

THE USES OF COMPADRAZGO: VIEWS FROM A PHILIPPINE TOWN

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Compadrazgo (godparenthood) relationships in Estancia, a rapidly growing urban Philippine municipality, which are formally established through baptismal, confirmation and matrimonial ceremonies, concretize linkages and responsibilities not only between the involved individuals but between whole family groups over two generations. The patterns and strategies used in choosing the compadres (godparents) differ according to four ranked socio-economic levels, namely, (1) the upper level (older elite and capitalist-entrepreneurs); (2) the middle high level (professionals and bureaucrats); (3) the middle low level (small-scale businessmen and employees); and (4) the lower level (fishermen, crewmen, laborers, and market vendors). While vertical linkages among the two upper levels are utilized frequently and mostly for the extension of ties with peers or between levels, it is the lower levels that have fewer ties which use them in a more diffusely social but less instrumental manner.

Introduction

The Catholic Church introduced the practice of godparenthood, the utilization of lay sponsors during a variety of religious ceremonies such as baptism or marriage, etc. to many different countries around the world. Godparenthood itself, however, originated in the European Church from a merging of earlier practices, and its daily usages, and the formal church norms that define it, have been continuously modified over time. Its current form and significance in the Catholic Church result from long term interactions between daily practice, social requirements, and written norms (Mintz and Wolf, 1950; Gudeman, 1975). Exported to other countries usually in combination with colonial expansion, godparenthood has sometimes proven a useful missionary tool (Phelan, 1959). However, its acceptance and utilization in the various host countries has been remarkably varied both in terms of how people think about it, that is, how they have internalized its norms and, even more strikingly, the uses to which it is put, as illustrated by a large research literature dealing with godparenthood in Europe, and Central and South America. Godparenthood is thus good grounds for examining how externally derived institutions are continuously adapted and transformed to meet the needs of host societies.

Much research on godparenthood has been plagued by confusion between different levels of analysis (church regulations versus normative and activity levels), and over-reliance on normative descriptions. In general, however, after the seminal article by Mintz and Wolf (1950), and particularly since the 1960s, interests and issues in godparenthood can be arranged along a continuum ranging from efforts to reach an inherent definition of godparenthood to analyses of how it is utilized by different social groups. Starting from different theoretical viewpoints and, to some extent, different field work experiences, Foster (1961) defined it as a narrow dyadic contract between two parties while Wolf (1966) saw it as multistranded and generalized sets of reciprocal obligations. Gudeman (1972; 1975) has recently described it as an interplay of the natural and the spiritual person, of the sacred and the social. Gudeman (1975), Hammel (1968), and Ingham (1970) all emphasize certain asymmetrical characteristics of the relationship that make it approximate asymmetrical alliance or affinity. From a wider societal point of view, Kottak (1967) and Chodkiewicz (1973) push this notion further and argue that godparenthood should be considered an integral part of achieved kinship because of significant similarities in membership, scope, etc. They suggest we abandon the misleading term, "ritual kinship," used by Mintz and Wolf (1950), among others. There have also been increasing attempts to examine

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godparenthood in terms of its adaptive viability with primary reliance on the real behavior, and occasionally on its interplay with the normative level. These analyses have more often (though not always) emphasized a group perspective and a societal level of analyses. Some recent examples would be Foster's (1969) description of the maximizing strategic choices for network construction of the Tzintzuntzenos, Van den Berghe (1966) and Chodkiewicz (1973), with their emphasis on social stratification in Mexican cases, Osborn's (1968) examination of ethnic groups strategies, and Lomnitz's (1971) examination of Chilean middle class strategies. Nonetheless, few of these studies examine the differential utilization (and definitions) of godparenthood by or within different strata, or subgroups of a single community.

In this paper, we will discuss only briefly some definitional characteristics of *compadrazgo* (godparenthood).¹ We will focus instead on two related problems: (1) How do godparenthood linkages covary with other aspects of the society, such as kinship, social mobility, ecological considerations, etc., and (2) Looking at social stratification, we will attempt to identify the adaptive strategies of different segments of the population in the utilization of *compadrazgo* ties, and the consequences these have for conflict and integration at the societal level.

To this end, we will lean heavily on data collected in 1967-68 in a central Philippine municipality, and on the research of two other anthropologists in the Philippines. After a brief discussion of the town, we will (1) indicate some of the general qualitative features of godparenthood in the town, (2) describe a quantitative study we conducted on an important aspect of godparenthood, (3) compare the patterns that emerged from the data and the general questions they raise, with two other studies of godparenthood in the Philippines (Sibley, 1965; Arce, 1973; Potter, 1973), and (4) draw out some general conclusions and implications.

The Municipality of Estancia

The fishing town of Estancia, at the northern tip of Iloilo province, on the island of Panay in the Western Visayas, has already been described at length by D. Szanton (1970) and Blanc Szanton (1972). It has a population of 6,000-plus residing in 1,014 households. A subsistence farming settlement in the late 1800s, it became a municipality and an interisland port in 1903. Thanks to its active small port and fishing industry, it was the fastest growing municipality in the province during the 20th century, and in 1967, it was even growing faster than the provincial capital. The growth was due to immigration, with very little counterbalancing emigration, in contrast with other Visayan towns. Thus, a complete household census in 1967 showed 52.5 percent of the adults had been born outside Estancia, though mostly in the Visayan region. Its population was thus composed primarily of first and up to third generation migrants who had arrived, generally as single individuals or nuclear families, in fairly recent years.

Of the 1,014 households, two thirds were nuclear and another 24 percent were nuclear with one additional kinsman (parent, sibling or more distant relative). There were just a few cases of married siblings living with their parents and married couples living temporarily together (often recent migrants waiting for new abodes). There were also 96 widowed or single individuals. Estancia thus fits the pattern of predominantly nuclear neolocal households found in other Visayan communities (Pal, 1963; Sibley, 1965) and in Luzon (Anderson, 1964; Castillo *et al.*, 1963; 1968; Dizon, 1973; Murray, 1973; etc.).

Because patterns of godparenthood choices have been known to covary with marriage choice patterns, it is noteworthy that local women tend to marry first generation male migrants, while local males are relatively more mobile and more often reside and marry out. With either the husband or the wife not born in the town in about half of the cases, marriage

patterns are obviously exogamous (and uxori-local) not too surprising given the high level of immigration. It should also be noted, however, that both in-migration and exogamous inter-marriage provide Estanciahanos with a more limited number of available kinsmen than would be found in less mobile and more endogamous communities.

Surprisingly, there are few major systematic studies about lowland kinship. Much has been written on kinship among the mountain populations of northern Luzon (Eggan, Keesing, Barton, Dozier, etc.), and on Muslim groups in Mindanao and Sulu (e.g. Mednick, Baradas, Frake, Kiefer), but there are only two dissertations focused on lowland Christian kinship patterns (Anderson, 1964; Murray, 1970). The more recent studies have emphasized the importance of a variety of informal kin and non-kin groups such as generalized personal kindreds (Eggan, 1967); ambilineal kin groups (not formally organized but recognized and functioning as interest groups); consanguine or affinal relatives of all kinds; and neighbors and town co-residents (Murray, 1973a; 1973b; Arce, 1973). Though our research was not focused specifically on kinship, similar kin and non-kin groups operated in Estancia as well. To them should be added, as we will see, two more categories that have been somewhat neglected so far; godparents and *kilala* or familiar acquaintances.

Turning to religion, there are six distinct religious groups in the community, as well as a sizeable number of persons who claim no affiliation. The four major groups with church buildings are: Roman Catholics, 69.6 percent; Aglipayans, 17.3 percent;² Evangelical Baptist, 7.3 percent, and Seventh Day Adventist, 2.9 percent. There are also Jehovah's Witnesses and members of the *Iglesia ni Kristo*, a locally minor but nationally important sect (D. Szanton, 1970:55-60).

Religious affiliations are unevenly distributed among different economic levels and occupational segments of the community. Aglipa-

yans have the lowest median incomes and are predominantly fishing crews and fishermen. Catholics are a more mixed lot, but somewhat over-represented in the lower economic income levels. The Protestants have disproportionately higher median incomes and are overly represented among business people and professionals. However, although in several respects, Estancia manifests considerably greater religious heterogeneity than Iloilo province as a whole (D. Szanton, 1970), this as we will see, has only minor consequences for the patterns of *compadrazgo*.

From an economic point of view, the town can be divided into several occupational segments. Two-thirds of the population is engaged in somewhat more "traditional" occupations, such as subsistence fishing, as crewmen on fishing outfits or as artisans, market vendors, or fish dealers. Another 20 percent are "modern" employees, i.e., insurance agents and salesmen, teachers and professionals. Finally, about 13 percent are entrepreneurs, both owners of large commercial businesses (often migrants) and the large fishing outfit operators who also represent the somewhat older political and patronal elite of the town. Economically, these segments also represent a rough scale of increasing wealth in terms of both family income and capital accumulation, and provide the basis for the town's income distribution pyramid.

In terms of stratification, a basic two class division, with an only occasionally penetrable economic barrier between them has been commonly proposed for both rural and small urban communities (Fox, 1956; Lynch, 1963, etc.). However, more recent efforts have emphasized a growing middle class, at least in more urban settings. From our observation, Estancia may be viewed as organized in at least three, and possibly four, strata, with the top and bottom ones being clearly economic classes, i.e., landlords and outfit operators versus laborers. The middle level would be in fact a category including largely professionals, bureaucrats, and

teachers and one might also add another intermediate "class" of small-scale entrepreneurs.

To summarize, the town of Estancia is a relatively new and rapidly growing urban community, with a high proportion of immigrants without large numbers of local kinsmen. Economically based on fishing and fish-marketing, it is religiously and occupationally heterogeneous, and therefore perhaps affords an interesting contrast to smaller farming communities, older agricultural towns, or larger cities, with respect to its uses for godparenthood. Furthermore, its particular stratification patterns should allow some analysis of differing utilizations of the godparenthood relationship within a single community.

Godparenthood in Estancia: The Basic Relationships

For Catholics and Aglipayans in Estancia, godparenthood ties are formally created through the ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, and matrimony. The Seventh Day Adventists and Evangelical Baptists limited it to baptism and marriage ceremonies. The use of godparenthood by Baptists elsewhere in the Western Visayas was also noted in Sibley (1965). The initiation of godparenthood ties usually formalizes an already existing relationship between acquaintances, neighbors or friends (Blanc Szanton, 1972: 111-115). In some sense it could be considered an idiom for expressing relationships with certain people and not others, much as kinship. Terms of *pare/mare*, for example, are frequently used without previous co-participation in a formal ceremony as a way to test the goodwill and readiness of the other party.

Once godparenthood ties are formally established, they concretize a variety of bonds and responsibilities between the several people involved. They established a relationship between the godparent (*maninoy, maninay*) and the child (*ihado, ihada*) in baptisms and confirma-

tions, and between the *maninoy/maninay* and the couple in weddings, similar to the *padrinazgo* variously described in Spain (Pitt Rivers, 1961; Freeman, 1970) and Latin America (Mintz and Wolf, 1950 and Kottak, 1967). In Estancia, it appeared that the most commonly recognized responsibility of the *maninoy/maninay* was to provide their *ihado/ihada* with a substantial gift at the time of the ceremony, and to offer regular gifts (usually cash or clothes) on birthdays, and at Christmas, fiesta, or Easter time. The *ihado/ihada*, on the other hand, was supposed to express deference to godparents and visit them on those occasions. Non-compliance by either part brought forth indignation and the progressive disintegration of the relationship. These annual exchanges were apparently necessary to mark the continuation of a relationship that could then be activated, much as an insurance policy, in times of need. *Maninoy* did also occasionally help fund an *ihado's* education, could be asked for help when the godchild was searching for a first job, and was used as a generalized source of support, according to the godparents' personal capabilities.

Another important set of relationships established by godparenthood unites the children of godparents and their godchildren. They are supposed to enter a quasi-sibling relationship of mutual aid and address each other as *igso-hon*. Being *igso-hon* carries strong incest taboos, at least normatively, though the extent to which it affected real behavior and marriage patterns in Estancia, or elsewhere, requires further investigation. In Estancia, *igso-hon* from childhood were also sometimes made godparents of their respective children, when adults, thus compounding the relationship. However, Jocano (1969) only mentions *igso-hon* in passing in his study of a Visayan rural barrio, and Sibley (1965) or Arce (1973) do not refer to it at all. A closer examination of the significance of *igso-hon* bonds, both normatively and behaviorally, in different situations, could add a useful element to the understanding of godparenthood as a lowland Philippine institution.

The major relationship established by *compadrazgo*, however, and the one discussed at length below, is that uniting the godparents and the parents of the child both termed *cumpare* and *cumare* or more informally (and frequently) *pare* and *mare*. These terms are also frequently applied, for both reference and address, to brothers, sisters, and cousins, as well as spouses of both parents and godparents, and also to all godparents present at the same ceremony (co-sponsors), and at least their spouses. The original parents, godparents and co-sponsors appear to be the core of the relationship, however, and all other cases, when mentioned during the research, were usually accompanied by a brief explanation. All of these relationships call for "reciprocal goodwill and general willingness to help meet the other's needs and expectations" (Blanc Szanton, 1972:112).

Godparenthood ties established at marriage are different inasmuch as the major relationships are between the *maninoy/maninay* and the couple itself (not their parents) but they are in many ways similar to the exchanges of deference-for-support characteristic of the *maninoy/ihado*. Sponsors at weddings are expected to provide generalized support and a kind of insurance for the young starting couple, providing them with jobs, advice, even funds when needed, aside from an initial substantial gift at the time of the ceremony itself.³ The sponsor's children are addressed as *igso-hon* by the couple and possibly by the couple's children as well. Co-sponsors at weddings also automatically become *pare* and *mare* with each other and with their respective spouses.

In conclusion, one should stress, in accord with Chodkiewicz (1973), that godparenthood ties, because of the varied intersecting linkages they create between a number of individuals, cannot be viewed as only single dyadic relationships, but must be understood as relationships between whole family groups over two generations. The support of a *maninoy* or *cumpare*, be it through education, money, or a job, is significant at the level of real activity for all

members of the family. Its normative definition, embedded in kinship is similarly significant for the whole family group.

So far we have only touched on *compadrazgo* on the individual and familial levels. At a societal level, these relationships are also important for both bonding and differentiating whole segments of the population, by perpetuating patron-client relationships between segments, or by stressing horizontal cooperation within segments, as has been previously pointed out by, for example, Van den Berghe (1966), Kottak (1967), Chodkiewicz (1973). It is to this further level of analysis that we will address ourselves now.

Cumpare/Cumare in Estancia

Our research in Estancia was aimed at a variety of socio-economic processes, and we gathered a considerable amount of data on aspects of godparenthood in the process.⁴ It is not, however, exhaustive. Having lived in the town for 18 months, we eventually became godparents and inevitably made many unsystematic observations on the qualitative characteristics of the relationships involved. About half-way through our stay, questionnaires were administered by one interviewer to a random sample of 70 Catholics, 41 Aglipayans, 36 Protestants, and 17 Seventh Day Adventists drawn from their respective church registries. In addition, 33 members of the Knights of Columbus, a popular and powerful Catholic association, were also interviewed to represent a significant portion of the local elite. A little later we also studied almost the complete universe of market vendors and small scale fish dealers, in order to get at the significance of godparent ties when they overlapped with economic transactions, but this latter sample, already discussed in Blanc Szanton (1972) is not included in this analysis.

The questionnaire we used aimed at unravelling the patterns and strategies used in choosing *compadres*, and the results obtained,

i.e., what kinds of *cumpare* did people in different segments of the community provide themselves with, and ended up having.

The interviews asked for the *total number* of godparents from baptism, confirmation, or marriage, and differentiated carefully the *direction of the choices* made, that is, if each of the godparents had been chosen by the respondent himself, or by his family, by the godparent, or his family or were a result of co-sponsorship. The *characteristics* of each godparent with respect to the respondent was also carefully investigated, distinguishing between eight categories (near or distant relative, acquaintance, neighbor, political official, co-worker, business associate, and boss) with further detailed information on each in many cases. A further question asked specifically about the *reasons* of the respondent himself, or the assumed reasons of the godparent, for making the particular choice. Finally, two questions explored the use of *pare/mare* as terms of address, by asking which official godparents they did not address in those terms and why, as well as which people who were not official godparents they usually addressed that way and why. In collecting this data, the assumption was very much that, though based completely on the informant's memory, good will and truthfulness in answering, because of the level of detail and the large total number, significant larger trends would still appear.

Examining the responses of the people we knew well suggested that indeed some ties were forgotten. When listed, however, they were consistently acknowledged correctly. It is also probable that memory was selective, likely to produce an upward skewing of connections, with the best remembered linkages being those with people more socially significant than one's self. The quantitative data is thus essentially a minimal listing, because godparenthood ties, like a genealogy "is a test of an informant's memory and not a test of blood" (Titiev, 1943). Finally, older *cumpare*

linkages that were not active anymore were much more difficult to recall, as the respondents themselves often complained, and there appeared to be a fair number of such cases.

It should be pointed out also that the questionnaire did not include a number of important variables. It did not attempt to differentiate between different kinds of godparenthoods (by baptism, confirmation, or marriage) and did not specify the number of children of the respondent and their birth order, thus making it impossible to reconstruct the historical succession of kinds of godparents in the respondent's life cycle, or to examine the frequency of duplication of ties.

The questions did, however, allow for the analysis of compadrazgo patterns in terms of the characteristics of the *cumpare* obtained by each individual (or family), and by each segment of the population, as well as in terms of the reasons adduced for the individual choices.

In order to establish a significant hierarchy of individuals and segments of the population against which to examine the data on godparents, we could use either objective measures of wealth, income, education, or occupation, or a reputational approach, i.e., the views of local individuals. We ultimately decided for the latter, and had two well integrated and knowledgeable members of the community (an unemployed female pharmacist and part-time teacher, member of one of the old families in town, and a male schoolguard and part-time mailman) rate all the people interviewed and all the *cumpares* listed.⁵

The indices along which people were ranked included wealth, social prominence and general respect in the community.⁶ The rank attributions of the two raters were remarkably consistent, with the greatest range of disagreements occurring at their own rank level, when presumably the differentiation impinged on their ranking of themselves and their friends and enemies. Differences in ranking (rarely more

than one rank) were adjusted into a final average ranking for each individual. We then divided them into four levels, "upper," "middle high," "middle low," and "lower" socio-economic levels, which in fact, we discovered afterwards, closely correspond to the economic-occupational categories previously identified in the town. The "upper" are the older elite and larger capitalist-entrepreneurs, also the political patrons in the town (D. Szanton, 1970). They are followed by the "middle high" professionals and bureaucrats, mostly recent newcomers attracted by employment opportunities or assigned by the Department of Education, mixed with some smaller entrepreneurs. The "middle low" are largely smaller scale businessmen and lower ranked employees, while the "lower" represent subsistence, fishermen, crewmen, laborers, and the market vendors closest to daily subsistence. Because the match is not perfect, however, and would have to be examined with much greater detail, I will refer to the segments as "ranked socio-economic levels."

Examining variations in *cumpare/cumare* ties with respect to religious affiliation, there do not appear to be striking differences between members of different churches. All seem to use *compadrazgo* in similar ways, though Seventh Day Adventists and, to a lesser extent, Baptists, do have a somewhat lower average number of *cumpare* (especially *cumpare* chosen by the respondents themselves). This is probably due to the fact that they do not use *cumpare* for confirmation.

There are, however, considerable differences in the average number of *cumpare*s of all kinds, per respondent, by socio-economic level. At the "lower" and "middle low" levels, there are about nine *cumpare*s per respondent, while in the "middle high" and "upper" levels, the figure almost doubles to 15. This quantum jump in numbers is particularly significant because, as we will see, a comparable jump occurs with regard to several other variables, and thus confirms the existence of genuine

differences between the "upper" and "lower" socio-economic levels. Less extensive utilization of *cumpare* by poorer people has been observed elsewhere, e.g., in Brazil (Kottak, 1967) and in Mexico (Chodkiewicz, 1973; Lomnitz, 1971), and will be further discussed in our comparisons and conclusions.

Further significant differences in the direction and relative numerical importance of the *compadrazgo* relationships by socio-economic levels clearly appears in Figures 1 and 2. In general, there is a real contrast between the strategies of the two top, and two bottom, levels.

1. Respondents in the two upper levels do not acknowledge "upper" or barely acknowledge "middle high," having chosen *cumpare* in the two "lower" levels. They stress instead their selection of *cumpare*s at the same level (especially "middle high") or with each other.
2. In the two "lower" levels the situation is reversed. The respondents do not emphasize the *cumpare* choices at the same level, but instead indicate more than half of their choices as among people at the higher levels. It is noteworthy, however, that while the "middle low" respondents are primarily directed all the way to the top level, the "lower" level respondents aim only at the two levels immediately above them, but not all the way to the top. They seem much less ambitious in their choices.
3. From another point of view, the two "middle" levels seem primarily interested in the top level or in themselves, in contrast to their "upper" and "lower" level counterparts.

Examining Figures 3 and 4 showing whom the respondents acknowledged having been chosen by, we see striking similarities and differences in contrast to Figures 1 and 2.

1. Respondents in the two top levels indi-

cate being chosen relatively more frequently, in comparison to their own patterns of choice, by people in the two "lower" categories. The difference is particularly noticeable for the "upper" level, but significant for the "middle high" as well. In addition, they less frequently (or with the same frequency) acknowledge being chosen by *cumpare* in the same or higher level.

2. The same pattern occurs in the two lower levels, with the difference that same level choices also increase. In the lowest level there is also, surprisingly, a small increase in indicated choices made by upper level *cumpare*.

Significant patterns emerge from this comparison if we: (a) assume that the choices expressed by the respondents in each level are suggestive of their own strategic interests, (b) assume that the choices they indicate as having been directed towards themselves by others suggest perception of the other levels' strategies, and (c) complement this data with some knowledge of the major reasons governing their choices in the different cases in the context of the historical development of the town.

The "upper" level people in the town appear primarily concerned with consolidating their positions with their own peers, usually acquaintances though, and not kinsmen or neighbors (Table 1). The primary reasons are political and economic. Given the high level of political factionalism in Philippine municipal politics (Lande, 1964; Machado, 1971/1972), they use *compadrazgo* to ally themselves with other elected political officials (councilors, mayors, etc.) who are their present party mates or competitors. Elaborated systems of alliance are made and broken rapidly, particularly among the followers of the leading families in the town. Economic interests also often underline these alliances. Outfit operators in Estancia do not operate joint cooperative business ventures, but they can still be of use to each

other on numerous occasions. Influential peers are thus sought-after *cumpare*, as many of them stated quite openly.

The "upper" level people also seem concerned to establish links with the professionals and public officials of lesser rank or importance, again for generally instrumental reasons. Being the *cumpare* of your child's teacher, of the judge, of the court clerk can be extremely advantageous at times, for your child's success, or for the legal protection of your business. Similarly, *cumpare* relationships with immediate business associates [usually subordinates because horizontal business cooperation is rare among the wealthier people in Estancia (D. Szanton, 1970)] somewhat increase the likelihood of honest and responsible work.

The lack of acknowledgement of ties with the "lower" levels, particularly by the "upper" level (Figure 1) is perhaps surprising. It may reflect very selective recall or perhaps a partial confirmation of the hypothesis expressed by Van den Berghe (1966:1241) that *cumpare* ties downward are considered "more of a liability than an asset . . . as the master-servant bonds become more specific and universalistic." This seems doubtful, however, as a complete explanation, for the patron-client system in Estancia still seemed very much alive in 1967. The outfit operators, for example, well represented in the "upper" level, behaved very much like economic and political patrons (D. Szanton, 1970) but had relatively few *cumpare* ties with their crewmen though they occasionally had such ties with their captains. Part of the reason may have been the great turnover of crewmen, and their frequent movement from one fishing boat to another, discouraging the establishment of permanent bonds.⁷

When "upper" level people acknowledged being asked to become *cumpare*, the persons asking were often not crewmen but small scale business people, policemen, employees, and the like.

People at the "middle high" level primarily

Figure 1
CUMPAIRE CHOSEN BY RESPONDENTS

Figure 1

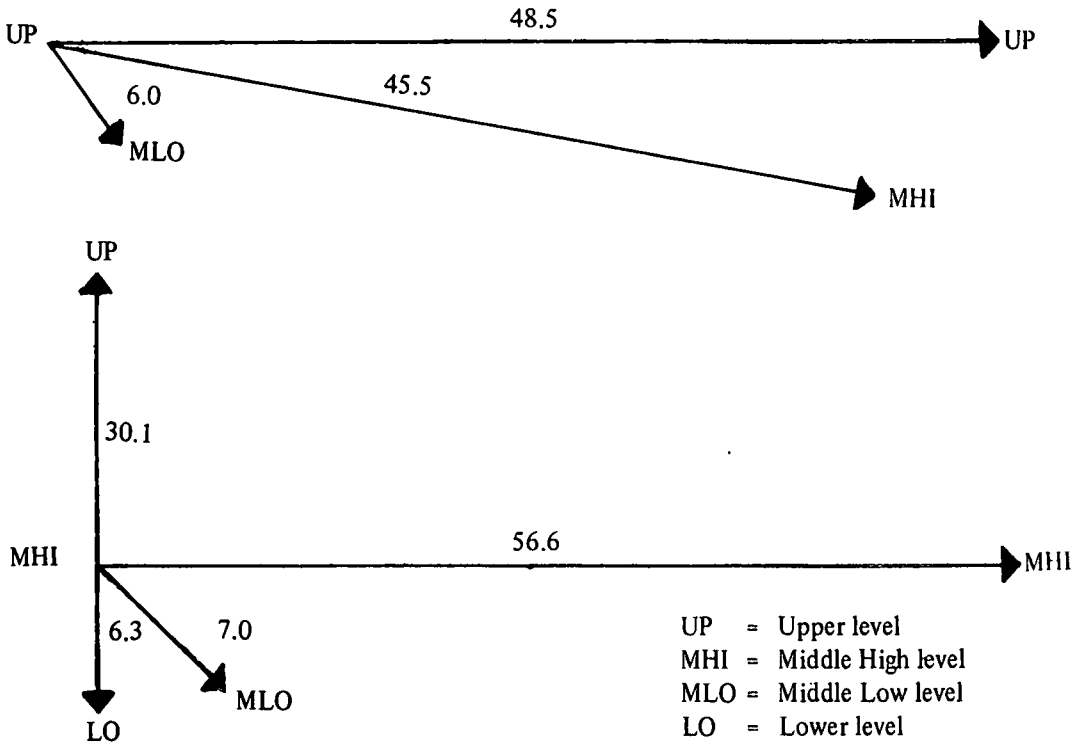


Figure 2
CUMPAIRE CHOSEN BY RESPONDENTS

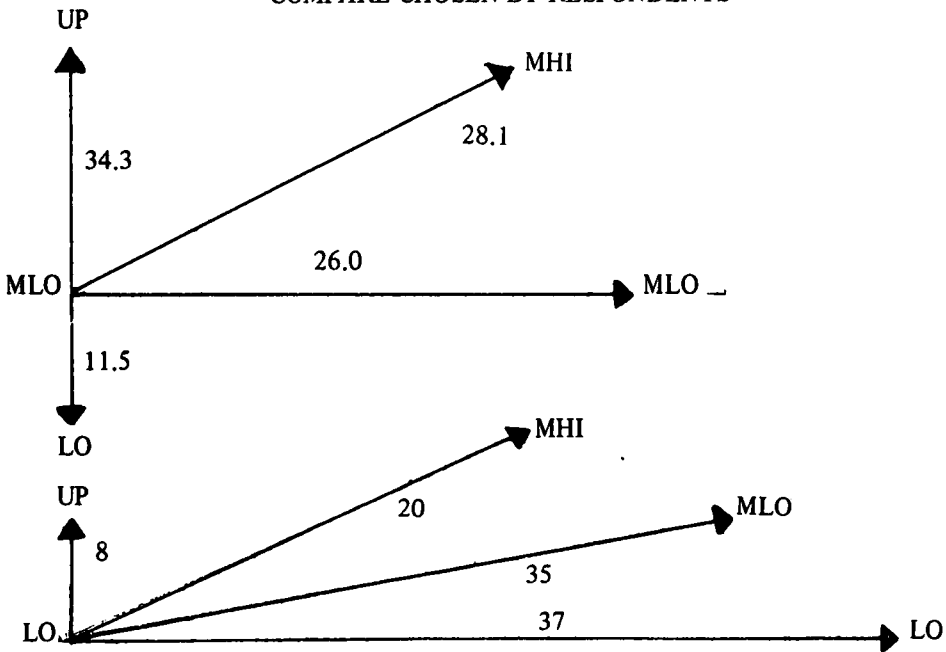


Figure 3

CUMPAARE OF THE RESPONDENTS CHOSEN

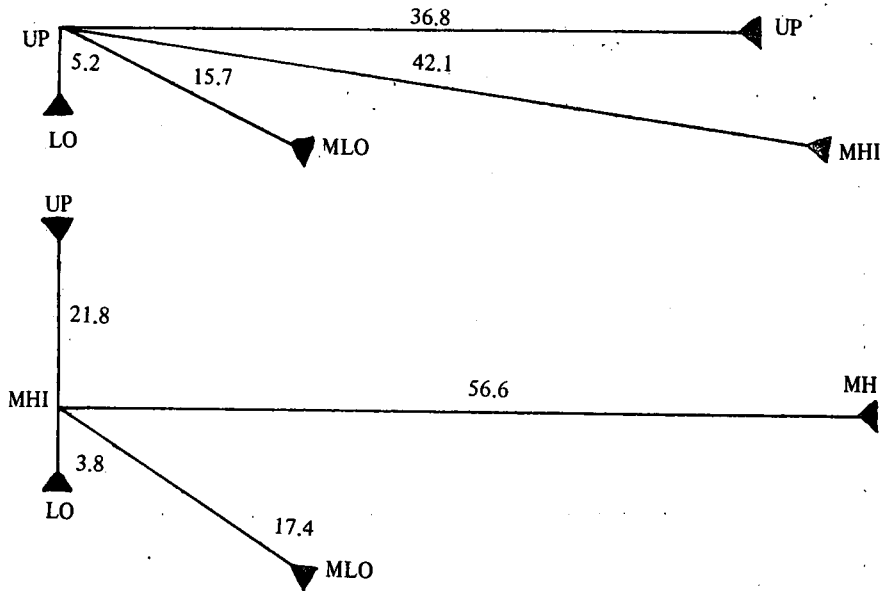


Figure 4

CUMPAARE OF THE RESPONDENTS CHOSEN

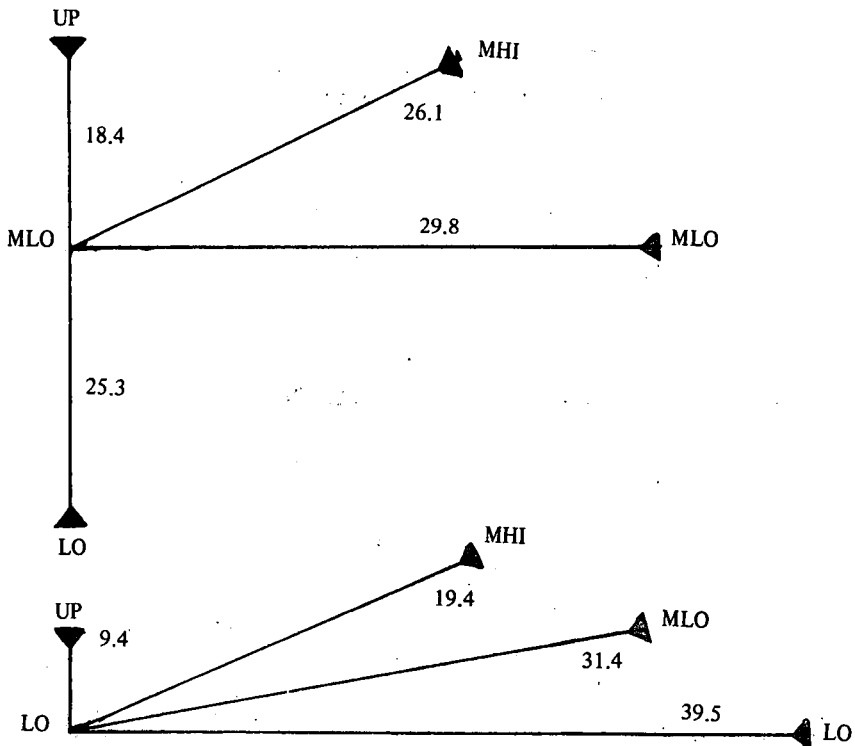


Table 1

PERCENTAGE RELATIONSHIP OF CUMPARES CHOSEN BY RESPONDENTS
OF VARYING SOCIO-ECONOMIC RANKS

Socio- Economic Ranks	Relationships				Total
	Kinsmen*	Neighbors	Acquaintances	Co- Workers & Officials	
Upper	9.0	6.0	81.8	3.0	100%
Middle High	12.0	5.3	57.3	25.3	100%
Middle Low	15.0	13.2	66.9	4.7	100%
Lower	21.9	26.3	42.1	9.6	100%

*The close kin listed fell frequently in the category of affines (sister and brother-in-law, father-in-law).

looked toward "upper" level people, and to each other. Their motivations were very consistent. Largely newcomers in the town and with a profession on work position to defend, they sought the support of the town's politicians and municipal officials. (They were usually careful to befriend all factions, but to show particular preference for the one currently in power!) They also sought out links that would be economically advantageous. Thus, *cumpare*-outfit operators would send their crews to a specific doctor and *cumpare*-store owners would allow easier and longer credit terms. Borrowing money is similarly facilitated (Blanc Szanton, 1972:111-115). Finally, they used *compadrazgo* to improve their general social standing. Ties with the priest, for example, facilitated access to some of the socially high-ranked Catholic associations in the town (Knights of Columbus and *Cursillo*) and thus enlarged their circle of useful friends and acquaintances.

The extension of *compadrazgo* among the "middle high" level followed many of the same strategic motivations. Elaborate (and useful)

linkages existed between certain store owners, some professionals, and the police chief. High school teachers would also link with one another both within and across the factional rivalries of the high schools. Finally, the members of the socially prominent Knights of Columbus, mostly of this level, established close *cumpare* links to each other. In contrast, ties with lower levels would be relatively few, and usually limited to immediate subordinates, store helpers, employees, or domestic help. They would have thus some, but not necessarily all, of the features of patronal connections.

"Middle low" people established ties both up and down. They aimed at public officials, political patrons, store owners, and money lenders, and occasionally their employer or that of their wife or children. Links to the "middle high" level would mostly be with teachers and business owners. When they acknowledged being asked by "upper" level people, they often suggested it was for faction-building by political figures. To avoid being too blatant, high public officials, e.g., the mayor, or vice-mayor, might offer to become the *cumpare* of a "middle low" person, always

pointing to some other earlier tie such as originally coming from the same barrio, or having been school friends. Similarly, the wife of the mayor or vice mayor might approach "middle low" wives, and establish *cumpare* ties with them. The same kind of politically-based linkages were established with the "middle high" level people, usually councilmen and their wives, or lesser factional leaders. Connections with teachers, insurance agents, and small business owners also occasionally appear.

When *cumpare* linkages were initiated with only people on the same or lower levels, they were primarily with co-workers, friends, and neighbors and occasionally with employees or former debtors (who would initiate the relationship). These links generally appear to be much less instrumental, and more socially cooperative.

"Lower" level people acknowledge few ties with the "upper" level, either initiated or received, and these are limited to public officials and occasional businessmen, or their homelot owner (probably initiated to limit conflicts about payment, and with the hope of avoiding eviction). The ties with the "middle high" were much the same, aside from a few relationships initiated with employers or co-workers in higher socio-economic ranks. With "middle low" people, and with people in their same level, the links are with neighbors, friends or co-workers, and a few relationships initiated by a debtor.

In conclusion, major differences characterize, bind and separate these four ranked levels. The "upper and middle high" levels have their specific strategies, but are bound together by a variety of relationships of mutual assistance and cooperation. Their linkages downward are few and narrow in scope. Similarly, the "middle low and lower" levels also collaborate in using *compadrazgo* in a generally social, less instrumental, manner. Their linkages upward are less with general economic patrons than with political faction heads (usually initiated by the latter and more instrumentally aimed at gaining votes),⁸ store owners (providers of credit) and teachers, thus creating relationships that are somewhat more narrowly defined,

even if they still underline dependencies.

A few additional observations contribute to this general picture. There are differences in the categories from which *cumpare* are chosen, according to respondents' socio-economic levels. As Table 1 shows, respondents at all levels chose their *cumpare* predominantly among acquaintances. However, in contrast to the "upper" levels, the "middle low" and "lower" socio-economic ranks chose kinsmen and neighbors much more frequently. The "middle high" distinguished themselves from all others for an unexpectedly high number of *cumpare* among occupational acquaintances, i.e. co-workers.⁹ Some choices of co-workers also appear in the "lower" level, particularly among subsistence market vendors, but usually categorized as acquaintances first, and they are not shown on Table 1. They do not, however, offset the "lower" level emphasis on kinsmen and neighbors.

Finally, consistent qualitative differences in the utilization and understanding of *compadrazgo* relationships between top and bottom levels are suggested by the *reasons stated* for *cumpare* choices, which generally fall into the three following categories:

1) The spiritual quality of the godparent and his desired good effect on the child. Thus, for example, people were said to have been chosen because they were good, well-liked or loved (by the person choosing them); because of good character or repute; because of a desire for closer, more intimate relationship with a close friend, an *igso-hon* or even a former suitor (in the case of female respondents).

2) To perpetuate and improve a past or ongoing relationship. Several versions were possible, including appeals to existing reciprocities, e.g., "we felt a debt of gratitude towards the person," or "because she is a friend and has no children" or "lost her child," or "because we are former classmates, clubmates or co-workers" and are thus already in some sense co-participants in a pool of helpful others.

3) For an immediate and specific advantage. Thus, people in debt regularly and openly acknowledged trying to establish a *cumpare*

relationship with their creditor. This was also the case between buyers (*suki*) and vendors (creditors) (Blanc Szanton, 1972). Likewise, *cumpare* ties are acknowledged as having been initiated with appropriate people to obtain election votes, or employment, or protection. Professionals (doctors, teachers, midwives) are ostensibly approached to obtain free services, or at lesser expense, or more readily. These manipulative reasons may reach some very petty extremes: one home economics teacher and her husband were frequently asked to become *cumare/cumpare* at weddings in the expectation they would thereby provide the wedding cake for free.¹⁰

Although these stated reasons must be regarded with great caution, they do tend to align with the several socio-economic levels in the town. Thus practically all in the first category were provided by "lower and middle low" level people. The second category of answers was found at all levels though the focus on reciprocity was most frequently stated by people at the bottom. Finally the third category, i.e., instrumental, answers were primarily mentioned by "upper," and to some extent, "middle high" people.¹¹ In other words, the different stated motives for the use of *compadrazgo* seem directly related to the respondents' differing socio-economic positions.

Comparisons and Conclusions

Like Van den Berghe (1966), describing a larger town in Southeastern Mexico, we too find significant differences in *compadrazgo* along socio-economic lines, though our parameters are not always the same. Our concluding observations, however, seem to be quite opposite. He describes *compadrazgo* in the upper and middle class as considered essentially less important, often more of a liability than an asset, and as stressing intensification of kin or close friends' ties, primarily among peers. In the lower classes, however, these ties are more often vertical and usually extended to outsiders, thus often accompanied by a loss of intensity. The etiquette surrounding them, however, is more formal, and the ties are considered more important. He concludes, as did Foster (1953) that, with the deterioration of generalized

multi-stranded patron-client ties, the upper and middle classes will possibly tend to reduce *compadrazgo* to its Church-sanctioned minimum form, closer to the Iberian pattern, while for lower classes, still oriented primarily to the community, *compadrazgo* will continue to serve useful social and economic functions.

In Estancia much of this is reversed. It is the "lower" levels that tend to have fewer ties, mostly with kin and neighbors (intensification) but they are also the ones who give it a more diffusely social, less instrumental, content. The "upper" and "middle" levels, on the other hand, utilize the relationship frequently and mostly for extension of ties (thus presumably less intensive) with peers, or between levels. It is thus the "lower" levels that have fewer ties while the upper levels show no signs of a reduction of *compadrazgo* relationships.

Chodkiewicz' study of a smaller rural Mexican village (1973) stresses how both patrons and clients' positions are sustained by vertical *compadrazgo* ties. He describes how the wealthy use their ties with the poor to obtain scarce labor and to deter violence, and stresses how reciprocity, because of the uneven socio-economic levels, tends to become exploitation. In his introduction and in later chapters he notes the usefulness of horizontal *compadrazgo* ties among poorer people in providing "a poor man's defense against family strife," and a form of social insurance. However, they are less frequent than one might expect given their utility which, he suggests, is due to their high cost and the time-consuming cooperation they require. Much as Van den Berghe and myself, Chodkiewicz does find clear differences by wealth, and bases his explanations on environmental and historical data. The situation he describes appears quite different from that in Estancia.

A recent article by D. Middleton (1975) discusses *compadrazgo* in one barrio of a much larger Mexican town. Unfortunately, there is little data on the characteristics of the respondents or the content of the exchanges, and differences in wealth are discussed only briefly. However, comparing his data with Foster's Tzintzuntzan (1969), he shows that in the

urban settlement,¹² as in the rural village, *compadrazgo* is primarily horizontal, and only selectively and secondarily vertically extended. This contradicts Foster's hypothesis that people would tend to increase vertical linkages in more urban and heterogeneous environments, and Mintz and Wolf's hypothesis (1950) that economically mobile people will tend to increase vertical upward-oriented linkages. Middleton's lack of attention to the superimposition of vertical *compadrazgo* and patron-client ties to the content of those relationships, and to the differing significance of *compadrazgo* for different segments of the population, however, do not allow further comparisons with Estancia.

On the other hand, research in South America has shown how ethnic groups with different economic bases (e.g. Osborn's work in Southern Colombia) or the middle class in Santiago, Chile (Lomnitz, 1971) do make variable uses of *compadrazgo*. The Lomnitz example is particularly striking. For her urban middle class subjects, *compadrazgo* may be interpreted as "an expression of solidarity needed for the survival of the group. The middle class does not control the means of production, neither does it engage in manual labor. Its major resource is the control of public and private administration. Manipulating the administrative processes for its members' benefit requires a system of tacit mutual assistance" (Lomnitz, 1971:103). This would seem to fit much that was happening in the "middle high" level of Estancia, though other variables were also at play, partly related to its size and historical patterns of growth. The elected municipal political officials of the town were also its economic patrons and owners of the means of production. Nonetheless, middle rung administrators and professionals did manipulate certain aspects of private and public administration, and were thus deemed important collaborators by the larger patrons who would, in exchange, offer those outsiders-newcomers their general influential support in the town. By emphasizing the importance of equal reciprocity for such horizontal *compadrazgo* ties however, Lomnitz pushes the concept further. Only another member of the middle class — in our case the "middle high" level — has both access to favors of a bureaucratic,

political or professional nature, and the possibility of interacting as social equals. Lomnitz thus concludes that participation in *compadrazgo* indicates membership in the Chilean middle class (1971:99). Are we perhaps seeing the same pattern in Estancia in embryonic form?

Finally some interesting studies in Bolivia (McEwen, 1975) emphasize the importance of examining *compadrazgo* historically as it relates to general economic, demographic, and social organizational changes in patron-client systems occurring concurrently with widespread land reform in that country. While largely unstratified Indian communities there tend to use kin more than *cumprare* ties, vertical *compadrazgo* is significantly present where there are land-based patrons, varying only according to the strength and importance of patrons versus clients. Also, in a more stratified marketing municipality, horizontal *compadrazgo* has developed among the relatively wealthy while lower level people still try to establish vertical links, with only limited success.

Unfortunately, our data on Estancia lack historical depth, so we cannot examine changes in *compadrazgo* over time,¹³ and the two other potentially relevant studies in the same province offer data of uneven quality and are not directed towards the same theoretical concerns. Jocano's analysis of a rural interior barrio only mentions *compadrazgo* in passing, very normatively (1969:177-179), and stresses primarily the consonance of the *compadremaninoy-igso-hon* complex with the local bilateral kinship structure and the generational extension of kinship. Sibley (1965) compares *compadre* choices in an older subsistence farming barrio in Iloilo, and a newer migrant community of sugar wage workers on the neighboring island of Negros. He provides some historical, social, and economic background for the two communities, but does not differentiate socio-economic levels and the degree of stratification. His major variables are extension to non-kins versus intensification of kin ties, and the proportion of links with barrio people versus links with outsiders. His primarily Catholic, Iloilo barrio of farmers and tenants (and landowners?) stress intensification of close kin ties (siblings, first cousins)

within the community. (No mention is made of affines.) The barrio is strongly endogamous and most of its inhabitants are related. *Compadrazgo* would then be used to intensify particularly important (or particularly brittle!) kin ties in a universe of kinsmen.

Interestingly, the barrio of migrant wage workers, about three generations deep, has changed its *compadrazgo* alliances several times. Initially some of its ties went back to the community of origin, though most were with non-kin outsiders in other barrios, in the town center, and in a neighboring market center. During World War II, owing, says Sibley, to the population dispersal and general confusion of the Japanese occupation, *compadrazgo* ties were for a while only established with kinsmen, but the previous pattern reemerged soon afterwards. Since then, however, ties to the mother community have decreased, likewise its connections to the town center (which itself has been in economic decline ever since being bypassed by the national road), and with the neighboring barrios and the market center. Unfortunately, Sibley does not offer a satisfactory explanation, economic or otherwise, for this pattern of increasing closure. However, this rapid succession of changes suggests using great caution in interpreting or generalizing on any synchronic data on *compadrazgo*, Estancia not excluded.

Aside from a brief suggestion that *cumpare* ties in both barrios, when with non-kin, tend to be with higher status people, and that this is somewhat more so in the newer barrio than in the old settlement, the extent to which *cumpare* ties are relatively more horizontal (among peers) or vertical (overlying patrón-client ties) is also not examined by Sibley. The new barrio appears to have relatively more vertical *cumpare* linkages, which seems to sustain the hypothesis of Mintz-Wolf (1950) and Foster (1969) in contrast to Middleton (1975) but this is not adequately supported by solid data. In the larger, heavily migrant, town of Estancia, also about three generations deep, both kinds of ties are used, but there are stresses on horizontality on the upper levels and a mixture of both in the lower ones, reflecting the greater degree of the heterogeneity and stratification in this larger and economically growing com-

munity.

For comparative purposes it is worthwhile looking at some recent statements on *compadrazgo* in other areas of the Philippines, particularly Luzon. Jocano (1973:65-70), examining aspects of kinship in the municipality of Bay, on the shore of Laguna Lake, notes that *cumpares* in a small barrio are selected among kinsmen for both economic and personal reasons (they are less expensive, easier to ask help from without shame, and more responsible for the child in times of need). In the larger town center, on the other hand, *cumpares* are often chosen upward, among economic and political patrons, with little apparent interest in the godchild. It thus becomes a social mechanism for structuring relationships between landlords and tenants. Jocano states, however, that because the bond, not based on formal jural authority (like marriage), is a loosely defined relationship that can be maintained only through continuing exchanges, it is now "maintained as a matter of practice and has lost much of its institutional function as a cohesive force it once possibly was in the social system." I strongly disagree. The bonds are indeed being used differently now than they were before, but they seem to be very much alive and serving cohesive as well as differentiating functions in modern rural and urban Philippines.

Arce (1973) describes the objective structural characteristics of *compadre* (not their conscious motivations) in 1956-58 in a small farming town in Camarines Sur. Unfortunately he differentiates the utilization of *compadrazgo* by socio-economic levels only summarily and thus the possibilities of comparisons with Estancia are limited. He does point out that the lower class (two-thirds of the town on the basis of reputational ratings) chooses upper class sponsors, while the upper class largely chooses among themselves. He finds no quantitative differences in the patterns of choices for baptism as opposed to marriage sponsors though, qualitatively, preference is expressed for choosing marriage *compadre* from a somewhat higher socio-economic level than oneself (65-66). In both cases sponsors are usually not kinsmen. Arce also notes a strong cor-

relation between sponsors and neighbors but does not distinguish along that variable according to classes. He gives, in that article, limited information on the social and economic history of the town. Generally speaking however, Arce's town, more agriculturally based and less stratified than Estancia, does seem to offer a similar, though simpler, general pattern.

A recent dissertation by D. Potter (1973) also finds that, contrary to the initial hypothesis of the author, *compadrazgo* ties are very much alive in Dumaguete, a medium-sized Central Philippines town, and that in fact the number of sponsors per rite has been increasing over the last few decades, particularly among the urban upper-middle class¹⁴ (1973:453). In 1970-71, Potter interviewed representative samples in the town and three adjacent barrios (the latter containing mostly white collar employees, mixed farmers and non-farmers, and farmers, respectively), and attempted some diachronic reconstructions on the basis of the Dumaguete parish and civil registry records. Though he does not differentiate systematically between the strategies of different socio-economic and occupational segments in the town and barrios important for our present purposes, Potter makes some interesting observations. Kin choices (intensification) have apparently increased over the last three decades and when kin are chosen in both urban and rural settings, they tend to be of higher socio-economic status or white collar civil servants and professionals (1973:411; 414-416). According to Potter, his study generally shows in both settings "a consistent cumulative trend toward a more horizontal structure with a strong stable minority of vertical upward bonds and a decreasing proportion of vertical downward linkages" (1973:443). Though a more detailed analysis would be necessary, Potter can point at some differential strategies. Barrio parents are increasingly choosing *cumpare* among non-farmers, mostly white collar civil servants, employees, and professionals. Urban parents, a large proportion of whom are apparently white collar themselves, tend to choose horizontally, among other civil servants and professionals. They often choose the same sponsor repeatedly and have a greater number of sponsors altogether, much like in Estancia.

Lower status urban parents on the other hand are striving to secure for themselves upward linkages which are not usually initiated downward by the higher status respondents (1973: 446-447). Potter also cites Voth (1969) as indicating similar trends for horizontal bonds and rejection of vertical downward ties by both urban and non-urban residents from data gathered during an earlier social mobility study in the same town. While such general trends cannot be interpreted meaningfully without more information on the socio-economic composition of the sample, its context (town and barrios) and changes over time, they do still suggest some striking similarities with the more detailed patterns described for Estancia and Camarines Sur, and thus encourage some tentative wider comparative hypotheses.

The above comparisons suggest the following changes in the utilization of *compadrazgo* during the post-World War II period:

1. Smaller rural communities tended towards using *cumpare* ties for the intensification of particular kin and neighborly ties, and patron-client ties, both vertically and horizontally.

2. In migrant communities and small urban areas, the lower socio-economic levels seem to do much the same for general insurance purposes. There might have been more vertical extension in different situations or at different times in the past according to the existing patron-client relationships.

3. In more stratified communities, higher socio-economic levels utilize the relationship for extension of ties to peers with instrumental motives, and focus more on horizontal than on vertical linkages.

Thus, they establish patterns of manipulative mutual cooperation that will help them depend, entrench, and increase their own position of power and control with respect to their lower level counterparts. Hypotheses such as these must necessarily remain tentative, however, because of the limited sample and of problems of historical and environmental variability.

Conclusions

In conclusion, after this brief survey of recent Philippine research, it appears that patterns of *compadrazgo* are variable and situational, indicating the need for much caution before any wider generalization.

The Estancia data suggest that, when patrons have changing sets of clients not tied by a long term involvement with land (e.g., fishing outfit crewmen), in a new, reasonably heterogeneous and stratified community, the overlaying *compadrazgo* and vertical patron-client ties are fewer and tend to be more single-stranded, especially from the patrons' point of view. Horizontal linkages are important in the lower levels for generalized social and economic assistance, often expressed in an idiom of kinship. At the upper levels, horizontal linkages assume probably new, more openly instrumental, importance allowing for peer

manipulation and protection of wealth and power. In particular, an administrative and professional segment emerges, closely allied through *compadrazgo* to the economic and political elite, but forming an identifiable peer-directed category.

The extent to which these patterns are echoed in other provincial towns, or in larger cities, can only be ascertained by future field-work. One can probably hypothesize, however, that with the general deterioration of patron-client ties and the tendency towards single-strandedness (Blanc Szanton, 1976; Wertheim, 1968; Scott, 1972), existing patterns will be further emphasized, probably leading to a further decrease in the vertical components of *compadrazgo*. The extent to which horizontal patterns will be differentially utilized by the higher and lower socio-economic levels, is open to testing over time.

Notes

¹The Spanish term *compadrazgo* from *compadre* (*cumpare*) has habitually been used by social scientists to refer to the whole godparenthood institution, because it highlights the importance in the Philippines of that intra-generational relationship as opposed to the cross-generational one. (Ihado/ihada are also Spanish terms while maninoy/maninay appear to be Ilongo). Recently, Hart (1977) has proposed the more comprehensive term "compadrinazgo." It should be noted that neither general term is commonly used by the informants themselves.

²The Philippine Independent Church, equivalent to the English Episcopal Church, was established nationally at the turn of the century through the formal denial of papal authority by Bishop Aglipay and his followers (de Achutegui et al., 1961).

³It should be noted that the gifts expected and exchanged do vary in accordance to the economic possibilities of the giver and thus do not impinge as heavily as one could imagine on the finances of less wealthy godparents. They do entail, however, an extra expense for their tight budgets.

⁴Several people contributed to the design of the project and to the collection of the data. I would like to especially thank David Szanton, Milton Juanico, Lourdes Franco, and Leovino Arce.

⁵Both objective and reputational approaches have been used in the Philippines before and generally produce remarkably compatible results (Magdalena and Zarco, 1970; Lynch, 1959-1963; Arce, 1973).

⁶A: most respected, economically sound, socially prominent, B: above average but not at top; C: average person, respected but of no special importance; D: below average, poor but still respectable; E: least respected, poor, socially insignificant.

⁷Indeed, the rapid succession of alliances and factioning was a characteristic of the patron-client ties in 1967 Estancia, and probably throughout much of the lowland Philippines at that time. (For a description of the Philippine national two-party system, see Lande, 1964; Grossholtz, 1965). Individual actors moved rapidly in and out of each patron-client system, according to their system of alliances and economic and political advantage.

⁸The instrumental use of *compadrazgo* by politicians as well as its class-bringing aspects have been stressed by Hollnsteiner in her analysis of the dynamics of power in the town of Hulo, Bulacan (1963:70-77).

⁹It is true that some of the categories of Table V overlap such that kinsmen and acquaintances may also be public officials or co-workers and vice-versa. Thus, for example, a large proportion of distant relative-*cumpare* were also high public officials. Their distant kinship probably created enough of an initial bond to provide the basis for a comfortable intensification of the relationship.

¹⁰The extent to which the initial instrumental reason given for the choice of a *cumpare* modifies the subsequent relationship of "generalized good will" between the parties is difficult to judge on the basis of our information. One could hypothesize for further testing, for example, that the most instrumental relationships are also likely to be the most shortlived.

¹¹Lower level people do respond to, and acknowledge, politicians' requests for votes, but most of their own *cumpare* relationships are described in different, less manipulative terms.

¹²The extent to which Middleton's urban fishing barrio has been urbanized or transformed by its proximity to the town is largely assumed in the paper and needs to be presented in greater detail.

¹³Because compadrazgo has been present in the Philippines for 400 years of Spanish rule, and appears to have been readily adopted and actively used since the very beginning (Phelan, 1959:77-78), a historical study of changes in the institution, even on the basis of the limited information available from early travelers and missionaries' letters and accounts, might be possible.

¹⁴Mostly civil servants and professionals, according to a passing reference (p. 447). Potter does not present exhaustive data on the socio-economic levels, occupational segments or classes represented in his sample or generally present in Dumaguete town and barrios in 1971. Similarly, we could not make full use for our present purposes of the recent and very comprehensive review of Philippine compadrazgo by Hart (1977) because of its lack of detailed socio-economic information on the research sites which he discusses.

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