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THE EMERGENCE OF THE RANCHO AND THE SOCIOECONOMIC
TRANSFORMATION OF THE CAXCANA, JALISCO, 1939-1959

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*To my mother, Ana María Ruvalcaba Molina,
To my siblings, Raúl and Anabel
And to my son, Agustín.*

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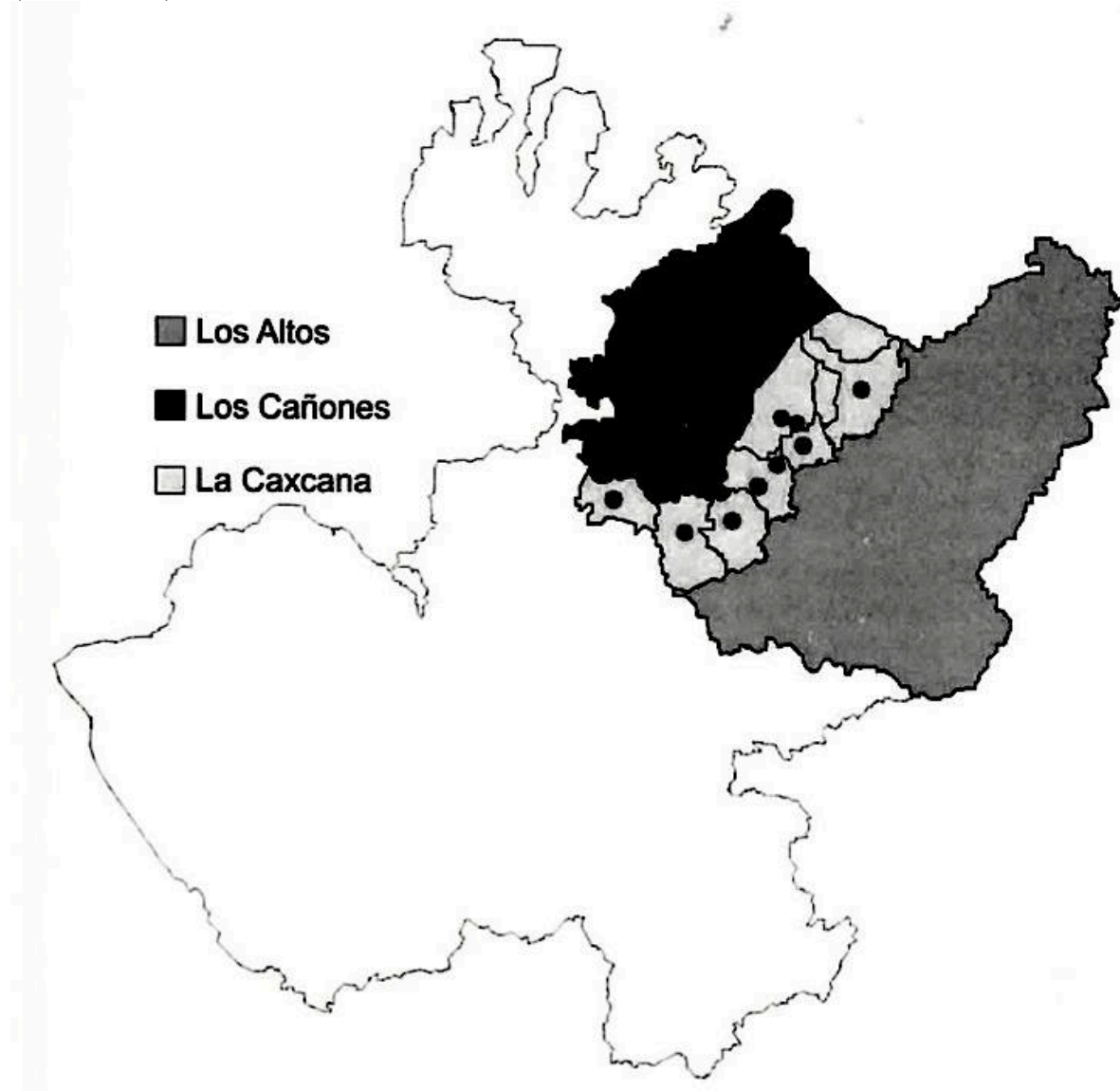
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NOTE ON TRANSLATION

All translations into English from both the Spanish and ranchero Spanish spoken by the interviewed men and women presented in this dissertation are my own unless otherwise noted.

MAP OF THE CAXCANA (State of Jalisco, Mexico)

The Highlands region (Los Altos), the Canyons region (Los Cañones), and the Caxcana region (La Caxcana)



Source: Juan Frajoza, *Pueblo de mujeres enlutadas: estudio prototípico de Al filo del agua*, (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes/H. Ayuntamiento de Yahualica de González Gallo, 2010), The Caxcana's main municipalities here shown and dotted: from south to northeast, San Cristobal de la Barranca, Ixtlahuacán del Río, Cuquío, Yahualica de González Gallo, Mexxicacán, Nochistlán (state of Zacatecas), and Teocaltiche.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the experiences of twentieth century *ranchero* farmers in their struggle to become landowners and to farm in peace across an analysis of land tenure, politics, agriculture, and violence in the Caxcana region of Jalisco. It focuses on the period from 1939 to 1959, years that reflected the culmination of that struggle, which resulted in a deep transformation characterized by the generalization of rancho land ownership and unprecedented agricultural productivity. These years span the administrations of J. Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez, Jalisco governors with strong family ties in the Caxcana who played central roles in the state's infrastructural development and modernization. At the national level, this period also marked the end of countryside's basic unit of socioeconomic life: the hacienda. The historiography has understandably spent countless pages examining its history and subsequent demise but surprisingly little on what rural form substituted the hacienda since 1940, when war, agrarian reform, power politics, and emboldened farmers forced its eradication. This dissertation is an original study that explores the form of land tenure that took the hacienda's place as the key engine of rural society throughout Mexico: the Mexican rancho, or farm, also commonly known in the post-Revolutionary twentieth century as the *pequeña propiedad* (smallholding, or, literally, the small property). I argue that the rancho rose as a dominant form of land tenure post 1940, establishing its regime of property relations over the vast lands of the Caxcana formerly belonging to hacienda owners. In my dissertation, the rancho is thus neither a thing nor merely a unit of land tenure, but a twin process by which farmers not only fought to guarantee their livelihoods through agricultural productivity but also ensured so by eradicating local traditional forms of arbitrary violence.

Ándale que mi amá y la señora se fueron pa' la
cocina a hacer quihacer y se asustaron. A mi mamá
nada le pasó, porque luego me dio de mamar, de
comer, y yo mamé las bilis del susto que ella vivió.
Yo mamé las bilis, y esa cosa. Entonces tenía yo tres
meses de nacido cuando nos venimos para acá. Nos
venimos por la razón de que andaban sacándole el
maíz al que tenía sus granitos de maíz, pa' echárselos
a los caballos. De modo a que dejaban a aquellas
familias a morir de hambre.

There you have it that my ma and the lady left fo
the kitchen to make their chores and got scared.
Nothing happened to my mom, because she then
gave me to suck, to eat, and I sucked on
that bile from the fear that she lived.
I sucked that bile and all that. Back then
I was three months born when we came here.
We came for the reason that they were taking away
corn to feed their horses from whomever
had their grain of corn. In this way they let
those families die of hunger.

Juan Álvarez, farmer, 2012¹

INTRODUCTION

The Twentieth Century Rancho

On a warm afternoon of 2012 in Mexxicacán, Jalisco, ninety-five year old Juan Álvarez recounted in *ranchero* Spanish the story of how he almost died as a three-month-old living in nearby rural Zacatecas. According to him, he had drunken his mother's fear-poisoned breast milk, "infested with bile," produced from witnessing a confrontation between Álvarez's father and armed men that had surrounded their house. His neighbor was a widow and had sought refuge for her and her daughter in the Álvarez home. Those armed men routinely entered the

¹ Interview with Juan Álvarez, in Rosalío López Gutiérrez, *A punto del olvido y la tumba: Historias de vida de Mexxicacán*, (Guadalajara: Programa de Apoyo a las Culturas Municipales y Comunitarias-Centro de Estudios Históricos de la Caxcana-Fundación Desarrollo Sustentable-H. Ayuntamiento de Mexxicacán, 2014), 33-34.

village to kidnap women, especially adolescents who lived in homes with no male protectors. No bullets nor physical violence unleashed in the verbal altercation between Álvarez's father and the armed men on that night, just a warning by the former: in light that the young woman refused to be taken, the only way to kidnap her would be over his dead body. Ceding to the threat, the men left but sowed a terror so deep that, moments later, when infant Álvarez drank his mother's breast milk, he fell gravely ill to the point of being thought dead by his mother and grandmother. Before the burial, his father felt the warmth of the blanket cloaking his infant son and decided to take the baby to a healer. In that last effort of hope, Álvarez was miraculously brought back to health. The *maleantes* ("thugs" or "wrong-doers"), as Álvarez described them, were a common sight in the village, which was a conglomeration of *ranchos* (Mexican farms) that acted as if sitting ducks waiting for the pillage. Soon after the incident of the biled breast milk, the armed men returned, searching Álvarez's home for hidden warehoused corn and fed it to their horses upon finding it. The terror and plunder imposed by this armed group, according to Álvarez, left countless families hungry and fearful. This insecurity was the reason his family migrated and crossed the border from southern Zacatecas into Jalisco in search of safer horizons. They immigrated to a rural region colloquially known as the Caxcana, north of Jalisco's capital, Guadalajara. Unknowingly, their family entered into a new stage in the history of the Caxcana, a vast place located between gorges that would witness further armed violence and insecurity for at least the next two subsequent decades.

This dissertation examines the experiences of *ranchero* farmers like Juan Álvarez in their struggle to become landowners and to farm in peace across an analysis of land tenure, politics, agriculture, and violence in the Caxcana. It focuses on the period from 1939 to 1959, years that reflected the culmination of that struggle, which resulted in a deep transformation characterized

by the generalization of rancho land ownership and unprecedented agricultural productivity. These years span the administrations of J. Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez, Jalisco governors with strong family ties in the Caxcana who played central roles in the state's infrastructural development and modernization. Both governors developed strong ties to the national government, González Gallo was Presidential Secretary to President Manuel Ávila Camacho from 1940 to 1946 and Yáñez became Education Minister under President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz's administration from 1964 and 1970.² At the national level, this period also marked the end of countryside's basic unit of socioeconomic life: the hacienda. The historiography of rural Mexico has understandably focused on examining its history and subsequent demise but surprisingly little on what rural form substituted the hacienda since 1940, when war, agrarian reform, power politics, and emboldened farmers forced its eradication. This dissertation is an original study that explores the form of land tenure that took the hacienda's place as the key engine of rural society throughout Mexico: the Mexican rancho, or farm, also commonly known in the post-Revolutionary twentieth century as the *pequeña propiedad* (smallholding, or, literally, the small property). I argue that the rancho rose as a dominant form of land tenure post 1940, establishing its regime of property relations over the vast lands formerly belonging to hacienda owners. In my dissertation, the rancho is thus neither a thing nor merely a unit of land tenure, but a twin process by which farmers not only fought to guarantee their livelihoods through agricultural productivity but also ensured so by eradicating local traditional forms of arbitrary violence.

The generalization of a ranchero society that ensued did not just transform the rural landscape socioeconomically but impacted the subsequent course of Mexican social and political

² Aída Urzua Orozco and Gilberto Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, (Guadalajara: Gobierno de Jalisco, Secretaría General, 1989), 601. González Gallo also served as Senator between 1934 and 1940, 599 and 759.

life by swaying the direction of agrarian policies, political power and ideology, intellectual thought, and agricultural development. I examine all of these dimensions through the history of the Caxcana, a region in rural Jalisco that exemplifies this transformation. Traditional studies of rural history anchor their analyses to the Mexican Revolution and focus on landless peasants and their polar opposite, haciendas, plantations or large-scale commercial farms. But the other part of twentieth century Mexican farming society lived in the landowning middle ground, a sector with freer forms of labor, owning farms that by the mid-twentieth century competed decisively in the agricultural sector, often dominating it. Ranchos spurred the generalization of intensive agricultural production and livestock raising throughout the country, establishing in the process a *ranchero* culture that became visible in the commodified rural and urban landscapes of Mexico and the United States. The fall of the hacienda also marked the beginning of the period of the so-called *contrareforma* (counter-reform), initiated in the late 1930s by President Lázaro Cárdenas.³ This moment is generally understood, for the rural sector, as the shift from President Lázaro Cárdenas' administration and his agrarian reform, peasant-focused, policies to the emergence of President Manuel Ávila Camacho's new political agenda that de-emphasized agrarian reform and favored private commercial agro-industry. The Caxcana critically recasts this shift in national power politics because agrarian reform there was *ranchero* and not peasant focused; for places like the Caxcana, rural society did not experience a counter-reform but a continuity, if not an intensification, of *ranchero*-centered agrarian reform expressed in the re-hierarchization of agriculture that placed livestock raising as the dominant focus of the rural economy. Only from the standpoint of peasant-based populist cardenismo could the generalization of *ranchero* society into the Ávila Camacho administration represent a full defeat of cardenista agrarian reform. A

³ Stephen R. Niblo, *Mexico in the 1940s: Modernity, Politics, and Corruption*, (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1999).

closer critical examination of how agrarian reform was carried out locally, driven by rancheros, in the Caxcana, during the Cárdenas regime demonstrates that his national agrarian policies in fact on the ground greatly favored the interests of the *pequeña propiedad*.

Historical and Historiographical Relevance

This dissertation proposes a new agrarian question from the perspective of the twentieth century rancho. The historiography of twentieth century rural Mexico primarily centers on the question of the concentration of land in the hands of a few who controlled the countryside politically and economically. This historiography directly or indirectly anchors itself to the Mexican Revolution and the great landholding, particularly the hacienda, whose uprooting during the Revolution had proven impossible, with many revolutionary leaders becoming hacendados themselves. Nevertheless, a central concern of this dissertation is to propose that of the many new meanings that emerged in rural Mexico throughout the twentieth century, it was the rancho, and not the hacienda, that provides the key to understanding the countryside. The rancho is the prevalent form of land tenure in the Caxcana and arguably in countless parts of the Mexican countryside, yet it has a fleeting role in Mexico's rural historiography.⁴ In some important works, the rancho sits like a reticent neighbor on the edges of the large landholdings, wearily existing on the sidelines amid the dominant hacendado figure and the commonplace landless peasant or peon.⁵ Other times, the rancho is conflated with the *ejido* form of tenure,

⁴ Eric Van Young's historiography of Latin American rural history demonstrates the consistent and strong emphasis that historians have placed on great landholdings. With few exceptions highlighted (e.g. Hilda Sabato's *Agrarian Capitalism and the World Market: Buenos Aires in the Pastoral Age, 1840-1890*), Van Young's comprehensive historiographic analysis serves to underscore the dearth of works on the smallholding and the singular gap in our understanding of rural life that such paucity represents. Please see Eric Van Young, "Rural History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* edited by José C. Moya, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 309-341.

⁵ Please see the work of David Brading, *Haciendas and Ranchos in the Mexican Bajío, León, 1700-1860*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). The rancho has multiple definitions and meanings. For example,

which typically encompassed one to twelve hectares.⁶ In other works, the rancho is intriguing but only because it mimicked and fulfilled the role proper of an hacienda or a plantation.⁷ But the rancho cannot be explained solely through our understanding of the great landholding; neither can we grasp the deep complexities and heterogeneities of the Mexican smallholding through the specific historical framework of the agrarian reform's ejido. Historians have used radically different scales to interpret the form and shape of the rancho, from as little as a few hectares to as many as 1,000 hectares.⁸ But the rancho is not a small hacienda nor is it an ejido; it is its own category of land tenure that in the twentieth century fought to be understood on its own terms. Rancheros in the Caxcana underscored that to conflate the rancho with the hacienda or the ejido presupposed and implied a politics that diminished if not foreclosed its voice and power over the rural landscape. From an analytical point of view, one can certainly compare or even conflate the rancho with an hacienda or an ejido but such an exercise can only be meaningful if one applies a working definition of the rancho in the first place. With the decline and obsolescence of the hacienda, a study of the Mexican rancho thus becomes indispensable for understanding twentieth century Mexican rural history.

Attendant to its relative absence in the historiography is the rancho's lack of definition.

This dissertation addresses this gap by developing three discernable types of ranchos across

the rancho could refer to an entire community of different smallholdings that might include a small unifying church or it could also mean a single, individually-owned, property. In this study, I make reference to the rancho based on the latter definition unless otherwise noted.

⁶ See, for example, John Gledhill, *Casi Nada: A Study of Agrarian Reform in the Homeland of Cardenismo* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1991).

⁷ The prime example being the work of Frans Schryer, *The Rancheros of Piasflores: The History of A Peasant Bourgeoisie in Twentieth Century Mexico* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

⁸ Please see George M. McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, (New York: American Geographical Society, 1923), 82. Here one must note that this amount of hectares was based primarily on the average ranch in the central region of Mexico; for northern Mexico, a "large stock farm" could encompass well over a thousand, even thousands of hectares due to the greater availability of land, McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, *ibid*.

measurements of scale particular to the Caxcana but which may be generalizable in other parts of central Mexico: small, medium, and large. These ranges bring particular socioeconomic and political meaning to the ranchos of the Caxcana. Defining the rancho by ranges of scale is also the bridge that then allows crossing into an exploration of the process of transformation in the twentieth century that purged what remained of the hacienda and gave way to the rancho as the dominant form of land tenure. In my region of study, haciendas were not as grand as in say Chihuahua, where properties numbered in the tens of thousands of hectares. The Caxcana's largest hacienda was so much smaller in comparison, at no more than 7,000 hectares.⁹ In this vein, ranchos in my region of study were also proportionately smaller than the largest estimates of ranchos in other parts of Mexico (which historian George McBride numbers in the thousands). In the Caxcana, a small property owner with the largest rancho held on average between 400 to 600 hectares.¹⁰ A medium-scale rancho averaged between 100 to 400 hectares while the smallest and most common group of ranchos ranged between five to 100 hectares.¹¹ Notably, as the region underwent significant socio-economic and political transformations, it is suggestive that property owners in all three mentioned rancho categories considered and self-described

⁹ The largest hacienda in the state of Jalisco was the hacienda of Cuisillos, which measured over 40,400 hectares; meanwhile, the smallest hacienda in the state was the hacienda of Oblatos, standing at slightly over 1,600 hectares, Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 122.

¹⁰ The value of each hectare of land was determined by its quality. The main types of land quality were *de temporal*, *de riego*, *de agostadero*, *eriazas*, and *improductivas*; respectively, seasonal, irrigation, pasture, uncultivated, and unproductive. Within these categories, there were sub-types. For example, tierras de riego were lands that used irrigation, but this did not for the most part mean a sophisticated system of watering, rather, most often, it meant channeling in water from a nearby water source (such as a dam or river) through whatever techniques were available such as the *bimbalete* (water bascule) or outright hauling water on workers' backs; the closer the irrigation land was to a water source, the more valuable the land became. Similarly, tierras eriazas differed in quality; the more the land still had to be cleared for farming the lesser was its value. In this sense, five hectares of seasonal land, for example, were not the same as five hectares of irrigation land or five hectares of pasture lands. Since land qualities and values were not equal, please see chapter two, where I show the "theoretical" equivalents between land qualities; throughout both chapters one and two, I specify the quality of land whenever the sources permit.

¹¹ In chapter two, I engage with the idea of the *minifundio*, or the tiniest form of land tenure, which I consider to be less than five hectares and do not include in the category of the smallholding (other authors do include less than five hectares as still constituting a smallholding). In said chapter, I elaborate on why one could argue for the importance of considering the minifundio as a separate form of tenure, both conceptually and historically.

themselves as *rancheros* or *pequeños propietarios* (small property owners). This shift in rural identity stands in significant contrast to the old nineteenth century domineering figure of the *hacendado*, who often looked to an aristocratic ideal based on frenchified (or *afrancesado*) Mexico City or Guadalajara to model. Small, medium and large landowning *rancheros* became the loci of rural identity in Mexico by the mid-twentieth century, shifting the cultural rural symbols from *afrancesamiento* (frenchification) to *arancheramiento* (ranchification).

Situating the *rancho* in the broader historiographical discussion of rural Mexico, *rancheros* held a prime political role not just regionally, but also nationally, in the discourse that promoted a rural middle class and the agrarian reforms that benefitted *rancheros* in general. Regionally, they became prime movers in the social, political, and economic transformations that were taking place in agriculture and land tenure, as well as the processes of emigration and infrastructural development. Nationally, *rancheros* were on many occasions the main beneficiaries of agrarian reform, if not always in political rhetoric, in practice. Taken as a numerical force, no other group benefitted more from the demise of the *hacienda* or from the broader economic project to reform the countryside than the *ranchero* class. Even at the height of the political and cultural exaltation of peasants and anti-*latifundio* rhetoric, *rancheros* were protected from land expropriation not just in legal practice, but in time also in political discourse. In order to cast new light on the historiography of rural Mexico, this study thus provides a history of the transition from the *hacienda* to the *rancho* in the Caxcana, from the latter part of the nineteenth century and then analyzes the *rancho*, focusing on the twentieth century.

The *rancho*'s epoch of glory was the twentieth century not just in terms of directing the course of agrarian policies but also by generalizing the transformation of agriculture in Mexico. Typically, historiographies focus on the social and political dimensions of the traditional agrarian

question, with the agricultural rarely being weighted in critical juxtaposition and association. Such a lacunae is problematic given the link between the two; each is the different side of the same coin. When analyzed through the history of the rancho, the agrarian cannot be fully understood without the agricultural.¹² Most accounts of agrarian reform examined through the ejido are critical for its failure to bring social justice to the countryside. A history of the rancho, however, shows the way in which agrarian reform was stripped from its ideological roots centered on peasants and refashioned as a politics by private landowning farmers to continue the process of transforming agriculture. In this sense, the agrarian reform that caused social contradictions in many case studies throughout Mexico was the same set of social reform policies that allowed for an overcoming of the traditional monopoly of agricultural production held by haciendas in places like the Caxcana. In this region, ejidos were primarily used as a form of communal land sharing among pequeños propietarios to enhance the productivity of their private landholdings and further cement a ranchero, not an ejidatario, identity. Landless rural workers similarly fashioned their ejidos in this mode of communal smallholding land tenure association, often serving as key ejidatario proxies for the rancheros that temporarily left when they emigrated to the United States as braceros or as undocumented workers. Hence, traditional agrarian reform and its aim to bring land to peasants did not take root in the Caxcana as it did in many regions across Mexico. Agrarian reform and the ejido were locally repurposed to impulse a kind of proto-Green Revolution, as it were, that rancheros had been undertaking in concert with

¹² Please see chapter five of this dissertation for an attempt to critically link both categories and Emilio Kourí's proposed method of uniting the agrarian and the agricultural for rural studies, Emilio Kourí, "Lo agrario y lo agrícola: reflexiones sobre el estudio de la historia rural posrevolucionaria," *Boletín del Archivo General Agrario*, 3, (May/June: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Registro Agrario Nacional, 1998): 10-21.

municipal, state and federal authorities throughout the 1930s—perhaps altering the letter of the agrarian reform law albeit arguably, in their vision, fulfilling its spirit of social economic justice.

Often, the Green Revolution is given sole credit for the agricultural boom experienced throughout Mexico. In the Caxcana, however, such shift in productivity could have not been possible without the infrastructural precursors that prepared rancheros for the new farming regime that would surge in the context of this international agricultural food program. That is, by the time the federal government agreed to undertake the Green Revolution experiments in Mexico beginning in 1942, ranchero societies in Jalisco had already prepared a framework and foundation to reach competitive production yields across agriculture and livestock raising. By the late 1930s, the government of Jalisco declared the rancho in Jalisco “the pillar” of rural society. While the rhetoric of the federal government had traditionally relegated the rancho, the state level centers of power drew out the political potential of pequeños propietarios by appealing to them as if agrarian reform had been meant for them. As such, the state government in Jalisco invested in a preliminary backbone of intensive agricultural production; key among these were infrastructural development and credit to help modernize agricultural inputs such as machineries and the use of fertilizers. Combined with federal government efforts to generalize the Green Revolution throughout Mexico, by the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, places like the Caxcana achieved a doubling, tripling, and even quadrupling of agricultural output of major crops, a diversified horticultural farming regime, one of Jalisco’s most important livestock producing sectors, and even medium-scale, light industry, manufacturing centers that made matches and frozen popsicles for regional and national consumption. In the process, rancheros established greater migratory chains with the urban economies of Mexico and the United States, further cementing their economic influence over rural society and agricultural productivity.

The rancho also touched and influenced Mexican post-1940 intellectual and political life. As this story of transformation unfolded, rancheros captured the imagination of writers like Agustín Yáñez. Rancheros left a lasting impact not just on his own thought and praxis, but on the critical understanding his generation would develop of Mexican national life. A key, although not exclusive, literary work most representative of this influence is Yáñez's *Las tierras flacas*.¹³ In telling the story of Mexico's rural transformation, Yáñez does so through the lens of the rancho, opening from its perspective a series of questions essential for understanding twentieth century Mexican history across the themes of land tenure and violence. His point of departure is land but also the arrival of a sowing machine, representing the hope of transformation for both men *and* women. The land is open for productivity, as if liberated from the shackles of the past, and asks farmers to demarcate their properties and work the land, incorporating technologies brought from the outside world to build their *ranchos*. The historian reading *Las tierras flacas* at this point wonders: where is the hacienda? What happened to Mexico's basic unit of rural life, so forcefully represented in the historiography through the stories of peasants and hacendados? The hacienda in *Las tierras flacas* is conspicuous by its absence. In Yáñez's representation of rural life, the protagonists are not hacendados, but rancheros and their struggle to overcome arbitrary forms of violence perpetuated by the figure of the cacique. This dissertation does not engage in literary analysis nor does it use literature as evidence. Rather, it provides a historical examination of Yáñez's policies during his political tenure and draws historical comparisons to the historically meaningful aspects of the governor's literary production, particularly its preoccupation with the obstacles blocking the pacification of the Jalisco's countryside and the role rancheros had in that process of undoing cacical violence.

¹³ Agustín Yáñez, *Las tierras flacas*, (Mexico City: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 2003 [1962]).

In following with this exploration of the meanings and significance of the rancho, this project critically examines its history and ultimate rise as a dominant form of land tenure in the twentieth century using the case of the Caxcana. The process by which the rancho replaced the hacienda as the basic unit of rural social life reflects a greater transformation beyond the confines of land tenure. I argue that the generalization of ranchero society throughout Mexico deeply impacted the course of post-1940 Mexican social and political life. The rancho replaced one of the most enduring symbols and strongholds of rural Mexico and, in so doing, compelled a new reconfiguration of politics at the state and federal level that would incorporate their de-peasantized vision of the agrarian and the agricultural.

Methodological considerations

Most studies of Mexican rural society build the agrarian question around a critique of the national state for failing to improve the plight of the peasantry through land distribution. My study moves beyond analyses of state-driven agrarian reform. Instead, I widen the parameters of analysis by incorporating the Caxcana, where agrarian reform did not take root; I show how landless rural workers negotiated within a smallholding economy that finally opened an actual possibility for private land ownership outside the often-unwieldy political dynamics of agrarian reform. This study also examines how during this period, acclaimed Jalisco governor, novelist, and, later Education Minister, Agustín Yáñez pressed for this transformation from above, implementing more infrastructural modernization and focusing on the eradication of violent rural bosses throughout the state and in the Caxcana, the land of his peasant mother. He did not achieve the eradication of caciquismo on his own, but through the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*-led federal government. Yáñez drew from the growing power of rancheros, his

popular base whose culture and central role in Mexican society he exalted and critically examined throughout his oeuvre. I demonstrate that eradicating caciquismo in the Caxcana became Yáñez's greatest legacy as a politician and his most significant contribution to the ideologically engaged praxis of the writers, artists, and intellectuals of his generation.

Studies on rural social and economic life focus on large landowning estates or plantations because these have produced a large amount of documentary evidence. Nevertheless, rural life is also composed and defined by agriculturally productive regions using relatively freer forms of labor that are not directly tied to these large landowning regimes. Such farming zones, however, leave much less evidence, appearing faceless and shapeless in the registers left by official government reports and census data or newspapers. This voidness is hardly the ideal scenario for meaningful interpretation because while we know how the post-Revolutionary government defined them officially, we do not yet fully grasp how these farmers have individually or collectively identified themselves in the twentieth century. This dissertation is an attempt to bring a face to this new kind of rural identity. Farmers, also known as *rancheros* or *pequeños propietarios* in Mexico, are officially defined as having a set amount of land, espousing a conservative ideology, and engaging in an undercapitalized form of agriculture. The research methodology I have employed points to a vastly different interpretation of these farmers. In chapter two, I use the agrarian reform archives to identify and locate smallholders, where they abound in greater numbers than peasants and hacendados. My work analyzes over a thousand files belonging to four municipalities in the Caxcana never before examined by historians of rural Mexico. I also move beyond the official written record, examining rancheros' voices through oral history but also in a particular literary canon of rural life led by three of Mexico's most influential writers: Agustín Yáñez, Juan José Arreola, and Juan Rulfo.

The works of fiction by Yáñez, Arreola, and Rulfo, are understood in this dissertation to be self-referential and are not used in my work as evidence. Nevertheless, they can allow us to engage with the meaningful dimensions of their work that attempt to grasp the expressions and terminologies particular to ranchero farming society which are largely if not completely absent from the official historical record. Since a central part of my research relies upon oral history, their works of fiction also help maintain the interpretative process in heightened awareness of the limits but also the value incorporating a set of subjective voices to the history of the Caxcana. The writings of Yáñez, in particular, have allowed me to compare and contrast the experiences narrated by the men and women I have interviewed in the Mexican state of Jalisco, in rural Zacatecas and in several cities and rural counties in the United States over the course of seven years. In citing a central example used in my work, in Yáñez's 1947 classic story about the transformation of ranchero society, *Las tierras flacas* (*The lean lands*), I have found many sets of shared experiences with those of my interviewees that mirror one another in ways that nuance or often challenge the documentary evidence found in archives and newspapers. For example, the general stereotype reduces rancheros to conservatism and tradition. Ranchero ideology in the Caxcana, however, is as complex and heterogenous as the shape of the rancho itself, developing in relationship and reaction to the socioeconomic, religious, political, and cultural forces occurring within and without the region.

Chapters

In order to provide the broader historical context in which the rancho emerged in the Caxcana, the first chapter is an analysis of its relationship to the hacienda in the region, primarily from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1930s. The chapter focuses on competing interpretations

of the nature of the hacienda but also land questions that raged throughout the nineteenth century, such as the increased encroachment and dispossession of indigenous people's lands, inheritance patterns, agricultural production, and rural labor. I argue that the growth of ranchos during this period took place as a result of these shared problematics often thought to be exclusive to the haciendas. This chapter thus asks why the rancho came to be overshadowed by the hacienda as an object of study in a context in which both systems of land tenure shared *and produced* meaningful socioeconomic dynamics crucial to explaining rural society. The second chapter is a history of the rancho in the Caxcana, focusing on the evolution from its relationship to the hacienda to its rise as the dominant form of land tenure by the mid-twentieth century. Developed from an examination of over one thousand agrarian reform litigations from the post-Revolutionary period to the 1970s, it is an original study that demonstrates the complexity of the rancho across not just property ownership but socioeconomic, political, and cultural dimensions. I argue that the rancho in the Caxcana developed into three distinct categories of scale that collectively became the foundation of ranchero identity and politics: large, medium, and small scale ranchos. Each scale expressed a set of ranchero problematics that shaped the rancho as a dominant form of land tenure in the region. Large-scale ranchos fought to be recognized as smallholdings in the face of accusations that they were still haciendas; these ranchos also led in great part the fight to secure certificados de inafectabilidad (certificates of immunity from expropriation). In the Caxcana, it was rancheros with large-scale ranchos that led the fight against expropriation and not hacendados. Large ranchos drew the attention of agrarian reform policies but the same threat of expropriation simultaneously heightened their image as defenders of the pequeña propiedad. Medium-scale ranchos helped generalize the fight against agrarian reform because they and their landholdings existed in greater numbers relative to large rancho

owning rancheros. While their properties more comfortably fit the definition of the *pequeña propiedad*, medium-scale landowning rancheros' properties were also the target of expropriation. Such experiences pushed them to form a more concerted and organized identity as rancheros, and to develop a definition of who they were as an organized social group at the federal level, having direct ties to the burgeoning *Federación de la Pequeña Propiedad Agrícola, Ganadera y Forestal de Jalisco* (Federation of the Agricultural, Livestock Raising, and Forestry Smallholding). Lastly, small-scale ranchos in the Caxcana, existing in the greatest numbers, expressed the problematics of emigration to Mexican cities and the rural and urban United States. Small-scale owning rancheros also aided in the subversion of the ejido, converting the few federally mandated land grants that existed in the Caxcana into extensions of their smallholding properties. Agrarian reform land surveyors spent onerous months, at times years, surveying and sanctioning small-scale rancho property boundaries often only to realize that no land was available for expropriation. Taking all three categories as a whole, rancheros not only fought in the agrarian reform arena but simultaneously engaged in the greater, more long standing war against arbitrary violence which took the shape of rural caciquismo (rural bossism).

The subjects of the third and fourth chapters thus focus on rural violence and efforts from above and below to bring peace to the countryside from the perspective of the rancho. Chapter three examines the policies of J. Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez and their competing approaches to infrastructural modernization in Jalisco. I argue that whereas the administration of González Gallo modernized Jalisco while leaving existing structures of rural caciquismo intact, Yáñez instead applied policies of infrastructural development that would simulatenously work to specifically eradicate bossism in the countryside. Until the Yáñez administration, infrastructural modernization and caciquismo were co-terminous in Jalisco. My analysis demonstrates how

Yáñez redefined that relationship by circumscribing the discourse of development within the idea of social justice in general and anti-caciquismo in particular. The chapter is a close examination not just of Yáñez policies, but also his political writings, which delve into a theory of history and theory of the politics of *grandeza* as a way to conceptualize social change in rural Mexico, showing the central role that the rancho and rancheros play in this process. In the face of entrenched political opposition, Yáñez drew from the growing power of rancheros to shape and carry out his anti-cacique policies. Relatedly, chapter four examines the problem of caciquismo in Jalisco but from below, through the particular case of the Caxcana showing how rancheros and rural workers effectively worked toward the eradication of arbitrary forms of violence, shaking down the regional concentration of power held in the hands of the local caciques. I argue in this chapter that the emergence of the rancho also shaped a new social actor in the Caxcana: the short-lived post-hacienda ranchero cacique that failed in his attempt to assert a system of power over a region dominated by ranchos. The post-hacienda cacique treated the region's inhabitants like enemies of the central government but also like people still subject to the traditional interpersonal law of the hacienda.

I explain the rise and fall of the ranchero cacique through the 1957 brutal assassination of Felipe González Gallo, who's power further consolidated through his younger brother's political rise from Presidential Secretary to the governorship of Jalisco. This event represented a victory that crucially defined ranchero identity in the Caxcana. Understood through the broader political arc, the chapter also underscores the ambivalent relationship that ranchero society in the Caxcana had with state power. I tell the story of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional's* (the Institutional Revolutionary Party) local armed representation embodied in the person of Felipe González Gallo, who had been named chief of the federal *defensa social* in the Caxcana and was

also a landowning pequeño propietario. His assassination was not merely an act of violence between men, but a direct message to state and federal power of the rejection of the imposition of caciquismo in the region. The eradication of traditional bossism in the Caxcana was thus not only aided by efforts from above, through Yáñez's ideologically-driven infrastructural development, but by a ranchero ideology expressed in their struggle to produce a space not solely determined by regional and centralized state power. But the pacification of the Caxcana was not only driven by the imperatives of social justice; achieving peace in the Caxcana was also deeply influenced by rancheros' desire to gainfully participate in the agricultural sector.

The political developments experienced in Jalisco and the Caxcana were intimately connected to the imperatives of agriculture. The emergence of the rancho also produced a new economic landscape that reflected the generalization of agricultural productivity. The fifth and final chapter engages more concertedly with the history of agriculture in Mexico, drawing from my proposed definition of the rancho in order to connect this socioeconomic sector to the arc of agrarian politics influencing the surge in agricultural productivity. I argue that the instensification and generalization of agricultural productivity in the Caxcana was, on the ground, intimately connected to the politics of ranchero land tenure. Rancheros not only became associated with the politics of agrarian reform but they became central figures in the politics of agriculture. The chapter shows how the link between agriculture and ranchero politics critically problematizes traditional twentieth century agricultural histories, particularly those engaging with the Green Revolution. These studies typically cast a grim picture of agriculture through a framework of economic success at a deep social cost, emphasizing land inequality and the unprecedented explosion of commercial crop production. This chapter, however, suggests that the twentieth century rancho opened a space for measurable and meaningful agency in rural

society, producing in the case of the Caxcana a deep social transformation that was the culmination of the longstanding struggle against arbitrary forms of violence in order to mold agriculture in a new rancho image: rancheros broke the Green Revolution's pattern of technological selectivity and shaped the generalization of agricultural production and livestock raising. Deeper still, the rancheros of the Caxcana circumscribed the meaning of these transformations through a valorization of change with recourse to a past in which fear and hunger during the times of the hacienda were, according to men like Juan Álvarez, not essential but socially produced.

CHAPTER ONE

From the Hacienda to the Smallholding: A History of Land Tenure and Rural Workers in the Caxcana

The Hacienda and the Rancho Toward the Late Nineteenth century

In the 1970s, a group of Mexican anthropologists from the National Institute of Anthropology and History, or INAH (*Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia*), set out to study the economic and social structures of the highlands of Jalisco, better known as Los Altos. They were driven by the sociological and historical void still analytically unfilled by the demise of the hacienda, which many concur came to an end in 1940.¹ The avid investigators and their eager field assistants took on the task of examining and analyzing what remained and took the place of the hacienda; this institution had been the prime engine of rural life and they wanted to understand what new socioeconomic, political, and cultural forms developed in its stead. The aspects that stood out to them the most was the whiteness of the population, the influence of the Church on the region's inhabitants, and the prevalence of cattle raising.² But the singular characteristic they noticed was the preponderance of the smallholding. What had stepped into the limelight across the entire region was the rancho.

Prior to this moment, however, the rancho lived in the shadows of the hacienda, including in the Caxcana. The first important legacy left by the hacienda were its historical remnants, demanding to be understood if one was to grasp any subsequent forms of land tenure. The socioeconomic centrality of the hacienda in the countryside is indeed highlighted throughout the

¹ Niblo, *Mexico in the 1940s: Modernity, Politics, and Corruption*, 104.

² Patricia de Leonardo, *Economía y sociedad en Los Altos de Jalisco*, 1. ed (México: Centro de Investigaciones Superiores del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1978)., 12. The authors define ranchos in terms of size, ranging from one to 500 hectares, *ibid.*, 43.

historiography. Eric Van Young, for example, states that “[n]ot only was the great estate the most highly visible social and economic institution in the late colonial countryside, but it dominated the factors of agricultural production—land, labor, and capital—and supplied the city [of Guadalajara] with most of its staple of foodstuffs.”³

This history dates back to the origins of modern forms of land tenure in los Altos and can be traced to the land grants given by the *Audiencia de Guadalajara* to several families in the form of *mercedes*.⁴ Society in the region was highly endogamous, perhaps therein allowing for the continuation of land ownership within the family over time.⁵ Nevertheless, this idea of endogamy comes into tension with Eric Van Young’s thesis of high land ownership hacienda turnover, since one can assume a relationship between endogamy itself and the consolidation and retention of land ownership within a family. Van Young cites that in the case of the Caxcana, two haciendas, located in Cuquío, had high ownership turnover: the Hacienda de Izcuintla and the Hacienda of Miraflores. The first was sold eight times in ninety years during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, between 1712 and 1802. The Hacienda of Miraflores passed through six different owners in the span of about the same time, between 1693 and 1782.

So which pattern of land ownership prevailed? The one with high ownership turnover described by Van Young or that of generational ownership alluded to by the INAH anthropologists, led by Patricia de Leonardo and Jaime Espín?⁶ The answer to this question may

³ Eric Van Young, *Hacienda and Market in Eighteenth-Century Mexico: The Rural Economy of the Guadalajara Region, 1675-1820*, (Berkeley: The University of California Press), 107.

⁴ De Leonardo, *Economía y sociedad en Los Altos de Jalisco*, 58. Another form of land acquisition that in time became common was to buy land directly.

⁵ Ibid., 59. Also see Van Young, *Hacienda and Market in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*, 120.

⁶ The INAH anthropologists de Leonardo and Espín (and their collaborators) were working under the guidance of social anthropologist Andrés Fábregas Puig, who claims to be the progenitor of anthropological studies in the Los Altos region of Jalisco. In many of his prologues, he presents his important role in the following manner: “En el

lie in the methodology used. While Van Young uses as much data as possible to gauge change over time, there is not a sense of transformational shifts in the analysis of economic fluctuations in the hacienda developed by de Leonardo and Espín. For example, in order to explain the economic upswings and downturns experienced by the hacienda, the anthropologists simply assert that these were due to internal reactions to external forces in the market, with passing time presumably being a neutral factor. To them, the hacienda compresses and decompresses its modes of production, remaining intact as an institution because of its ability to flex and bend according to whichever powerful market forces.⁷ The difference between both is significant. The analysis put forth by Van Young paints the hacienda as increasingly subject to the demands of the growing population in Guadalajara and, in time, subject to the demands of its own rising surrounding population; the hacienda, to this effect, is increasingly attempting to be highly productive and economically engaged. The analysis put forth by the anthropologists puts weight

verano de 1973, un grupo de investigadores del Centro de Investigaciones Superiores del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (CISINAH) iniciamos el análisis antropológico de Los Altos de Jalisco, que se prolongó a lo largo de 1974. Por aquellos años, la región alteña no había llamado la atención de los investigadores y se contaba, desde el punto de vista antropológico, con una escasa bibliografía,” María Antonieta Gallart Nocetti, *La producción ganadera en San Miguel el Alto Jalisco*, (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2002), 9. While he views the studies such as those by Paul S. Taylor, Noelle Demyck, François Chevalier, Luis González, and Helen Rivière D’Arc as worthy, he considers them first explorations into the study of Los Altos. He, on the other hand, led an army of anthropologists and historians to the region that came to purportedly fill *the* analytical gap of the region. While I am not entirely convinced that the authors who pre-dated Fábregas had not already provided an essential understanding of the place, the role of Fábregas Puig is nonetheless important; but, for example, there are numerous studies he never cites that really render him more of a late-comer than a pioneer in the anthropological study of Los Altos, among them a recent translation of mine titled *Los paletteros de Mexicacán: Un estudio de la iniciativa empresarial en México* by Jack R. Rollwagen (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2014) or a number of dissertations such as Andrew Wallace Noble’s *Una síntesis panorámica de la educación en el municipio de Yahualica, Jalisco, México*, (The University of the Pacific, 1972).

⁷ De Leonardo, *Economía y sociedad en Los Altos de Jalisco*, 78 and in passim. The authors drop the historical element and make the market, *sui generis*, the dominant force over conditions in the hacienda: “La hipótesis que quiero explorar es que la hacienda alteña era una empresa cuyas características estructurales internas le permitieron adaptarse a las cambiantes situaciones en las condiciones de mercado [...]. En otras palabras, lo que observamos es una correlación entre el auge y la decadencia de mercados y diferentes organizaciones de la hacienda y de las instituciones agrarias, donde preponderan en un momento ciertos elementos capitalistas y en otros ciertos elementos que no lo son tanto. Es decir, cuando se presenta una coyuntura favorable y permanente de mercado para los productos de la hacienda –por ejemplo auge del mercado en las zonas mineras –la hacienda se consolida como una unidad de explotación, concentrando la propiedad; el trabajo se organiza en base a peones asalariados y se orienta a la producción para el mercado,” 55.

on the spatial features of the hacienda's cultural and social production, particularly the rural elite and patterns of inheritance, implying therein that land ownership is sustained across generations.

The anthropologists are by no means alone. Their portrayal fits closely with Luis González's depiction of hacendados: "Completaban su atuendo señorial con buenos cuacos, trajes vistosos, peleas de gallos, soñadas aventuras amorosas y largas genealogías."⁸ One here does not sense of market forces pounding at the hacienda's door, compelling it to fundamentally change. González further evokes the hacendado's nonchalance with regards to productivity, stating: "No les quitaba el sueño la mejora de las técnicas agrícolas ni el aumento de la producción. Gran parte de la hacienda podía estar sin cultivo y la cultivada producir cada vez menos."⁹ But according to Van Young, if you were not working the land, you could easily lose it. In this sense, market forces and land ownership were intimately related. Historian of rural Jalisco, Sergio Valerio Ulloa, concurs with Van Young as he describes in detail the tenuous nature of land ownership during the colonial period, citing that particularly by the nineteenth century, land ownership was a revolving door of mortgaging.¹⁰ Perhaps to some degree both perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, Van Young and Ulloa's analyses of hacienda ownership turnover hold more explanatory weight in that they show how the power of the hacienda increasingly became dispersed over time, having difficulty reconstituting itself with

⁸ Luis González, "La sociedad jalisciense en vísperas de la Reforma," in *La Reforma en Jalisco y el Bajío*, (Guadalajara: Librería Font, 1959), 38. "They completed their majestic attire with good horses, dressy garbs, cockfights, desired amorous adventures and long genealogies."

⁹ Ibid. "Their sleep was unperturbed [by the need for] technological agricultural improvements and productivity. A great part of the hacienda could remain unsowed and the land that was sowed produce less every time."

¹⁰ Please see Sergio Valerio Ulloa, *Historia rural jalisciense: Economía agrícola e innovación tecnológica durante el siglo XIX*, (Guadalajara: Centro Universitario de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades, Universidad de Guadalajara, 2003).

every generation until political and demographic events compelled a change in land tenure, bringing the smallholding to the fore.

The main reason why haciendas switched owners so frequently was as much legal in nature as it was economic. During the colonial period, the process of acquiring an hacienda only required paying a fraction of the mortgage plus recognizing past defaulted mortgages. Such procedure allowed for, if not welcomed, buyers who were not always able to guarantee timely payments and eventual final purchase of the hacienda.¹¹ On top of the risky purchase, interest payments on mortgages were at five percent per year.¹² It is no wonder, then, why some haciendas, over the course of a century, had an average of one owner per decade. Owners were only a few crop seasons away from losing their mortgage. This instability of ownership contrasts significantly from the traditional stereotype of haciendas, one that highlights its single-family dominion across generations, with its institutional guardianship held under a family name over time.¹³

The Caxcana gives us a similar image though presents its own reasons for the precariousness of land ownership. In nearby Valle de Guadalupe, for example, don Manuel de la Torre, the heir to an hacienda there, describes the region's desolation in the nineteenth century and how the cattle-ranching lifestyle fits into the scarcely populated vastness of the land:

Eran estas tierras tan despobladas y donde no había ley que la gente que llegó se posesionó de la tierra que quería. Se paraban en un lugar y hasta donde llegara su vista, hasta ahí era de ellos, mientras no chocara con otro propietario. La agricultura nunca fue

¹¹ Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 123.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ An hacienda which more closely conformed to the traditional stereotype of the generationally-owned family hacienda was the type of entailment in the form of the *mayorazgo*, defined by Van Young as “an estate inheritable only by the eldest heir, and which could not legally be alienated [...]” Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 124 and 125-129. The more prominent *mayorazgos*, however, stood out because they fell at the larger end of the hacienda-size spectrum, measuring often well over 40,000 hectares, *ibid.*

el negocio para los hacendados. La agricultura servía para alimentar al ganado, a los peones y a los encargados y a la familia del patrón, que siempre fue muy extensa. Al principio se utilizaban esclavos, después peones y luego medieros. Al patrón no le gustan los medieros pero fue la única forma de mantener atada a la gente a la tierra. La tierra se quería para el ganado. El ganado que trajeron los españoles era ganado bravo llamado bramino que pastaba libremente en las grandes extensiones. El ganado se llevaba a pie a Lagos de Moreno y a veces hasta México.¹⁴

As we will see in the coming sections, unlike the land desolation reminisced by don Manuel, there were a significant amount of Indian communities (including some *fundos legales*) across the region, though they would disappear by the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ But already in this description of the large landed property, we get a different depiction from the highly productive haciendas surrounding Guadalajara described by Van Young, on the one hand.¹⁶ On the other, De la Torre's description was not either automatically aligned to the early colonial hacienda image created by, for example, Chevalier, where cattle were left to roam relatively unsupervised and vulnerable to "rustlers" who sought them for "their hide and tallow."¹⁷ Cattle-ranching was a time-consuming endeavor that required expertise and constancy, the owner's

¹⁴ De Leonardo and Espín, *Economía y sociedad en los Altos de Jalisco*, 53. "These were lands so unpopulated and lawless that the people that arrived took possession of the land they wanted. They would step on a given place and up to where the sight would reach that [land] would become theirs, where they wanted, as long as it did not clash with another property owner. Agriculture was never business for the hacendados. Agriculture served to feed livestock, peons and workers in charge [of the hacienda], as well as the owner's family, which was also quite extensive. At first, slaves were used, then peons and then sharecroppers. The owner did not like sharecroppers but such was the only way to keep people on the land. The land was needed for livestock. The livestock brought by the Spanish was ganado bravo called bramin that would graze freely on the vast extensions [of land]. The livestock was taken by foot to Lagos de Moreno and sometimes even to Mexico."

¹⁵ Here one should note that these were Indian communities (which were generally divided into 'individually-held' land and communal land) and not Indian settlements. The fundo legal was the communally-held Indian 'town' that included a few streets, homes, and perhaps a church with contiguous landholdings being worked by the Indians themselves.

¹⁶ Other important works also attest to the hacienda's productivity, disputing its stereotype of indolent owners and low crop output. Please see, notably among these, John H. Coatsworth, "Obstacles to Economic Growth in Nineteenth century Mexico," *The American Historical Review* 83, 1 (Feb., 1978): 86 and in passim.

¹⁷ François Chevalier, *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico: The Great Hacienda*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 107.

daily life revolved around tending his cattle and property ownership was generally based on the exploitation of their ruminating gold.

The historiography tells a different story for ranchos. These smallholdings were dependent satellites of the great hacienda. Even though they were numerous and ubiquitous, ranchos were purportedly not sights of overall transformation. In his analysis of structural change in Guadalajara and its hinterlands, Van Young, for example, states that their owners, the *rancheros*, “were largely passive objects of the forces of change in the regional economy.”¹⁸ Put next to the haciendas, ranchos must have seemed certainly quite humble and unassuming. By one measure, the hacienda and the rancho stood at different poles of the landowning spectrum:

Hacienda en estos reynos de América son casas de campo de personas de más que de mediano caudal, con sitios de tierra de ganado mayor o menor, criaderos y caballerías más o menos, según las facultades de cada poseedor, en que con el arte de la agricultura, siembran varios víveres de semillas y crían ganados mayor, menor, de cerdo y caballada. Ranchos son en estas tierras indianas unas casas de campo de poca pompa y valor en que viven hombres de mediano pasar y pobres cultivando las tierras cortas que tienen o arriendan, en que siembran al tamaño de la posibilidad de cada uno y criando a sus animales domésticos, compuestos según sus fuerzas alcanzan.¹⁹

¹⁸ Van Young, *ibid*, 6.

¹⁹ As cited in *Noticias varias*, Espín and De Leonardo, *Economía y sociedad en los Altos de Jalisco*, 51-52. “Haciendas in these lands of America were country homes by dwellers of no more than a median income, with plots of land of large or small livestock, places to raise and horse quarters that were so-so depending on the abilities of each owner, who through the art of agriculture sow various amounts of seeds and raise their large or small livestock, pigs or drove of horses. Ranches are on these Indian lands homes of little pomp and value in which men live of middling circumstance or poor who cultivate the small lands that they rent, who sow to the size of their possibilities and raising domestic animals, whose form depended on the strength of their reach.” Curiously, Eric Van Young cites the same source in his work *Hacienda and Market*: Haciendas, said Fray José Alejandro Patiño in 1778, were “country houses belonging to people of more than average means, with lands for cattle, horses, and sheep, breeding pastures, and agricultural lands on which, more or less according to the capabilities of each owner, are produced various grains and livestock.” In turn, said Fray Patiño, ranchos were “country houses of little pomp and small value occupied by men of modest means, or the poor, who cultivate the small parcels which they own or rent according to their available resources, and on which they raise domestic animals and livestock,” Van Young, *ibid*, xlii.

This was not an uncommon comparison between haciendas and ranchos. Even though we are told that the hacienda was much more distinguished, the rancho served similar economic tasks in the countryside. Conceptually, this account does not present us with a sense of where an hacienda ends and where a rancho begins; for all intents and purposes, the rancho is like an hacienda, particularly when it comes to land productivity, but on a more modest scale. Clearly, if one took the largest hacienda and the smallest rancho, the differences might be more observable, yet, as my analysis in this chapter will show, the heterogeneity of a rancho (both in quality and scale) begs for a conceptual definition beyond just a comparison to the hacienda.

The historical roots of the small property originated during the first part of the colonial period, much earlier than the above account's time. The Spanish crown granted land to foot and mounted soldiers in the form of *mercedes*. Upon four years of continued residence, the land would be permanently conferred to the soldier in full possession. Key to understanding the origins of the small property was also its purpose. Though the quality of land varied, the purpose of the land grant was to support and sustain the owner and his family. What was granted to the foot soldier (a *peonía*) ranged between sixteen and forty hectares, while the mounted soldier received considerably more land that exceeded basic subsistence (a *caballería*), approximately sixty-six hectares (though some estimates cap the amount at forty-three).²⁰ From its inception, the small property was meant to allow for the transition from wartime to peacetime during the economically uncertain years of a colonial administration that could not really offer soldiers much more but a piece of land for their years of service to the Crown. In time, cattle ranching

²⁰ De Leonardo and Espín, *Economía y sociedad en los Altos de Jalisco*, 48-49. Please note that a *caballería* during the colonial period, according to François Chevalier, which was previously understood as a form of land property, in time came to be known as a unit of measurement, except for Chevalier, the unit measured 43 hectares. Chevalier, *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico*, 264.

prevailed in the smallholding due to a shortage of manual labor.²¹ Given its own particular point of historical departure, qualitatively different from the hacienda, the rancho nonetheless came to be understood through the framework of the hacienda. From Chevalier and beyond, the formation of the rancho was intimately linked to the development of the hacienda and hence why it was determined that knowing one was more important than the other.

What other reasons might be at play in why we see the kind of conflation between the hacienda and the rancho in which the hacienda ultimately dominates our understanding of private property? The question here is not insignificant, for, I argue that the subsumption of the rancho under the hacienda is one of the main reasons for the smallholding's glaring historiographical gap. That is, the implicit assumption that the rancho is a smaller type or an extension of the hacienda supposes that an analysis of the latter already encompasses an analysis of the former and thus one need not go too much beyond descriptive-depth. I am not proposing that social scientists have been necessarily naïve or easily dismissive in their analyses of land tenure. In fact, I would like to suggest that in order to answer this question, one must understand the degree to which the rancho itself on the ground has informed the social scientist; the documentary evidence left behind by the rancho has successfully shaped the way it has wanted to be interpreted: Not as less than an hacienda but as a form of tenure comparable if not equal to or

²¹ According to George McBride, "[m]any of the ranchos in Mexico owe their origin to grants of land made to the Spaniards in the early colonial period. Some of them, in all probability, date back to the Conquest itself. We have seen that the Spanish crown rewarded some of the conquistadores with large tribute districts, which later developed into haciendas, and that others received grants of land alone, which, in some cases, the holders extended until large estates had been formed. There were, however, some grants, particularly of the smaller class known as *peonías*, which did not follow this course but remained of their original size or, in the course of time, were divided. These are the properties which came to be known distinctively as ranchos. Their first owners had, apparently, been agriculturalists in Spain, either among the small freeholds of Asturias or in some of the numerous agrarian communal pueblos of Aragon and Castile. They were real farmers and were content to settle upon these small holdings, to live in the primitive way that their Indian neighbors lived, and to marry the native women. Even in the early years of the colony there were said to be many such persons (*labradores*) scattered about among the Indian towns or working tillable lands which they had taken up. This group is the more worthy of attention since it is almost the only example, in the New World, of Spaniards becoming real colonists and actually cultivating the soil with their own hands," McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, 88.

synonymous with it. Rancheros, and not just those who study them, have played a role in the conflation between haciendas and ranchos or between hacendados and rancheros, by attempting to forge an identity that would portray them with the same dignity. In order to better grasp this point, one can draw from the interplay between land possession and family and how the processes of maintaining land and land monopolization created a shared space of experiences for the rancho and the hacienda.

For example, a curious feature of the rancho and the hacienda in the Caxcana was their common practice of inbreeding, a form of endogamy that was prohibited by the Church but could ultimately be forgiven for the right reasons. One of these reasons, which affected both rancheros and hacendados, was land ownership, specifically, if marriage would lead to the preservation of land within a family. Such was the case in 1814 between Don José Damián de Jauregui and María Patricia de Jauregui, both second cousins from Mexticacán.²² It was imperative that they get married, according to don José Damián, because it was the rainy season and he wanted to help his fiancé's family sow the fields and would not be able to without the priest's blessing.²³ A second reason that could exempt one from marrying a cousin was if the groom-to-be kidnapped the prospective wife but retrospectively apologized and underscored his intention of providing for her. The end result was continued familial and economic cohesion through the maintenance of land under a common surname on both sides.²⁴ In this instance, marriage between cousins was at once caused by the need to continue to possess land and land itself was also ultimately its legitimization, through the Church.

²² De Leonardo and Espín, *Economía y sociedad en los Altos de Jalisco*, 74.

²³ Ibid., 74.

²⁴ Ibid.

The rules of inheritance of the rancho also invoked the experience one might see in the hacienda, what Chevalier might suggest as a form of land “entailment,” that is, the ability to prevent the breaking-up of property through a particular inheritance custom, the most prevalent of which was the law of primogeniture.²⁵ Particularly toward the mid to late nineteenth century, for example, inheritance was imparted following a rule of equity, not equality:

El reparto de la propiedad tiende a ser lo más equitativo posible. Para eso primero se avalúa la propiedad ante un notario público. En el reparto se da preferencia al hijo más pequeño para que escoja. Por lo general se queda con la casa. Después se sigue en este orden, de menor a mayor, entre todos los hermanos. Cuando la herencia es de tierras de distintas calidades se concede mayor superficie al que recibe tierra mala. El procedimiento es similar cuando se trata de ganado. Primero se avalúan los animales; después los hijos, empezando por el menor, van escogiendo los animales que prefieren, de acuerdo con su número. Si a alguno de los hermanos le toca un animal mejor, es decir más caro, tiene que *emparejar* a los otros hermanos con dinero, pagar la diferencia para equilibrar el precio.²⁶

In this description, we see what might be the development of the rancho through the process of land inheritance that one can apply to the Caxcana. The rancho here develops from a larger property, which could have been a larger rancho or an hacienda. Nevertheless, in this description of equitable inheritance, one already sees a major difference between the rancho and the hacienda. Even though both have to deal with issues of inheritance among siblings, the division of the land in the case of the rancho is done in such a way that more weight is given on what would benefit each individual inheritor and his or her family more so than keeping the landed

²⁵ Chevalier, 263.

²⁶ De Leonardo and Espín, 77. “The division of the property tends to be as equitable as possible. For this purpose first, the property needs to be appraised before a notary public. In dividing [the land] preference is given to the smallest son so that [he] may choose [first]. In general, [he] keeps the house. Subsequently, this order is followed, from youngest to oldest, between all siblings. When the inheritance is land of different types of qualities, he who receives the worst quality of land receives the greatest amount. The procedure is the same when it comes to livestock. First the animals are appraised; thereafter the sons, beginning with the youngest, choose the animals of their preference, according to the number. If one of the siblings gets a better animal, that is, a more expensive one, he has to balance that out with the siblings with more money, pay the difference to equalize the price.”

property in its original form.²⁷ Indeed, the hacienda's aim always strove for the property's integrity as a common practice. Yet the processes by which rancheros maintained or even expanded their properties threw them into a common space with hacendados where they engaged in the same problematics of land tenure.

These common problems of land tenure met in the fascinating history between the centralists and the federalists during the nineteenth century. The history is long and complicated but, for the case of Jalisco, one could summarize it as a two-decades long push to 'free-up' corporate and communal land in order to commodify it. Much before these became federal laws, Jalisco passed the first laws of *individualización* of communal land both of *reparto común*, where Indians worked, and the *fundo legal*, where Indians lived and shared the outlying communal land. The first of these laws were announced by the federalist Jalisco government under Prisciliano Sánchez Padilla, decreeing in 1825 that such civil communal property was prohibited. The only communal form of land exempted was the ejido, which was the common space individuals used for cattle grazing, wood-cutting, and so forth. Indians would now be able to do with their land as they pleased, without the burden of paying the various compulsory *pensiones* they once had to under the communal land regime; importantly, they could also sale their land, except to the Church or to latifundists (defined by the law as large landowners who owned one *sitio de ganado mayor* or more). The subsequent 1830s saw the emergence of a series of laws specifying the way in which such individualización of communal land should be carried out, leaving the task up to the *ayuntamientos* (municipal governments) and prohibiting

²⁷ There is space within the rules of inheritance to protect the integrity of the property. If keeping the land together is the aim, then "el uso de la herencia no está restringido por ninguna regla." Yet, most generally, "El caso más común, dada la escasez de los recursos, es que uno de los hermanos compre su herencia a los demás *con el fin de mantener el patrimonio mínimo para una familia* [my emphasis]," De Leonardo and Espín, 77. At its core, according to some authors, the rancho is defined as "una unidad agroganadera con proporciones suficientes para sostener a una familia," *ibid*, 73.

the power of local Indian authorities previously in charge of collecting the communal usage fees. By the early 1840s, the struggles between the centralists and federalists led to a reversal of all laws of land privatization (including the laws of *desamortización*, or *de manos muertas*, which specifically targeted church properties) when the centralists won over under Antonio López de Santa Anna and Nicolás Bravo. Nevertheless, weakened by the war against the United States, the centralists once more lost power to the federalists, who soon reestablished these laws in 1847.

The laws opened up a new supply of land for the purchasing (or the taking) of nearby hacendados and rancheros for the Caxcana and the broader region. Haciendas were not the only ones to form or expand out of the newly ‘individualized’ communal properties; ranchos also took significant swaths of the land that was put up on the market as a result of Jalisco’s new privatization decrees. We will see that even well into the early twentieth century, land continued to be put up for sale; from land which was genuinely vacant to that which was under someone’s possession but without title. As I will attempt to demonstrate later in this chapter, similar struggles to maintain, lose, or increase landed property became significant sources by which rancheros defined themselves vis-à-vis other property owners.

*The Consolidation of Ranchero and Hacendado Land Tenure:
The Multiple Forms of Land Accumulation and the Dismantling of Communal Property in the
Caxcana, Pre-1930s*

In his analysis of the hacienda, Van Young has a suggestive chart that shows the disproportionate ratio between haciendas and ranchos during the late eighteenth-century in the Intendancy of Guadalajara. The total number of haciendas was 96, while the number of ranchos

was 2,659.²⁸ The implication drawn by the author is that in places that were further away from the city of Guadalajara or harder to reach, the proportion between the hacienda and the rancho tended to be the widest. In Tepatitlán, for example, there were three haciendas and 1,528 ranchos. The Caxcana seems to be an exception to this rule, but the disproportion is still significant, with eighty-five ranchos and one hacienda for the jurisdiction of Cuquío.²⁹

In the entire highlands region, which for many authors encompasses the Caxcana, the rancho is a numerical force to be reckoned. Known for its “pattern of a multitude of small, independent units of production,”³⁰ the region might serve to underscore the possible correlation between livestock farming and the proliferation of ranchos. More importantly, these areas were “less strongly connected economically to the city, with sparser populations scattered around the countryside on numerous smallholdings.”³¹ The force of cascading effects from the city upon the smallholding here is unclear. On the one hand, the city’s demand for agricultural goods drove production on the haciendas. Unable to compete with an equally labor-intensive system of agricultural production, ranchers opted for livestock raising which could be done successfully over pasture land of varying degrees of quality. But even amid the great economic preponderance of the hacienda, ranching in the Caxcana was characterized by a mix of land uses in which ranchers combined seasonal farming heavily based on sharecropping and livestock raising depending on the kind of land owned or rented. The effect of Guadalajara upon the

²⁸ Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 108. Defining the rancho has never been an easy task for the historian. For colonial times, there is ample evidence for the permeating presence of ranchos in the countryside. Yet, “a precise definition of the term “rancho” is nowhere explicitly given [...its] many distinct referents included small hamlets or other rural population concentrations, independently owned small properties, and rented holdings which could be organic parts of larger properties or only loosely annexed to them,” *ibid.*, 109.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 109.

³¹ Van Young, *ibid.*

rancho was thus looming, but the latter's relative diverse land use softened the city's impact, with the hacienda absorbing its biggest blows or gains.

Municipality	Number of Haciendas	Year
Cuquío	7	1897
Ixtlahuacán del Río	6	1897
Yahualica	3	1897
Mexticacán	1	1897

Table 1.1 Number of haciendas in the Caxcana

Source: Sergio Valerio Ulloa, *Historia rural jalisciense: economía agrícola e innovación tecnológica durante el siglo XIX*

Even though rural property across the Caxcana was heavily divided, prior to the 1930s, a number of large landed properties, or *latifundios*, nonetheless still existed. For example, San Cristóbal de la Barranca had the hacienda of El Tablón with 1,006 hectares, owned by the successors of Apolonio Reynoso and the hacienda of San José y María with 6,201 hectares, owned by Epigmenio Ochoa. In Ixtlahuacán del Río, the hacienda of El Consuelo de Jáuregui with 1,578 hectares owned by Francisco Jáuregui and Julián Pérez, the hacienda of El Consuelo de González with a whopping 4,953 hectares owned by Jesús and Maclovía González, and the hacienda of Guadalupe with an even greater 6,722 hectares. The vast majority of haciendas in the region developed toward the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth century. They grew in scale in the nineteenth century through the legal but often also illegal absorption of Indian communities, which were suppressed by the post-independence decrees mentioned earlier. These were widely used by lawyers and *huizacheros* to grant Indian communal property to surrounding hacendados or rancheros. As late as 1881, we see a continued common pattern of communal land takeovers on the part of hacendados and rancheros.

One usual form of land usurpation occurred in the case of the hacienda of Colimilla, just south of the Caxcana. The land sits on the slopes of the Río Verde, a main water causeway that

touches much of the Caxcana's south-eastern border. There, the Indians of Matatlán were denied rightful ownership and were forced off the land after doña Cortés de Ocampo, owner of the hacienda of Colimilla, initiated a civil suit before a judge against them and another hacendado, because they had allegedly dispossessed her, despite the fact she: "had been in perfect and calm possession up to the point of dispossession committed by said Indians, who have been harvesting in said property and destroyed the hill and made carbon with the harvest leftovers from the foothill."³²

Among those who were supposed to return the land to Mrs. Ocampo in July of 1881, the judged decreed the following:

Que los indios demandados [...] confesaron de una manera clara que no tenían derecho alguno de posesión de los terrenos que sembraban, pues eran de la propiedad de Matatlán, lo mismo que todos los situados en las laderas y barrancas del río Verde, y que esa comunidad, a la que los indígenas pertenecían, se los daba y a los demás que la componen, en usufructo. Esa manifestación demuestra la falta absoluta de derecho en los demandados para hacer uso de los terrenos material de este juicio, pues debían saber que las comunidades de indígenas fueron extinguidas por el decreto número 481 de la Antigua Legislatura del Estado; que los bienes que a ellas pertenecían se mandaron dividir por varias disposiciones tanto generales como del Estado entre sus miembros, y en consecuencia, que para que los actos que se han efectuado en los terrenos de que se ha hecho mención, tuvieran alguna razón de ser, hubiera sido indispensable que los indios justificaran al menos su posesión privada en ellos, adquirida por un título justo traslativo de dominio, cosa que en realidad han estado lejos de demostrar, pues como antes se dijo, los mismos demandados han negado esa posesión privada atribuyéndosela a la comunidad de Matatlán de que forman parte siendo así que corporaciones de esta naturaleza, no existe legalmente.³³

³² *El Litigante*, [Newspaper] Guadalajara, 8 July 1881.

³³ Ibid. "That the sued Indians [...] confessed in a clear manner that they did not have any right of possession of the land that they sowed, because these belonged to Matatlán, the same with all of those lands situated in the slopes and ravines of the Río Verde, and that said community, to which the Indians belonged, were granted to those that comprised it, in usufruct. Such declaration demonstrates the absolute lack of right of the defendants to make use of the material lands in this trial, for they should know that the indigenous communities were extinguished by decree number 481 of the Old State Legislature; that the property that these belonged to were divided by various dispositions both general and of the State among its members, and as a consequence, so that the functions to be effected in the aforementioned properties [be justified], it would have been indispensable that the Indians at the very least justify the private possessions of these, acquired by a property transfer trust, matter of which in reality they have been far from proving, for as before mentioned, the very defendants have denied such private possession, attributing it to the community of Matatlán of whom they are a part and so corporations of this nature, do not legally exist."

Following old customs of communal land claims, Indians in this case truly shot themselves in the foot by denying that they owned the land they worked; they only possessed in usufruct the land that they worked, which they historically knew to be owned by the community, which was Matatlán. Moving into the twentieth century, the Caxcana did not appear to have the same legalistic formalities in terms of land litigations as the above hacienda of Colimilla case demonstrates. Indigenous people in the region were no longer fighting legal battles over communal properties that would at any rate be moot in the new era of land privatization. But instances of land accumulation and takeovers did continue to take place outside the court's domain.

According to one case, a good part of the fundo legal of the town of Tepac was usurped, without the Indians really knowing how, by surrounding rancheros and by Agapito Gutiérrez, owner of the hacienda of Ocotengo.³⁴ In another instance, the lands of the Indians of Manalisco were taken by:

...the creator of La Capellanía [modern day Bellavista] of J. Jesús López, who sent an engineer to measure said wind [from the east], having witnessed the measurements, citizen Margarito Pérez, as First Constitutional Mayor of Yahualica, and they halted the measuring because they could not convince the engineer to calculate the property up to where they felt was needed; and since they were covering the costs, they decided to end said measuring of said wind [and they usurped it]. And on the west and north, areas that correspond to the hacienda La Jarrilla, as the surveying of said hacienda was being made, the Indians appeared and did not allow the measurement of the Indian's entire property, and as consequence were told that they would call the Federación [because] Silvano González, [former] owner of said hacienda, had government backing.³⁵

³⁴ Archivo Histórico Agrario de Jalisco [hereafter AHAI], Exp.100, 33-34.

³⁵ AHAI, Exp. 102, 6-7.

Such threats to call in the intervention of powerful political connections, but also often just outright violence, characterized many of the land boundary re-drawings that occurred around this time, skipping over the route of courts and the legal system altogether.

Other times, Indians lost their land through self-inflicted wounds, as we had seen earlier. For example, the property of the Indians of Juchitlán were acquired (already having been privatized by a junta repartidora) by nearby hacendados through a sagaciously brazen form of usury.³⁶ The Indians would request “some financing of little value to their enterprise” and the hacendados, as a security of what little they loaned, would force Indians to hand over their land deeds never return them again.³⁷ In Tlacotán, in the municipality of Ixtlahuacán del Río, the lands were taken through an emptying of the town’s inhabitants. In the mid nineteenth century, “the then revolutionary leader Antonio Rojas implemented a general *leva* and practically left the town without inhabitants or at least without its men heads of household.” In a matter of time, surrounding large landowners and non-denizens denounced the indigenous people’s lands as “baldías,” or vacant, to Ixtlahuacán del Río authorities. On the east, west, and south, the haciendas of San Marcelo Ixcuintla and El Consuelo de González had absorbed the majority of indigenous lands. It was as this process of land absorption was taking place that the native’s

³⁶ After Mexico’s independence, a trend to privatize communal Indian property (or *fundos legales*) was carried out by the various Mexican presidential administrations. The *juntas repartidoras* were developed to carry out such privatization at the local level. They were formed by surveyors who were designated by the local *ayuntamientos* (municipal governments) essentially against the interests of Indian communal land whose members were kept out of the decisions made by the junta repartidora. See Ignacio Aguirre Loreto, *Colección de acuerdos, órdenes y decretos sobre tierras, casas y solares de los indígenas, bienes de sus comunidades y fundos legales de los pueblos del estado de Jalisco, Tomo I*, (Guadalajara: Cromotipografía del Buen Gusto, 1876). Aguirre Loreto, comp., and Jalisco Leyes, *Colección de acuerdos, órdenes y decretos sobre tierras, casas y solares de los indígenas, bienes de sus comunidades y fundos legales de los pueblos del estado de Jalisco*.

³⁷ AHAI, Exp. 112, page labeled “17”. The direct quote goes as follows: “[...] el despojo de nuestras tierras fué debido a que nuestros antepasados les pedían a los ahora terratenientes algún recaudo de poco valor en sus comercios, y estos para seguridad de lo poco que les fiaban y otras veces, por temor de ser despojados de sus títulos de propiedad, les obligaban a que llevaran sus escrituras, y cuando estos quisieron volver a poseer sus títulos, los señores ricos se los negaron, ocasionando hasta la fecha su despojo.”

fundo legal had been reduced to 100 hectares and one “ojo de agua” located in the same town.³⁸ Tlacotán’s fundo legal was voided of its general purpose when it was chopped down to such a small amount of land. According to the census taken on May 30, 1902 by the junta repartidora of Tlacotán, presided by Eduwiges Martínez Camacho, the fundo was supposed to be distributed among 112 individuals who had a right over these properties. In other words, after most of its land was privatized, the fundo was morseled into less than one hectare per Indian.³⁹

In other cases, the onslaught of land grabbing by these hacendados and rancheros demoralized the Indians in such a way that these would begin to have internal strife among each other. This happened in 1902 with the Indians of Mechoacanejo, “for, while some attempted to maintain their land communally, others, without authorization, but conspired with the hacendados and contributed to its selling.”⁴⁰ But it was not just large landowners or rancheros that were solely in charge of dismantling communal properties across the Caxcana, Indians also attempted to follow suit with their own land partitioning. In 1902, the Indians of Mexticacán requested the installation of another “comisión repartidora” because the existing one had left some land undistributed. These men were not just fighting for the last bone of land left. Even though part of their communal property had been previously sold to private individuals,⁴¹ they saw no other alternative but to enter the realm of land privatization in order to request land that was once theirs.⁴² As in most of the cases above mentioned, the Indians would never see

³⁸ AHAI, Exp. 137.

³⁹ *El estado de Jalisco*. Guadalajara, 27 March 1903.

⁴⁰ Aldana Rendón, *El campo jalisciense durante el Porfiriato*, 36.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 37.

⁴² In his forthcoming book, *Estudio prototípico de La feria*, Juan Frajoza argues that one of the most important literary works of 20th century Mexico, Juan José Arreola’s *La feria*, revolves around the socio-cultural, economic, and political problematics surrounding the taking of Indian land; rural society, as vividly, and with tremendous

returned the land that they claimed was theirs through *restitución* (restitution); any ejido obtained, if any, would be given through *dotación* (government grant).

High tax contributions and fiscal fees also placed Indian lands at risk. Such was the case of Susano and Florencio Ramos as they put forth in May 25th 1900. Both were Indians from Tenayuca who had requested to the Zacatecan congress the cancellation of taxes so as to halt a land repossession that weighted over some of their communal lands. Without such a reprieve, their lands would be auctioned off in the nearby southern Zacatecan town of Nochistlán. On May 18th 1904, the tax collector of Nochistlán announced a new auction of lands in Tenayuca. On this occasion, a property was placed up for sale valued at 120 pesos located at the Sierra de las Manzanillas because of tax payment default.⁴³ Poverty, but also ignorance and desperation, made victims of the Indians, who were heavily taken advantage of by countless land speculators. Lino Barba was one such sly entrepreneur, who, on August 11th 1905 bought 6.25 hectares for thirty pesos from the Indians of the town of Acasico, in Mexxicacán; two days later, the same land was valued at eighty pesos.⁴⁴

historical accuracy, portrayed by Arreola derives and departs from the Indian dispossession of land by colonizers and later hacendados and ranchers of European descent. Indeed, counter to the sense that this was a problem left in the past, the taking of Indian lands is a problem that survives into the twentieth century. The life of the struggle of Indian leaders (in this case, the tlayacanques of southern Jalisco) to lay claim of their lands through colonial and then post-independence State courts is the backdrop of the human dramas that unfold throughout his novel: “Antes la tierra era de nosotros los naturales. Ahora es de las gentes de razón. La cosa viene de lejos. Desde que los de la Santa Inquisición se llevaron de aquí a don Francisco de Sayavedra, porque puso su iglesia aparte en la Cofradía del Rosario y dijo que no les quitaran la tierra a los tlayacanques. Unos dicen que lo quemaron. Otros que nomás lo vistieron de judas y le dieron azotes. Sea por Dios. Lo cierto es que la tierra ya no es de nosotros y allá cada y cuando nos acordamos. Sacamos los papeles antiguos y seguimos dale y dale. ‘Señor Oidor, Señor Gobernador del Estado, Señor Obispo, Señor Capitán General, Señor Virrey de la Nueva España, Señor Presidente de la República... Soy Juan Tepano, el más Viejo de los tlayacanques, para servir a usted: nos lo quitaron todo.’” Juan José Arreola, *La feria*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco), 2008, 9.

⁴³ Periódico Oficial del Gobierno del Estado de Zacatecas, Zacatecas, 1 August 1900 and 25 May 1904.

⁴⁴ Archivo Histórico Particular Frajoza Ruvalcaba [hereafter AHPFR], Registro Catastral de Yahualica 1900-1910, Tomo 1, 20.

Taking heed of newly announced land decrees posted by municipal authorities, many continued to file formal complaints of vacant and abandoned lands. These were lands that were owned in large measure by Indians. Such ‘complaints’ were more frequent in the nearby municipalities of the state of Zacatecas, given that, for example,

[...] el Reglamento de policía para la municipalidad de Toyahua en su artículo 27 contemplaba que ‘[l]os solares que se adjudiquen a particulares dentro de la población, serán fincados por los adjudicatarios o sucesores en el término de seis meses contados desde el día en que se les expida la adjudicación, bajo la pena de perder el derecho adquirido en el terreno que sin más requisitos se adjudicará al primero que lo denuncie.’⁴⁵

[...] the police Regulation for the municipality of Toyahua in its article 27 contemplates that ‘the plots that are adjudicated to particulars within the township will be build upon by the beneficiaries or successors in the term of six months starting from the day that the adjudication is issued, under the penalty of losing the acquired right of the plot that without further requirements will be adjudicated to the first person that reports it.’

The ease with which one could file vacant law complaints highlights the changing nature of land tenure itself; as these instances of land adjudication show, the promotion of land privatization was generalized, undertaken out in the fields on lands that were not vacant and were highly productive and around the center of town regardless or precisely because of their communal nature. These were indeed the laws of individualización from the 1820s and 1830s continuing to take effect well into the early twentieth century.

The reported lands in these Zacatecan municipalities, in fact, consisted of small property urban or rural fractions. On August 15, 1899, Francisco Regalado, who lived in San Pedro Apulco, filed a complaint at the municipal presidency, “a título de abandonado dos terrenos eriazos,” (“of a title of two uncultivated abandoned plots”) located to the west of Rancho de Apulco, which were valued at 160 pesos. The presidency determined that if in the following six months no person showed up to hold up his or her rights, on February 15, 1900, they would be

⁴⁵ Periódico Oficial del Gobierno del Estado de Zacatecas, Zacatecas, 15 February 1902.

foreclosed. Another case occurred on the February 10, 1906 when Petronilo Muñoz, inhabitant of Monte de Duranes, placed a complaint before the *jefe político* of Nochistlán, Mauricio Yáñez, requesting a title of abandonment for a property located in the same ranch, which comprised a total of 1.75 hectares of *agostadero*. Months later, on the 18th of November, Cesáreo Larios, resident of the same ranch, placed another petition to acquire an alleged vacant property of approximately one hectare of *agostadero*. A year later, on the 4th of November of 1907, Bernardino Contreras made a similar demand for cause of abandonment of a “solar para fabricar” surrounded by walls, located on Calle Independencia, in Nochistlán. On the 1st of April of 1909, José María Prieto made a claim of another urban lot located in the town of Nochistlán and valued at twenty pesos because it allegedly lacked an owner. On the 21st of July, Francisco O. García did the same for a property called La Laguna, located in Toyahua, that had the capacity to produce four liters of sowing and was valued at twenty pesos.⁴⁶

The claims for vacant lands in Jalisco’s municipalities were infrequent, one may even say nearly nonexistent. Nevertheless, the property extension of one notable claim that did exist was exorbitant in scale, by no means consistent with the small land swaths seen in neighboring Zacatecas. During the mid 1930s a great civil dispute began in Mexico City between Prudencio Valencia and Desiderio Beas, who had claimed around the same time the vacant or empty spaces that might have remained on the Jalisco hacienda El Astillero.⁴⁷ In 1908, it was declared vacant and handed over to Simeón Dueñas, granting him a surface of 26,580 hectares that encompassed the limits of Zapopan, a good chunk of the municipality of San Cristóbal de la Barranca (in the

⁴⁶ *Periódico Oficial del Gobierno del Estado de Zacatecas*, Zacatecas, 10 January 1900, 7 March and 22 December 1906, 11 January 1908, 19 June and 8 September 1909.

⁴⁷ *El Estado de Jalisco*, Guadalajara, 23 August 1903.

southern Caxcana), a part of Tequila to where it reaches San Juan del Teul, and Zacatecas.⁴⁸ The vast property was by no means an uninhabited, vacant, backcountry. The land encompassed towns, congregations, rancherías, and other properties and thousands were left without homes or valid deeds. One historian aptly states that “el trastorno producido por tales perturbaciones reviste todas las circunstancias de una calamidad pública.”⁴⁹ Indeed, even if this enormous land grab was unusual in Jalisco, it is in some sense nonetheless the logical extreme of the land dispossessions that had been in the upswing since the early to mid nineteenth century in the region.

*The People on The Land:
The Caxcana's Rural Laborers Into the Twentieth Century*

The dispossessed, which previously had the relative liberty to work their own lands and exploit their foothills, would see their hunger greatened. In Ixtlahuacán del Río, land usurpers did not allow the Indians to extract a little wood for personal use over lands that had formerly belonged to them.⁵⁰ The jealousy with which even foothills were guarded may speak to the changing nature of land tenure in this period, particularly the heightened pressure on land due to the processes not just of Indian land dispossession, but of hacienda disentanglement and population increase.⁵¹ The pushing of Indians and other rural men off their land is also reminiscent of the colonial period, when hacendados purposefully purged men from their plots in order to bring them into the hacienda work-force. But labor in the countryside fell into many different

⁴⁸ Canudas Sandoval, 1528.

⁴⁹ Aldana Rendón, *El campo jalisciense durante el Porfiriato*, 51.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵¹ For an important analysis of the significant and unique impact that population increase played in the countryside around this period, please see Van Young, *Hacienda and Market in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*.

categories. In this section, I give a sense of the differences and nuances between rural laborers in order to provide a livelier, more granular image of the type of laborers that worked on the smallholding.

We can begin by analyzing some of the most common laborers, the *aparcero* and the *mediero* were categories of landless workers that, at least on paper, would have one believe both engaged in a relatively fair system of work with property owners. An *aparcero* (or sometimes also *parcionario*) was someone who held possession of a plot of land often along with other “owners” as *pro indiviso*, or in communal joint possession but not ownership. It was common that these lands were held among many family members and, as such, these were usually not legalized through a deed. The term *aparcero* is in practice a relatively ambiguous category, confused often with that of *mediero*, which is defined as a worker who gives his work in order to receive half of the harvest or whatever the fruit of his work may be. An *aparcero* can also work under the terms of a *mediero* if such is the agreed upon stipulation, but, unlike the *mediero*, the former can also, for example, work for a third of the total of the product of his labor.⁵²

Then there were the *medieros*, who received a relatively better remuneration for their work. *Mediería* was a contract, usually a verbal agreement, in which the property owner and the farmer divided in equal parts the product and the inputs of a business. Besides the land, the grantor provided seeds, sowing tools, and the oxen. The *mediero* put his work and that of his family.⁵³ If the farmer owned his own house and the land used for *mediería* was close-by, the

⁵² For example, in 1856, in the municipality of Mexiticacán, a priest states the following: “Los indígenas de Acasico se han presentado ante mí con dos objetos: el primero que necesitan se les asigne a cada uno su tierra para sembrar al tercio o por venta con la cofradía, par air componiendo sus labores; el segundo se levantar su iglesia, que están careciendo de una misa desde que se dispuso cayera.” AHAG, Sección Gobierno, Serie Parroquias, Mexiticacán, Caja 2, Sobre enajenación de una parte del mueble de la cofradía de Acasico de Mexiticacán y reedificación de la iglesia de aquel pueblo. Año de 1856, f.6.

⁵³ Archivo del Juzgado Menor de Mexiticacán [AJMM], Verbal. Anastasio Rodríguez contra Manuel García por menos de cien pesos, 1887.

agreement would not include house borrowing. If the site was far from the laborer's house, the grantor would include a dwelling in the agreement. Despite its apparent nominal fairness, mediería led to many quarrels among contracting parties. Many civil suits were initiated by the grantors (i.e., landlords) against their medieros. These suits were generally circumscribed under the following complaints: the illegal appropriation of land or the dwelling,⁵⁴ the death of livestock due to negligence or mistreatment,⁵⁵ and fraud—the farmer would take seeds for himself, not sow them, or would appropriate more than his share of the harvested product.⁵⁶ In turn, the medieros would sue mainly for the following reasons: the seeds and other agricultural tools were paid for in order to bring the harvest to good term but the owner tried to take over half of the products without having faithfully fulfilled the contract,⁵⁷ the grantor would try to obtain excessive yields on loans made or charge rent for the dwelling when such was not stipulated on the contract; the owner would charge unpaid debts to a close relative member of the mediero, often affecting an entire family.⁵⁸ Even though medieros and aparceros didn't always buy into good deals with landowners, they fared somewhat better than the *jornaleros*.

Jornaleros were lower in the order and were paid for the duties performed per a day's work (*jornal*) almost exclusively during sowing times, hoeing (*escarda*), and harvest (*cosecha*)—dedicating the other parts of the year to manufacturing tasks such as palm-leaf

⁵⁴ Archivo del Juzgado Menor de Cañadas de Obregón [AJMCO], Demanda interpuesta por Tomás Alviso contra Mateo López, 1903.

⁵⁵ AJMCO, Juicio verbal, Sabás Jiménez contra Bernardino Mercado, 1888.

⁵⁶ AJMM, Civil ordinario, Longinos Lomelí contra Librado Ruvalcaba, 1910.

⁵⁷ AJMM, Civil ordinario por menos de cien pesos, Felipe Sánchez contra Ladislao Macías, 1909.

⁵⁸ AJMM, Civil ordinario, Gregorio Iñiguez en contra de Amado González, 1920.

braiding (*trenzado de palma*)⁵⁹ to make sombreros, *chiquihuites*, or *petates*. During the early twentieth century, jornaleros received an average of twenty-five cents⁶⁰ per daily wage in the haciendas of Cuquío, Yahualica, and Ixtlahuacán del Río, which was more than the jornaleros of Mexiticacán, who received eighteen cents per daily wage. There, in Mexiticacán, men worked “desde las cuatro de la mañana hasta las once de la noche, después de que daban de comer a los animales, pues debían sacar a pastar a los bueyes por la noche hasta que se hinchaban.”⁶¹ In comparative perspective, in the municipalities of Teocaltiche and Lagos de Moreno, located in the broader Los Altos region, jornaleros only received a cent more than in Mexiticacán.⁶² One should underscore that not the entire wage was paid in cash; it was common practice that a portion of the wage would be paid in species, generally: corn, bean, or some sections of *manta*. Then there was the ‘piecemeal’ jornalero (*a destajo*), who worked for specific tasks. For example, in 1903, J. Guadalupe Jáuregui, resident of San Nicolás, hired Manuel Jáuregui for six pesos so that he could take on “un quehacer a destajo que le dio y fue el de cambiar y acordonar un poco de piedra para hacer una cerca.”⁶³ Even though these workers had the possibility of earning a daily wage higher than *jornaleros eventuales*, such wage was conditioned by how fast the task was finished. Nevertheless, it was much more difficult to have a regular income as a jornalero a destajo since such depended on work availability.

⁵⁹ The palm leaf was braided to primarily make *capotes* and *sombreros*, which was a great kind of material to cover from the sun or protect from the rain. The palm leaf was not a local resource, but was rather brought in from the pacific coastal areas such as Nayarit by *arrieros*. One man from Mexiticacán recalls that his father did venture to trek to the coast via donkey to bring back palm-leaf, which was sold by the dozen of *trenzas*.

⁶⁰ Jaime Olveda, *Yahualica. Historia*, (Guadalajara: H. Ayuntamiento de Yahualica de González Gallo, 2002), 180-183.

⁶¹ Rodríguez Jiménez, “Mi formación profesional,” 60.

⁶² Mario Aldana Rendón, *Del reyismo al nuevo orden constitucional, 1910-1917*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco-Universidad de Guadalajara, 1987), 41.

⁶³ AJMM, Juicio verbal, J. Guadalupe y Manuel Jáuregui, 1903.

Key to understanding a rural laborer is that he could work in one or more of these rural categories of work at any given time. For example, an *aparcero* working for the produce of his share (be this a fifth, a third, a half, etc.) could also work for a *jornal* (a daily wage). As a *jornalero*, however, the *aparcero* would not receive a wage for his share but only for the work done on the share that belonged to the owner. The owner was typically an *hacendado* but *rancheros* also brokered plenty of contracts under *aparcería* as *arrendatarios* or *subarrendatarios* (leasers/subleasers). As more agreements under *aparcería* of the region emerge in the historical record, the more one learns just what unfavorable end of the stick the *aparcero* received. The *aparcero* provided his long arduous work and the *arrendatario* provided the land, farming tools, oxen, and seeds. But the *aparcero* barely broke even in this exchange. He was not allowed to keep the pasture tied to his share; that part belonged to the owner even though in most cases it was the *aparcero* who collected and packed together the pasture for the *arrendatario*, only to receive nothing in return or a tiny bonus if at all. But, again, what the *aparcero* ultimately received was always contingent on the agreed upon terms which made *aparcería* a little better for some *aparceros* but less so for others.⁶⁴

Life was barely a step up for other rural laborers. Uprooted from their land, many headed to the hacienda, joining the *peones acasillados* (“house peons,” or peons tied to another’s land) or becoming *temporales* working for miserly wages, chained to familiar but now strange land. Some authors such as Agustín Yáñez⁶⁵ state that there were no *peones acasillados* in the region;

⁶⁴ When *aparceros* tried to cut corners to make the terms of contract a little more favorable, even if extra-legally, they risked being sued if caught by the grantor (*arrendatario*). In violation of their contract, some would use the implements of one *arrendatario*, such as oxen, and use them on another’s land. In one example, José María Hernández, an *aparcero*, was sued by his *arrendatario* for using the latter’s oxen in someone else’s land. The judge found the *aparcero* guilty and made him pay one-fourth of the share he made with the other party using the original *arrendatario*’s property, Archivo Municipal e Histórico de Tepatitlán de Morelos, C11-Exp1-F5.

⁶⁵ Agustín Yáñez, “Portón y patio de ingreso a viejas haciendas,” in *Haciendas* by Luis Sandoval Godoy, (Guadalajara: Editorial de la Casa Mago, 2008), 10.

that the hacendados were not the tyrants vehemently demonized by authors of novels of the Mexican Revolution, and that there were no *tiendas de raya* (company stores) in these large landed properties. Evidence however shows that such practices were widespread throughout the region. Nevertheless, so as one may not dismiss Yáñez's assertion altogether, the "style" of work coercion and sharecropping was not the brutal system known in other places, but control over workers rather tilted more on paternalism and social cohesion.⁶⁶ For example, since the latter part of the nineteenth century the hacienda of La Jarrilla was distributed through "aparcería" among fifty-two families who, many assured, received the benefits and loans of yuntas (oxen-plow), implements, seeds, and money. In addition, they had built homes and implemented systems to increase land productivity such as drainage and fertilization.⁶⁷ In reality, these men were not aparceros per se, but were actually aparceros-acasillados.

Peones acasillados were those landless peons who lived in the rancho or hacienda and constructed their homes on the owner's property, living there with relatively more stability than the aparceros. These acasillados, or *acomodados* as they were also sometimes called, shared the duties of the agricultural work with their wives and children. These most often performed as *sembradores* (sowers). They carried their seeds in some sort of small sturdy bag often made of bull scrotum skin or in *morralitos* (small satchels) made of *ixtle* fibers. The sembrador walked behind the farmer, engaging in a kind of "dance," pecking a hole with one foot, throwing the seed, and covering the seed with the other. When children were not old enough or women were unable to perform these sowing duties, the farmer hired a jornalero or a temporal. In general

⁶⁶ Perhaps one of the most important works that compares the types of conditions that rural workers experienced throughout Mexico, with southern Mexico being the most onerous and exploitative for workers, please see Friedrich Katz, "Labor Conditions on Haciendas in Porfirian Mexico: Some Trends and Tendencies," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54: 1 (Feb. 1974): 1-47.

⁶⁷ AHAI, Exp. 102, 23.

however, it was not uncommon that hired hands worked alongside the farmer's family during the various stages of the farming cycle: *labranza*, *siembra*, *escarda*, *asegundada* (soil softening), *cosecha*.⁶⁸

These cases demonstrate that wage variability and scarcity, and not just work availability, determined the acquisition of basic goods for workers. At the same time, it also determined the outward migration of jornaleros to other parts of the country and to the United States. Jornaleros had to find ways to sustain themselves and their families despite such meager wages. A good portion of these jornaleros used land of poor quality and yield performance behind the landowner's back, grappling through steep and hardly accessible gorges in order to sow corn (*de temporal*), harvesting minimal quantities. These were the so-called *tierras de cuamil*, the worst land for sowing, whose widespread utilization were a faithful marker of scarcity and land tenure tensions.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ These phases are examined more closely in chapter four of this work but the *escarda* and *asegundada* are two phases of the farming cycle that might need further explanation. To get the soil ready for farming, tiny hills called ridges are made along the long rows that are formed by the plowing animals. These long rows, called furrows, are the base of these little hills, coined *lomos de surco*, or "hump ridges," where the seed is usually planted not on its center, but on its side, where it won't take up the great humidity that forms in the ridge's upper half. Once the seed takes root, weeks after planting, the *escarda* phase takes place. *Escarda* is the phase where farmers remove most of the weeds and grass that grow around the plant so as to prevent nutrient loss for the crop planted. Also, importantly during this phase, the ridges are padded to be more centered around the plant (which had been previously placed on the ridge's side) and, if available, a little chemical is sprayed to prevent substantial weed re-growth. The *asegundada* was the phase in which the plant had already sprouted about a meter or so and the soil by then had stiffened. In order to allow the most nutrients to continue to enter the plant for better growth, the soil was delicately poked and pounded to soften it, a practice once before done during ploughing but much needed a second time, hence the term *asegundada*.

⁶⁹ Frank Tannenbaum briefly alludes to these *tierras de cuamil* in his work though leaves out their broader meaning or significance with relation to other forms of land tenure in general, and vis a vis the onslaught of land takeovers in particular. He relegates his discussion of these plots to a footnote: "The Indians of the coast that live in the villages under the jurisdiction of the Municipios of Purificación and Cihuatlán are the owners in common of large extensions of land fit for cultivation but due to the low culture of these Indians all of these large extensions of land remain uncultivated. If they do cultivate the land it is in the form of little parcels called *caumiles* [sic] where they plant some maize. In some places as in Jirotto these *cuamiles* are in the folds of the mountains and have the form of a square having a parcel some 25 meters each. As they do not work the greater part of the year for them most of the time is one of 'sweet idleness.' They travel about half naked with their hair long and the skin very dark due to the absolute lack of cleanliness. The men, just as the women, from their waist up do not wear anything to cover their nakedness. The children are completely naked," Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), 51.

Conclusion

The smallholding does not emerge in the twentieth century in the sense that it was submerged or non-existent in the prior centuries. Rather, the smallholding positions itself in the twentieth century not just as the most prevalent, but now dominant form of land tenure in the Caxcana with the dissolution of the hacienda in the 1940s. Instead of viewing the smallholding as having a secondary or purely dependent role to the hacienda, I argue that the relationship between both has been one of a historical sharing of socio-political and cultural spaces that defined them in qualitatively different ways that cannot be reduced to mere subservience or dependence. We know that the hacienda over time gained great economic power by feeding the city's growing needs. Yet the smallholding, by diversifying its productive capacities both in the areas of agriculture and cattle-ranching, grew to become an important landowning force that would not only find a stake in the politics of the nineteenth century, but would participate heavily in the reconfiguration of land tenure during that same period.

As we have seen in this chapter, the rancho grew in importance alongside the hacienda by taking advantage of the laws that made most forms of communal property illegal. This transference of communal lands into private hands, a process that took place well into the twentieth century, reconfigured the face of private property in the Caxcana both through legal, but most often illegal or dubious means. Unlike most traditional historical portrayals, I thus argue that an analysis of the hacienda does not suffice to explain the smallholding. As I have shown, while the hacienda “dominated the factors of rural life” throughout the greater part of the colonial period, the smallholding shared in the same problematics of land tenure and rural social relations, significant among these inheritance and labor and thereby developed its own particular

character different from the hacienda. The smallholding, thus, secured an important place in the rural landscape of the Caxcana, not subservient but parallel to the hacienda. As we will see in the next chapter, the process by which the rancho became defined was dynamic, producing various kinds that I will systematically categorize into three distinct types for the purposes of conceptually capturing its heterogeneous nature.

CHAPTER TWO

The Large, Medium, and Small-Scale Landowning Rancheros of the Caxcana, Jalisco: A History of the Rise of the Rancho and a Proposed Definition

Toward A History and Definition of the Rancho: The Case of the Caxcana

The rancho in the Caxcana is characterized by three broad categories of scale: 400 to 600 hectares, 100 to 400 hectares, and five to 100 hectares, respectively, large, medium, and small scale. At first glance, these categories may seem arbitrary or too schematic, but I argue that each tell a discernable story not just about the rancho itself but about the meanings of land tenure and rural social relations in twentieth century Mexico more generally. In the Caxcana, the land grew more divided into an ever-increasing number of ranchero landowners. But ranchero landownership did not fit into a single category in the region; while all identified as rancheros or *pequeños propietarios* and collectively thwarted agrarian reform in the Caxcana, they each practiced a politics of ranchero landownership particular to the scale and quality of land they owned. As individual small, medium, or large scale owners, rancheros produced a landscape that redefined agricultural production and rural politics in the region.

Based on land litigations of the period, some local historians will argue that owning 400 hectares or more already bore the clear mark of great landownership, critically understood as *latifundismo*, and such form of tenure should not be considered by any means a rancho, particularly in a region like the Caxcana, where land did not abound. They may further argue that these property owners, however smallholders they may claim to be before a judge, are simply your typical large landowning hacendados shrewdly disguising themselves for their benefit so as to prevent land grabbing and expropriation. If it is in fact the case, the argument further goes, that they called themselves *pequeños propietarios* and they claimed that their land allowed them *una vida decente* (a decent life) but no more, we should not take their word for it.

And yet, such arguments against naming these large-scale owners *rancheros* have internal flaws that I will attempt to unpack as I analyze the rancho in this chapter.

On the one hand, to depict property owners as deceitful and abusive of their power is already a tired trope in Mexican historiography which implies a paradigm of oppression not only already proposed ad nauseum but one that at any rate loses its meaning in the story of land tenure and transformation I tell here. On the other, I would like to suggest that even if these larger landowning *rancheros* took an unsurprising recourse in the past to formulate a landowner's consciousness (be that one that aspired *hacendado* status), a series of transformative factors rendered these landowners smallholders *in effect*. Some of these factors are related to official classification. As the term *pequeños propietarios* came into institutional and general usage in the Mexican censuses and government decrees, the classificatory shift officially redefined landowners, generating crucial political and economic implications in a way that simultaneously also legitimated the new category. Other factors, as I will elaborate in the chapter, have to do with land reconfiguration increasingly driven and determined by a family's owner's fight against agrarian reform, but also by broader phenomenon such as increased commercialization, technological innovations, and emigration. But all of these same forces of change allowed for not just large-scale *pequeños propietarios* but small and medium-scale *rancheros* to come to the forefront in the twentieth century, filling the void left by the dominant *hacienda* and replacing its place with new socio-cultural, political, and economic forms.

One of the first definitions of the *pequeña propiedad* in the twentieth century was outlined in 1915 through a series of legally established decrees. According to these circulars, the *pequeña propiedad* was to be between "50 and 100 hectares of irrigated land."¹ Nevertheless, the

¹ Arturo Warman, *El campo mexicano en el siglo XX*, (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001), 72.

situation on the ground forced new definitions of the smallholding according to the productive situation of the property owner over the land. The subsequent three decades thus widened the definition of the *pequeña propiedad* into one that would fit the political and economic interests of property owners and politicians (both of whom at times were the same). Arguably for the question of land in twentieth century Mexico, smallholders developed a political space that ran parallel, often untouched, by agrarian reform and which also produced predictably favorable conditions for their position as *rancheros*. By 1947, the definition of the *pequeña propiedad* was incorporated into Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution: “100 hectares of irrigated or humid land, equivalent to 200 hectares of seasonal land, 400 of good quality *agostadero* and 800 of monte, forest, or arid *agostadero*.”² More particular cases further modified this definition when it was deemed that commercial agriculture (of the then most significant crops) of up to 150 hectares would also be protected from expropriation. Livestock ranchers also benefitted from this ad hoc approach to modifying the definition of the *pequeña propiedad* when legislators accepted that their land be protected up to the point where 500 heads of large livestock can be supported.³ These *rancheros* could thus in theory have claimed as a *rancho* anywhere from 400 to more than 1000 hectares to allow 500 heads of livestock to graze in relative comfort. Such enormous quantity could be claimed because, as explained in chapter one, the quality of the land and climate determined how much actual land was needed to allow a head of cattle to graze comfortably.⁴

This ever-expanding definition of the *pequeña propiedad* also made use of specific legal measures to help protect its integrity, particularly in the first decades of agrarian reform. The

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Please see footnote six of chapter one.

greatest legal protection given to a small property holder was the *certificado de inafectabilidad*. According to Arturo Warman, these certificates were first issued in 1937 and that throughout the course of agrarian reform litigations, nearly half a million of these were authorized and signed by the Mexican president.⁵ Federal agrarian law thus grew to incorporate the particular interests of ranchero landowners based on the type of land and the kind of agricultural enterprise carried out on the property. Obtaining a certificate was essential for many property owners of 150 hectares or more. The owner would take his petition to the corresponding agrarian delegate, who in turn checked the veracity of the documents presented. The delegate then surveyed the petitioner's land, taking special note whether the land was productive and if all seemed in order. Then, he would publicly announce the petition, giving surrounding landowners around three weeks to contest.⁶ The next step entailed determining whether the petitioner didn't already have more land registered that might surpass the small property in scale. In a relatively timely manner, the delegate submitted the landowner's petition to the *Cuerpo Consultivo Agrario* in charge of making a ruling within thirty days. If the ruling was found favorable, it would then be sent to the Mexican President for final approval.⁷

⁵ Warman, *El campo mexicano en el siglo XX*, 73.

⁶ Arnulfo Embriz and Laura Ruiz, *Guía del Archivo General Agrario Vol. 2*, 41-42. (Mexico City/Tlalpan: Registro Agrario Nacional, Archivo General Agrario, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1999). "El artículo 354 de la Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria señaló que los dueños de predios que de acuerdo con esa ley fueran inafectables, podían solicitar la expedición del certificado de inafectabilidad correspondiente. La solicitud se presentaba ante el delegado agrario con los documentos conducentes. Dentro de los diez días siguientes, el delegado mandaba inspeccionar el predio para comprobar la veracidad de las pruebas aportadas, especialmente que la propiedad estuviera en explotación. Transcurrido el plazo, citaba a los núcleos agrarios ubicados dentro del radio legal de afectación y a los propietarios colindantes de la finca para que en un plazo de veinte días expusieran lo que a su derecho conviniera."

⁷ Embriz and Ruiz, *Guía del Archivo General Agrario Vol. 2*, *ibid.* "Asimismo, el artículo 353 señaló que la dependencia encargada de la política agraria se cercioraría de que el solicitante no tuviera inscrita en el Registro Agrario Nacional la propiedad de otros terrenos que, sumados a aquéllos cuya inafectabilidad se solicitaba, rebasaran la extensión de la pequeña propiedad; revisaba el expediente y con base en los documentos que se encontraran en él, los turnaba al Cuerpo Consultivo Agrario (CCA), el cual debía elaborar un dictamen en el término de 30 días, para que fuera sometido a la consideración del presidente de la República. Si ésta era favorable, ordenaba que se publicara en el Diario Oficial de la Federación y en el Periódico Oficial de la entidad

In the Caxcana, a *ranchero* owning less than 100 hectares did not feel compelled to travel around to secure a *certificado*; at no point did anyone with that amount of property become subject to land expropriation. Medium and large scale *ranchero* owners did seek protection under these federal laws, however, and in so doing, *rancheros* as a whole stood to gain from a landowning identity that the central government increasingly recognized as a political force. Forging such an identity on the ground was not easy because the *rancho* itself was not easy to define, particularly not on scale alone; at times, the *pequeña propiedad* was as large as a small *hacienda* or as small as a pittance of land. Size notwithstanding, the definition of the small landholding became crucial in the twentieth century, particularly in the wake of agrarian reform when being able to prove the definition of land ownership as a *pequeña propiedad* and to demonstrate its agricultural productivity meant for some the difference between land expropriation or exemption from it. Through a protracted negotiation between land tenure politics from above and below, the story of twentieth century rural Mexico, from the perspective of the Caxcana, thus became the story of private property in general and of the *pequeña propiedad* in particular.

So how may one come to a focused definition of the *pequeñas propiedades* that numerically dominated the Caxcana landscape? Broadly speaking, one can classify the types of smallholdings in the Caxcana into three meaningful categories. The first encompasses a scale between 400 to 600 hectares, representing the largest class of landowning smallholders. Their cases shed light on the fall of the *hacienda*, the regional onslaught against agrarian reform, and how they came to emblemize the kind of socioeconomic and political dominance that took hold

correspondiente, además de inscribirla en el RAN. El artículo 82 del Reglamento Interior del Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización, y el artículo 338, fracciones XIII y XIV, del Código Agrario de 1942, ordenaban que la Sección de Inscripciones de Inafectabilidad Agrícola y Ganadera debía encargarse de registrar los certificados de inafectabilidad y las declaratorias sobre superficies inafectables, así como de las modificaciones y derogaciones.”

over the region. The second type of smallholder owned between 100 and 300 hectares. This medium-sized *ranchero* smallholding class is fascinating in its own right, revealing the more dynamic economic arrangements that took hold across the region between property owners in order to diversify sources of income as well as demonstrating as a group a keener consciousness of their position as landowning smallholders. The third smallholding category ranges between five and 100 hectares, exemplifying ranchers more deeply and closely embedded in the daily toils of agricultural production and livestock raising with the attendant struggles of engaging in these as productively as possible, which included emigrating to the United States to find sources of capital or to try to pass as *ejidatarios* in order to have access to more land. Moreover, these small-scale landowning *rancheros* allow us particular insight into the lowest subset of landowners broadly known as *minifundistas*, those that are not quite smallholders but neither altogether landless. *Rancheros*, regardless of land scale, were often times relatives or close acquaintances and looked over one another when it came to shared interests. Other times, their interests were at odds with one another. These categories thus overlapped at times, most especially at the seams, but without delineating the characteristics that give each category its particular accent, the end result would mean a return to the vague lot of ranchers presented in past historiography.

Large-Scale Landowning Rancheros

Large smallholders are often not surprisingly confused with *hacendados*. The amount of land owned surely allowed the large smallholder many of the benefits of an *hacendado*, such as owning a second house in the city and a solid economic cushion on which to fall when violence or hunger threatened the region. The *hacienda*-owning class has already been studied

extensively, often at the expense of the rancho. In this section, thus, my goal is not to compare or contrast one with the other, but rather, to try to explain how large smallholders came to regional preponderance through the weakening and fracturing of the hacienda. In addition, I will also demonstrate how the sheer attack against agrarian reform that took hold in the region was undertaken not so much by hacendados but by these large smallholders. Lastly, the same growing power used by these landowners to fend off agrarian reform would be the same exercised in the region to cement their power.

The death of the hacienda occurred gradually in the region. The nineteenth century's many economic and political blows played a role in weakening the hacienda, but the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero Rebellion were the most important factors to sever its dominance. These large landowning rancheros were owners of some of the best land, some of which was once a part of an hacienda. Across the region, cases appear in which the Agrarian Reform delegate alleged illegitimate property titles produced to make the hacienda appear as a set of smallholdings. For example, in Cuquío's San Juan del Monte, the delegate recommended that the Agrarian Commission target Silvano González's hacienda, which he argued was divided into several smallholdings between 100 and 140 hectares plus another large holding of 986 hectares all held in ownership under different names. Putting forth damning evidence against the hacendado, the delegate states that "[e]sta última venta [de 986 hectáreas] coincide con la fecha de la solicitud de tierras del poblado de referencia, por lo que se comprende desde luego que se hizo con el premeditado fin de eludir la aplicación de la Ley Agraria en vigor, por lo que no debe tenerse en cuenta."⁸ Further incriminating the hacendado, he states that "[c]on respecto a las

⁸ AHAI, San Juan del Monte. 2744. "With respect to the four sales made via auction, I am of the opinion that these should also not be considered because I am aware that the owner or owner in usufruct of the mentioned Hacienda ceased to pay tax contributions with the deliberate purpose of being the highest bidder in the auction, which did happen, thereby keeping, via a nominal third party, ownership of the properties mentioned."

cuatro ventas efectuadas por remate, soy de opinión que también no se les tome en cuenta pues tengo conocimiento que el propietario o usufructuario de la Hda. que se menciona, dejó de pagar las contribuciones con el deliberado objeto, de ser en el remate, el mejor postor, lo que aconteció quedándose él aunque por interpósita persona en propiedad de las fracciones antes mencionadas.” The owner of the hacienda and the other purported surreptitious titleholders claimed the allegations to be false. Ultimately, however, the evidence showing how Silvano González turned over hundreds of hectares in a bargain closeout auction sale to someone else right after the land petition was made convinced the deciding agrarian reform judge that his property could be expropriated. On top of that, González was shown to also have over 1,500 hectares of land elsewhere in Jalisco.

Here is where the idea of the myth of the pequeño propietario may arise, from cases such as those of Silvano González who clearly parceled up his vast property into different “smallholdings” to prevent losing his land. The myth basically holds that property divisions on paper under different names should not be taken at face value given that large property owners made use of legitimate deed transfers to hide the actual amount of land they owned. The implication here being that the latifundio survived well into the twentieth century and that the smallholding is a guise shrewdly used by neo-hacendados to ward off scrutiny. Ultimately, however, I argue that these cases over time became less and less common. The Mexican Revolution and particularly the Cristero Rebellion forced many hacendados to flee the countryside who in no way wished to become sitting ducks for bandits, rebels, and the federal armed forces. Their vast lands were divided in time either through inheritance or sale. In fact, many hacendados became urban residents, partly making a living from the piecemeal sale of their properties. Far from being the commanders of their grand agricultural enterprises, these

landowners sold much of their land from outside of the region and left the other large portions they had to the administration of family members or trusted acquaintances. J. Guadalupe Ruvalcaba was one such case of several large landowners who, though considered himself an “agricultor” by profession, resided in the city of Guadalajara and sold significant portions of his inheritance over a period of decades.⁹ Ruvalcaba had received his part of the inheritance from his mother, Elodia Torres Vda. de Ruvalcaba, as a young man in the 1930s but by the 1950s was well underway in the sale of a few hundred hectares of that land bequest, effectively becoming a city-dwelling large smallholder.

But the land did not remain void of landowners when the majority of hacendados left region. A great proportion of large landowning rancheros quickly filled the void and, as I demonstrate in chapter four, many took up positions of power left by hacendados. But is this a continuation of the powerful landowner narrative of the hacendado taken up by large landowning rancheros? We may think that we are facing such a narrative of neo-latifundismo in part because of the rhetoric of agrarian reform contained in the official proceedings: agrarian reform officials essentially treated any large property of land as an hacienda. Most large-scale landowning rancheros fitted the profile of a large landowner because they either had enough land that could potentially be expropriated or they had purchased or inherited hacienda lands. Some smallholders became targets by virtue of being related or associated to a large landowner or because their property neighbored a former hacienda. At the beginning of each agrarian reform proceeding, the cards seemed stacked against the landowner and in favor of the petitioners. Upon receiving land petitions from would-be ejidatarios, the agrarian reform proceedings treated the petitioners as landless peasants and the respondents as large property owners of unproductive

⁹ AHAI, Tortuga y Anexos. J. Guadalupe Ruvalcaba’s older brother, who also received a considerable inheritance of land, remained in the region.

land. But, as we will see in the coming sections, it was never the case that property owners had huge unused vacant lots, the majority of these lands were productive. By the same token, neither were petitioners always landless. Even if it was always incumbent upon private property owners to hire a representative to defend their land from expropriation, the prolonged length of time it took to come to an actual legal resolution ultimately favored the property owners. The lengthy process also typically benefitted small property owners even when these bore the burden of defending their land against expropriation.

In the first more formalized stages of agrarian reform, following the Cristero Rebellion, large smallholders realized just how vulnerable they were to agrarian reform. Large landowning rancheros became aware that hacendados were not the sole targets of agrarian reform and that their lands were also up for scrutiny and expropriation. One case, not altogether unique, involved the targeting of hacienda and large smallholding properties in the community of Cuquío, located in the municipality of the same name. Up for grabs were the lands of the Hacienda Cofradía belonging to J. Trinidad Martín Mora and the Hacienda El Llano de Cuquío, owned by Guadalupe Sánchez.¹⁰ The petition was made in 1929 and the final resolution was taken in 1938, a process of just nine years; a comparatively short time considering that many resolutions took thirty or more years to come to fruition. In the end, the ejido was granted to 211 families, comprised of 3,294 hectares taken from both aforementioned hacendados and another large landowner, Ángela Arana Vda. de Sánchez. Those families received between four and eight hectares each, with the remaining used for communal agostadero land (for livestock) and a lot reserved for the new rural school.

¹⁰ AHAJ, Cuquío, Cuquío, Exp. 717.

Such expropriation shook large smallholders into action because their lands too became targets of agrarian reform. These haciendas were surrounded by properties that were large-scale ranchos or perhaps slightly larger. Four large-scale landowning rancheros in particular stood to lose a combined 589 hectares according to the *comité agrario*:

Large Landowning Ranchero	Amount of Land Owned	Amount of Land Targeted
José Sánchez Martín	698 hectares	158 hectares
Margarita González Esteves	777 hectares	176 hectares
Refugio Sánchez J.	419 hectares	95 hectares
María de Jesús Mora Vda. de Mora	482 hectares	109 hectares

Table 2.1 Large-scale landowning rancheros, amounts of land owned, and amount of land targeted for expropriation
Source: AHAJ

For a large landowning ranchero, it must have been an outrageous sight to behold to be put on par with an hacendado, set to lose a proportional amount of land when the economic stakes of expropriation for each seemed incomparable. It was whimsical to aspire some kind of hacendado status on the one hand, but a very different serious matter to be bound to lose land like one. Even though these large-scale rancho lands were neither expropriated nor turned into an ejido, the case set a precedent that all significant large properties would not only be targeted, but that the comisión agraria would not automatically set the rancho apart from the hacienda. The comisión agraria made no distinction between hacienda lands and large-scale ranchos when they outlined properties that could be expropriated; the large-scale rancho of Refugio Sánchez J., which comprised 419 hectares and Guadalupe Sánchez's 6,769 hectares, for example, were treated as one in the same for the purposes of land reform. What this case showed the large

landowning rancheros was the need to propound the virtues of the rancho more loudly and to define themselves as pequeños propietarios more forcefully or for the very first time.

By the early 1940s, large-scale landowning rancheros went in search of a guarantee that might guard against expropriation. One community, El Cerrito, predominantly made up of rancheros foreclosed any possibility of land reform when petitioners asked for land in 1939.¹¹ As the agrarian committee undertook the land request petitions, rancheros simultaneously secured their certificados de inafectabilidad. The following table shows the fourteen certificados issued just in the community of El Cerrito alone:

Ranchero	Certificado de Inafectabilidad: Year Issued	Amount of Hectares Protected
Ignacio L. Moreno	1942	119
Ma. Guadalupe Moreno González	1942	100
María González de Moreno	1942	100
María Ignacia Moreno	1942	140
Silvano González	1942	297
Margarita González Esteves	1943	383
Elena Sánchez	1943	149
Demetrio Sánchez	1943	198
María Dolores Sánchez Martín	1948	200
Josefina Rueda de Sánchez	1948	673
Esperanza Macías de Sánchez	1948	494
Jesús Plasencia Sánchez	1948	106
María Dolores Sánchez	1948	74
David Plasencia Sánchez	1948	110

Table 2.2 Certificates of immunity from expropriation and the amount of hectares protected
Source: AHAIJ

Why a ranchero smallholder would seek to protect seventy-four hectares, as María Dolores Sánchez did, for example, might seem completely unwarranted in retrospect because, as stated

¹¹ AHAIJ, Cerritos (El Cerrito), Exp. 1988.

earlier, no smallholder with land of that scale in the region lost land to agrarian reform. Her case emphasizes the degree to which people panicked into action to protect their lands, even if these had a basic knowledge of agrarian reform or were operating on hearsay. It is also indicative of the cascading effect that agrarian reform had in breaking up larger properties into smaller ones within a family, altering the previous commitment that most large property owners had of leaving their property intact, which was a tendency followed by the hacienda and large smallholdings in earlier periods. The sheer amount of certificates that were obtained in just one community, in this case El Cerrito, underscores the alarm owners felt over agrarian reform and how families were more than willing to make use of new patterns of inheritance by fractioning off their properties among themselves even before the death of the patriarch or his widow. This case demonstrated to *rancheros* that the *certificado de inafectabilidad* as an offensive strategy against the *comisión agraria* worked. In 1963, twenty-four long years after the case of El Cerrito was initiated, the same commission decreed the inadmissibility of the original petition. Even though petitioners were legally entitled to an *ejido*, the commission could not proceed with expropriation because:

“[...] los trabajos técnicos-informativos realizados se demostró que no existen fincas legalmente afectables, ya que todas las fincas son auténticas *pequeñas propiedades*, por lo que el presente expediente, debe negarse por carencia absoluta de fincas afectables.”¹²

The targets of agrarian reform were thus not just those with thousands of hectares of land, but families known in the region to have substantial amounts of land, often between 400 and 600

¹² AHAI, Cerritos (El Cerrito), Exp. 1988. ““the technical works undertaken demonstrated that no properties exist that may be legally expropriated because the properties are authentic *pequeñas propiedades*, therefore, the present file should be denied for lacking properties that may be expropriated [my emphasis].”

hectares. Along with medium smallholders, whom will next be examined, they showed a collective and successful resistance against agrarian reform and land expropriation. While some had access to knowledge about the exemptions agrarian reform made in favor of smallholdings, the general population of smallholders was not counseled or learned in agrarian code and had legitimate fears of losing their land, including small smallholders but especially medium smallholders, as we will analyze next.

Medium-Scale Landowning Rancheros

It was not uncommon to see medium-scale landowning rancheros intertwined in agrarian reform litigations dealing with large-scale landowning rancheros. As the above case of El Cerrito shows, the great majority of owners that requested a certificado de inafectabilidad were medium smallholders. The process of securing a certificado de inafectabilidad was one shared among large and medium ranchero landholders, but seldom do we get a sense of the actual legal proceeding and what the implications for self-identifying as a pequeño propietario had for the outcomes of agrarian reform. In the following example, I show what the legal proceeding of defending a large-scale rancho entailed, including the legal terminology used which served to define and defend the property. I use this case because even though the large-scale ranchero landowner might have stood to lose more by agrarian reform, the medium-scale ranchero took center stage when it came to defending their lands, ringing the bell that expropriation was no longer a problem of hacendados, but a general problem across the countryside that spread to rancheros. With the hacienda in demise, the future pointed to a land of ranchos, and whether received through inheritance or acquired by purchase, no land could be lost to agrarian reform. Engaging the process of protecting their lands undoubtedly cemented a “ranchero consciousness”

in a way that fed and perhaps legitimated the official title given to them in the Mexican census of “pequeños propietarios.”

It was thus not surprising that since they had even less, though still a significant amount of land, medium-scale smallholders pressed more concertedly to protect their 100 to approximately 400 hundred hectares of property when confronted by the comisión agraria. They did so in two main ways. The first was by proving that their land was a smallholding via a certificado de inafectabilidad and the other was to simply, but convincingly, claim that it was so, relying on the agrarian reform codes to make their case. There were dozens of certificados de inafectabilidad issued to landowners in the Caxcana. One case involves the community of San Gabriel (which emerged from the former Hacienda of San Gabriel). Long after agrarian reform had come to a halt due to an insufficient amount of lands to expropriate, rural workers in San Gabriel put forth an agrarian reform petition, requesting an ejido from the lands in which they had worked since time immemorial, claiming “que desde nuestros ancestros hemos venido trabajando la tierra de esta Hacienda, donde como hijos de hacienda y única ocupación habitual a sido trabajarla.”¹³ Nevertheless, San Gabriel had long stopped functioning as an hacienda, and although collective memory still held on to the many lived experiences of hacienda life, the land there was already greatly divided into ranchos. The worker’s petition thus seemed anachronistic on two fronts: there was no more distributable land on the one hand, and, on the other, the Hacienda de San Gabriel stopped operating as such around the 1920s. One broader event that may serve to explain such anachronism is President Díaz Ordaz’ (1964-1970) concerted attempt

¹³ AHAI, Hacienda de San Gabriel, Exp. 3973. “[T]hat since the time of our ancestors we have been working the land of this Hacienda, where as children of the hacienda and sole daily occupation has been to work the land.” Here, one should note that there’s a difference between claiming that agrarian reform did not take root simply because the land “was already divided” or because workers did not feel inferior to landowners as explicitly stated by important authors of the Mexican Bajío. One finds a social process exceptionally rich in interactions that involved many types of land divisions (some of which were surreptitious that over time became legitimately divided) as well as tensions between social groups that may or may not have produced the possibility of a more widespread agrarian reform.

to breathe new life into agrarian reform in order to settle old and new land petitions in the hopes of bringing agrarian reform to an end by distributing millions of hectares of land.¹⁴ In this sense, Díaz Ordaz revived efforts of land request. What may serve to explain the second anachronism is not the the hacienda persisted into the twentieth century but rather, that the fall of the hacienda and the prevalence of the smallholding changed the way in which rural workers sought wages and fought to make a living by making the target of landowning power much less discernable and more scattered but still present.

The case of San Gabriel is particularly suggestive since owners there were represented by Rigoberto González Quezada, at the time president of the *Federación de la Pequeña Propiedad Agrícola, Ganadera y Forestal de Jalisco*. González Quezada did not randomly represent the local interests of property owners; he essentially went to Cuquío on a family assignment to represent his relatives using his official badge from the *Federación*. Those landowners were his elder aunts and uncles, close cousins of his father, Felipe González Gallo, the local boss who is examined in chapter three. Representing the landowners involved some rhetorical legal juggling. If the owner's land was protected by a certificado de inafectabilidad in its entirety, then all that would suffice was to cite the certificate and the land would be exempt from land reform. Nevertheless, it was not almost ever the case that all of the owner's properties were included under a certificate. When this happened in the case of San Gabriel, González Quezada carefully worded his plea, emphasizing that the entirety of the property was a 'smallholding' despite the fact that not all of it was protected under a certificate:

Pido: PRIMERO.—Previo los tramites legales, se respete la pequeña propiedad de nuestro socio el Sr. Jacinto Jiménez González constituida por los predios rusticos denominados “La Tortuga” hoy “La Joyita”, “La Tortuga” hoy “La Meza” fracción del

¹⁴ “[R]evivió esa orientación y llevo a cabo el reparto más grande en extensión para atender la presión campesina y con clara intención de culminar con el reparto. Esa decisión no pudo evitar el estallido de una crisis de gran magnitud y muy larga duración en la producción agropecuaria,” *ibid.*

predio “La Meza”, fracción del Rancho “La Martinica” o “Martinica de Arriba” ubicadas todas ellas en el Mpio. de Cuquío, Jal., y que por constituir una legítima y auténtica pequeña propiedad en explotación de origen y por lo tanto inafectable en todos sus términos para cualquier Acción Agraria, como se establece en el Certificado de Inafectabilidad No. 159427.¹⁵

The properties that González Quezada cites would automatically be removed from potential expropriation given that they are legally protected by a certificate, yet the remaining properties of his clients had to also be accounted for. He thus used the codified definition of what constituted a “legitimate and authentic small property” as found in the articles of agrarian reform in order to protect the rest of the smallholder’s property:

Por la calidad de sus tierras, extensión superficial y antecedentes legales, el predio rústico denominado “La Cañada”, constituye una auténtica pequeña propiedad en explotación y de origen de conformidad a lo establecido en la fracción XV del artículo 27 Constitucional, con relación a los artículos 249 de la Ley Federal de la Reforma Agraria.¹⁶

Or, additionally:

¹⁵ AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 22. ““I hereby request: First.—Prior to the legal proceedings, that the pequeña propiedad of our associate Mr. Jacinto Jimenes Gonzalez be respected, it is constituted by the properties named ‘La Tortuga’ today known as ‘La Joyita’, ‘La Tortuga’ today known as ‘La Meza’ plot belonging to ‘La Meza’, plot of the Rancho ‘La Martinica’ or ‘Martinica de Arriba’ located in the Municipality of Cuquío, Jalisco, and that because it constitutes a legitimate and authentic pequeña propiedad in operation and therefore not subject to expropriation in all of the terms outlined in Agrarian Action, as established in the Certificate of Immunity No. 159427.” He followed the same argument to defend the properties of Salvador González Torres (119 hectares, no Certificado de Inafectabilidad), José González González (227 hectares, partially protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Armando de Robles Torres (155 hectares, partially protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Daniel de Robles Torres (739 hectares partially protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Porfirio Escobar Reyes (90 hectares, protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Luis Prieto Pérez (60 hectares, protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Ma. Dolores Torres Alatorre Vda. de Robles (384 hectares partially protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Daniel González Mora (59 hectares not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Severiano González Torres (43 hectares not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Srita. Elia Del Refugio González Mora (58 hectares, not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Ruben González Mora (59 hectares, not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Juana Mora Ayala (10 hectares, not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), Srita. Ma. Guadalupe Mora Ayala (10 hectares, not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), José Francisco Mora Ayala (10 hectares, not protected), Esperanza Mora Ayala (20 hectares, not protected by a Certificado de Inafectabilidad), AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, *ibid* and *in passim*.

¹⁶ AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 91.

el [pequeño propietario], siempre ha tenido la posesión en forma pública, continua, pacífica, de buena fé, a título de dueño y siempre la ha explotado en la medida de sus posibilidades.¹⁷

For González Quezada, citing not just the law but alluding to the spirit of the law, as the above language suggests, was equally important. Combining this language typed on paper fashioning the watermark of the Federation was also part of the way in which upholding the preservation of the smallholding was staged. The logo was an outline of the state of Jalisco with a ripened corn peering out of its husk pictured on its center. Invoking a sense that what was at stake was the productivity of the land, González Quezada followed with a blunt statement:

Previo los trámites legales se respeta la pequeña propiedad, constituida por el predio rústico denominado “La Cañada”, ubicada en el Mpio. de Cuquío, Jal., por constituir una legítima y auténtica pequeña propiedad en explotación de origen y por lo tanto inafectable en todos sus términos para cualquier Acción Agraria.¹⁸

Yet petitioners here were not asking to kill production on the lands they were requesting; in the style of Emiliano Zapata, they claimed to be “sons of the hacienda,” justifying their petition on the basis that they wanted possession over it because they worked the land.¹⁹

But production and productivity were two different things. In a place like the Caxcana, where nearly every arable inch of land was productively worked, it was nearly impossible to lay any claim over someone else’s property. What is more, by the 1970s, as chapter four shows, agricultural productivity had soared, rendering any land reform request even weaker. The land was in fact so parceled out among owners, that not one of the seventy-two land petitions made

¹⁷ AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 31.

¹⁸ AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 91.

¹⁹ The Federation’s president cited Article 27 with respect to articles 249 and 250 of the Federal Agrarian Reform, AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 21.

across all four municipalities requested land based on its idleness.²⁰ The petitioners were ultimately denied an ejido because not enough of them lived within the *radio de afectación*.²¹ What we may instead understand as the subtext of these land petitions is not the struggle by the landless to take over idle land, but rather, to take over land that one is contracted to work under. Agrarian reform in this sense was used as a short-term attempt to break from the system of contracts between smallholders and *aparceros*, which might benefit the latter if a bad crop year or personal circumstance may be leading him to breach the agreed upon terms with the former. Ultimately, the President of the Federación de Pequeñas Propiedades obtained the results sought. As it turns out, the efforts made by him and the smallholders of defending over two dozen smallholders and writing letters on behalf of the fifteen particular ones was ultimately not needed or considered since half of the petitioners, compelled to leave the region because of a lack of work, did not fulfill the basic residency requirement necessary for a land grant.²²

What, then, did landless farmers do when they were denied an ejido? The question here is better answered by asking what position these petitioners had vis-à-vis land tenure prior to their land request. As previously stated, petitioners were recruited from a pool of landless contracted rural laborers. But another group comprising petitioners had land, albeit insufficient or hardly enough for subsistence. Lastly, petitioners also came from groups who were actually *bona fide* smallholders or already ejidatarios. This broad range of backgrounds allows for a

²⁰ Here one must note that up to half of cultivable land was put “to rest” so as to allow renourishing; these lands, though not cultivated do not fit into the definition of “tierras ociosas” under the formal codes of Agrarian Reform.

²¹ AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 110. “En esas condiciones, si la capacidad de los núcleos de población es un presupuesto fundamental para promover la acción de Dotación de Ejido, conforme al artículo 196, fracción II, de la Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria, interpretado a “contrario sensu”, y esta no se dá, en la especie no se cumple con los requisitos establecidos por la Ley de la Materia por lo que se considera procedente dictaminar el expediente de que se trata en el presente en sentido negativo, y remitirlo al C. Gobernador Constitucional del Estado a efecto de que emita el Mandamiento Provisional, sin que ello implique que los peticionarios, o cualesquier otros, previo cumplimiento de los requisitos de procedibilidad, estén en aptitud de promover la Acción Agraria que corresponda.” Ibid, 110-111.

²² AHAI, Exp. 3973, Hacienda de San Gabriel, 115.

more nuanced answer to the question of denied or approved requests for land. Put together, one can resume these three pools of petitioners as grappling not just with the question of subsistence, but reacting to an increasing dynamism in access to labor and an intensification of land use that constantly informed the actions of smallholders of medium and small scale and those rural workers with less land alike.

The problematics of securing work thus did not just fall on rural workers, but on smallholders as well. Smallholdings were a source of employment for countless rural workers in the region. In one land petition begun in 1954 in the community of La Tortuga, the petitioners were jornaleros who sought land from the larger nearby large landholdings because the surrounding smallholdings, they claimed, were no longer able to hire them.²³ The main source of employment for rural workers in the Caxcana had become the smallholding. By this time, agricultural productivity was on the rise, producing tensions in the regional market for work and employment. As stated, we cannot view agrarian reform as parting from a mere dichotomy between landowners and the landless. Nevertheless, to the extent to which landless workers sought a way to possess land of their own to work on, smallholders interrupted those attempts with strong opposition. Smallholders signaled to all that they were a collective force against agrarian reform, claiming to work the land individually and collectively for the good of the region's productivity.

In this sense, even when the president of the Federación de la Pequeña Propiedad did not come to their aid, smallholders came together on their own to defend their properties by appropriating the notion of rural productivity. When petitioners in La Tortuga requested land from the seven-mile radius in question, medium smallholder Benito Torres took it upon himself

²³ AHAI, La Tortuga y Anexos, Exp. 3230, 3.

to legally dismantle the entire petition by proving that it lacked the basic requirements. Torres contended that after the census was taken, only one person qualified for an ejido (indeed, not enough to move the petition forward) with the rest living in neighboring ranches and communities far removed from the required “radio de afectación.”²⁴ Some of the petitioners, according to Torres, were even in fact already ejidatarios trying to increase their land share. Not intending to associate himself with these surreptitious ejidatarios, Torres went as far as to claim that him and the surrounding smallholders were ejidatarios of sorts, not in name but in spirit, already having a smallholding and in no need of agrarian reform. On behalf of the small property owners of the area, he patently demanded that the land petition be annulled on the basis that both the letter and the spirit of the law be followed, stating that:

Por consiguiente, el rancho de La Tortuga, Municipio de Cuquío, Jal., no satisface ninguno de los requisitos que como necesarios exigen los artículos 54 y 51 fracción II del Código Agrario a nombre y representación y expresamente autorizado por los pequeños propietarios de la región que entre paréntesis hago la aclaración que son en mayor número que los solicitantes puesto que la propiedad se encuentra intensamente dirigida entre *pequeños propietarios tipo ejidatario*, solicitamos se niegue la dotación solicitada por no ser sujeto de derecho agrario [my emphasis].²⁵

The petition in this community was also denied because the Comisión Agraria did not find land that could be made subject to expropriation. The entire area was surrounded by pequeñas propiedades, leaving Torres’ accusations against the petitioners in the back burner.

As the Comisión Agraria determined, the lands under scrutiny were predominantly those of medium smallholders, notably among them:

²⁴ AHAI, La Tortuga y Anexos, Exp. 3230.

²⁵ Ibid. “Therefore, the rancho of La Tortuga, Municipality of Cuquío, Jalisco, does not satisfy any of the prerequisites that are required by articles 54 and 51 fraction II of the Agrarian Code in name and representation and as explicitly authorized by the pequeños propietarios of the region [that] in parenthesis I clarify are the majority of the petitioners given that the property is predominantly managed among ejidatario-type smallholders, we demand that the land grant be denied because it is not subject to agrarian right.”

Medium Landowning Smallholder	Amount of Hectares Owned	Quality of Land
J. Trinidad Sánchez Mercado; Maura Ma. De Jesús Mora; Josefa Sánchez Mora	204	70% seasonal 30% pasturage
Silvia González Limón	278	85% lower quality pasturage 15% greater quality pasturage
Daniel de Robles Torres	310	unspecified
Rigoberto González Limón	145	50% seasonal 50% pasturage
Carmen Mercado de Orozco	216	50% seasonal 50% pasturage
José González González	186	20% seasonal 80% pasturage
J. Guadalupe Ruvalcaba Torres	192	unspecified
Juan Prieto Pérez	284	unspecified
Porfirio Escobar Reyes	90	unspecified
Apolinar González González	195	80% seasonal 20% pasturage

Table 2.3 Medium-scale landowning rancheros, amount of hectares owned, and quality of land

Source: AHAI

What comes into stronger relief in the case of medium smallholders that was much less apparent with large smallholders is the question of how to intensify productivity of the land. Land for the vast majority of medium smallholders was divided along its quality, which determined its purpose (generally speaking, seasonal quality land was used for agricultural production, while pasturage was namely used for livestock raising). Agricultural production, on the one hand, was not simply an individual's effort to sow and harvest crops, but was rather a socially dynamic array of dealings between smallholders, merchants, and rural workers to make of agriculture as much a business involving subsistence and commercial crops as it was the commodification of the land itself. These men and women regularly dealt in speculation and rentierism but also in

legal proceedings and contractual conflicts. On the other hand, even though pasturage land was just as deeply enmeshed in an ever-increasing move toward commercialization and profit-making, the social process of working these lands was much more closed off and limited to a smaller number of individuals controlling and overseeing ruminants more than hired hands. Dealing with agostadero lands required setting up enclosures to keep livestock from invading agricultural lands not yet harvested; these enclosures in turn had to be kept in good condition because it was not at all uncommon for cattle to be shot dead when they have stepped into another property owner's crops. What can be discerned here beyond the long-held, analytically depthless, notion that livestock grazing and agricultural production were complimentary activities geared for the farmer's livelihood, is that dealing in both economic arenas produced a tension that pulled smallholders into different directions and social situations.²⁶

To dovetail once more into the case of the community of La Tortuga, one might better understand why the aspects of seasonal agriculture figured more prominently over those of livestock raising. We see, for example, that one important reason smallholders wanted to prevent agrarian reform was precisely because they feared that land distribution would significantly reduce their source of labor to the point of causing trouble and agitation.²⁷ Acting as the new arbiters of the regional economy, crops and rural productivity, they further argued, would suffer should agrarian reform take root in the region.²⁸ For these pequeños propietarios, the question of agrarian reform was not just about land, but also about the threat of losing a

²⁶ This notion is used often when describing both sectors, even in works solely focused on the livestock sector, see, for example, Gabriel Ascencio Franco, *Los mercaderes de la carne*, 58.

²⁷ AHAI, La Tortuga y Anexos, Exp. 3230.

²⁸ Ibid. "Por ultimo deseo dejar establecido para orientación de esa H. Autoridad que todos los predios rústicos situados dentro del radio de 7 kilómetros tienen el carácter de inafectable y si es que hacemos esta defensa en común, es debido a que el peligro es colectivo no por afectación sino por las consecuencias que implican la agitación de los trabajadores, para obtener mayor rendimiento reclaman paz y tranquilidad."

portion of their labor pool. On the other hand, as smallholders fought against the formation of ejidos, smallholdings, paradoxically, were also often fashioned into private communal lands of sorts for the purposes of livestock raising. There's the case, for example, of Salvador Ruvalcaba, Benito González Becerra, and Leobardo Torres González, who were co-owners of 155 hectares of pasturage land they called El Cerro. Their co-owned property, which allowed them an average of fifty hectares each to keep and graze their cattle, was needless to say untouchable. The tension wrought from simultaneously producing for the livestock and agricultural sectors was layered, for while some continued to balance a life attempting to reap benefits from each, others subsumed agricultural production under cattle ranching, producing crops that were geared toward the commercialization of livestock raising and no longer for human consumption. That agriculture in time would begin to heavily focus on the production of sorghum and corn feed underscores how the struggles fought by pequeños propietarios to secure good agricultural land and cheap labor would yield great benefits for the region's livestock sector.

Land served purposes beyond agriculture and cattle ranching, it was also a form of liquidity for rancheros. As in the case of large smallholders, some medium smallholders also attended their agricultural affairs from without the region, selling or renting parts of their property. Some of these activities give us a glimpse into land values based on land purchases that included those that had a certificado de inafectabilidad attached to them. The following is land purchased from a former hacienda:

Year of Purchase	Purchasing Ranchero	Amount of Hectares Purchased	Price	Quality of Land	Certificado de Inafectabilidad, Year Issued
1954	Filiberta Gómez Uribe	60	\$200 pesos	agostadero cerril árido	1952
1954	“ “	50	\$200	not specified	1952

			pesos		
1954	“ “	63	\$200 pesos	not specified	1952

Table 2.4 Purchasing rancheros, amount of hectares purchased, quality of land and certificates of immunity from expropriation

Source: AHAI

The above purchase by Gómez Uribe was land belonging to an ex-hacienda, whose owners had secured a certificado de inafectabilidad prior to dividing the property among family members or selling large parts of it. But how is the sale of land characterized outside of a certificado? The following buyers provide a window into an average sale between smallholders, the sellers of whom all spent part of the year living in Guadalajara:

Year of Purchase	Purchasing Ranchero	Amount of Land Purchased	Price	Quality of Land
1953	J. Gertrudis González González	79 hectares	\$400	90% cerril 10% laborable mala calidad
1950	Miguel González	5 hectares and 28 areas	\$200	temporal and agostadero
1950	“ “	54 hectares	\$1,000	not specified
1950	“ “	5 hectares 29 areas	\$100	not specified

Table 2.5 Purchasing rancheros, amount of hectares purchased, quality of land, and price of land

Source: AHAI

Even though the years between the sales of land protected with a certificado and those that were not fall in close range, there is a great variability in the price of land. One can conclude that having a certificado de inafectabilidad attached to your purchased land did not so much add to the value of the land, though it might have affected the value negatively if the land was targeted by the government and the owner had not secured a deed of immunity. In this next sample of purchases between smallholders, the variability of prices is even more apparent, even when the land purchases were made in different years:

Buyer	Year of Acquisition	Type of Acquisition	Amount in Hectares-Areas-Centiareas	Price
J. Refugio Sánchez González	1918	Inheritance	1-05-00	\$56
	1918	Inheritance	130-09-50	\$4,850
	1950	Purchase	3-20-19	\$150
J. Refugio Sánchez Medina	1937	Close-out	16-65-76	\$2,000
	1942	Purchase	78-98-00	\$8,000
	1948	Purchase	39-97-00	\$6,000
Benito Torres González	1920	Purchase	155-64-39	\$4,800
Alfonso Sánchez Martin	1950	Purchase	290-00-00	\$6,000
Federico Sánchez González	1951	Purchase	384-00-00	\$9,020
Emigdio Sánchez González	1918	Inheritance	412-60-00	\$8,420
	1926	Purchase	0-76-00	\$200
	1945	Purchase	3-23-00	\$500
Canuto Sánchez Lario	1928	Purchase	0-22-00	\$10
	1944	Purchase	1-41-00	\$40
			0-74-00	\$20
			0-72-38	\$15
			86-39-00	\$3,000
			3-09-00	\$150
Rosalío Mercado Sánchez	1934	Purchase	135-00-00	\$4,500
Rosalío Mercado Ayala	1914	Purchase	4-80-00	\$160
	1911	Inheritance	64-74-88	\$3,000
	1933	Close-out Purchase	64-98-00	\$2,000
	1945	Close-out Purchase	86-04-00	\$2000
	1945	Purchase	24-90-00	\$900

Carmen Mercado Sánchez	1934	Purchase	200-00-00	\$8,300
Mercedes Sánchez de Mercado	1919	Purchase	0-08-78	?
			0-86-52	\$40
			1-40-00	\$100
	1944	Purchase	65-72-10	\$2,000
María Refugio Sánchez González	1919	Inheritance	285-30-00	\$5,500
			10-69-00	\$713
			70-58-00	\$1,820
	1918	Inheritance	53-00-00	\$1,610
	1925	Purchase	0-10-00	\$50
Elisa Martin González	1952	Inheritance	25-00-00	\$1,100
José Martin González	1952	Inheritance	25-00-00	\$1,100
Antonio Sigala Ramírez	1924	Purchase	1-83-00	\$100
	1926	Purchase	1-75-79	\$125
	1930	Purchase	1-19-00	\$25
	1945	Purchase	45-49-40	\$1,500
J. Felix Gutiérrez Huerta	1946	Purchase	58-13-60	\$1,600
J. Luis Sánchez González	1918	Inheritance	200-00-00	\$6,000
J. Isaac Sánchez Soto	1953	Purchase	1-86-10	\$100
			60-95-30	\$1,590
			60-95-31	\$1590
Miguel González González	1950	Purchase	54-09-17	\$1,225
			0-04-00	\$4
			5-28-00	\$500
		Purchase	5-29-00	\$500
			0-29-98	\$150
	1951	Purchase	96-04-00	\$2,300
	1951	Purchase	16-23-00	\$800
	1951	Purchase	1-00-00	\$100
J. Jesús	1947	Purchase	15-00-00	\$700

Rodríguez López				
			20-00-00	\$1,000
Joaquín Sánchez Larios	1941	Purchase	18-46-35	\$400
	1954	Purchase	64-19-00	\$1,500
María del Rosario Mora Mora	1900	Manifestado	58-79-00	\$740
	1900	Manifestado	6-41-00	\$280
	1944	Adjudication	56-86-40	?
			14-75-52	?
María Sánchez Viuda de Vallarta	1954	Purchase	18-46-35	\$750
			18-46-39	\$800
			18-46-35	\$800
			21-00-00	\$1,000
Enrique Sánchez González	1941	Purchase	28-00-00	\$800
Manuel Figueroa Orozco	1940	Purchase	195-00-00	\$3,500
Alejandro Sánchez Mora	1944	Purchase	6-41-00	\$280
	1954	Purchase	11-59-00	\$450
			56-86-40	\$1,213
			64-19-00	\$1,800
Josefa Mora Viuda de Sánchez	1886	Manifestado	58-79-00	\$740
	1929	Inheritance	6-41-00	\$280
	1931	Purchase	5-00-00	\$150
	1944	Adjudication	14-72-56	\$570
			56-86-40	\$1,213
Francisco Sánchez Sigala	1945	Purchase	99-19-03	\$5,000
			0-80-00	\$6
			0-00-97	\$14
Rafael Estevez Muñoz	1929	Purchase	0-02-00	\$10
	1934	Purchase	5-51-30	\$75
	1950	Purchase	144-00-00	\$1,440
	1951	Purchase	56-09-45	\$560

	1953	Purchase	3-43-25	\$200
Juan Sánchez Mora	1946	Purchase	2-49-00	\$32
	1954	Purchase	17-42-00	\$250
			98-41-50	\$1,048
	1954	Purchase	192-83-01	\$2,000
	1954	Purchase	98-41-51	\$1,049
Eduardo Rostro Luna	1912	Manifestado	70-00-57	\$5,850
	1930	Purchase	1-12-56	\$60
	1952	Purchase	1-89-43	\$250
Salvador Sánchez Sigala	1929	Manifestado	58-79-00	\$750
	1900	Manifestado	6-41-00	\$280
	1944	Adjudication	56-86-40	\$1,213
			0-59-00	\$24
			14-66-00	\$570
Rafael Esteves Contreras	1944	Purchase	58-79-00	\$1,500
			56-86-40	\$3,000
			51-95-27	\$400

Table 2.6 Assessing relationship between certificates of immunity from expropriation and value of land
Source: AHAI

A perusal of the price of land purchased by these smallholders shows the great variability in the cost of each hectare across time. Taking a slice of the early 1950s, one can observe that the amount of hectares purchased shows how price variability tends to be greater when buying less than fifty hectares. Between 1952 and 1954, for example, \$250 pesos could buy you up to seventeen hectares or as little as less than two. On the other hand, as the amount of hectares increased significantly, the price gap was much more closed, likely because the quality of land tended to be more mixed as the number of hectares rose. For example, in 1954 the price of sixty-four hectares was \$1,800 pesos and fifty-six hectares \$1,213. In other words, the price per hectare in the first case was \$14.70 pesos and \$21.66 pesos respectively, whereas in the second example it was \$28.13 pesos per hectare versus \$21.66 pesos per hectare, respectively. What namely explains the price per hectare is the quality of land. Most likely, paying \$125 per hectare

afforded the smallholder a significant source or access to water whereas paying \$14.70 pesos per hectare might have provided the owner agostadero pasturage land of mixed quality. Paying \$21 to \$28 pesos per hectare is an average price range for the purchase of seasonal and agostadero land of varying qualities in the 1950s; high quality seasonal and pasturage lands were rarely for sale. There was undeniably much at stake for the medium smallholder, who protected his lands as fervently, if not more so, than the large smallholder. In order to understand the broader tensions at play in land tenure, and to examine the way in which smallholders were not a harmonious group unto itself, one must also lastly bring the small smallholders into the analytical fold.

Small-Scale Landowning Rancheros

The rancheros with the least amount of land had properties that ranged between ten and 100 hectares. They fit into a subcategory of pequeños propietarios because they show characteristics in common that compels one to include them in the group. Whereas large smallholders could pass as hacendados or medium smallholders could pose in some way as large smallholders, small-scale landowning rancheros were known at times to pretend to be ejidatarios. It is not that some smallholders could not make a decent living, most who owned over thirty hectares managed to live beyond subsistence level. It is that those small smallholders who owned less hectares of land had to find many other sources of income, especially if theirs was low quality seasonal land. Having further important implications for agrarian reform, these smallholders were scattered throughout the region, with properties interspersed between other larger properties. Emigration was also a characteristic that marked these smallholders, who left for the United States and other Mexican cities in significant numbers. Lastly, one could not tell

the story of small-scale smallholders without also situating an analysis of minifundistas, that group of landowners with no more than a pittance of one to five hectares who were not peasants, but were neither quite landless.

Small-scale landowning rancheros present another angle from which to view agrarian reform. On one level, they made it especially difficult for agrarian reform to take root in the region simply by their sheer numbers. They were interspersed throughout the region, siting in between haciendas and numerous larger smallholdings. When it came time to survey a *radio de afectación* for potential land expropriation, these properties represented a true headache for the surveyor. For any given land petition, a surveyor from the *comisión agraria* faced dozens of these smallholdings to account for in his report. It was not just enough to only pin-point the larger smallholdings and large properties, a detail of all property owners was needed in order to provide an accurate point of reference for every stage of the agrarian reform proceeding. To give just one example, one topographer seemed a bit overwhelmed when he was sent to survey the lands of one petition that had by then already been pending for twenty-eight years.²⁹ He trekked the entire area in order to verify that the owners listed on paper and their properties, as well as the type and quality of land, matched the reality on the ground. The topography unearthed more than what was actually on paper, most likely properties not yet properly registered for tax purposes. He found that one of the larger smallholdings comprised forty hectares of mostly pasturage quality and some seasonal quality accurately matched what was on the official land registry. His map also managed to capture what had been apparently impossible to ascertain in the previous decades since the petitioners first requested land: the numerous small-scale ranchos

²⁹ AHAI, Tortuga y Anexos.

existing in the midst of the hacienda in question; an hacienda that had long been dead. The report rendered the following:

Zona de Pequeñas Propiedades que se encuentran registradas en la Delegación de Hacienda de Cuquío descritas a continuación: “Jesús González” El Roble con 16-00-00 Has, “Calletano Becerra” “San Rafael” 20-00-00 Has, Roberto González Ruvalcaba” “La Cuchilla Has, Pedro Fabian González Díaz S/N 8-50-00 Has, Juan M. González Díaz “Arroyito” 64-00-00 Has, Josefina González “Los Trojes” 33-00-00 Has, Victor González “Los Trojes” 62-00-00 Has, Benito González B “El Cerro” 33-00-00 Has, Salvador “Los Papas” 45-00-00 Has, Benigno Ruano “San Rafael” 7-00-00 Has, Leoncio Carvajal “San Rafael” 42-00-00 Has, Idelfonso Ruíz “San Rafael” 42-00-00 Has, Aurora González “El Cerro” 62-00-00 Has, José Marín “La Troje” 12-00-00 Has, Juan Ruano “El Troje” 10-00-00 Has, José Becerra “El Troje” 10-00-00 Has, Andres Ramírez “En Cerro” 80-00-00 Has, Eпитacio Ramírez 70-00-00 Has, M. Paula Ramírez “El Cerro” 50-00-00 Has.³⁰

Making no qualms in admitting the potential gaps in his survey, he states that there is a “posibilidad de haber sido omitidos algunos propietarios más” (“a possibility of having omitted a few more owners”). Commas, periods, and accents on the names are missing from his hastily written list of small smallholders, but also entire last names. When the amount of owned hectares were less than fifteen, the topographer simply reported back the forty-one names that appeared on the land registry, stating the following:

Zona de Pequeñas Propiedades que fluctuan entre 3-00-00 Has, a 15-00-00 Has, en su mayoría, las cuales se encuentran registradas bajo el nombre de “Juchitlán” los siguientes propietarios: Manuel González Plascencia, Gregorio Aguayo, Manuel Gallardo, J. Gpe. Escoto, Ruben Mora, Pedro Mariscal, Albino Hernández, Quirino Gallardo, Herculano Gómez González, Antonio Aguayo Gutierrezm [sic] María Aguayo, Gutierrez, Pascual Altamirano, Basilio Altamirano, Matilde E. Aguayo Guzman, José Plascencia, Antonio Plascencia, Ma. del Rosario Casillas, J. Gpe. Sánchez Escoto, Pascual Gómez, Ignacio Cisneros, Jacobo Guzman, Isidro Gutierrez Guzman, Anastacio Gómez, Cenobio Gómez, J. Trinidad Estrada, Atilano Vargas, Salvador Ruvalcaba, Ma. Felix Guzman, José Vargas, Ricardo Morales, Ramón Reyes Americano, Salvador Gómez Sánchez, J. Jesús

³⁰ AHAI, Tortuga y Anexos.

Notwithstanding all the tedious technical issues faced by the topographer of verifying the dozens of smallholders with less than one hundred hectares, how was the comisión agraria supposed to carve a piece of communal land without directly affecting the livelihood of so many who owned just enough land? The direct answer is that they did not and really could not. Waiting so long to come to a decision only allowed for more smallholdings to proliferate or to reconfigure, foreclosing even more any possibility of creating an ejido.

On another level, “true” agrarian reform was similarly difficult to come by from the pressures of a booming agricultural sector. Many small-scale rancheros were known to have been beneficiaries of ejidos, both in name and extra-officially. Landless workers who had already received an ejido were also found to drop their names into the hat of other land petitions. Large smallholders and medium smallholders led the fight against this particular petition in the community of El Terrero. They exposed many of the would-be ejidatarios, outlining the exact reason why these did not qualify for an ejido. Generally speaking, to meet the qualifications for *derecho agrario*, the petitioner had to be a resident of the community in question, be older than sixteen years (unless he was already a head of household), not possess over \$5,000 pesos in (agricultural) capital, not have land beyond the extension of his corresponding ejido plot, and not be the beneficiary of any other ejido. In addition, the required minimum number of petitioners was twenty. One by one, these large and medium smallholders disassembled the initial petition pieced together by the comisarios agrarios leading the petition. They argued that twenty-seven men were not qualified for a *dotación*. The reasoning was that the vast majority were allegedly already enjoying an ejido plot in neighboring communities, many of whom were likewise not

³¹ Ibid.

nearby residents. Two were found to be minors, another a paralytic, and one, Estefana Gutiérrez Saavedra, was an elderly “decrepit.” They further argued that a few small smallholders, such as Francisco Mora Esparza, Martín López Gutiérrez, and Jesús Huerta Soto, had capital that surpassed \$5,000 pesos; a third man, Atanacio Ávila Godoy was a merchant of sorts, possibly a medium or large smallholder who was found to possess over \$10,000 pesos in capital. Lastly, there were two braceros found on the lists, one was Vicente Delgadillo Ríos, who allegedly never dedicated himself to agriculture, and Isaac López Ponce, a “bracero by profession who resided in the United States.”³²

This rush to gain access to ejido land by men who were not landless or eligible does not reflect mere land greed on the part of smallholders and petitioners of the other many strands. The opening made through the approval of agrarian reform land requests in other parts of the Caxcana uncovered yet another window into the agricultural production boom occurring in the region. Land acquisition and access to land formed part of the promise of being a part of the gains resulting from the ever-increasing agricultural yields and the attendant participation in the livestock sector. In this sense, it is likely that ejido land was undoubtedly used by small, even medium smallholders, and not just minifundistas or ejidatarios. The medium and large-scale rancheros were indeed protecting their interests against small smallholders not just by preventing land expropriation but also by attempting to impede a rise in the amount of competitors. The threat of competition was real; by the 1950s, hundreds of small-scale landowning rancheros in the Caxcana left for the United States in search of more capital to increase their share in the

³² AHAI, El Terrero. Ultimately, the elimination of these few dozen men from the list did not prevent legitimate petitioners from being granted land. This part of the Caxcana contained properties by some of the largest landowners in the region. In fact, this community received one of the largest land concessions in the Caxcana, a total 559 hectares, twelve for the rural school and an average of fifteen hectares for each of the thirty-five beneficiaries. The largest was in the community of Las Cruces, where 3,112 hectares were expropriated in 1938 for the benefit of 139 ejidatarios.

agricultural sector, with many returning not just with saved income to purchase more land but with new knowledge of technologies and how to grow more profitable crops.

The extent to which minifundistas participated in these migratory patterns is not clear, at least not for the initial decades of land reconfiguration, agrarian reform, and agricultural transformation. More detectable are the smallholders that left for the United States who had the income to make the long trip north, whether as braceros or on their own. Those with but a couple of hectares of land spread across the region as a prime rural work force. Their families also grew rapidly in numbers, allowing for the possibility to earn incomes in the lands of smallholders without neglecting harvesting their own lands. One to five hectares of land was hardly adequate land for grazing but the pittance might serve to house the growing family of the minifundista. And yet, it would be impossible to leave these out of the equation. To bring some perspective of the reach that smallholders had over minifundistas, one may glean into the general costs of crops per hectare. These costs only increased over time:

Crop	Cost of Crop Per Hectare (1936)	Output Production Per Hectare (1936)
Wheat (tierra de humedad)	\$15-\$20 pesos per hectare	70 to 75 per 1
Corn (tierra de temporal)	\$20-\$30 pesos per hectare	50 to 60 per 1
Bean (tierra de temporal)	\$10-\$15 pesos per hectare	40 to 50 per 1

Table 2.7 Cost of crop per hectares and output production per hectare

Source: AHAI

Meanwhile, the cost of living for families living in minifundios or at the fringes of another's property had more immediate costs to assume:

Food for a year	\$365
Head of household shirt and underwear in one	\$10

Sombrero and huaraches for head of household	\$5
Clothes for adults	\$23
Clothes for children and school supplies	\$14
Bedding, petates, earthenware, etc.	\$30
Doctor and medicine	\$40
Total annual costs	\$487

Table 2.8 Annual cost of living of a peasant family composed of three adults and three children (1936)

Source: AHAI

From the prices of land already examined, a hectare could cost up to \$100 pesos, with anything of lower non-seasonal quality no less than \$50 pesos, a hefty percentage of a peasant's annual cost of living. With ten hectares or more, a farmer could manage to keep his head above water. This measure of subsistence, in a sense, is the most basic way of making sense of the definitional boundaries of the small smallholder, the one that differentiates him from the minifundista, who is most often in survival, not subsistence mode. The extra wiggle room for living at or above a true subsistence level is what allows a smallholder to participate in more risky ventures, to dream more concretely about improving his living conditions. This is not to say that a smallholder with ten to twenty hectares was not engaging in the similar menial jobs connected to the minifundista, such as *trenzado de palma*, or even helping other ranchers with tasks in agriculture or livestock raising. Yet the inability to grow beyond subsistence level by continuing to work as hired hands was a stark reality that placed the minifundista outside of the narrative of the smallholding.

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth century, José Tomás de Cuellar, respected writer helped to paint a stereotype of the newly rich upper middle classes in Mexico. As part of the wave of *costumbrismo* writings, Cuellar depicted part of this new class as one that had not yet shed its rural customs, lamenting that their attempts to buy their way into an image of aristocratic and

high French culture were gaudy and missing the point.³³ The degree to which Cuellar and others influenced any degree of change in the values, morals, and customs of the groups they critiqued is not clear; what is more certain is that their writings were a reflection of the cultural preferences that many well-to-do landowning families likely aspired to. The historical record for the twentieth century, particularly after the 1930s begins to paint a different picture of such cultural aspirations. We see that along with the new reconfiguration of land tenure that occurs, where the emergent dominant form is the smallholding as explained in this chapter, so too goes a shift in the cultural aspirations of rural society, from ‘afrancesamiento’ to ‘arancheramiento.’

These, of course, are very broad strokes to paint, but we see the broad gamut of ranchero cultural practices become accepted and in fact admired to the point of becoming the status quo in the countryside. No longer was ranchero just a pejorative term, but it came to acquire positive connotations as well, to be celebrated and extolled throughout the countryside. Here, I am not referring to the work of the likes of Ricardo Pérez Monfort, who analyzes the propagation of rural stereotypes through the golden epoch of Mexican cinema. Rather, I am referring more specifically to the way in which ranchero practices become a dominant cultural norm throughout the countryside, including those like *coleadero* culture, competitions such as *peleas de gallos* or *carreras de a caballo*, and the particular musical forms that accompanied these rituals, many of which were directly correlated to the relationship people had with agriculture and livestock raising.

³³ Here, I will underscore the following quote from his work, *La linterna mágica*: “Yo he copiado a mis personajes a la luz de mi linterna, no en drama fantástico y descomunal, sino en plena comedia humana, en la vida real, sorprendiéndolos en el hogar, en la familia, en el taller, en el campo, en la cárcel, en todas partes; a unos con la risa en los labios, y a otros con el llanto en los ojos; pero he tenido especial cuidado de la corrección en los perfiles del vicio y la virtud; de modo que cuando el lector, a la luz de mi linterna, ría conmigo, y encuentre el ridículo en los vicios, y en las malas costumbres, o goce con los modelos de la virtud, habré conquistado un nuevo prosélito de la moral, de la justicia y de la verdad” in José Tomás de Cuéllar, *La linterna mágica*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1992 [Quinta edición]), ix. Read, especially, the short-story titled *Baile y cochino* in that same work.

Why just now allude to this cultural shift when the chapter's themes deal with the complexities of land reconfiguration and smallholders? It is my estimation that next to breathing new life into a group of landholders heavily understudied, the most important implication of this study is to bring a stronger historical foundation to the many cultural studies that have been written about *rancheros* in particular and rural society in general. This cultural shift is arguably correlated to the reconfiguration of land tenure that I examine in this chapter; deriving from the complex set of land tenure arrangements made by smallholders, who displayed a great degree of heterogeneity as a group but were intimately connected through the economic implications of their political struggles. As I have demonstrated in this chapter, large, medium, and small-scale landowning *rancheros* reveal how and why agrarian reform did not take root in a region like the Caxcana. They bring about a new intervention into our understanding of agrarian reform as more an instrument that served to further cement the growing dominance of smallholders rather than a means to bring peasants justice and land. The very idea of the landless is also taken to task by *rancheros* themselves, who render the idea of the *ejidatario* more as a chimera than a peasant enjoying redress; the *ejidatario* chimera was a by-product of smallholders' drive to secure a stable landowning future. Smallholders dispersed the location of power through their sheer numbers. But while rural workers still struggled to find work or have land, being largely left out of the new reconfiguration in land tenure that took place in the twentieth century, *rancheros* were by no means the new tyrants of the countryside. *Rancheros* also tasted their own share of sloppy mud; some lived through the often violent experience of expropriation, others lacked adequate access to make their lands as productive as possible, and many were also emigrants who crossed illegally to the United States. As I will demonstrate in chapters three and

four, many pequeños propietarios also became the economic targets of rural bossism and others suffered the great loss of cattle as their livestock enterprises were just taking off.

CHAPTER THREE

Juarismo in the Age of Agustín Yáñez: Political Stability and Ideological Clash During Jalisco's Rural Socioeconomic Transformation, 1939-1959.

The Politics of the Rancho and Agustín Yáñez

In this chapter, I argue that the smallholding not only became a basic social unit of rural life, but also rose as a political foundation for post-Revolutionary and post-cardenista governments in which to attempt to slowly suffocate agrarianism without suffering the political consequences at the national level.¹ The rancho was an ideal form of land tenure for the political centers at the municipal, state, and national levels because it was amenable to conservative objectives while still providing a mass populist base that embraced the rhetoric of the Mexican Revolution in general and the social ideals of cardenismo in particular. But this chapter will also analyze the pliability of the rancho as an ideology and will examine the ambitious transformation that governor of Jalisco, Agustín Yáñez, aimed by reviving liberal ideology and the idea of democracy with the smallholding as its legitimating, concretizing, principle.

In order to analyze the smallholding through its multiple ideological meanings, I will first provide a history of the governments that strengthened the smallholding not just as a form of land tenure but also as a political stronghold from 1939 to 1959. I will then delve into Agustín Yáñez's liberalism, demonstrating in particular his attempt to rekindle *juarismo* in Jalisco.²

¹ National level in this sense refers to the central government and the set of political interests groups that operated nationally to promote and attempt to carry out those provisions of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 specific to agrarian reform and land justice. Such consortium of interests became politically dominant particularly after 1934, under President Lázaro Cárdenas. The discourse of agrarianism after this period was often thus an expression of allegiance to the cardenista project.

² Mexican political history grossly encompasses the subject of Mexican liberalism. This chapter is in dialogue with works such as Charles Hale's acclaimed, *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora*, which shows the deep influence that Spanish liberalism had on Mexican liberal thought, demonstrating the desired vision Mexican thinkers, intellectuals, and politicians had for a Mexico that could promote progress while preserving its Hispanic heritage and thwarting American ideological encroachment. Other classic works, particularly the seminal *El liberalismo mexicano* by Jesús Reyes Heróles, established a longer periodization for the study of Mexican liberalism to include not just the period of political instability of the nineteenth century, but stresses the necessity of also understanding

What did the reconfiguration of land mean politically? Did the extinction of the hacienda and the rise of the rancho as a dominant form of land tenure bring about new forms of regional feudalism or did it bring more control by the central state? For the governors of Jalisco, land reconfiguration meant the opportunity to bring change or continuity to the sites of control and influence in the countryside. At stake was whether government should continue a policy of allowing rural bosses (caciques) to rule or, alternatively, promoting a new policy of state-centered political control. The period between 1947 and 1959 engaged in this rural question, being one that saw the juxtaposition of two competing visions of society that contained the rhetoric of the 1910 revolution and cardenismo but suggestively also drew from nineteenth century political liberalism. While both institutions (caciquismo and centralized government) may not be mutually exclusive, the administrations of J. Jesús González Gallo (1947-1952) and Agustín Yáñez (1953-1959) placed these at incompatible odds, with the former governor allowing for the sound continuation of caciquismo while the latter governor espousing an overtly anti-cacique ideology in favor of centralized government, which he carried out.

In this chapter, I will further highlight the way in which land reconfiguration in the Caxcana allowed for the revival of nineteenth century ideas about society and political rule in a moment that finally seemed possible to implement them. For González Gallo, it meant the

liberalism in the political stability of the twentieth century. Charles Hale, *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) and Jesús Reyes Heróles, *El liberalismo mexicano*, Vols. 1-3, (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988). Lastly, Michael Gonzales' recent study of centennial celebrations deals with Álvaro Obregón's 1921 post-Revolutionary project that offered a new Mexican identity, inclusive of indigenous people all the while reviving the legacy of Iturbide, the centrality of the Catholic Church, and "Spanish heritage." While Gonzales focuses on the persistence of nineteenth century liberalism well into the 20th century, I would argue that his examination can only remain at the level of a proposed identity, an ideal type of sorts, that would not be generalized, legitimated, and concretized until the emergence of the pequeña propiedad as a dominant form of land tenure. Michael J. Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico in 1921: Visions of the Revolutionary State and Society in the Centennial Celebration in Mexico City," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 25, 2 (Summer 2009), pp. 247-270. Please also see Deborah Cohn, "The Mexican Intelligentsia, 1950-1968: Cosmopolitanism, National Identity, and the State," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 21, 1 (Winter 2005), pp. 141-182.

further consolidation of independent-like regional governments reigned by strong cacique figures, in the style of the porfirian *jefe político*. For Yáñez, it meant the expansion of the domain of the central government into the state's regions in order to generalize the idea of equality and private property by expounding a new and competing notion of justice in the countryside. While both political meanings were children of Mexican liberalism, they did not go hand in hand when it came time to their implementation. When Agustín Yáñez became governor of Jalisco, the power of the *jefe político* was not an old vestige of the *porfiriato*, it was alive and well in the form of the cacique figure. For Yáñez, the Revolution had not lifted a finger to target the countryside's feudal roots and its tendency to produce deep social inequality, structural violence, and concentration of power.

Political Foundation for Transformation: The Silvano Barba and García Barragán Administrations, 1939-1947

As the state of Jalisco experienced the decline and demise of the hacienda, the state government turned to the burgeoning and thriving rancho as its support-base in the countryside. The government of Jalisco, since the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero War, had not experienced true stability until the second administration of Silvano Barba González (1939-1943). The post-Revolutionary governments of Jalisco had the preoccupations of a federal government but the budgets of a rural municipal backwater. These state governments were characterized by having poor coffers and loose, cautious, relationships with the central revolutionary government.³ Through their greater ties to the national presidency, Jalisco state

³ Jalisco has historically experienced a tense relationship with the central government, particularly during the Reforma period during the nineteenth century. Please see, especially, Jaime Olveda, *La política de Jalisco durante la primera época federal*, (Guadalajara: Poderes de Jalisco, Gobierno de Jalisco, 1976), Mario Aldana Rendón, *Jalisco durante la República restaurada, 1867-77*, vols. 1-2, (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 1981, 1983), and José María Muriá et al., *Historia de Jalisco*, vols. 1-4 (Guadalajara: Gobierno

governments simultaneously met with the new political imperatives in Mexican politics of promoting infrastructural modernization despite having little to no revenues; such new imperatives would presumably provide greater political stability through the incorporation of the masses. Stronger ties to the federal government came about with the second administration of Jalisco governor Barba González, who was part in parcel of a broader national shift of power headed by Lázaro Cárdenas that deposed the dominance of Plutarco Elías Calles. Barba González was one of many state governors under the newly formed Partido Nacional Revolucionario (and later the Partido Revolucionario Institucional) who had worked under Cárdenas and would help secure the permanence of the new party at the national level through his appointment as governor of Jalisco.⁴

In Jalisco, national revenues clearly fed into cardenista projects and not into the general state coffer. For example, Barba González's administration could not meet the budget to build basic drainage in Guadalajara, but by 1940, Jalisco had pushed through 146 land grants and redistributed over 128,000 hectares.⁵ Such heavy agrarian reform was driven by the federal government's push to generalize land redistribution and resolve the problem of land left over from the Revolution, not to mention the drive to eradicate pro-callista hacendados. In this vein, even if the state coffers were lacking, Barba González pushed nationally-directed efforts to promote education and literacy, building thirty-six public libraries across thirty municipalities. The first public libraries in Jalisco contained books on hygiene, civics and morality, nutrition,

de Jalisco, Secretaría General, 1982). One could say, that for the twentieth century, the culmination of this tension occurred during the difficult years of the Cristero War, emblemized by Plutarco Elías Calles' taunting remark to Silvano Barba González that Jalisco was "Mexico's chicken coop." Might the source of this tension be the reason why, unlike states such as Michoacán or Veracruz, Jalisco has produced two Mexican presidents, who, at that were tenuous and short-lived at best?

⁴ Hector Aguilar Camín and Lorenzo Meyer, *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910-1989*, translated by Luis Alberto Fierro, (Austin: The University of Texas, 1993), 131.

⁵ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 46.

agriculture, livestock, and small industries.⁶ With education being another central political chess piece of cardenismo, similarly, the rate of student enrollment throughout the state increased along with teacher's salaries and the number of schools rose to 572. While none of these investments in literacy and education attest to the quality of teaching and learning, nor land redistribution attest to the quality of bringing rural social justice, they do reflect the strong ties that the state government formed with the federal government.

The gulf between government state-driven and federal-driven modernization was still wide. The federal government kept and controlled the revenues produced by the oil industry. On the counted times that Jalisco took on large-scale projects on its own during this period, it did so by amassing great debt. This was the case when Barba González for example developed the embryo for what would later be a thriving Tourism Ministry through the *Dirección de Turismo y Propaganda*, which first and foremost required a road.⁷ The road that connected the Highlands of Jalisco, Guadalajara, and the coastal city of Barra de Navidad was built during this period through credit; this major highway was pitched as the centerpiece of the tourist industry and the work that constituted Barba González's administration's greatest and "maximum effort."⁸ As a rule, Jalisco state governments under Barba González and his successor, Marcelino García Barragán, learned to produce their own bureaucracies but only insofar as these were pegged to a larger national bureaucracy. Even older institutions like prisons subtly met this fate and became bureaucracies. Jalisco's prisons aimed to turn men into soldiers and proletariats, allowing for men to transition from an unrecognizable mass to a recognizable inchoate citizenry. Men who

⁶ Ibid., 59.

⁷ Ibid., 19 and 95.

⁸ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 98-99. In 1941, \$1,655,000 pesos were invested in the continued construction of this road.

went to prison learned how ignorant and undisciplined they were through the promotion of literacy and military education within the prison.⁹ They were taught military routines but had to also attend workshops in “carpentry, shoemaking, breadmaking, ironworking, cloth-making, among other small industries” such as soap-making.¹⁰ The products were predominantly consumed and used within the prison or exported for use in other government institutions. Soap made by imprisoned underage “delinquents,” for example, was sent to the General Hospital in Guadalajara.¹¹ Insofar as economic development and education drew the masses into the political fold, these formed crucial building blocks to the strong relationship being built between Jalisco state government and cardenismo.

After Barba González’s administration, political stability continued under his successor Marcelino García Barragán (1943-1947). What makes García Barragán’s administration politically significant was its growing emphasis on strengthening the rancho. This boon for the smallholding over time became a detriment to the ejido, which was overshadowed politically and economically by the former. While the agrarian and agricultural policies and decrees passed under García Barragán were promoted as serving both the *pequeña propiedad* and the ejido, the spirit of these laws consistently favored small property owners. While the *pequeña propiedad* often fell short in productivity or outright suffered losses during the 1940s, it was still regarded as the backbone of the new economies forming in rural Mexico. Any obstacles deterring the *pequeña propiedad*’s full potential were thus neutralized to the degree possible. For example, under García Barragán’s government, laws punishing cattle theft (*abigeato*) were among the harshest: these laws severely punished not just the cattle thieves but those that knowingly

⁹ Ibid, 61.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

purchased stolen cattle as well. The cattle law of 1943 established a draconian sentence of six to fourteen years in prison in addition to an astonishingly high penalty of 15,000 pesos.¹² But the punishment seemed fitting if the government was to help promote the power of the pequeña propiedad in the countryside. Cattle theft was common throughout rural Jalisco and was thought to negatively affect the local economy but above all, the purpose of the law was to uphold the property rights of rancheros, heeding their call to help make the countryside more safe and peaceful.

In addition, García Barragán initiated the first steps in protecting the smallholding not just from thieves but also from nature. That by the 1950s Jalisco's agricultural production had quadrupled, as chapter four of this work shows, despite nature not always working in its favor. The rancho suffered the same consequences of seasonal fluctuations in agricultural output throughout the twentieth century. From Barba González to García Barragán, the smallholding was strengthened through the increased protections it received from the government. Interests on loans accrued by smallholders were often forgiven, if not the entire loan outright, because the output of the previous years was not profitable. These 'gifts' were also extended to ejidatarios but not for the same reasons; the loan forgiveness was meant to allow the smallholdings to continue to produce until more prosperous years arrived (which they did) but nothing was expected from the ejido for better or for worse since it was deemed fragile and weak.¹³ Thieves and nature were not the only obstacles targeted; market forces proved to be just as, if not more, problematic for the government of Jalisco as seen in its deep concern over the Bracero Program. Though nationally the Bracero Program was lauded as a great feat of bilateral cooperation

¹² Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 251. In 1944, the penalty for the crime of abigeato was increased, *ibid*, 337.

¹³ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV,, 254-255.

between Mexico and the United States, locally the program was felt as a loss for the regional agricultural economy. García Barragán made this clear in his speeches, stating that Jalisco's workforce supply was greatly reduced through the Program and that ways to discourage loss of rural workers should be conceived.¹⁴ The United States continued to draw Mexican labor through the Bracero Program and informally, which caused deep preoccupation and condemnation for the Jalisco government.¹⁵ Nevertheless, measures to directly target or hinder the Bracero Program in Jalisco were kept inactive.

The inability to act against the Bracero Program was just one marker of the growing control federal government over Jalisco. While García Barragán criticized the Program, it would have been politically unfeasible to condemn and contain the amount of Bracero recruiters into the state. But this circumstance in turn stirred his government to turn into areas that it could potentially dominated and control: the state's 124 municipalities. In seeing itself increasingly subordinate to the federal government, the state also realized just how incapable it was in dealing with its own jurisdictional territory. The initial trepidations García Barragán's administration had over exerting control over municipalities was reflected in his regime's sudden high hopes in human nature. For example, in light of its inability to generalize public assistance to all sectors of society, García Barragán's government in the early period of his administration encouraged jaliscienses to help each other out in solidarity rather than to expect assistance or intervention from the state.¹⁶ This hands-off patchwork approach would be short-term, however. García Barragán's government attempted to solve the problem of government incapability by

¹⁴ Ibid, 258.

¹⁵ Ibid, 334.

¹⁶ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 256-258.

strengthening the relationship between state and municipal governments. He passed a decree that began the slow process of breaking the preferential (and often exclusive) access that the Guadalajara municipality had over state resources.¹⁷ If government mostly exclusively spent its resources in the city of Guadalajara, the decree declared that municipal presidents across Jalisco would be taught how to solicit state resources for their local governments. The government's explicit goal of helping municipal governments was not mere benevolence, but to begin to impose the norms by which they were to govern. Over 120 special councils were also established to monitor and gather knowledge of each region's economy and shifting demography, information which was then directly sent to the Jalisco central government.¹⁸ Such desired control over the municipalities would not be satisfactorily achieved for many years but García Barragán's decree set the precedent for subsequent governments to build upon and in time realize meaningful dominion over municipal government and society.

With more will than resources, García Barragán's government instead focused on sectors of the rural economy that demanded a significantly smaller workforce while simultaneously having the potential of being much more profitable. Such was the case of livestock raising. This sector of the economy was one of many enigmas for post-cardenista Jalisco governments. Intent on knowing more about the livestock sector, García Barragán's administration took advantage of the authority conferred by the federal government's National Bureau of Statistics to carry out its own collection of information about the rural economy with a special interest in gathering livestock raising figures.¹⁹ Knowledge was another building block from which future

¹⁷ Ibid, 256-257.

¹⁸ Ibid, 260.

¹⁹ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 261-262.

governments would come to rely. This period was a moment of great tension between smallholders and ejidatarios. Government attempted on numerous occasions to intervene in the conflicts between both groups. The degree of effective mediation or impartiality on the part of a government can be arguably questioned since it consistently favored smallholders across the board and saw them as the key to their long-term political goals; the post-cardenista governments always placed their bets and hopes on smallholders. By 1944, as the number of land petitions were denied and declined, the government was already announcing the death of the ejido by framing it as unproductive (see Table 1).²⁰ The rhetoric of the government in coining the ejido as unproductive was more than a diagnosis an accusation and condemnation in the face of continued preferential treatment given to the smallholding. The ejido at this point got in the way of the state's attempt to make Jalisco an economic leader at the national level and one could argue that this period signaled both its political and economic death. With nothing to contribute, economically and now politically, the looming death of the ejido in Jalisco became a gleaming reality.

	Expediente s Agrarios	Resuelto s (Positivo)	Ampliación de Ejidos Establecido s	Ejidos (superfici e total)	Expedientes de Inafectabilida d de Pequeñas Propiedades	Superficie Total de Pequeñas Propiedade s Protegidas
1941 ²¹	702			28,493		25,739
1942 ²²	697	24		17,814 hectares	361	55,115,34

²⁰ Ibid, 271.

²¹ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 170.

²² Ibid, 194.

(1942-1943) ²³	(578 from above)	69	33	12,598.74 hectares		
1943 ²⁴	41	14	17			

Table 3.1 Decline of Ejido Land Grants, 1941-1957 [Calculated known figures]

Source: AHAJ

Political Stability and Ideological Clash: The Governments of J. Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez Delgadillo, 1947-1959

The governments of J. Jesús González Gallo (1947-1952) and Agustín Yáñez Delgadillo (1953-1959) would preside over the period of greatest political and economic stability seen in Jalisco since it became a Constitutional Sovereign State in 1824. As I have shown, what also makes both governors uniquely comparable is their connection to the Caxcana: González Gallo was born in Yahualica and Agustín Yáñez's parents were natives to the region. Both men allow us to confront the rural question through their own personal family backgrounds and the development of their own particular ideologies as they forged their paths toward political power. While Yáñez and González Gallo knew each other as teenagers while being involved in the nascent Catholic youth movement, the 1920s and the 1930s pushed both men in different directions. Yáñez became a lawyer and moved through intellectual paths in Mexico City, until one day a meeting with President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines opened the door to the Jalisco governorship. González Gallo, on the other hand, rose the political hierarchy more concertedly, taking key positions as lower court judge in prominent municipalities and later becoming senator of Jalisco from 1934 to 1940, until reaching his most notable position as Presidential Secretary to Manuel Ávila Camacho.²⁵

²³ Ibid, 270.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ González Gallo in this respect shares some similarities with Silvano Barba González, who served high-ranking positions in the federal government under President Lázaro Cárdenas.

González Gallo represented both change and continuity; he was the first governor of Jalisco to initiate significant and visible infrastructural modernization in the state, particularly its capital of Guadalajara and his legacy in this respect is undeniable. His administration had access to the largest budget and most unprecedented disposal of federal loans enjoyed by no other regime before him, allowing him to translate that money into an unprecedented level of infrastructural development.²⁶ At the same time, González Gallo continued to practice the kind of selective “hometown” infrastructural modernization that characterized the administrations that preceded him. That is, most resources collected by the state government served Guadalajara but a good portion was allocated to modernizing the particular governor’s municipality of origin.²⁷ In the realm of law and politics, he changed the way rural courts were organized so that rural society could remain the same. In this respect, González Gallo built upon his predecessor’s efforts to strengthen the dominion over the state’s municipalities by giving more judicial power to the central-state and reorganizing it at the municipal level. In his first year in office, González Gallo did so by passing a law that increased the number of Supreme Court judges and Civil and Finance judges in Guadalajara while substituting the scattered regional lower courts “juzgados

²⁶ In the branch of education alone, “Al hacernos cargo del Gobierno el presupuesto destinado a este ramo era de \$4 485 988 00. El aprobado para el presente año [1952] es de \$16 895 790 00,” *ibid*, 730. Agriculture enjoyed an even greater budget: “Fue factor importante para el logro de la producción que se consigna, la refacción crediticia que en el ultimo año y por conducto de la Comisión de Fideicomiso, en la que el Estado es avalista, otorgaron el Banco Nacional del Crédito Ejidal por dos millones de pesos, y el de Crédito Agrícola por \$1 240 584 00 en préstamos de refacción y avío para siembras de maíz de temporal y de trigo de invierno. En los seis años de la Administración [sic] que concluye, las refacciones proporcionadas a ejidatarios y pequeños agricultores con nuestro aval pasaron de veintiocho millones de pesos,” Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 738.

²⁷ It was not uncommon that after serving their tenure, governors were honored by their hometowns often by erecting monuments or works in their name or a times even adding the governor’s name to the hometown’s denomination; e.g. Cuahtitlán de García Barragán or Yahualica de González Gallo.

menores” for a greater number of municipal ones.²⁸ This move might have been the most pivotal at the regional level because, in the case of the Caxcana, it conceded the impartation of justice to the municipality of Yahualica, where his family held a tight grip on political power. In a rural society still engrossed by the problematics of rural bossism and more circular structures of justice, to infuse the countryside with state-centered justice in fact exacerbated the problem of violence by often conferring rural bosses renewed legitimacy because in exchange for pledging loyalty to the state government, caciques would be able to influence court proceedings and outcomes.

Through this reorganization of the justice system, could González Gallo have allowed for the reproduction of what Juan Rulfo characterized as the interpersonal, circular, system of justice, based on vengeance, so prevalent in rural Mexico?²⁹ This question is one intimately tied to the broader arc of feudalism in which the history of rural Mexico is often framed. Here, one can loosely understand feudalism as the system of political power concentrated in the hands of one particular social group that implies the dominion over land.³⁰ But key to understanding feudal modes in this period is the attendant implication of structural violence that comes with the domination over the economic and political landscape. The feudal face that takes shape in rural Jalisco, and arguably in many parts of Mexico, is caciquismo. What thus made this interpersonal institution, i.e. caciquismo, so challenging to uproot was not its informal nature but its continued

²⁸ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., compiladores, *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, Tomo IV, 604. One should underscore that González Gallo had a keen awareness of the potential power of the restructuring of the justice system bureaucracy, having served as a lower court judge himself before becoming Presidential Secretary to Ávila Camacho, as mentioned earlier.

²⁹ See Juan Rulfo’s short story “El hombre” in *El Llano en llamas*, (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés, 2000). This discussion is further elaborated upon in the remainder of this chapter.

³⁰ In writing about feudalism, Marc Bloch is weary about the application of the term feudalism in general, but also its use to understand rural forms outside of Europe. Nevertheless, he implies that in so far as feudalism is understood as a universal, which he compellingly allows in his seminal study, this sociopolitical and economic system is one of conceptual continued permanence for understanding nations and rural societies across the world, see Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, (New York: Routledge Classics, 2014 [1965]).

embeddedness in the new legitimate structures of power disseminated throughout rural Jalisco. That is, González Gallo did not introduce a competing system of justice but a complementary one to the vengeance-driven system already prevalent in the countryside that served the interests of his family at the regional level while simultaneously promoting the power of the central government in rural Jalisco. On a related perspective, Yáñez at times intertwined the conservative tropes of classical liberalism that suited the emerging smallholding *ranchero* class: placing a kind of individual responsibility for structural conditions while cementing a critique of the kind of structural conditions that curtailed an individual's possibility to be free from tyrannical forces. In the vacuum left behind by the hacienda, the *ranchero* class would benefit from the mediation of the law between men, as Yáñez puts it. Once the mediation of law would be generalized, the smallholding class would thrive with the politics of liberalism alongside. Nevertheless, by Yáñez's time, the law mediated in favor of the *caciques* because the centralized legal system (first promoted under González Gallo) was complementary and not antithetical to the interpersonal law of the *caciques*.

In this historical series of developments, in which justice and *caciquismo* were not at incompatible odds with one another, the *rancho* played a central role. The *rancho* became the stronghold that nourished the rise of non-hacendado families after the Cristero War that raged throughout Jalisco and surrounding states in the late 1920s. None of the hacendado families in the Caxcana were able to reconstitute themselves into even an image of their former selves; as they receded into history, they cleared the path for families who had taken sides with the government as *gobiernistas* during the Cristero War. One of these families were the González Gallo's, whose three oldest brothers had positioned themselves as brokers between the region's *cristeros* and the federal army. Many smallholders, as the previous chapter demonstrates, were

actually from hacendado families but became smallholders after the large estates were parceled out. A great majority of smallholders (both old and new), however, were not directly tied to former hacienda families. The smallholding thus did not just continue to thrive as a category of land tenure but emerged as a political one; from the smallholding arose the new dominating political class in Jalisco. If it is generally understood that the great landowners were the backbone of callismo, then the political backbone of cardenismo was the politicized smallholding class. By the late 1930s, when cardenismo was well-established, one such family, the González Gallo, expressed the power of the *ranchero* as a political class at the highest levels.

By the time Agustín Yáñez came to power in 1953, it would not have been surprising to see him continue on the same socioeconomic and political path taken by González Gallo. Yáñez, for example, was handpicked by Adolfo Ruiz Cortines to become governor of Jalisco; González Gallo was similarly selected by Ávila Camacho first, and only thereafter undertook the ceremonial formality of campaigning in uncontested elections.³¹ In what little symbolic protocol required by electoral alchemy did occur, even the main opposition party, the *Partido Acción Nacional*, formally backed Yáñez as the sole runner and announced it would not set up an opposing candidate.³² But while the Yáñez administration was characterized by economic and

³¹ Ramón García Ruiz, et al., *Jalisco en el progreso de México. Aportación a la obra de gobierno del Lic. J. Jesús González Gallo. 6 Estudios Fundamentales*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 1947), 90-91. “1946. 16 de octubre. Rinde su protesta como candidato del Partido Revolucionario Institucional al Gobierno del Estado, el señor licenciado J. Jesús González Gallo; pronuncia un medular discurso exponiendo su programa en favor de la agricultura y de la industrialización, de la educación del pueblo y, en general, del progreso de Jalisco,” 90-91. Later that month, Ávila Camacho honored his selection of González Gallo with an official visit to Yahualica to inaugurate the dams, schools, and other social infrastructure developed under his presidency, 91. ““1946. 24 de noviembre.” Manuel Ávila Camacho visits Yahualica to inaugurate public works: the road, the dam “El Estribón”, elementary schools, the plaza, and water and drainage services”” “1o de diciembre. Tienen lugar en el Estado las elecciones constitucionales para la renovación de los poderes. Juega como Candidato único para el cargo de Gobernador el Licenciado González Gallo, postulado por el Partido Revolucionario Institucional, y apoyado unánimemente por todos los sectores populares de la Entidad,” *ibid.*

³² “Agustín Yáñez dice a Jalisco: Mi política es de brazos abiertos,” *El Informador*, 26 August 1952, 6. Part of the article reads: “Una demostración afortunada de que la unidad de pensamiento y de acción política se ha logrado en el Estado de Jalisco, es la feliz circunstancia que el sábado, día 23 del actual, en que el pueblo de la Ciudad de

political continuity, ideologically, his regime marked a clear break from his predecessor. I argue that Yáñez's ideological commitment, once put into practice, had a deep impact on rural jalisciense society. The period in which he rose to political power as governor of Jalisco could not likewise have been more politically propitious to the goals of confronting the problematics of justice in the countryside; this was the period of the Mexican miracle, which in Jalisco translated into a great demographic, industrial, and agricultural boom that brought to Yáñez's discourse an added legitimacy.³³ This period of rising economic prosperity allowed for a renewed stimulus on infrastructural modernization throughout Jalisco though for Yáñez, improvements to the built environment had to be tied to a deeper political project that was not simply *priista*, but *juarista*.

The enormous task for Yáñez was to break with the selective forms of modernization that had characterized development policy since Barba González in order to systematize and generalize the access to infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, and schools for rural society. From his administration's perspective, development had been carried out in ways that concentrated the power of regional bosses and consequently perpetuated deep social problems in the countryside. What seemed alarming to Yáñez was that the growing level of prosperity did not destabilize the power of caciques but in fact gave them more incentive to protect their interests at all costs, often in seeming disregard to the deference they were supposed to confer to the state government. Yáñez's cabinet would know this determination on the part of caciques to grip onto power more tightly; on notable occasions, some in his cabinet were directly threatened

Guadalajara conoció de la determinación política que hace candidato a Gobernador del Estado al señor licenciado Agustín Yáñez, es la declaración extraoficial, pero honrada y autorizada de algunos destacados dirigentes del Partido Acción Nacional en Jalisco, quienes al manifestar su satisfacción por tal suceso político, exteriorizaron su decisión de no presentarle oponente. Es decir: Agustín Yáñez es el candidato de todas las voluntades electorales de Jalisco."

³³ See, for example, Alicia Hernández Chávez, *Mexico: A Brief History*, translated by Andy Klatt, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), especially Chapter 11.

with death when they entered a regional boss's turf.³⁴ While no assassinations of his cabinet members occurred, cacique-driven murders were widespread and common throughout rural Jalisco. During the González Gallo administration, tackling the "rural question" as a fundamental problem of justice was a matter virtually absent even in lip service, while during the Yáñez administration it was a central feature of his rhetoric and policy.

Yáñez's first order of business was to pronounce himself as a promoter of the idea of justice in concrete terms that defined "individual and social guarantees."³⁵ One of the culminating moments of this political project was expressed in Yáñez's 1958 state of the state speech, which also served as a platform to celebrate and commemorate the centennial of the Reform Wars. According to Yáñez, Jalisco had been at the forefront of liberal constitutional democracy, initiating the War and the struggle against "reactionary" politics and becoming a safe haven for Juárez during the most difficult and protracted years of the armed conflict:

"Hace cien años Jalisco tuvo el honor de convocar la coalición de las entidades federativas para oponerse al golpe de Estado reaccionario y luchar por la Constitución y la Libertad. Con esto, a Jalisco tocó el privilegio de iniciar la Guerra de Reforma. Jalisco promovió, anticipando sus propios recursos, la formación y rápida marcha del ejército constitucionalista, cuyo primer general en jefe fue el Gobernador del Estado; Jalisco acogió a los Poderes de la legalidad y brindó su palacio por residencia del presidente Juárez, y sus ministros, a quienes salvó de traidoras asechanzas; pagando el precio de ser varias veces mutilada su capital y asolado su territorio, Jalisco perseveró tres años en su actitud, ayudó a forjar la heroica reciedumbre de caudillos como don Santos Degollado y revelar las extraordinarias dotes de estrategia en don Ignacio Zaragoza; finalmente, Jalisco lanzó, de sobre las ruinas de Guadalajara, templado en los fuegos del más prolongado sitio aquí sufrido, el ejército ya invencible que marchó sobre la victoria de Calpulalpan."³⁶

³⁴ Interview with Patricia Arias on the life of José Rogelio Álvarez, August 2010.

³⁵ Urzua Orozco and Hernández Z., *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes, 1940-1959*, 763.

³⁶ Agustín Yáñez, "Centenario Insigne: Palabras finales del IV Informe de Gobierno rendido en el recinto del Congreso del Estado la mañana del 1o de febrero de 1958," in *Discursos por la Reforma*, (Guadalajara: Publicaciones del Gobierno del Estado, 1959), 17.

One could dismiss Yáñez's juarista speech as political opportunism; the result of a coincidental meeting between his administration and the centennial rather than the fruit of a longer ideological understanding and affinity to that strand of liberalism. But is the reason that Yáñez expounds juarismo simply due to the fact that the centennial of the Wars of Reform occurred during his administration? His engagement with the subject suggests otherwise; the centennial served to further catalyze, not introduce, Yáñez's juarista ideological grounding. Indeed, prior to becoming governor of Jalisco, Yáñez had written extensively on liberalism both in allusion and overtly, the culminating work of these being his "Justo Sierra, su vida, sus ideas y su obra," published in 1948.³⁷ Justo Sierra, who in 1905 published his acclaimed *Juárez, su obra y su tiempo*, had helped shape a renewed historical and political understanding and appreciation of Juárez, dovetailing into the Porfirian politics that heroized the Reformer's life and his ideology. In the ideological arc that made Juárez so appealing to Yáñez, was the sense of liberalism that both contained its letter and spirit as put forth by one historian: "[Juárez's] work endures because it is unfinished, because it was progress and progress is unending [...]. Distant as his world may be, and dim his work, and the meaning of his ideas transmuted, the spirit that inspired them can never be anachronistic."³⁸ This juarista liberalism, made politically and ideologically current through the legitimation conferred by Sierra's new historical interpretation of Juárez,

³⁷ Agustín Yáñez, "Don Justo Sierra, su vida, sus ideas y su obra" in *Obras completas del maestro Justo Sierra*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1948). See also, Justo Sierra, *Prosas, Prólogo y notas de: Antonio Caso*, (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1963). This work was later published as a book under the same title. As a poignant note, Yáñez's Master's Thesis does not begin with Justo Sierra himself, but with his father, the writer and politician from Yucatán, Justo Sierra O'Reilly. Yáñez narrates the story of Sierra O'Reilly from one of Yucatán's most notable moments of its modern history: Its short-lived secession from Mexico during the period of the Mexican-American War of 1846 and the Caste War. What seemed to have been formative for a young Justo Sierra Méndez, from Yáñez's point of view, was his father's struggles to secure the survival of Yucatán's government, which at the time was led by his grandfather, Santiago Méndez Ibarra.

³⁸ Ralph Roeder, *Juarez and His Mexico*, (New York: The Viking Press, 1947), 740.

took particular forms regionally; in Jalisco, Yáñez put his legitimated liberalism into practice by recasting the rural question through the rancho and caciquismo.

Juarismo In the Age of Yáñez

The defining feature of Yáñez's ideological vision for jalisciense rural society was threefold: The premise for transforming rural society was universalist, rural caciquismo was to be reviled and expunged, and the smallholding was the foundation for sowing liberalism. Through what the Governor coined as "grandeza," he argued for the idea of the universality of the Mexican push toward transformation; he situated himself alongside a body of Mexicans, particularly artists and writers, whose work focused on building a form of political practice particular to Mexico, one that superseded their ideological inclinations in order to propose a transformative politics to the world. For Yáñez, this universalist foundation was the condition for uprooting entrenched, seemingly unuprootable, social structures of oppressive power in the countryside. Caciquismo was his main target, but why? On the ground, the face of caciquismo expressed tradition, prosperity, and order. Caciquismo could even be used as the basis for perpetuating political power; of potential personal benefit to all politicians, including Yáñez. Nevertheless, on the one hand, liberating the countryside from caciquismo was an act of self-preservation for Yáñez: His cabinet members were on occasions threatened by caciques. Furthermore, the system of caciquismo also threatened the Governor's family livelihood in farming and livestock raising in the Caxcana. On the other, as an intellectual, he was convinced that bossism was the thicket that prevented the efflorescence of the smallholding's full potential as a promoter of liberalism. For this reason, Yáñez understood that in order to promote, generalize, and implement the idea of liberalism, he first needed to take on caciquismo.

Yáñez's universalist, quasi-nationalist, overtly humanist, ideology revolved around the term *la grandeza*, which he presented to members of the Colegio Nacional in 1959 during a speech honoring Diego Rivera. He presents the idea of *grandeza*, or greatness, through one of Mexico's most renowned muralist, emphasizing not his communist ideology, but the mastery of his art and craft:

“Lección de inquebrantable voluntad, frente a los remisos en el servicio patrio; lección de pujanza creadora y de trabajo incesante, frente a la indolencia e inercia; lección de curiosidad constructiva y de ímpetu combativo para los engreídos de suficiencia y los conformistas; lección de fe, de constancia y de fecundidad para los irresolutos e infecundos; lección, en fin, de grandeza, para cuantos estamos obligados, y somos todos, a la grandeza creciente de México.”³⁹

Bringing such particular meaning to the concept of *grandeza* allows for Yáñez to unbind the Mexican creative mind from ideologies that are not particular to Mexico's historical formation, be these communisms or fascisms. According to Yáñez, Diego Rivera, for example, became great not because of his loyalty to communism but because he never stopped perfecting his craft particularly as it worked in the service of the Revolution. But Yáñez moved beyond mere nationalist genuflection. He also perceived a humanist trajectory amid the nationalist context, reading Rivera's work as a continuous act of self-reflection that might in time become generalized throughout Mexico through his work and art: “Mexicano esencial, en sus pericias más exóticas lo condujo el hilo de la patria y lo trajo a ser uno de los constructores del México revolucionario, al que contribuyó en la definición y práctica del humanismo socialista, común denominador de su obra como del pensamiento y la obra de la Revolución.”⁴⁰ Rivera, seen here

³⁹ Agustín Yáñez, “Discurso de homenaje a Diego Rivera,” *Memorias de El Colegio Nacional*, 1959, No. 2, pp. 215-227.

⁴⁰ Yáñez, “Discurso de homenaje a Diego Rivera,” *ibid.*

as self-reflexive mastery, could then be a vehicle for universality, providing a model to the world of revolutionary consciousness:

“Su enraizamiento, valdría decir: su encarnizamiento en la tierra y herencias natales horada el espacio hasta salir, para luego sobresalir en el infinito de la universalidad, travesía de los grandes creadores; pero no sólo, sino que transportó lo mexicano a dimensiones cósmicas, al mismo tiempo que su cosmovisión revistió apariencias mexicanas.”

In light of this conceptualization of the universal, one could arguably apply the way Yáñez characterized Rivera’s work to the oeuvre of other Mexican writers, intellectuals, and artists; Diego Rivera, José Vasconcelos, Juan José Arreola, to name the most exalted, all set a high bar for the expression of transformative, universalist, politics through the life of the mind.

Contextualized through the case of Jalisco, Yáñez spoke extensively about the idea of grandeza before the crowds of jalisciense rural society. To be sure, from the start of his administration, Yáñez expressed the need to promote a juarista democracy. But not unlike the liberal thinkers that came before him, Yáñez continued to reflect the tensions and contradictions between liberal thought and political practice that characteristically defined Benito Juárez. But Yáñez’s time to govern was characterized by the kind of political stability Juárez never enjoyed. If the electoral process is a fundamental index of the degree of democracy, Yáñez was not particularly off to an ideal start. As a candidate, he promoted the expectation of free and transparent elections while campaigning in Zapotlán el Grande, the land of Juan José Arreola and José Clemente Orozco, stating in his speech: “Por esto he dicho y aquí lo repito, que aspiré a la gubernatura solo mediante una limpia elección, a salvo de la más leve sospecha de fraude, condición que implica el apoyo del pueblo para dirigir sus destinos con la medida de su grandeza.”⁴¹ The elections were clean because Yáñez ascended to the gubernatorial throne

⁴¹ Agustín Yáñez, “Grandeza de Jalisco,” in *Discursos por Jalisco*, (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1958), 45.

unchallenged, not because he emerged victorious from the kind of democratic struggle of open elections he alludes to during his campaign. Indeed, the Mexican President elected the governors of Jalisco, not the popular jalisciense vote. When Agustín Yáñez campaigned to become governor in 1952, he had already been selected to fill the position by Mexican president Adolfo Ruiz Cortines.⁴² Yáñez was no different from his predecessor, González Gallo, who had served as presidential Secretary to Manuel Ávila Camacho and was streamlined into the governorship's office of Jalisco in 1947. Even though both governors were put through a symbolic popular electoral process after the fact, they emerged from the institutionalized pre-selection of political appointments controlled by the Mexican President. Such crude point of departure seemed vastly incompatible at least for Yáñez, whose campaign speeches given throughout Jalisco promoted the idea of free and open elections through democracy.⁴³

The tensions of Yáñez's liberalism notwithstanding, the new Governor would attempt to connect with jalisciense society through the very same ideology he would expound to the members of the Colegio Nacional many years later:

“Libre de cualquier otro compromiso que no sea el interés de Jalisco, mi esfuerzo principal y constante se enfocará a la superación de la vida cívica, mediante el imperio de la ley, que iguala, con el derecho, a todos los ciudadanos y los afirma en sus justas prerrogativas, en primer término: la del respeto a su persona y libertad. Sin libertad no es posible la grandeza ni de los individuos, ni de los pueblos. A toda costa mantendremos el ambiente de libertad, solo en el cual florecen las virtudes o fuerzas verdaderas de la democracia.”⁴⁴

⁴² Emmanuel Carballo, *Ya nada es igual, memorias (1929-1953)*, (Guadalajara/Mexico City: Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco/Editorial Diana, 1994), 208.

⁴³ See communications throughout the year 1952 in *El Informador* and in his speeches in the compilation, *Discursos por Jalisco*.

⁴⁴ Yáñez, “La cruzada cívica,” in *Discursos por Jalisco*, 46.

Rural society was unfree and lawless, according to Yáñez. Void of the basic conditions to achieving greatness, the new Governor would attempt to liberate rural society “at all costs” so that it may achieve “the virtues or true forces of democracy.”

But how would Yáñez be able to achieve the seemingly unachievable? Yáñez at this point understood Mexican civil society (the one that would vote through secret-ballot as well as “rationalize” and conceptualize freedom) as incipient, one that needed a transformative politics that would lead to democracy in order to rise from the old structural regimes of violence and unfreedom. In order to achieve democracy, Yáñez proposed reviling and eradicating caciquismo:

“Casi siempre la injusticia, el abuso, la explotación se achacan indefectiblemente al Gobierno, sin reflexionar que en la mayor parte de los casos esas situaciones se originan y prevalecen por la arbitrariedad de los individuos contra sus vecinos, porque los particulares no quieren respetar el derecho ajeno, ni cumplir sus deberes cívicos, por ejemplo, el pago de contribuciones, o simplemente por el miedo, la apatía, la falta de valor cívico de los afectados para denunciar y sacudirse a los que están medrando a su costa; si cada ciudadano ajusta su conducta a la ley, no tendrían por qué prosperar los influyentes, los caciques, ni los sistemas de corrupción como el que popularmente se llama ‘mordida.’”⁴⁵

Zapotlán el Grande was not the only municipality targeted by Yáñez and his administration. They traveled throughout the state, taking the podium in the town plaza to condemn the problem of violence and lawlessness and on many occasions kicking the hornet’s nest outright, calling out the particular cacicazgo of the region. In 1952, in Tizapán el Alto, for example, he stopped short of naming the cacique that held the region under his bread and stick regime. Yáñez praised the hard work of campesinos, relating his mother’s experience as a campesina to theirs and bringing the promise of honoring their hard work by expounding the need to eradicate caciquismo:

⁴⁵ Yáñez, “La cruzada cívica,” 47.

“Ustedes, gente de Tizapán, lo saben bien. Con dichosos recuerdos de infancia, acude ahora a la memoria el doloroso recuerdo aquí vivido, de gentes que fueron víctimas del furor homicida, por individuos irresponsables.”⁴⁶

By describing the cacicazgo of Tizapán as homicidal, Yáñez delegitimized that power structure, depicting it as an illegal practice rather than an institution, rendering it without any social, political, or economic right over rural society. His predecessor, González Gallo, had accepted caciquismo as a legitimate institutional presence in the countryside by not directly alluding to it in his speeches in general, not once; González Gallo supported the institution, finding it politically and personally necessary, and approved of it by not drawing anyone to its attention, much less calling for its eradication like his successor.

But condemnation did not mean eradication especially because one man’s cacique was another’s municipal president. One of the biggest challenges faced by Yáñez was the way in which caciquismo was circumscribed within the legal and legitimate parameters of rural society. The most powerful caciques of Jalisco were also municipal presidents prior to or during Yáñez’s regime. Toward the heyday of their cacicazgos, in the Caxcana, Felipe González Gallo and Gregorio González Gallo had both been municipal presidents during the 1920s and 1930s.⁴⁷ In Zacoalco de Torres, Fernando Basulto Limón and his brother, German Basulto Limón, had been municipal presidents and subsequent caciques of Zacoalco and neighboring municipalities.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 14.

⁴⁷ With both brothers alternating years in the presidency, Felipe González Gallo was municipal president of Yahualica during the following years: 1927, 1928-1929, 1930-1931. Gregorio González Gallo during the following years: 1929, 1932-1933. Relatives continued to alternate the municipal presidency in the two decades that followed. Please see the government page, Jalisco, Gobierno del Estado: Mpo. Yahualica de González Gallo, <<http://www.jalisco.gob.mx/es/jalisco/municipios/yahualica-de-gonzalez-gallo>>.

⁴⁸ Luis G. Cueva, *Forsaken Harvest: Haciendas and Agrarian Reform in Jalisco, Mexico: 1915-1940*, (Bloomington: Xlibris LLC, 2013), 102. To this day, many zacoalquenses remember the Basultos with cautious suspicion but for better or for worse the brothers form part of the town’s collective memory.

During his campaigning, it was no surprise that Yáñez took to Zacoalco's plaza, focusing solely on the question of caciquismo which he remembered plagued the town even as a child, on visits:

“Zacoalco no ha progresado porque no ha podido superar la discordia. Con pena recuerdo la lejana época en que vine varias veces a vacaciones: apenas había noche en que no se escucharan disparos y mañana en que el pueblo no amaneciera sin noticias de asesinatos y atropellos, que iban encadenando una serie interminable de venganzas y perpetuando el luto de incontables familias.”⁴⁹

The Governor here proposed a dual approach to neutralizing bossism in Zacoalco: Urging the people to begin to accept both the idea of citizenship and the idea of disarmament as inevitable changes that were needed to guarantee a basic “right to life” and subsequent enjoyment of the municipality's material wealth.⁵⁰ Encouraging them to subscribe to a new kind of regionalism, State-centered as opposed to cacique-centered, he advocated for a more representative municipal government so that, once established, would serve as the local arm of the State's attempt to “liquidate cacicazgos.”⁵¹

Liquidation was the operative term. The coastal region of Jalisco and the Caxcana saw the most infamous experiences between its caciques and Yáñez to the point of inspiring two canonical novels of twentieth century rural Mexico: *La tierra pródiga* (1960) and *Las tierras flacas* (1962). When Juan Rulfo explains to the world that “Jalisco was surrounded on all sides by Mexico, except by water,” he pays homage to Yáñez's confrontation with caciquismo, tipping his hat to the monumental task undertaken by his fellow writer to attempt to connect the center of Jalisco to its coastal waters and economy, then blocked by the monopoly caciques held over the

⁴⁹ Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 51-52. Also see his speech, titled “Fe en Jalisco,” where he states “Zacoalco [...] dió sitio para exhortar al respeto a la vida humana y la liquidación de los cacicazgos por medio de una vigorosa vida municipal,” *ibid*, 91-92.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 54.

entire region.⁵² In *La tierra pródiga*, Yáñez illustrates the entrepreneurial and material modernization that caciques are able to achieve; caciques see themselves as great modernizers and tamers of the brute forces of nature in order to extract its wealth, the kind of spirit used to stereotype the Spanish conquistadors.⁵³ Under this logic, one understands why Jalisco's "great modernizer," and Yáñez's predecessor, González Gallo, would find their existence crucial to Jalisco's so-called modern progress. Confronting powerful men with the brutal force of a professional army had not been historically the answer; the greatest examples, to say the least, were the loss of the regions that later became the states of Colima and Nayarit.⁵⁴ But if not through brutal force, then how? The "liquidation" of the caciques rested in exacerbating and intensifying the local intra-cacique rivalries, according to Yáñez. The author makes numerous references to the ability to produce material wealth (such as airports) from the natural resources extracted from the richness of Jalisco's coastal regions (iron, titanium manganese, copper, uranium, silver, and gold). With regards to the idea that caciques and infrastructural development are not mutually exclusive, his question is peculiar from the historical standpoint. By Yáñez's time in government, dams, roads, public buildings, and other public utility works

⁵² Juan Rulfo, "La tierra pródiga," in *Juan Rulfo: Toda la obra*, edited by Claude Fell, (Madrid: Universidad de Costa Rica, 1992), 376-378.

⁵³ Agustín Yáñez, *La tierra pródiga*, (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), 112, 163, and in passim. For the reference to the Spanish conqueror, Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán, see 167.

⁵⁴ Here one may ask the related question: Was there a precedent of deep resentment against the cacique figure by central government in the Jalisco context? Of the many times that caciquismo represented a problem, one case that proves emblematic and meaningful is one that Yáñez and many in his position of power had been keen to try to study and understand. It was the case that cost the state of Jalisco the vital commercial port of San Blas, over 200 kilometers of coastline and over 20,000 square kilometers of territory in what in time would become the federal state of Nayarit in 1917, now northwest of Jalisco. The region known as Nayarit had an even longer history of contesting and successfully rebelling against outside forces, notably in the sixteenth-century when the Cora chief Nayar halted, even if for a brief victorious period, the advance of Spanish troops into his territory. Yet the context in which the secession of Nayarit unfolded was a modern one whose political and social iterations continued into the twentieth century. The leader of the Nayarit secessionist movement was Manuel Lozada, otherwise popularly known as *El Tigre de Alica*. Lozada represented the challenges and paradoxes of Mexican liberalism, particularly when it was put into practice.

had been built despite or because of the permeating presence of caciques and other parallel forms of violence and conflict. A closer examination of his writings and policies show, however, that Yáñez was making a different argument. The argument claimed that infrastructural modernization was not enough to make a “civilized” society: “Rechazamos el concepto antihumano del progreso. Pugnaremos por el progreso que tiene como fin la dignidad y el mejoramiento del hombre, que nunca debe ser sacrificado en aras del adelanto meramente material.”⁵⁵ A civilized society thus encompassed a ‘moral’ dimension based on the generalized respect for private property in the juarista tradition. The key for Yáñez, as was for Juárez, rested on making education an integral part of social life –at the urban, but especially rural level– in order to undo the entrenched institutions that reproduced widespread violations of the rights that protect private property and the rights that make men equal. These ideas might have suited the interests of the large landowners on paper, but they emanated from the distinctly humble origins and the steep uphill road to social mobility and political power experienced by both Yáñez and Juárez.⁵⁶

For all of the strategic brilliance that led to their rise to power, the caciques of *La tierra pródiga* nonetheless had points of vulnerability, such as the largely interpersonal way in which they negotiated between the traditional and the modern. For example, the ultimate demise of Ricardo Guerra Victoria, “el Amarillo,” the last remaining cacique in the novel, was his inability to contend with the value of the new regime of legal and institutional codes enveloping the region; he continued to take on numerous extramarital affairs in the traditional way instead of building his empire around his one legal wife, Elena, and he refused to treat the State as

⁵⁵ Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 103.

⁵⁶ Yáñez, *Flor de juegos antiguos*, (Guadalajara: Ediciones de la Universidad de Guadalajara, 1941) and Yáñez, *Tres cuentos*, (Mexico City: Joaquín Mortiz, 1974).

something other than yet another cacique, confusing the seeming peacefulness of the credit contracts as a sign of weakness, violable, rather than an impending Trojan Horse.⁵⁷ But it was all a trap. The State forces, represented by Pascual Medellín, loaned money and extended copious amounts of credit to the caciques knowing full well that these would never repay given the logic of their caciquista standpoint of power. And they didn't. After the caciques engaged in a war against themselves, liquidating each other one by one, only one remained, "El Amarillo," who escaped the region with his young mistress, having lost his wife and all material possessions to the State and its financiers.

The caciques of the *Las tierras flacas* inhabited a qualitatively different socioeconomic, political, and cultural situation than that of the coastal region, one much more closely reflective of Jalisco's general context.⁵⁸ As such, the smallholding was at the center of his story. Ranchos and rancherías were nowhere as near as resource-rich than the exceptionally "prodigal" coastal lands, which is why the introduction of even the most minimal technology or infrastructural innovation into the region wreaked intense acrimony between the different rancheros; in the novel, this encounter is mediated by the introduction of a sowing machine to the region followed by agricultural technologies and infrastructural modernization. The natural death of Epifanio Trujillo, the region's cacique, coincided with the historical demise of the hacienda, unleashing in parallel novel-historical form, the subsequent problem of the smallholding as the dominant form

⁵⁷ Elena's character represents a strange admixture of qualities, including physical attractiveness, piety, loyalty, and, importantly, financial wisdom.

⁵⁸ Yáñez makes distinctions between Jalisco's different regions: "Será por otra parte necesario formular planes integrales de desarrollo regional, dada la variedad de nuestras zonas, como la de la costa, la de los Altos, la Caxcana, etc.; no es posible en ciertos renglones del programa el abarcar toda la Entidad, ni menos el acometer uniformemente ciertas actividades." Please see Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 81. Nevertheless, the coastal region represented for Yáñez a particularly singular set of socioeconomic regional particularity as compared to the rest of the Jalisco, please see Carlos Tello Díaz, "La colonización de la costa de Jalisco: 1953-1959," *Relaciones*, 140, Autumn 2014: pp. 267-293.

of land tenure. On the interpersonal level that also serves to explain the atomization of land were the pressures exerted by Felipe and Jesusito on their father to divide their great landholdings; Felipe and Jesusito did not want to inherit their father's land, they wanted to be beneficiaries of that power before his death. Throughout his cacicazgo, Epifanio Trujillo filled the countryside with a generation of children he had with countless different women he took for short and medium-term pleasure, never marrying them since he did not believe in any legal institutions but his own.⁵⁹ In the same fashion he culled his livestock, Trujillo awarded his last name only to those children he found of stout superiority and downgraded those he deemed inferior to the category of godchildren. Those were the lucky ones, for Trujillo *sacrificed* many of his unworthy newborns right at birth. The men who attempted to become the region's caciques were a combination of Trujillo's 'legitimate' and 'scattered' progeny: Respectively, Felipe and Jesusito Trujillo as the former and Jacob Gallo as the latter. Under such pressure, Jacob Gallo's mother flees from the region with his son in tow. Over time he became a man of resources and returns to his native land.

Jacob Gallo ultimately takes over the region by introducing and monopolizing the political pipeline that brought the agricultural innovations (improved methods), public works, irrigation, building of dams, substitution of agriculture for livestock raising, use of fertilizers, and financing of projects through credit; when Jacob Gallo sought an alliance with his stepbrothers and offered a share of modern progress, albeit under his terms, Felipe and Jesusito refused, writing him off as yet another transient harmless "bastardo desgraciado."⁶⁰ Jacob

⁵⁹ Agustín Yáñez, *Las tierras flacas*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, Gobierno de Jalisco, 2009 [1962]), 221, 34, and in passim. The trope of the 'bastardization' of rural Mexico by strongmen or great landowners is also explicitly detailed in Juan Rulfo's epic novel *Pedro Páramo*, please see Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo*, (Madrid: Cátedra, 1983).

⁶⁰ Yáñez, *Las tierras flacas*, 136-139.

Gallo's terms demanded the return of the sowing machine Epifanio Trujillo had taken from poor rancheros (Rómulo and Merced), a demand that throughout the novel serves as a metaphor for allowing economic prosperity to thrive among all social groups of the region. Gallo used the rancheros that reviled Epifanio Trujillo against him. The destruction of caciquismo in these lean lands did not come about solely through the transformative aims of Jacob Gallo, who himself acts as either an enlightened type of cacique or politicized ranchero. Throughout the novel, the caciques and their infighting constantly take a backseat to the clamor and intensity of post-Trujillo ranchero culture and society which ultimately overwhelmed the actions of those, like Felipe and Jesusito, who sought continuity, and those, like Jacob, who wanted change. Even the head town, the municipal headquarters, Clamores, had no control over the natural and social environment of the ranchos, nor of the violence that was unleashed between both groups. The greatest pressure for the return of the sowing machine were the multiple and layered expressions emanating from ranchero society and, in the final event, it suffocates caciquismo out of the region while keeping and sowing the benefits of the material advantages it had brought.

How can we derive historical meaning from this literary prototype so brilliantly provided by Yáñez in *Las tierras flacas*? Conceptually, significant parallels may be drawn for the case of the Caxcana, particularly around the figure of Jacob Gallo. Is Jacob Gallo Jalisco's governor, J. Jesús González Gallo,⁶¹ the man that brought *progress* to Jalisco and Yahualica? Or, is he one of the many rancheros that emigrated from the region and returned from the United States to oversee and undertake the socioeconomic transformation of the Caxcana? Alternatively, could Jacob Gallo stand as a symbol of the central government, in this case represented not just by González Gallo but by Yáñez himself? What seems poignant to suggest, from a historical

⁶¹ Yáñez, *Las tierras flacas*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, Gobierno de Jalisco, 2009 [1962]), 222 and in passim.

standpoint, is that Jacob Gallo could represent all three: Yáñez compresses the events after the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero War into a novel that brings literary meaning to the rural cultural response of the rise of the smallholding as a dominant form of land tenure and the modernization of the countryside. Jacob Gallo represented the paradoxes and tensions of the political and ideological clash in the countryside during its transformative period in the twentieth century. While he promoted progress through infrastructural modernization, González Gallo also used violence (legal and extra-legal) to push his political agenda forward.⁶² Not unlike Jacob Gallo, González Gallo was willing to allow the continuation of caciquismo as part his of agenda of centralization. Yet, the weighty process of generalizing progress by breaking the concentration of political and economic power in the countryside was not something carried out by González Gallo himself, but rather, it was a force pushed forward by prosperous rancheros, particularly those that had emigrated to the United States and reinforced through the systematic policies carried out during the six years Yáñez was in power.⁶³ González Gallo believed in caciquismo not just because he had a direct personal stake in the institution, but also because, in a neo-porfirian ideological fashion, it served to protect the traditional state and national institutions that had locally been threatened by the violence of the Cristero War.

Yáñez's work in *Las tierras flacas* encompasses the paradoxes and contradictions of his juarismo in rural Jalisco. Ultimately, Yáñez was convinced of the need to eradicate caciquismo, both the caciques themselves and their source of power, understanding the great deterrent it represented for the continued realization of the smallholding as a carrier of the fruit of liberalism.

⁶² One account directly accuses J. Jesús González Gallo of ordering assassinations against his political enemies and adversaries, Jean Franco, *Lectura sociocrítica de la obra novelística de Agustín Yáñez*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 1988).

⁶³ For a detailed account of the economic policies that were tied to his political and ideological aim of eradicating caciquismo, please see chapter four.

Even if the eradication of caciquismo specifically meant the elimination of the González Gallo's cacicazgo, the means justified the end. Jean Franco explains this aim succinctly:

“Veinte años después, Agustín Yáñez nos confirmó que efectivamente esa había sido la orientación esencial de su acción: la eliminación —o la recuperación— de todos los González Gallo que dominaban el Estado.”⁶⁴

Jean Franco takes Yáñez to task for having exercised a non-negotiable degree of anti-democratic means to achieve his goal of eradicating caciquismo but also for implicitly making an apology of cacique's use of violence. What her elegant, albeit somewhat reductive, reading of both historical liberalism and structural violence in rural Mexico obscures, however, is Yáñez's marked emphasis throughout both novels of the need to bring economic justice to the countryside.⁶⁵ Economic justice, which entails guaranteeing people's “right to life,” was a prerequisite for *juarismo*, a breaker of old forces that were inherently unjust, according to Yáñez. Social relations in the countryside under the new regime of the *pequeña propiedad* would thus have to be rooted in a principle of economic justice. When he began his tenure as governor, Yáñez admitted to having a significant yet not nearly enough budget needed to generalize such principle of fairness throughout each and every one of Jalisco's regions, including the Caxcana. For reasons that he explained on his reconnaissance trip to the Caxcana's Ixtlahuacán del Río, a land dotted with numerous small and medium smallholders, he underscored a unity of forces

⁶⁴ While his policies and subsequent literary output overtly suggest his desire to eliminate the González Gallo cacicazgo, decades later Yáñez would also directly state as much in this interview, cited by Franco. Please see Jean Franco, *Lectura sociocrítica de la obra novelística de Agustín Yáñez*, 180, citing the following: “Entretien avec A. Yáñez,” in *Imprevu*, Montpellier, CERS, 1980-1.

⁶⁵ One of Yáñez's greatest critiques of these caciques, even the infamous ones from the coasts or from the Caxcana, was their utter lack of self-reflexivity. The coastal ones, for example, felt a deep sense of religious piety, erecting churches and submitting to prayer in the many chapels he commissioned. More than cynicism, Yáñez revealed a deeper void of self-reflexivity. Agustín Yáñez, *La tierra pródiga*, (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), 35, 95 and in *passim*.

between the people and government.⁶⁶ The prime forces to emanate from the people rested in the fruits of their active participation in the rural economy, primarily agriculture and livestock raising, which were at the heart of smallholders and rural worker's preoccupation. This was a time when the pequeña propiedad's consolidation of power was already palpable, which is why Yáñez exhorted the group of predominantly large smallholders of their moral and ethical responsibility to rural workers in 1953, during the IV National Convention of the Agricultural Smallholding's Confederation:

“Séame permitido hacer la misma exhortación, en particular a los pequeños agricultores de Jalisco, a quienes en forma patética les recuerdo sus deberes para con esa clase del campesinado formada por los llamados “medieros”, aparceros y peones; desposeídos de tierras, por una parte, y de los derechos agrarios por la otra, son verdaderos parias de nuestros campos, expuestos a todos los riesgos, sin protección segura de ninguna especie; entregados a la clemencia o la inclemencia de la naturaleza y a la benevolencia o la malevolencia de los propietarios y refaccionarios con quienes trabajan aleatoriamente.”⁶⁷

Foreseeing that their socioeconomic power over the next decades would only continue to grow with the attendant increased exploitation and intensification of land use, Yáñez gracefully reminds, if not cautions, pequeños propietarios about the mediating role the central government would have between them and their rural workers:

“Será una gran satisfacción para el Ejecutivo del Estado que este punto figure en las deliberaciones de la convención y recaigan acerca de él conclusiones que garanticen un trato humano, justo, que comporte los riesgos y pérdidas, así como que favorezca más alto nivel de vida en beneficio de esa numerosa clase rural, víctima frecuente de explotaciones, que son nocivas a la estabilidad y al progreso sociales. Mientras la justicia no rija las relaciones entre individuos y grupos, toda la base de desarrollo nacional será falsa, deleznable.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 125-126.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 183-184.

⁶⁸ Yáñez, *Discursos por Jalisco*, 184. “It would be a great satisfaction for the Executive of the State that this point would figure in the deliberations of the convention and fall upon him conclusions that guarantee a humane treatment, just, that encompasses the risks and losses, one that favors the highest level of benefit to the rural class which is a frequent victim of exploitation that is toxic to social stability and progress. While justice does not rule over social relations between individuals and groups, the entire base of national development will be false, cheap.”

By 1954, Yáñez publicly linked through his speeches the relationship between a prosperous smallholding regime of land tenure and the eradication of caciquismo in concrete ways. In Ixtlahuacan del Río, for example, the Governor praised the participation of ixtlahuaquenses for helping build the road to Guadalajara, which now was only at a phenomenally shorter three-hour distance by motor vehicle. Above all, he exalted the elimination of the region's cacique, Francisco González Gallo, who a few years before, in 1946, had been killed by a local *ranchero*.⁶⁹ If any existing "regimes of abuse and arbitrariness" remained, it was up to locals to finish off the problem of these "small reigns of violence and terror" by "bravely" denouncing and formally reporting these to the Yáñez administration for the "moral" good and economic prosperity of Jalisco.⁷⁰ But if we learn any lessons from his literary prototype in *La tierra pródiga* and *Las tierras flacas*, the government would not directly pull the trigger. Toward the culmination of Yáñez's governorship, the assassination of the last cacique of the Caxcana, Felipe Gonzalez Gallo, was carried out through the indirect actions of government and direct actions of locals, as analyzed in chapter five.

Conclusion

What occurred throughout Jalisco between 1939 to 1959, particularly during the height of the ideological clash between González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez, carries implications for our understanding of the impact of national politics on the regional level. One could ask, for example, whether the great ideological drift between Cárdenas and Calles had transformative

⁶⁹ Please see chapter four for the regional context and analysis in which the González Gallo brother's *cacicazgo* operated throughout the Caxcana.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

political ramifications at the various local levels. A close historical reading would suggest that the break between callismo and cardenismo took place over a long period of time in regions like the Caxcana, reaching fruition decades later, when its last cacique was eradicated. For González Gallo, the reconfiguration of land tenure that saw the rancho's rise to dominance in Jalisco signaled the continuation of a ruling regime of semi-independent caciques. For Yáñez, this same condition of the greater extension of the smallholding regime meant a propitious moment to expand the dominion of central government into all regions of Jalisco in order to generalize not just material modernization but *juarismo*, in the idea of equality, private property, and individual guarantees. Juarismo could not survive in a rural landscape with radical concentrations of land in the hands of a few as existed throughout the nineteenth century. From the logic of Yáñez's juarismo, González Gallo's political thought, implemented as a form of government was completely viable but generated profound inequalities and tended toward land concentration. Unlike the theory that argues that caciquismo generally meant the absence of the state,⁷¹ the Caxcana proves otherwise; Yáñez's ideologically-driven policies amounted to a coup d'état from the standpoint of Jalisco's traditional political rural system. Yáñez's program deliberately spurred conflict in the countryside in order to incentivize the destruction of the "enemies of progress," or González Gallo's "keepers of order." The consummation of their eradication was Yáñez's greatest contribution to the universalist politics-as-praxis being carried out by his generation of intellectuals, writers, and artists, what he coined the ideological liberal politics of *grandeza*.

⁷¹ See, notably, Alan Knight's contributions in *Caciquismo in Twentieth Century Mexico*, edited by Alan Knight and W.G. Pansters, (London : Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2005).

CHAPTER FOUR

The Assassination of Felipe González Gallo and the Eradication of Ranchero Caciquismo in the Caxcana

Rural Bossism in Mexico and the Caxcana

This chapter examines rural boss Felipe González Gallo and the eradication of rural bossism, or *caciquismo*, in the Caxcana. It is an attempt to bring the Caxcana into dialogue with the recent historiographic arguments about bossism in Mexico, which I argue continue to rely heavily on the idea of the rural boss as an intermediary between the state and rural society.¹ Caciques' access to the resources of the state, through powerful politicians or military strongmen, is the source from which rural bosses typically derive their own power in the regions or spaces where they operate, which in turn allows them to tap into the resources produced in his region of domination through the threat of force but also persuasion. Further, these studies demonstrate, caciques concretize the abstract power of the state locally by filtering through his or her person the resources brought in 'from above' and those produced 'from below,' often with the goal of cementing personal power or the power of a figure higher in the political hierarchy. We also know through these studies that the interplay between the state and society is complex and is informed by processes brought about especially from revolution, rebellion, centralization, and economic development. Nevertheless, few, if any studies, address the question of caciquismo through the question of ranchero land tenure and how post-hacienda conditions significantly undermined the government's ability to install intermediary caciques in rural Mexico.

¹ Notably among these are the essays presented in the work edited by Alan Knight and Wil Pansters in *Caciquismo in Twentieth Century Mexico*, (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2005), where urban and rural bossism in Mexico is examined from the period of the Mexican Revolution to the present. The works presented in this book are impressive and provide a solid first step into the study of caciquismo in the twentieth century but nonetheless leave more questions than answers on the development of rural bossism and what allows for its permanence or its demise.

I argue that the development and end of rural bossism in the Caxcana came about as a direct result of the reconfiguration of land tenure (analyzed in chapter two) through a series of events best understood not through the role of the state but by how rural society dealt with a new regime of private property in general and the rising dominance of the *pequeña propiedad* in particular. In this sense, rural bossism in the Caxcana is a historically specific phenomenon connected to the demise of the hacienda that gives us insight into the relationship between land tenure reconfiguration and its effect on rural social relations, which were arguably also transformed in the twentieth century. The state as a deep penetrator and arbiter of rural society is not meaningful in the story of transformation that unfolds in the Caxcana. On the one hand, as explored in chapter five, the state's role in the great post-1940s agricultural boom that took Mexico by storm is better grasped at the national level, where it heavily subsidized specific large-scale agricultural projects, arguably leaving out many rural areas of great productive promise; locally, in places like the Caxcana, it was *rancheros* who pushed forward with new agricultural technologies *in order to incorporate* themselves into the new regime of commercial agriculture, not the other way around. Similarly, while we see in chapter three that Jalisco governors Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez attempted to enact social and economic change in the Caxcana (through selective modernization and broader, state-level, structural modernization, respectively), it was ultimately the forces on the ground that generated the possibility for the eradication of Felipe González Gallo's *cacicazgo*.

I define this kind of bossism in the Caxcana through the post-hacienda *ranchero cacique* who failed to impose his regime of *hacendado* political power over a landscape increasingly dominated by *rancheros*. In order to understand the rise and fall of *caciquismo* in the Caxcana, one must turn to how it was composed as a whole. Bossism in the Caxcana derived its power in

numbers, comprised of three brothers from the González Gallo family which divided the region through their spheres of control: Gregorio González Gallo took power in Yahualica, Francisco González Gallo dominated Ixtlahuacán del Río and parts of Cuquío, while the most infamous of these three, Felipe González Gallo, reigned over all three municipalities. All three men were respectively assassinated at the hands of large and medium smallholders in 1936, 1949, and 1957,² but I focus on Felipe González Gallo in particular because his assassination was an even greater reflection of the growing power of smallholders driven by the social and economic imperatives of the smallholding. Felipe González Gallo became a threat to production by constantly pillaging, robbing, and looting smallholdings but also by threatening the social stability that productivity promised, such as allowing rural workers to work in relative peace and extending the relative security of the home into the outside world for women. The González Gallo cacicazgo was not by any means anti-modern; the brothers were themselves smallholders who took advantage of vacuum left by the demise of the hacienda. As the majority of smallholders in the Caxcana, they worked to increase their land share or whenever possible intensify production on their properties. What gave them a degree of power was siding with the government during the Cristero Rebellion, who afforded them *defensas rurales*.³ Nevertheless,

² Gregorio was killed on account of issues involving land and retaliations for a previous murder on December 19, 1936, Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Yahualica de González Gallo (AHMYGG), Ramo Civil, Libro de Actas de Defunción de 1936, f.97v; also see “En Yahualica dieron muerte al Sr. Gregorio González Gallo,” in *El Informador*, 22 December 1936 (Guadalajara). Francisco was killed on April 19, 1949, please see “Muy concurridos los funerals del señor Francisco González Gallo,” in *El Informador*, 21 April 1949 (Guadalajara).

³ The *defensas rurales* were rural militia units that branched from the Mexican military and became prevalent in central Mexico particularly after the Cristero Rebellion. It was a way for the Mexican president, particularly under Lázaro Cárdenas to pacify the countryside by giving positions of power to former cristero and gobiernista leaders alike, see especially Enrique Guerra Manzo, “Guerra cristera y orden público en Coalcomán, Michoacán (1927-1932),” *Historia Mexicana* 51,2 (Oct.-Dec., 2001): 325-362 and Jorge Alberto Lozoya, *El ejército mexicano (1911-1965)*, (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1970). Thomas Rath notes more particularly that these rural militias were reservist in nature and that they were a part of a campaign of conscription on the part of the Ávila Camacho government that generally failed both because men in charge of drafting on the ground distorted the bureaucratic procedures to their benefit but also because potential draftees resisted, and at times openly rebelled against

Felipe González Gallo's *defensas rurales* (an assemblage of his own trusted friends now in uniform) can hardly be interpreted as the armed extension and systematization of the state into the Caxcana; practically all smallholders in the region were armed and when his dusk neared, González Gallo became emblematic of the dominance of the smallholding, with the state continuing to be but a loose expression in the Caxcana. For the González Gallo brothers, the smallholding had giveth and the smallholding had taketh.

Competing Interpretations of Felipe González Gallo: Official and Local Versions of His Power

In 1957 the brother of the prominent and powerful former Jalisco governor J. Jesús González Gallo⁴ was assassinated by members of a poor peasant family from Cuquío. On don Felipe González Gallo's fateful day, four men ambushed the cacique and his driver as they passed through a small hamlet near Yahualica, roughly 130 kilometers northeast of Guadalajara. The men, three of whom were from the peasant Americano family, proceeded to open fire on the vehicle, killing both don Felipe and his driver. Given the stature of the former governor, known as Jalisco's "great modernizer,"⁵ news of the assassination of his brother, Don Felipe, reverberated far beyond the Caxcana's 1,400 square kilometer boundaries. The event was widely publicized in prominent Guadalajara newspapers, which kept audiences thoroughly updated on the murder investigation as clues emerged. For jaliscienses, already attuned to ideas

conscription, please see Thomas Rath, "'Que el cielo un soldado en cada hijo te dio...': Conscription, Recalcitrance and Resistance in Mexico in the 1940s," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 37:3 (Aug., 2005): 507-531.

⁴ J. Jesús González Gallo was governor of Jalisco from 1947 to 1953, please see chapter three of this work and, for a brief biographical sketch, please see *Enciclopedia de México*, 7th ed., Tomo VI, s.v. "González Gallo, J. Jesús," (Massachusetts: Quebecor World Book Services, 2003), 3437. See also, Manuel Cambre, *Gobiernos y Gobernantes de Jalisco*, 3rd ed., (Tlaquepaque: Ayuntamiento de Tlaquepaque, 1990), 140. More locally, in the municipality of Yahualica, as mentioned in the introduction, the González Gallo family had ties to the region dating to the Cristero Rebellion when in 1927 Felipe and Gregorio González Gallo bribed a general into releasing a captured local priest, Román Adame Rosales, who later became canonized saint, see Agustín Yañez, *Yahualica: Etopeya*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 1946) 136-137.

⁵ Jorge González Guevara, *González Gallo: El gobernante y su obra*. (Guadalajara: Editorial Tiesa, 1952), 2.

of progress and modernization since Jesús González Gallo's governorship of "*Progreso como Meta*"⁶ (understood here, in accordance with the contemporary language of news media and historical actors to mean economic growth, urbanization, infrastructural development, and technological advancement) the shocking lawlessness and savagery of the slaying presented an apparent anomaly that required explanation beyond the "facts" gathered by investigators.

In the days immediately following the murder, prominent *tapatio* newspapers ran editorials that constructed an official narrative of events. According to the rationale posited by the Guadalajara press, don Felipe was a member of a family of public servants that had been struggling to promote progress in Jalisco. His death was attributable to the persistent "backwardness" of Jalisco's countryside, where armed men, unchecked by the laws that governed Jalisco, roamed throughout the region according to their own whims and desires. This narrative attempted to establish that Jalisco had a "rural problem."⁷ It framed the assassination in terms of a tension between backwardness (rural) and progress (urban), which supposedly necessitated Guadalajara's thorough intercession of the countryside in order to enforce the law and discipline the region's rural subjects. Instilling modernization in the region was viewed as essential to overcoming the backwardness of rural Jalisco and to better serve the interests of Guadalajara, and ultimately those of "progressive" Mexicans everywhere.

Another account, this one emanating from the Caxcana, stated that don Felipe was a ruthless cacique who ruled the region unchecked by the laws that governed Jalisco. Here, Felipe González Gallo is said to be *the* armed man operating outside of Jalisco's laws precisely because

⁶ See Jesús González Gallo's motto in a caption below his photograph in Manuel Cambre, *Gobiernos y Gobernantes de Jalisco*, (Tlaquepaque: H. Ayuntamiento Constitucional de Tlaquepaque, 1990) pp. 138 and 141.

⁷ See their descriptions of Jalisco's problem in the countryside described in "El Occidental Opina: Agitación en Yahualica," *El Occidental*, 1 November 1957 and "Editorial: *Caciquismo* y Pistolerismo," *El Informador*, 4 November 1957, 4.

he held himself *to be* the law, robbing and pillaging at will throughout the region's municipalities. He is also held responsible for restricting the fruits of "progress" to his power-base in Yahualica proper. Consequently, inhabitants (from smallholders to peasants) inevitably came to find Yahualica's modernization as conspicuously selective, with Felipe González Gallo appearing as the cacique who controlled its effects locally for his benefit. In this narrative, the Americano men carried out an act of kindness by ridding the region of its "rural problem," embodied in one man.⁸

Despite their obvious differences, the two narratives share the keen realization that the incomplete modernization of the Caxcana, both in its relationship to the regional hub of Guadalajara and in its materialization within the region itself, had created a significant rural problem. The official narrative suggests that in spite of the valiant attempts of the González Gallos to bring progress to the region, modernization was incomplete due to the resistance of unlawful and backward subjects. In fact, the apparent anomaly presented by the lawless murder of the "great modernizer's" brother is explained by the incompleteness of the very project initiated by the former governor himself. The second narrative, meanwhile, suggests that modernization was selective and incomplete in the region because the Gonzalez Gallo family jealously guarded a monopoly on the distribution of the material means and benefits of the process. This is certainly a conceivable, if simplistic, interpretation, as Jalisco Governor Jesús González Gallo was credited as the politician who single-handedly brought modernization to his native region, while his brother, Felipe, was seen as the local "muscle" of this significant political *parentesco*, the actual local embodiment of the growing national power of the González Gallo family name and the inequities of progress with which that name became locally synonymous. Thus, both narratives converge on the point that modernization was selective and

⁸ Interviews with Marta Americano, Maestra Paz Guzmán, Pascual Americano August 26-30 2006.

anomalous, but offer contradictory explanations for its peculiar manifestation, leaving out any notion of an ongoing regional transformation (in this case of land tenure) as the potential cause of these events.

While Jesús González Gallo has figured so prominently in the history of Jalisco, no systematic study has ever been written on the impact of his political and economic policies at the regional level. This is surprising because he played such a pivotal role – at first in the Ávila Camacho presidency and later as appointee to the Jalisco governorship – in constructing Mexico's and Jalisco's new image of progress and modernization. Manifestations of this new image went beyond rhetoric. Modern ideals were materialized in Guadalajara by the construction of public works projects and the building of hundreds of schools as the city's population skyrocketed⁹, and throughout Jalisco by the paving of hundreds of kilometers of roadway.¹⁰ But modernization per se, promoted as a new political and economic direction in Mexican and Jaliscense history, was only extended selectively into the regional outposts of Jalisco. The only remote region that could boast of modernization during this period was the Caxcana, and more specifically, Yahualica proper, leaving the rest of the valley mostly physically unaffected. In this sense, González Gallo was following in the footsteps of prior Jalisco governors who implemented modernization projects only in Guadalajara and in their own native hometowns.

⁹See Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática online database <<http://mapserver.inegi.gob.mx/dsist/ah12003/index.html?c=424&e=14>> keywords: Jalisco and Guadalajara.

¹⁰ Between 1940 and 1950 Guadalajara's population grew by 60 percent reaching a total of 380,000 inhabitants. Regarding the population numbers, these would only continue to increase exponentially, reaching 740,000 in the 1960s, see José María Murià, *Breve Historia de Jalisco*, 2nd ed. (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2005), 543. For the constructions of stated public works projects see González Guevara, Jorge, *González Gallo: El gobernante y su obra*, (Guadalajara: Editorial Tiesa, 1952), 10-15 and for photographs of the constructions in Guadalajara see 16-38. Also see "El municipio de Guadalajara y sus funcionarios," *El Informador*, 5 October 1957, 1 and "Datos para la historia de la educación en Jalisco," *El Informador*, 14 July 1957. Also see, Murià, *Breve Historia de Jalisco*, 175-177.

As Guadalajara experienced an unprecedented level of modernization in the early and mid-1940s, Yahualica curiously imitated its burgeoning counterpart to a proportionate degree. The modernization to Yahualica proper, a three square-kilometer pueblo of roughly 6,000 inhabitants,¹¹ albeit restricted, nevertheless affected social relations in the entire region. The advent of modernization engendered deep suspicion in the Caxcana. This suspicion was not the result of an outright rejection of these grand transformations. Rather, it was because modernization in the region was mostly confined to the boundaries of Yahualica. Furthermore, it was widely believed that the Governor was using his older brother, Felipe González Gallo to enforce these initiatives of selective modernization.¹² During the coverage of his assassination, he is also referred as the region's *jefe político*.¹³ When viewed through this frame, the escalation of violence that took place in the Cuquío-Yahualica Valley is revealed as more than petty rural politics between "*hombres bravucones*."¹⁴ Rather, it is suggestive of how the new types of outside influences affected regional social relations in a particular manner as they were mediated through the feared and resented figure of the *jefe político*.

¹¹ See Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática online database <<http://mapserver.inegi.gob.mx/dsist/ah12003/index.html?c=424&e=14>> kwd Jalisco and Yahualica.

¹² Two prominent Jalisco scholars have described and referred to Felipe González Gallo as a *cacique* in their municipal analyses. See Javier Hurtado, *Familias, política, y parentesco: Jalisco 1919-1992* (Mexico DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993) who examines the tight political grip held by the family in the Caxcana beginning with Felipe González Gallo and succeeded by his son, Rigoberto González Quezada. Also see José Guillermo Díaz Muñoz and Ignacio González Hernández, "Repensando la Democracia Municipal: Hacia la participación amplia organizada y apoyada en mecanismos de democracia directa," (Tlaquepaque: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente, 1999) also see their detailed analysis "Las organizaciones campesinas en la conquista de la democracia municipal: el caso de la OCIJ," in *La ciudadanización de la política en Jalisco*, coord. Renée de la Torre y Juan Manuel Ramírez Sáiz, (Tlaquepaque: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente, 2001), 23-50, in their sociological study on the emergence of recent grassroots organizations throughout various Jalisco municipalities, Díaz Martínez and González Hernández, state that in the case of Cuquío, what had impeded varying forms of democracy and political representation was the historical "cacicazgo" imposed by the González Gallo family.

¹³ "Editorial: Caciquismo y Pistolerismo," *El Informador*, 4 November 1957, 4.

¹⁴ Ibid. 'Brutish braggarty men;' was the term used in the first editorial to describe the actions of the Americano brothers against Felipe González Gallo.

Because this work seeks to examine the social history of post-cardenista Jalisco, it is limited by the absence of a regional historiography of the period. Yet, historians of Mexico have produced commendable examinations of caciquismo and its articulation with other social, political, and economic phenomena.¹⁵ Paul Friedrich's seminal ethnographic history is one of the more notable works. Researched in Michoacán, it describes the lives and political interactions of seven local caciques (some in the making) bidding for power in Naranja. It did not take long for historians to follow the trail of regional actors who fit the characteristics of men like *Achilles* and *Gonza* (two of the seven 'princes' in Friedrich's work) and to begin addressing the economic and political control at stake in *caciquista* power.¹⁶

Another well-known analyst of twentieth century caciquismo in Mexico is Roger Bartra. In his analysis of Puebla and Hidalgo, Bartra suggests that the cacique is part of a particular rural class, what he calls the "parasitic agrarian bourgeoisie," and that it retained regional "domination" through the control of "resources and labor of campesinos."¹⁷ In other words, the cacique class "controls the means of production" in rural Puebla and Hidalgo.¹⁸ Undoubtedly, his examination is essential to our understanding of certain aspects of caciquismo. Bartra

¹⁵ For notable examples see Romana Falcon, *Revolución y caciquismo. San Luis Potosi, 1910-1938*, (Mexico DF: El Colegio de Mexico, 1984), Victoria Lerner, *Génesis de un cacicazgo: Antecedentes del cedillismo*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación General de Estudios de Posgrado, 1989). While caciquismo in Jalisco per se has been examined, these works have focused on labor relations in Guadalajara, for a recent example see Maria Teresa Fernández Aceves, "En-gendering Caciquismo: Guadalupe Martínez, Heliodoro Hernández Loza and the Politics of Organized Labour in Jalisco," in *Caciquismo in the Twentieth Century*, 201-224.

¹⁶ More recent works on caciquismo in Michoacán which have built upon Friedrich's seminal work include: Enrique Guerra Manzo, *Caciquismo y orden publico en Michoacán, 1920-1940*, (Mexico City: Colegio de Mexico, 2002), Christopher Boyer, *Becoming Campesinos: Politics, Identity, and Agrarian Struggle in Postrevolutionary Michoacán, 1920-1935*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), Fernando Salmerón, *Los límites del agrarismo: Proceso político y estructuras de poder en Taretan, Michoacán*, (Zamora: Colegio de Michoacán, 1989).

¹⁷ Roger Bartra et al., *Caciquismo y poder político en el México rural*, (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1975), 1. For revisions to these essays which build upon the class analysis here discussed published in English, see Bartra *Agrarian structure and political power in Mexico* translated by Stephen K. Ault, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

¹⁸ Bartra et al., *Caciquismo y Poder Político En El México Rural*.

identifies how the cacique exercises political control. Further, his analysis synthesizes a variety of social classes that share similar characteristics, (empresarios capitalistas, campesinos acomodados—both part of the *burguesía rural*), and describes their differential access to wealth and the means of production. Nevertheless, the presentation leaves much to be desired in that it presents a narrative already well problematized in Mexican historiography—that the source of oppression is discernible, directed, and commanded by a group of individuals. Although the class with the most power did impose a certain order that can be categorized as “parasitic” and oppressive according to the empirical data and oral evidence gathered, Bartra’s analysis implies that the problem of oppressed campesinos could be resolved or ameliorated with the elimination of this “agrarian bourgeois” class, a position that the data presented in the present essay refutes.

In an examination of state caciquismo in Puebla, Sergio Valencia Castrejón analyzes Manuel Ávila Camacho’s infamous older brother, Maximino Ávila Camacho, stating that an understanding of his state-held cacicazgo is essential for understanding Mexico in this period.¹⁹ Importantly, he argues that cacicazgos have the ability to play a decisive role in presidential successions, which suggests that a cacique with strong ties to the national government can exert power well beyond the regional level.²⁰ More recently, Alan Knight defines caciquista power as “personal, informal, to a degree reciprocal, and resistant to formal laws and regulations.”²¹ Stating that “*caciquismo* is a remarkably durable phenomenon, which assumes many forms” and

¹⁹ Sergio Valencia Castrejón, *Poder regional y política nacional en México: El gobierno de Maximino Ávila Camacho en Puebla, 1937-1941*, (Mexico DF: INEHRM, 1996), 14.

²⁰ Ibid, 16.

²¹ Ibid, 3.

is capable of “adjusting to social and political changes,” Knight adds that “it *is* not necessarily doomed by ‘modernity’, whatever ‘modernity’ might mean.”²²

Thus, recent examinations have compellingly argued that caciquismo is in fact not necessarily contradictory to modernization, but rather can often complement it. The cases they present—both in rural and urban settings—emphasize that the traditional characteristics of a cacique, such as the use of calculated violence,²³ patronage, and the ability to mediate within his domain and with external forces, can adjust to transitions such as modernization and urbanization. This study, however, seeks to revise the recent historiography of caciquismo by examining its rise and fall in the story of a new regime in land tenure that envelop the Caxcana beginning in the 1930s.

Politics and Modernization in the Caxcana

From 1940 to 1960, Guadalajara experienced an unprecedented level of modernization. This was mostly commensurate with the narrative of modernization disseminated nationally from Mexico City during Manuel Ávila Camacho’s presidency (1940-1946). During the celebration of Guadalajara’s fourth centennial in 1942, Ávila Camacho and Presidential Secretary J. Jesús González Gallo traveled across Jalisco, including the Caxcana, pushing legislation and accords to

²² Ibid, 7. As a backdrop to Valencia Castrejón’s argument, Knight also states that “The Achilles’ heel of established *cacicazgos*—as of the Mexican national political system which for many years they underpinned—is the political succession. Orderly succession, whether of hereditary monarchs or democratic presidents, requires strict rules, strictly adhered to. *Cacicazgos* lack such rules, hence succession crises are endemic. As the old *cacique* fades—or the not-so-old *cacique* is ousted—the result may be a swift replacement by a new *cacique*, a phase of factional infighting and instability, or, possibly, a transition to a more democratic or, at least, rule-governed system.” Knight and Pansters, *Caciquismo*, 19.

²³ By calculated violence here I will refer to this assessment: “Cacical violence tends to be low-key, sporadic, even surgical [...] good—that is, effective—*caciques* do not engage in wholesale violence and repression, even out in the sticks,” Knight and Pansters, *Caciquismo*, 16.

promote the construction of irrigation projects, paved roadways, and other public works.²⁴ Subsequently, the Jalisco government commissioned the construction of primary and secondary schools, hospitals, bureaucratic institutions and the lauded network of avenues and paved roadways that facilitated movement throughout the city of Guadalajara and connected the capital to its regional outposts. The “spirit,” as one Jalisco scholar explains, “that persuaded the governors and individuals that promoted these works was logically clear: paths of communication opened the road to progress.”²⁵ While projects promoted under the banner of progress were embraced, the scholar continues, modernization was limited in Jalisco, due to high construction costs.²⁶ Thus, Jalisco’s regional outposts, while connected to Guadalajara through this new road system, would not see urbanization on the scale of *la perla tapatía* until the Yáñez administration as shown in chapter three.

Political and economic power in the region appeared to center on the González Gallo family due to its participation and leadership in the Cristero Rebellion, in which they had fought against the Cristeros on behalf of the government.²⁷ As a fervent Callista in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Jesús González Gallo was first appointed to a judicial seat in the lower courts of Teocaltiche and Jalostotitlán, principal municipalities in Los Altos de Jalisco “proper.”²⁸ The fact that González Gallo went elsewhere to begin his rise to political prominence is suggestive of

²⁴ Ramon García Ruiz, “Cronología jalisciense,” in *Jalisco en el Progreso de Mexico*, 87.

²⁵ Mario A. Aldana Rendón, *Desarrollo económico de Jalisco, 1821-1940*, (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1979), 104.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ As stated earlier, Jesús González Gallo’s older brothers, including Felipe González Gallo, did aid in the release of a priest apprehended by federal troops, but here the González Gallo, guided by local circumstance rather than having any fervor to the Cristero cause, were practical and not reactionary.

²⁸ Javier Hurtado, *Familias, política y parentesco 1919-1991*, 95. Jesús González Gallo was a callista early in his political career and even traveled to bid Calles farewell as the ex-president embarked on his exile.

the municipality's limited geopolitical importance as well as the local intolerance for *callismo* in Yahualica at that time. By the mid 1930s, González Gallo had risen to the state senate in Guadalajara. In this period, President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), seeking to establish a new order, began a purge of Callistas from politics throughout the republic. After being removed from his seat in the senate, González Gallo personally presented his party credential to President Cárdenas in resignation. Moved by this gesture, Cárdenas allowed him to keep a place in Mexican politics. González Gallo then served as senator and later supported Ávila Camacho's bid for the presidency in the final year of the Cárdenas administration, becoming a member of the Comité Pro-Ávila Camacho campaign that helped take the *poblano* to the presidency.²⁹ As reward for his support, González Gallo was appointed Ávila Camacho's presidential secretary for his entire sexenio.³⁰

By the late 1930s, the González Gallo family was able to consolidate its power in their municipality of origin, Yahualica, where González Gallo commissioned the erection of a statue of Ávila Camacho to commemorate his visit during his presidential campaign and where a dam was constructed in his name.³¹ During his service to Ávila Camacho as his private secretary, Jesús González Gallo continued to cultivate networks with the elite in the Los Altos region. The efficacy of such networks is evidenced by the public works projects constructed during that period. Similarly, the alteño elite, realizing his growing stature in Mexico City, sought his influence in the early 1940s. On the whole, the oligarchy of Los Altos³² had to navigate through

²⁹ Ibid, 95-96. Also please see, Luis Medina, *Historia de la Revolución Mexicana, periodo 1940-1952, del cardenismo al avilacamachismo*, (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1978), 57.

³⁰ Hurtado, *Familias*, 102. Also, Niblo, *Mexico in the 1940s: Modernity, Politics, and Corruption*, 92.

³¹ Agustín Yañez, *Yahualica: Etopeya*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 1946), 37.

³² Tomás Martínez Saldaña and Leticia Gándara Mendoza, *Política y sociedad en México: el caso de Los Altos de Jalisco*, (Tlalpan: INAH, 1976), 74-76 and in passim.

major political challenges connected directly to the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero Rebellion (1926-1929).³³ However, the period after the Cristero Rebellion marked new spaces for the traditional elite to regain control of Los Altos.³⁴ In the 1930s, with federal troops evacuating key regions of Los Altos, the traditional elite moved to fill the power vacuum left after the war.³⁵ Nevertheless, the political disruption created a period of severe economic downturn in Los Altos and in turn forced these regional power groups to continue to negotiate with state (and consequently national) governments well into the González Gallo gubernatorial administration.³⁶ As part of the non-traditional elite, González Gallo was able to

³³ Ibid, 242-243, 245. Challenges to this elite's power occurred, for example, in the 1920s when Jalisco governor and Obregonista, José Guadalupe Zuno, supported a family in Los Altos that was not a part of the traditional elite. Once this family, with the influential support of Zuno, began to form its own clientalist *alteño* politics apart from the traditional elite, many in the elite itself began to operate under its wing.

³⁴ For more on the inner dealings of the *alteño* oligarchy, see Silviano Hernández, *Acciones bélicas en tierras de Jalisco*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno de Jalisco, Secretaría de Cultura, 2003). Salvador Báez Mejía, *Crónica de Los Altos*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, 2000). César Gilabert Juárez, Margarita Camarena Luhrs, *El alteño global: Trayectorias evolutivas de Los Altos de Jalisco: Evolución política y sociocultural en la era de la sociedad global*, (Zapopan, Jalisco: El Colegio de Jalisco, 2004), Cristina Palomar Vereá, *El orden discursivo de género en los Altos de Jalisco*, (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2005), Silviano Hernández González, *El origen de la población alteña*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, Jalisco, 2003), Jim Tuck, *The Holy War in Los Altos: A Regional Analysis of Mexico's Cristero rebellion*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982), Agustín Yáñez, *Imágenes y evocaciones*, (Zapopan, Colegio de Jalisco/ México, D.F.: Alfaguara, 2003), Andrés Antonio Fábregas Puig, *La formación histórica de una región: los Altos de Jalisco*, (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1986), José Antonio Gutiérrez Gutiérrez, *Los Altos de Jalisco: Panorama histórico de una región y de su sociedad hasta 1821*, (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1991), Jorge Alonso y Juan García de Quevedo et al, *Política y región: Los Altos de Jalisco*, (México, D.F.: SEP, 1990), Tomás Martínez Saldaña, Leticia Gándara Mendoza, *Política y sociedad en México: el caso de Los Altos de Jalisco*, (Tlalpan: Centro de Investigaciones Superiores, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1976), Luis Felipe Cabañas Barajas ed and María del Rocío Castillo Aja ed, *Procesos regionales en Jalisco*, (Zapopan: El Colegio de Jalisco, 1993), Luis de la Torre and Manuel Caldera, *Pueblos del viento norte*, (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco, 1994), Cándido González Pérez ed, "Tercer Simposio Los Altos de Jalisco a fin de siglo: Tepatitlán de Morelos, Jalisco, 23 y 24 de junio de 1999: memorias," (Guadalajara: Sistema de Educación Media Superior, Universidad de Guadalajara, 1999). Eliseo López Cortés, *Ultimo cielo en la cruz: cambio sociocultural y estructuras de poder en Los Altos de Jalisco*, (Zapopan: El Colegio de Jalisco; Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1999), Manuel Alvarez del Castillo et al, *Veinte cuentos de literatos jaliscienses, 1895*, (Guadalajara: Editorial Hexágono, 1990), Jean Meyer, *La Cristiada*, translated by Aurelio Garzón Del Camino, (Mexico DF: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1976).

³⁵ Martínez Saldaña and Gándara Mendoza, *Política y sociedad*, 245.

³⁶ That is, even when those negotiations included continued support for *zunistas*.

forge significant economic and political relationships in Los Altos in this period, which he strengthened during his tenure as governor of Jalisco (1947-1953).

Evidence of the mutual dependence between González Gallo and the traditional *alteño* elite can be seen in the construction of the dam in Yahualica. Because of geological and climatic constraints in Los Altos, endeavors that required relatively low water consumption, such as cattle-farming or wheat production, were those that had traditionally produced the greatest wealth.³⁷ Indeed, without a constant and predictable source of rain and fecund soil, even ranchers with middling and small land holdings were affected by a lack of diversified sources of income. Projects initiated by Jesús González Gallo – both while he served under Ávila Camacho and later as Jalisco Governor – such as the dam and the paving of roads that connected Los Altos to Guadalajara, made the development of new enterprises possible.³⁸ Thus, in the 1940s, longstanding structural impediments to capital diversification and growth had been overcome by the *Alteño* elite through its connections with González Gallo. At the same time, the latter's political valuation continued to grow.

The Selective Road to Guadalajara

In the decade prior to the assassination of Felipe González Gallo, the Cuquío-Yahualica region began to modernize. One of the most important issues on Jesús González Gallo's modernizing agenda was road work, particularly paving the road that connected his native Yahualica to Guadalajara.³⁹ By the 1940s, the Jalisco government sought more efficient

³⁷ Consuelo Amador Díaz, "Los Altos De Jalisco: Transformación de Una Región 1940-1980," in *Política y Región: Los Altos de Jalisco*. Coord. Jorge Alonso and Juan García de Quevedo, (Tlalpan: CIESAS, 1990), 39.

³⁸ Martínez Saldaña and Gándara Mendoza., *Política y sociedad en México*, 254. Also, Jaime Espín and Patricia De Leonardo, *Economía y sociedad en Los Altos de Jalisco*, (Mexico City: Editorial Nueva Imagen, 1978), 224-230.

³⁹ Murià, *Breve Historia*, 2nd ed., 174.

methods to connect the newly generated material expenditures and profits of Los Altos to Guadalajara, and to transport finished commodities back to the countryside. Until then, the Caxcaca region had been connected to Guadalajara, but only insofar as it exported its products to the jaliscense market by way of an outdated infrastructure.⁴⁰ Prior to the paving of the main road, Guadalajara was dreadfully inaccessible to most of the region's inhabitants. There were, of course, exchanges of the multifarious sort between the region's inhabitants and Guadalajara prior to the paving of the road, as evidenced by Eric Van Young's research on the Guadalajara hinterlands in the colonial period.⁴¹ Yet, even by the 1940s, the roughly 100 kilometer journey to Guadalajara from the Caxcana required two days. Clearly, the modernization of the main road made exchange much faster and relatively more convenient.⁴² This convenience, however, was mostly limited to commerce and the region's "upper classes" because the majority of the region's inhabitants could not afford a vehicle.⁴³

For most compelled to travel to the city to exchange goods or to seek a particular service, the road to Guadalajara remained traditional: on foot with donkey in tow. There were significant problems in traversing through the foothills to Guadalajara *en burro*: the piercing and raucous shrieks of a frightened donkey triggered when crossing bridges was not only an intense experience for the owner, but the animal's startled motions would often cause its load to fall—

⁴⁰ De Leonardo, Patricia, "El Impacto del mercado en diferentes unidades de producción. Municipio de Jalostotitlán, Jalisco," in *Economía y sociedad en Los Altos de Jalisco*, 55.

⁴¹ See Eric Van Young's, *Hacienda and Market in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*.

⁴² Yañez, *Yahualica-Etopeya*, 22, "ventajas conseguidas por las modernas vías de comunicación."

⁴³ Ibid, Yañez, *Yahualica-Etopeya*, 23. "Cuando bien iba [the truck/car], podía llegarse a Yahualica entre las ocho y las diez de la noche, suponiendo que se hubiese salido temprano de Guadalajara." The vehicles would break down often enough that many mechanics made a living working the road from Guadalajara to the Caxcana. The term "upper classes" has been placed in quotation marks here to express them as an upper class only in terms relative to the rest of the region's inhabitants. Most of the breakdowns by automobile traffic on the newly paved roadway were by members of the region's "upper classes." For more, see Yañez, *Yahualica-Etopeya*, 23.

dropping many of the goods brought to or from Guadalajara into the river below. In addition, once arriving at the edges of Guadalajara, the city would at times collect a special tax depending on the amount of goods being ‘imported or exported’ in each *costalito*. As if startled donkeys and being excised by the city were not enough, there was always the ever-present probability of being robbed by foothill *bandidos*, a customary occurrence that truly made the journey to and from Guadalajara “muy muy trabajosa y difícil...y peligrosa.”⁴⁴ According to Agustín Yáñez, it was not until a new and decisive “tenacious progressivism” that real change took place in the region. Yáñez wrote that the dream of “countless generations, who had endured the rigors of the road [...] became a joyful reality” when the highway to Guadalajara from Yahualica was finally paved in 1946.⁴⁵

On the afternoon of November 24, 1946, outgoing President Ávila Camacho and his then-presidential secretary Jesús Gonzalez Gallo arrived in Yahualica – via the newly paved road – to an elaborate banquet at the municipal government headquarters. The president and his secretary were accompanied by a posse of cabinet members, senators, representatives, high-ranking military officials, and neighboring state governors—a caliber of dignitaries unlike any ever seen by yahualicenses. In fact, the president’s one-day visit to Jalisco was spent solely in

⁴⁴ Interview with Irineo Guzmán, August 29, 2006. Here I include his description of the frightened donkey: “A veces se les atoraban las pezuñas a los burros atravesando el puente—pos’ también cuales puentes; eran en veces nomas ahí unas tablas sueltas atravesadas ...pero vieras nomas que gritos y lloros... vieras nomas que feos gritos?” Irineo, or Don Neo as the people of the ranch call him, lives in a humble adobe home (even by his locality’s standards) without electricity or modern appliances of any kind; one neighbor made the following (rather harsh) statement about Irineo: “Don Neo, he is such a miser [‘es tan miserable’] and fixated with money but has never known what to do with it...you know what happened when the peso changed? He always had his money under his mattress. Since he never found out about the [currency] change, because he doesn’t even watch television, all of his old pesos [the old form of currency ‘viejos pesos’] were worthless years later when he actually tried to use them.”

⁴⁵ Yáñez, *Yahualica-Etopeya*, 24. It is important here to note, as explained in chapter three, that Yáñez would set a different modernization agenda that, in practice though not in overt discourse, was critical of his predecessor’s selective form of modernization; when it came to this road in particular, Yáñez considered that it served the economic interests of the González Gallo family (and their regional cacicazgo) at the expense of the region’s inhabitants and as such, dedicated his administration to the development of other road projects in the region so as to aid in the disarticulation of the power of the González Gallo brothers.

Yahualica.⁴⁶ By the late 1940s, the González Gallo family name became even more synonymous with political clout and economic wealth when Jesús González Gallo was hand-picked by President Manuel Ávila Camacho as the next governor of Jalisco. This prominent position enabled Jesús González Gallo to further utilize and expand his political leverage in the Caxcana.⁴⁷ As Jalisco governor, Jesús González Gallo continued to demonstrate his commitment to the modernization of Guadalajara and one of its hinterland regions in particular: that of Yahualica. While Jesús González Gallo was considered the great modernizer in Jalisco at large, he was known as the great benefactor in Yahualica.

According to a prominent historian of Jalisco, “González Gallo’s government was in accordance with the new national project of stimulating production, expanding road networks to connect [Jalisco’s] regions, foment credits in agriculture and education, as well as protecting the small property landholder.”⁴⁸ His economic advisor, Juan Victor Verges X., published a study in 1947 which sought to provide the fiscal rationale for the governor’s political mission to modernize. For Jalisco in the 1940s, road paving was one of the most important expressions of modernization and progress, he noted. In describing the advancements and the positive prospects for industrial development in Jalisco, the economic assessment noted how the existing transportation networks and lines of communication continued to thwart the possibilities for development. The analyst continued his assessment by stating that “these lines, particularly the railroads, have been deficient in relation to the services they are supposed to provide. We also see in other modes of transportation of goods and products the inefficiency of the vehicles

⁴⁶ “El Presidente Ávila C. Visitó Ayer Jalisco—Su Estancia en Yahualica,” *El Informador*, 25 November 1946, 1 and 3. See also Ramon Garcia Ruiz, “Cronologia Jaliscense,” 89 and 91.

⁴⁷ See the region’s location in context to the state of Jalisco on page eleven and twelve of this essay.

⁴⁸ Murià, 542.

themselves, as well as the lack of routes to the main centers of raw material production.”⁴⁹ Thus, Victor Verges here is adamant about the need to formulate a strategic plan for the development of a comprehensive road and highway system. Along with his analysis of the infrastructure needed to increase the rate of distribution of agricultural products, he also provided suggestions to increase the rate of productivity for farmers and ranchers in Jalisco. The analyst recommended that the government support livestock farmers, for example, by providing more cattle studs to improve stockbreeding. He also recommended more research on irrigation works (“both big and small”) and greater utilization of natural water currents. More dams, he concluded, were needed to store water and to generate energy. Yahualica, in this regard, did not fall behind.

Selective Infrastructural Development

The dam in Yahualica, placed in the locality of El Estribón (right outside of Yahualica’s town center), was one of the most prominent features of the government’s public works projects in Jalisco. The dam, usually referred to as El Estribón, was officially named after then outgoing President Ávila Camacho in 1946 when it was completed.⁵⁰ The dam’s capacity of six-and-a-half million cubic meters would work to offset some of the problems caused by Yahualica’s arid climate. We can gauge the extent of these limitations by comparing Yahaulica to its municipal

⁴⁹ Juan Victor Verges X, “Estudio económico de la industria,” in *Jalisco en el Progreso de México*, 177. Negatively exacerbating the process of production, and making it, in the opinion of this analyst, even more inefficient, was the scarcity of gasoline, which during this time sold “between 45 and 50 cents [Mexican pesos] per liter in the black market, with its actual official price being that of 26 cents per liter.” 176.

⁵⁰ Yañez, *Yahualica-Etopeya*, 37. Also see Ramon Garcia Ruiz, “Cronologia Jalisciense,” in *Jalisco en el Progreso de México*, 91.

neighbor Cuquío.⁵¹ Cuquío during this period yielded significant surpluses of wheat, corn, beans, chiles, and *tomatillos* irrigated naturally with annual rainfall.⁵² In 1934 for example, wheat production alone in Cuquío yielded approximately 3, 152 “loads”⁵³ of wheat that were exported to Guadalajara almost in their entirety, compared to Yahualica’s relatively paltry production of 232 loads for local consumption. In addition, the areas in Cuquío unsuitable for cultivation were used for cattle farming, producing with Yahualica cheeses, chorizo, and other meat derivatives such as lard and pig byproducts, delicacies for which the region is well known.⁵⁴

With the new dam, Yahualica’s agricultural production would try to become more diversified, like its neighbors Cuquío and Ixtlahuacán del Río. According to another of Jesús González Gallo’s economic advisors, it would also allow Yahualica to produce foodstuffs for the state, considered important at the time because roughly twenty-two percent of Jalisco’s food products were imported from other Mexican states—the highest percentage seen in Jalisco up to that point.⁵⁵ Jalisco in this regard was part and parcel of a general trend of higher demand for foodstuffs in Mexico that coincided with the enormous rate of population growth. With the most desired staples being “wheat, sugar, pork lard, corn, alcoholic beverages, fresh eggs, wheat flour, and wholesale swine,”⁵⁶ some of which an irrigated Yahualica could produce, the dam allowed

⁵¹ Ibid. Also see Comisión Estatal de Agua y Saneamiento, Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, Region 3, Yahualica de González Gallo, Estribon, <<http://ceas.jalisco.gob.mx/reg03.html>>.

⁵² AHJ, ES-2-934/1934 Box 204.

⁵³ A “carga” or “load” of wheat is not a scientific measurement, but is rather the standard load capacity of one wheat transport vehicle.

⁵⁴ Juan Victor Verges X, “Estudio Economico de la Industria,” In *Jalisco en el Progreso de Mexico*, 164-165.

⁵⁵ See Francisco Arguello Castañeda, “Economía Agrícola y Ganadera, Forestal de Caza y Pesca,” In *Jalisco en el Progreso De México*,” 214.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Yahualica to participate in the production of those goods with the “possibility of yielding high profits” at a moment when “all imported agricultural and industrial foodstuffs are of high demand.”⁵⁷ The concentration of economic power suggested that the social and political power over the region’s inhabitants could also be concentrated in the hand of a few caciques. Felipe González Gallo, in particular, sought to translate his political and military influence into a consolidation of his ranchero landowning economic status.

The Death of Felipe González Gallo

While Jesús González Gallo was supplying the Caxcana with enormous allocations of funds and energy for the construction of dams, streets, sanitation projects, a hospital, primary and secondary schools, and beautifying structures, the governor’s older brother, Felipe González Gallo, was working locally in ways that might appear as antithetical to the values of progress typically associated with modernization. Felipe González Gallo waged a caciquista-like campaign throughout the 1,400 square kilometer terrain. At first glance, this campaign, which gained the enmity of a large percentage of the region’s inhabitants and caused the deaths of many people, including don Felipe, seems to be at odds with the stature and leverage already enjoyed by his family in the region. Yet, upon close inspection, modernization in the region meant to monopolize the power that had dispersed through the proliferation of the rancho in the region since the 1930s. They wanted to concentrate land not as hacendados, but as large-scale landowning rancheros.

⁵⁷ Arguello Castañeda, “Economía Agrícola y Ganadera, Forestal de Caza y Pesca,” In *Jalisco en el Progreso De México*,” 214.

The cacique is said to be the lynchpin of traditional community relationships. It should be noted that these ‘traditional’ social relations (that is, the social relations prior to Yahualica’s rural urbanization) were by no means rosy or harmonious. As elaborated earlier, the region had not gone unscathed by the ravages of the Cristero Rebellion nor, to a lesser extent, by the Mexican Revolution for that matter. During the Revolution, the small troop led by Demetrio Macías in Mariano Azuela’s *Los de abajo* is a witness to this adverse past in their brief stop in Cuquío—whose main church of San Felipe, incidentally, served as a post for federal troops during the same period.⁵⁸ But modernization was expected to bring with it a new set of social relations—a true break from the history of conflict and violence previously experienced in the Caxcana. Regarding Felipe González Gallo more specifically, modernization brought a viable alternative to the arduous task of being a traditional cacique: Indeed the possibility of retiring to the abundance accumulated by his family during the 1940s. This route was likely not taken because it was, as sources show, a time when rancheros (large, medium, and small) were taking advantage of the socioeconomic opportunities that allowed them to intensify land use and move into commercial agriculture and livestock raising. Indeed, the modernization wrought by the González Gallo family actually intensified the oppressiveness of his cacicazgo. Yet, modernization alone does not explain this oppression, but rather, it is the demise of the hacienda followed by the rise in dominance of the rancho that puts the possibility but also the great resistance to the efforts by the González Gallo brothers’ efforts to exert power in the region.

One can consider the idea of whether, once the cacique was brought within the ambit of modern social forces, his more traditional power was not undermined. On this reading of the

⁵⁸ See Mariano Azuela, *Los de abajo*, (Madrid: Ediciones Catedra, 1994). His mention and use of Cuquío might be partly rooted in the fact that Mariano Azuela was born Los Altos. María del Rosario Guzmán Guzmán, resident of the municipality of Cuquío, remembers the time as a girl during the Mexican Revolution when she sneaked into the church recalls how her stomach “sank to the floor” when she saw all the broken saints and the altar being used to sleep and cook by the federal troops, interview with Maria del Rosario Guzmán Guzmán, August 29, 2006.

situation, it seems that, to compete with these new forms of social mediation, Felipe González Gallo intensified his campaign to include more violent and oppressive practices. The anomalies produced by modernization changed both the nature of the cacique's power and intensified his opponents' consciousness of their lack of access to its ever more bountiful fruits. They concluded that the cacique stood very much in the way. Individuals utilized the very means of modernization in the region to form networks, to carry out his murder, and to escape punishment for it. Hence, it will be suggested that, rather than instituting peace and stability in the region, modernization paradoxically intensified the level of violence, at least in the short term, in order to bring long-term stability.

Jesús González Gallo, then ex-governor of Jalisco and – rumor had it – potential PRI candidate for the 1958 Mexican presidential campaign, died from injuries sustained in a suspicious car accident on August 9, 1957.⁵⁹ Less than three months later, Felipe González Gallo would suffer a similarly tragic albeit much more grisly death.⁶⁰ On the morning of Tuesday October 29, 1957, Gonzalo Martínez, Felipe González Gallo's personal driver, picked up his boss for a routine trip to Huisquilco, a community in the municipality of Yahualica about

⁵⁹ "Falleció Anoche El Lic. González Gallo" and "Gran Pérdida Para Jalisco," *El Informador*, 10 August 1957, 1 and 8. Some in Caxcana have mentioned that they always knew Jesús González Gallo to have been murdered as well, never referencing a car accident. A worker of the Hemeroteca Pública in Jalisco, who shall remain anonymous, asserted that among the academic-legal and political circles he has talked to it is common knowledge that, while Jesús González Gallo lay bedridden and comatose in the hospital, a doctor from Mexico City was flown in to "finish him off" because he was a strong candidate for president. Another politician and former president of an important municipality close to Guadalajara, and who shall also remain anonymous, also made the same assertion. When I asked him "por qué [era que Jesús] no había medido el riesgo y medir un paso hacia atrás," the politician simply replied, without wanting to get into detail, that Jesús González Gallo "se [había] confi[ado] demasiado." Adolfo López Mateos was chosen as the PRI candidate (*el tapado*), becoming president of Mexico from 1958 to 1964, a man whose "intellectual and oratorical abilities" were well recognized within the party (see Martin C. Needler, *Mexican Politics: The Containment of Conflict*, 2nd ed., (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), 31). See also, "Grave Accidente Sufrió El Licenciado Jesús González Gallo," *El Informador*, 8 August 1957, 1 and 7.

⁶⁰ "En Cualquier Momento Puede Estallar la Violencia en Yahualica," and "Continúan Prófugos los Criminales," *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 31 October 1957, 1.

eighteen kilometers from the latter.⁶¹ This was an ordinary trip for Felipe González Gallo since he owned a large ranch in Huisquilco, a community comprised of approximately of 600 inhabitants in 1957.⁶² The dirt road to Huisquilco, rugged and difficult to maneuver, passed through several smaller localities, among them Pozo Moreno, inhabited by no more than fifty people at the time.⁶³ As the jeep maneuvered through the rugged terrain in the morning hours, they reached Pozo Moreno, only a couple of kilometers outside of Yahualica. While driving through the seemingly peaceful hamlet, a hail of bullets showered their vehicle, killing them both on the spot.⁶⁴ An article states that when Felipe González Gallo's body was found, "the right side of [his] body was [like] a colander due to the number of bullet holes. Immediately after being gunned down, his cranium was completely shattered with a heavy stone, which revealed evidence of blood and hair."⁶⁵ Furthermore, it was reported that González Gallo's eye had fallen out of its socket from the impact of the stone and that pieces of his brain were scattered about.⁶⁶

Immediately after Felipe González Gallo's assassination, a Guadalajara judge ordered an all out man-hunt across the entire Caxcana. They sent the secret police to question witnesses and rural forces to guard the area and assist the former in the process. Upon searching Felipe González Gallo's ranch for possible clues, leaks of police investigations began to spread

⁶¹ "4 Embozados le Tendieron una Emboscada en Despoblado," *El Occidental*, 30 October 1957, 1.

⁶² INEGI, *Entidad 14 Jalisco, Municipio 118*. In 1950 Huisquilco's total population was 274 and increased to 605 by 1960. <<http://mapserver.inegi.gob.mx/dsist/ahl2003/general2.cfm?clavegeo=165364>>.

⁶³ INEGI, *Entidad 14 Jalisco, Municipio 118*. In 1950, Pozo Moreno (reported in the census as Pozo Negro) had a total of forty-four inhabitants. <<http://mapserver.inegi.gob.mx/dsist/ahl2003/general2.cfm?clavegeo=165413>>.

⁶⁴ "4 Embozados le Tendieron una Emboscada en Despoblado," *El Occidental*, 30 October 1957.

⁶⁵ "Continúan Prófugos los Criminales," *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 31 October 1957, 1. "La parte derecha del cuerpo de González Gallo, era una criba por la cantidad de impactos que recibió. El cráneo le fue destruido, posteriormente, con pesadas piedras que muestran huellas de sangre y cabellos."

⁶⁶ "Continúan Prófugos Los Criminales-González Gallo Tenía Muchos Enemigos," *El Sol De Guadalajara*, 31 October 1957.

throughout the region. Although never published in newspapers, the region's inhabitants were completely shocked when they heard that a policeman had found a number of bodies buried and subsequently disinterred from Felipe González Gallo's property.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, to avoid apprehension, the Americanos took to hiding in the *barrancas* and *montes* of the region; great fear of reprisal descended onto the Americano family. As a result of the murder, the Americanos rose to the status of heroes and villains in the popular imaginary, not just in their native Juchitlán, but in all of the ranches in the municipality of Cuquío and the municipality of the González Gallo family provenance, Yahualica.⁶⁸

The Motive

The plan to ambush Felipe González Gallo was organized well in advanced. An assortment of personal interests between small and medium smallholders as well as rural workers coalesced with the purpose of making his assassination final. From accounts available, everyone in the region was familiar with the longstanding feud between the Americano family and the Aguayo family.⁶⁹ The Aguayos were a large extended family living in different parts of the Caxcana – some of which, not unlike the Americanos, also lived in Juchitlán, a small locality in the municipality of Cuquío. It is of importance to note that González Gallo did broker deals with

⁶⁷ Interview with Marta Americano, August 30, 2006.

⁶⁸ In 1972, Cuquío, along with four other southern municipalities, was removed from being part of the regional designation of "Los Altos de Jalisco." But, as Jim Tuck rightly states, analyzing them historically as part of Los Altos "can be justified on cultural, ethnic, and historical grounds. It is also warranted on grounds of precedent. Not only did these communities play a leading role in alteño history, but no chronicler of the cristero rebellion, past or present, has ever placed them outside Los Altos." See Jim Tuck, *The Holy War in Los Altos*, 2. A massive ravine (the *Barranca del Río Santiago*) also separates Cuquío from Guadalajara, geographically making the former more connected, historically, to southern Alteño municipalities than to the municipalities in its current legally recognized boundary.

⁶⁹ "González Gallo fue Víctima de Siniestra y Terrible Venganza," *El Informador*, 4 November 1957, 2. Even a couple of municipal representatives from the locality of El Baluarte were familiar with the feud.

several smallholders and also served in the interests of certain regional peasants, such as the Aguayo brothers, who, not unlike the Americano men worked as hired gunmen (pistoleros) as well as rural workers.⁷⁰ Even in Juchitlán, where most of the Americano family resided, Felipe González Gallo enjoyed the friendship and support of several medium smallholders who would throw elaborate parties for the cacique—gatherings that were enlivened by women, barrels of liquor, “exotic food,” and music, carried out well past dawn.⁷¹ Yet, aside from the relative degree of patronage Felipe González Gallo afforded to some individuals, the number of enemies he developed in the region through his cacicazgo was the result of an unusually high level of violence and oppression associated with him.⁷²

Further, the relationships that don Felipe forged with peasant families in places like Juchitlán, Cuquío, only seemed to exacerbate existing feuds. In the case of the aforementioned Aguayo-Americano feud, their mutual hostility was compounded when Aurelio Aguayo shot and killed Antonio Americano Guzmán, purportedly in self-defense. Antonio Americano Guzmán was an uncle of Marcial Americano, one of the four gunmen in the death of Felipe González Gallo.⁷³ The Americano-Aguayo vendetta, which on several occasions resulted in sustained gun battles between both families, could have simply been a drop in the bucket of personal family

⁷⁰ The municipal delegate of El Baluarte and small landowner Bartolo Tejeda Ruvalcaba, before ‘provoking’ Felipe González Gallo’s enmity, also enjoyed the *cacique*’s patronage. “González Gallo fue Víctima de Siniestra y Terrible Venganza,” *El Informador*, 4 November 1957, 2.

⁷¹ Interview with Irineo Guzmán, August 29, 2006. Irineo was then neighbor of one of the medium smallholder Gregorio Ruvalcaba Guzmán, a resident of Juchitlán, and described that from his small shack, as a young adolescent, he would stay up and witness these elaborate parties, but only from afar, since at times shots were fired amid the merriment.

⁷² Knight, *Caciquismo in the Twentieth Century* and Falcon *Revolución y Caciquismo in San Luis Potosí, 1910-1938*. Also see Steve Lewis, “Dead-end *Caudillismo* and Entrepreneurial *Caciquismo* in Chiapas, 1910–1955,” in *Caciquismo in Twentieth Century Mexico*, edited by Alan Knight and Wil Pansters (Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, 2005), 151–168.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

rivalries in the region or in Jalisco at large. Nevertheless, what came to inflect this vendetta was the relationship that the Aguayos' had with Felipe González Gallo. He "protected" them. This relationship allowed the Aguayos to move freely throughout the region without the fear of facing "justice" (either legal or "traditional") for the killing of Antonio Americano and other crimes committed in Guadalajara, as one article reports.⁷⁴

Beyond sparking the feud between the Americanos and Aguayos by building strategic relationships with the latter and offering them protection, there is evidence that Felipe González Gallo actively sought to instigate the feud. In 1954, for example, Felipe sent José María González, a mutual relative of both Felipe González Gallo and the Aguayos, to kill Sabás Americano, brother of Rufino and Marcial Americano. Eulogio Americano, Julian's father, searched for Aurelio Aguayo to avenge the death of his brother, Sabás Americano. Several months later, Aurelio Aguayo killed another Americano, Antonio. On top of being responsible for the death of two Americano brothers by that point, the Aguayos also extorted Marcial Americano for a large sum of money, while don Felipe further humiliated the Americano family by manhandling an aunt in public and throwing her face-down to the ground.

In the months before his death, Felipe González Gallo had been receiving anonymous letters that threatened his life if he did not leave Yahualica. Two of these three notes had been poorly written with many grammatical mistakes, while the third was noticeably written by someone with "*cierta cultura*."⁷⁵ The people accused of writing the notes and planning the assassination were Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra, Bartolo Tejeda Ruvalcaba, a local municipal delegate of El Baluarte, and Angel Ruiz Torres, a Universidad de Guadalajara engineer,

⁷⁴ "Cuatro Asesinos que Sembraban el Terror en Esta, Aprehendidos," *El Occidental*, 8 November 1957. Also, "Considerase Inminente la Captura de los Matones," *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 2 November 1957.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

practicing litigant, and chemist exiled by Felipe González Gallo from his native Yahualica. Felipe González Gallo directly attributed the anonymous death threats to the Americano family. The cacique had been quoted as calling for the Americano family's complete extermination, "even their dogs."⁷⁶ When Marcial Americano heard the news of Felipe's resolve, he feared for the safety of his family, particularly for his seven children. It was also around the time that his brother Sabás was killed that Marcial Americano was told by Felipe González Gallo to leave Yahualica, where he had lived with his family. Marcial Americano was thus forced to move his family to Tlaquepaque, a burgeoning outlying borough of Guadalajara. Thus, the mutual partnership that united against Felipe González Gallo was composed of markedly different social classes: The Americano men were peasants, Bartolo Tejeda Ruvalcaba was a local politician and smallholder, Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra was a medium smallholder once associated with González Gallo, and Angel Ruiz Torres, who taught college classes in Guadalajara.

Modernization in Yahualica did not presuppose or posit an equally developed legal-justice system. On the one hand, for those that incurred the ire of Felipe González Gallo, access to legal recourse in either the Cuquío or Yahualica municipalities was limited, for the González Gallos held a tight grip in both municipal headquarters. Conversely, those that received his patronage obviously fared well without the law precisely because they already enjoyed *la ley de* González Gallo in the region. Yet accessing the legal system in Guadalajara was worth a shot to Julian and Marcial Americano; after all, their families had already suffered the murders of a couple of their relatives and were at any rate already exiled from Yahualica. Thus, to some extent removed from Felipe González Gallo's immediate grip, the Americanos on several occasions reported the murders of their relatives Sabás and Antonio Americano to the

⁷⁶ Ibid. According to a witness, Felipe González Gallo had stated upon receiving the three anonymous death threats, that he "[quería] acabar con los Americano, hasta con los perros."

Guadalajara police. According to police reports, the Chief of Police in Guadalajara maintained that Julian Americano had on several occasions in fact filed reports against Aurelio and Abraham Aguayo and that the authorities had actually issued arrest warrants against the Aguayos. Further, the Police Chief stated, perhaps unconvincingly, that the police had searched for the Aguayo brothers on many occasions, but had failed in each of their attempts. According to police, Felipe González Gallo was himself responsible for warning the Aguayos of their impending arrest when the police were on their way, which suggests that the cacique had contacts with investigators in Guadalajara.

With seemingly no one to turn to, the Americanos acted to end the problem once and for all. Yet the derivation of the plot is still open to speculation. According to official narratives, the plot was hatched by “the ungrateful protégé of don Felipe,”⁷⁷ Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra, the engineer Ruiz Torres, and Bartolo Tejeda. It is not known for certain what drove Ruiz Torres to plot against Felipe González Gallo, except that he was exiled from Yahualica under unknown circumstances. Furthermore, according to one official report, he was given eight thousand pesos by Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra to pay the Americanos for the hit, an exorbitant amount of money then only enjoyed by medium and large smallholders and the few large landowners.⁷⁸ Other allegations describe Ruiz Torres as having a deeper ulterior motive for plotting Felipe González Gallo’s death. According to the same report, “the Ruiz family always harbored a deep resentment toward the caciquismo or authority that Felipe imposed in the region, and it has been

⁷⁷ “Considerase Inminente la Captura de los Matones,” *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 2 November 1957. Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra as a boy grew up as a kind of stepson of Felipe González Gallo until he turned eighteen; it is unclear whether Ruvalcaba Saavedra may have actually been González Gallo’s ‘illegitimate’ (to use the legal terminology of the time) son.

⁷⁸ Ibid. “la familia Ruiz siempre abrigó una especie de resentimiento por la autoridad o caciquismo que Felipe impuso en la region y, se asegura, el propio Felipe sabía que Ruiz Torres, lejos de ser un adicto suyo, constituía un enemigo en potencia.”

confirmed that Felipe himself knew that Ruiz Torres, far from being his admirer, constituted an imminent threat.”⁷⁹

In turn, Ruiz Torres was aware of individuals in the Caxcana who, not unlike his family, harbored resentments against Felipe González Gallo. In particular, he knew that the Americanos had taken Felipe’s threat of extermination very seriously and were now on high alert. The report further noted that “Ruiz Torres knew how to take advantage of the utter fear that overcame the Americanos when Felipe González Gallo threatened them with extermination” and that Ruiz Torres “used them as pawns to eliminate Felipe, who represented a similar nightmare for Ruiz Torres.”⁸⁰ Information collected in an interview with Pascual Americano, the nephew of Julian Americano who was 17 years old in 1957, suggests that the assassination was planned when a smallholder who’s name he “could not recall,” met with an Americano to discuss a hit on Felipe González Gallo in exchange for a cash reward.⁸¹ Felipe González Gallo, along with his group of armed men, had kidnapped this smallholder’s daughter, a local schoolteacher. After gang-raping her, they murdered her and threw her corpse into a ditch. Both narratives suggest that individuals of smallholding status contracted the Americanos to kill Felipe González Gallo knowing full well that the Americanos would already be interested in committing the crime for reasons that were extremely personal. One narrative suggests that a mix of individuals both from

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid. “Ruiz Torres supo aprovechar ventajosamente el temor de los Americano ante la amenaza de acabar con ellos lanzada por Felipe González Gallo a raíz de que éste recibió los tres anónimos, y los utilizo como verdugos para quitarse lo que también para él constituía una pesadilla, pues igualmente[sic] le temía a Felipe.”

⁸¹ Interview with Pascual Americano August 30, 2006. Pascual does not recall the name of the schoolteacher’s father. Pascual, however, did assert that the smallholder was from the Huisquilco-El Baluarte area, which, if the reader will recall, was Felipe Gonzalez Gallo’s main turf -- for not only were these localities in the municipality of Yahualica but the cacique owned a ranch in Huisquilco.

Guadalajara and the Caxcana were responsible for hiring the Americanos, while another suggests that it grew out of the disillusionment of the cacique's local subjects.

The Investigation and the Aftermath

According to the municipal delegate of Huisquilco, the Americano men and the fourth unknown gunman calmly drank beer in a small shop on the night of the murder. After asking them about their business in Huisquilco and the reason for carrying arms, one of the four men simply replied that they were “on commission” as if, the article implied, they had been sent on assignment by the government.⁸² The only person who directly saw the gunmen shooting at the Jeep was a shepherd who, frightened, ran and hid nearby. The investigators at first pointed toward the existence of a man who several weeks prior to Felipe González Gallo's assassination, warned various individuals about the looming plan. In fact, these rumors motivated González Gallo's former chauffeur to flee to the United States as a bracero contract laborer.⁸³ The man responsible for the warnings ended up being identified as Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra.⁸⁴ A local resident of Pozo Moreno, Joaquina González de Marín, had seen all four men, one of which was tall and thin, the others wearing distinct sombreros and *guaymeños*, roaming the locality several days before the murder.⁸⁵ She asserted that she did not recognize them as being of the region in particular. Joaquina González added that on the day of the assassination, she had heard up to fifty bullets discharged. Another witness, a beverage deliveryman, claimed to have seen

⁸² “Primeras Investigaciones,” *El Informador*, 31 October 1957. Also, “Primeras Investigaciones Sobre El Asesinato de González Gallo, Fueron Cuatro Los Agresores y después se les vio en Yahualica.—Hubo amenazas previas al crimen,” *El Informador*, 31 October 1957, 1.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ “Un Delegado Municipal...,” *El Informador*, 1 November 1957, 9.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

the Americano men sleeping in a small *jacalito* on the day before the murder. The deliveryman, who often used the shack for storing his goods, found them resting while making a routine drop. He said that the Americano men immediately pointed their guns at him and said that they were sent by the government on a mission to apprehend the Aguayo brothers.⁸⁶

In the days immediately following the murder, Felipe González Gallo's assassins were depicted as professional hit men, so unnerved by their actions that they sat calmly drinking cold beer in *Huisquilco* only a few hours after the murder. When Bartolo Tejeda Ruvalcaba, the municipal delegate of El Baluarte (a hamlet near Huisquilco), was accused of being involved in the assassination by providing haven to the Americano men, his testimony made the investigation take an interesting turn. According to Bartolo Tejeda, one of the individuals greeted him with a handshake and asked if he "remembered" him.⁸⁷ Thus, by making allusions to the assassins' reconnaissance of the area before the murder, their sophisticated knowledge of the high caliber weaponry they employed, their lack of remorse, their murky references to government ties, and their comprehensive maneuvers used to commit the crime, investigators at first were able to present the assassins as professional hit men and dismiss the fact that don Felipe had numerous local enemies.⁸⁸

This initial representation of the assassins as professionals was attributed not only to the fact that the González Gallo family was influential in Guadalajara, but because Agustín Yañez, by now Jalisco governor and whose family was from Yahualica, had close ties to the prominent

⁸⁶ "Tres de los Asesinos de," *El Informador*, 2 November 1957, 2.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid. Also see, "A Punto de Esclarecerse el Crimen-Interroga la policía a dos testigos claves," *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 1 November 1957 and "Continúan Prófugos Los Criminales-González Tenía Muchos Enemigos," *El Sol de Guadalajara*, 31 October 1957.

family and sought to protect their name from associations with the violent deeds of a *cacique*.⁸⁹

By 1962, however, he published *Las tierras flacas*, which is a direct social critique of the González Gallo cacicazgo veiled through the characters of the Trujillo brothers.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, upon receiving news of the murder, Governor Yáñez told newspapers that the assassins would be brought to justice. He sent a public prosecutor, aided by members of the secret and rural police, to bring the perpetrators to justice.⁹¹ However, as word of mouth traveled in Los Altos, a slightly different story was told. A group of investigators passing through Tepatitlán while working a different investigation were told that the cacique González Gallo had numerous enemies in the region and was the victim of a well-hatched local plan.⁹²

When apprehended by the secret police and asked to testify, Julian and Marcial Americano stated that Felipe González Gallo was not their direct target, but that it had rather been Aurelio and Abraham Aguayo. Julian Americano, then thirty-six years old, confessed to being one of the assassins, but never admitted to being the actual *autor intelectual* of González Gallo's assassination.⁹³ Julian Americano stated that the death was planned by Angel Ruiz Torres and was instigated by Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra.⁹⁴ Marcial Americano, then forty-seven years old and described as a man "*con aspecto de campesino*," as hard working, reserved in

⁸⁹ Yáñez governed Jalisco from 1953 to 1959. See, Cambre, *Gobiernos y Gobernantes de Jalisco*, 141; in this government publication, see Yáñez's photograph illustrated with a caption that reads "Lic. Agustín Yáñez Delgadillo, 'La Educación y la Cultura, Pilares del Desarrollo,'" pp 138 and 141.

⁹⁰ Agustín Yáñez, *Las tierras flacas*. Also, please see chapter three for a deeper analysis of the ideological underpinnings of Yáñez and his efforts to enact rural structural change in Jalisco once he became a governor.

⁹¹ "Fue Asesinado Cerca," *El Informador*, 30 October 1957.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ "Dos De Los Asesinos De...," *El Informador*, 3 November 1957, 3.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

demeanor, and who did not bother anyone “*ni para bien ni para mal*,”⁹⁵ declared that he in fact did accompany Julian and Rufino along with the fourth unknown gunman but only with the intent of killing Aurelio Aguayo.⁹⁶ Police did not discard the possibility that the driver who picked up Marcial and the fourth gunmen was Angel Ruiz Torres.⁹⁷ They stated to police that they had been told by Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra that the two Aguayo brothers would be in the vehicle. Attesting to this, they further stated, Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra had even taken them a couple of days before the murder to Tateposco, a neighboring ranch of Huisquilco, with the intent of killing the Aguayo brothers but had failed.⁹⁸ Once apprehended and taken to the police station, Julian was demonstratively angry toward Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra, shouting at the latter for not admitting of his involvement in the crime. Meanwhile, Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra, in his defense, stated that it was the fear of being killed by Felipe González Gallo that compelled him to kill the cacique first.

Ultimately, Angel Ruiz Torres was never apprehended and local residents speculate that he might have fled to the United States to avoid prosecution.⁹⁹ Faustino Ruvalcaba Saavedra was sentenced to prison for aiding and abetting the assassins of Felipe González Gallo. The Americano brothers, Julian and Marcial, were sentenced to prison for murder but were in time released; Marcial died of natural causes outside of prison.¹⁰⁰ Julian is today nearly ninety years old and resides in Mexxicacán near Yahualica. Meanwhile, the Aguayo brothers were finally

⁹⁵ Ibid. When asked to testify, Marcial’s neighbors described him in the stated manner.

⁹⁶ “Dos De Los Asesinos De...,” *El Informador*, 3 November 1957, 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Interview with Pascual Americano, August 30, 2006.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

apprehended and arrested on charges of extortion in Guadalajara and for the murders of several individuals, including two of the Americano brothers. The municipal delegate from El Baluarte, Bartolo Tejeda was not sentenced after he had accused the secret police and Rigoberto González Quezada, son of Felipe González Gallo, with torturing him into making a confession.

Conclusion

Less than one week after the assassination of Felipe Gonzalez Gallo, an opinion piece published in *El Occidental* emphasized that only modern and professional law enforcement could pacify Guadalajara's backward rural provinces. "These petty town reprisals, unfortunately so prevalent in our hinterlands, always stem from the authority's inability to enforce the law [...] swiftly," the unsigned op-ed states. It further charges local constables with corruption and misconduct. "[We must] create a respectable rural police force in Jalisco to compensate for deficiencies in the local municipal police, who without exception, and far from guaranteeing security for laboring men, constitute a threat and an instrument to commit all types of abuses."¹⁰¹ Disarmament of civilians is emphasized as indispensable for peace in the countryside. In light of the "witness accounts of the crime," which claimed that "the murderers traveled across the region armed as if preparing for combat, without anybody doing anything to stop them," a swift and "effective *despistolización*" would be necessary. Such measures, the editorial states, would be necessary if Guadalajara's hinterlands were to better serve the needs of the growing metropolis. "If it is true that we want to increase productivity levels in our agricultural and

¹⁰¹ "El Occidental Opina: Agitación en Yahualica," *El Occidental*, 1 November 1957, 2. My emphasis, *despistolización* here meaning disarmament (of Jalisco's countryside).

stockbreeding industries, it is indispensable to first bring peace to the *jalisciense* countryside.”¹⁰²

After outlining Jalisco’s “rural problem,” the editorial closes by stating that Jalisco’s social “plague”¹⁰³ was affecting the state’s stability, which was considered a precondition for the broader project of modernization. The countryside was conceived of as gun-ridden and excessively violent. *Despistolización* was required for it to pursue its “natural” course of increased productivity.¹⁰⁴ Reminiscent of the novel *La tierra pródiga*, where Agustín Yañez repudiates caciquismo and implies that cosmopolitan entrepreneurs would transcend it, the editorials collapse the complexities of Felipe González Gallo’s death into similar savage/civil, rural/urban dichotomous oppositions.¹⁰⁵

At the same time, the *Corrido de Felipe Gallo*, authored arguably by an Americano family relative, is suggestive of how scores of the region’s inhabitants understood modernization and the “rural problem” as one of peace centered around the economic integrity of the rancho. This transcription is one of a few versions that exist of the ballad, albeit the most common:

Corrido de Felipe Gallo

Un 19 de marzo muy presente lo tengo yo

¹⁰² Ibid. “Si en verdad se quieren incrementar las actividades agrícolas y ganaderas, es indispensable, previamente, llevar la tranquilidad al campo jalisciense.”

¹⁰³ “Editorial: Caciquismo y Pistolerismo,” *El Informador*, 4 November 1957, 4.

¹⁰⁴ Here it should be noted that tapatío newspapers were particularly preoccupied with the economy—anxieties which were exacerbated by WWII. These apprehensions were counterbalanced by underscoring Mexico’s important role in filling not just the labor gap in the United States, but the northern neighbor’s dependence on Mexico’s ability to supply it with agricultural goods, see Gloria M. Delgado de Cantu, *Historia de Mexico: Formación del estado moderno*, (Mexico DF: Editorial Alhambra Mexicana, 1987), 325-327. Incidentally, Jalisco did not contribute to the war effort with Tequila or Mezcal since what prevailed in quenching the trenches for the thousands of soldiers were adulterated spirits. The tight monopoly in the exportation of spirits also set back the industry in Jalisco during this period (since the same monopoly adulterated the drink elsewhere in Mexico outside of Jalisco), see José María Muria, *Breve historia de Jalisco*, 178.

¹⁰⁵ Agustín Yañez, *La tierra pródiga*, (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960). Curiously, Yañez implies in his novel that an overcoming of caciquismo, which in his novel is among the worst of Mexican social plagues, will not be achieved through legal or political frameworks; this work underscores that modernization (emblemized in his novel’s main character), brought to Yahualica precisely through the political maneuvers of Jesús González Gallo, are not necessarily antithetical to caciquismo.

Murió de fiebre amarilla el señor Felipe Gallo
 Todo el pueblo lo sentía porque ya era el presidente
 Decía Gonzalo Martínez con el volante en la mano
 “Ganamos [para otro rumbo] jefe no seas tan tirano”
 Al llegar al pozo negro se oyeron varios disparos
 A los primeros balazos cayeron como de rayo
 Saltan los Americanos matando Felipe Gallo
 Josefina [González Gallo’s mother] se paseaba por Agua y pa’ Los Llanos
 “70, 000 pesos damos porque maten Americano”
 “30, 000 damos en oro y lo demás en ganado”
 Soy nacido en Juchitlán y criado en terreno plano
 Si me quieren conocer yo soy Jaime Americano
 Y que mi querido Jaime ¿qué nos dejastes de herencia?
 Aunque maten Americano que siga la decendencia
 Adiós Yahualica hermosa con sus torres de cantera
 Ya murió Felipe Gallo ya pueden criar sus ganados
 Ya murió Felipe Gallo ya pueden criar sus ganados
 Vuela vuela palomita parate en ese aeroplano
 Ya cantastes las mañanas de Julián Americano
 En seguida cambia el sol pa’l señor Felipe Gallo.¹⁰⁶

In justifying the murder of Felipe González Gallo, the lyrics neither emphasize the bravado nor celebrate the mix of indulgence and murder typically associated with many *corridos*. Similar to the Guadalajara editorialists, the *corrido* conveys a preoccupation with a thwarted modernization. Yet in the ballad, natural progress can only occur when the region is rid of the “tyrannical” forces of the violent cacique. Instead of disarmament and more effective law enforcement, the *corrido* is preoccupied with region’s rancheros and their wish to “*criar sus ganados*,” or raise their cattle, without violent impediments. The song further underscores the wasteful amassing of wealth by alluding to the extravagant amount of money offered by the González Gallo matron, Josefina Gallo, as a cash reward to kill the Americano men. The lyrics insinuate that this excessive wealth was realized at the expense of others’ hard work and productivity, which inhibited peace. This concern with lawlessness and violence is not incompatible with that of Agustín Yañez in *La tierra pródiga* or the tapatío editorialists writing

¹⁰⁶ Ballad sung by local musicians, recorded on August 24, 2006, Juchitlán, Cuquío, Jalisco.

at the time, although in the corrido, the Americanos credit themselves with eradicating *the* “plague” and bringing peace to the region.

What the discursive clash between the Guadalajara version of events and those emanating from the Caxcana do not overtly reveal, however, is the deep reconfiguration of land tenure that the region was experiencing since the 1930s which motivated smallholders to hurriedly carve out a stake in the region’s productive capacities. The González Gallo brothers gained a head-start in this race by choosing what ultimately would be the winning side of the Cristero Rebellion, but, in time, they would see this advantage meet severe recalibration through the resistance of the growing power of other smallholders to caciquismo. The death of Felipe González Gallo, which left his body severely mangled and unrecognizable, marked the end of caciquismo in the region. Some authors have argued that it continued, citing the continued influence the cacique’s son, Rigoberto González Quezada attempted to exert.¹⁰⁷ Yet González Quezada, who died of natural causes in Zapopán in 2013, lived the remainder of his life since his father’s assassination outside of the region. To confuse his political clout within the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* with caciquismo is a conceptual misunderstanding unsubstantiated by the subsequent dominance of the smallholding in the region that has never allowed the return of infamous figures like Felipe González Gallo. It is true that Yahualica has become a key site of operations for the Sinaloa Drug Cartel, becoming the port of entry into the northern and gulf regions of Mexico. The luxuries seen in Yahualica range from Ferraris to California-style mansions. But the development of narcotrafficking in the region stems from another historical trajectory of men

¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Hiskey and Damarys Canache, “The demise of one-party politics in Mexican municipal elections,” *British Journal of Political Science*, v.35 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 257-284. Also see, Guillermo Díaz Muñoz and Ignacio González Hernández, “Repensando la democracia municipal: Hacia la participación amplia organizada y apoyada en mecanismos de democracia directa,” (Guadalajara: ITESO, 1999). Also see, Javier Hurtado, *Familias Política y Parentesco 1919-1991*, 106.

who dealt in contraband since the *cristiada*.¹⁰⁸ The thrust of the formal economy continues to be informed by the smallholding and the continued efforts to further develop cattle-ranching and to adjust to the ever-changing demands for global agricultural commodities.

¹⁰⁸ For a fascinating explanation of how the development of a culture of contraband in time takes root in the formal economy through the illicit movement of drugs and money laundering, please see the case of Medellín, Colombia, by Forrest Hylton, “The Cold War That Didn’t End: Paramilitary Modernization in Colombia,” in *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America’s Long Cold War*, edited by Greg Grandin and Gilber M. Joseph, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

CHAPTER FIVE

The Crops, Livestock, and Industry of the Caxcana: An Agricultural History of the Twentieth Century Rancho

Twentieth Century Agriculture and the Rancho

The historiography of land tenure and agriculture in Mexico reveals a great shortcoming: the absence of the rancho. This chapter argues that the transformation of agriculture that occurred in twentieth century Mexico cannot be adequately understood without the story of the smallholding, which came to thrive in central Mexico but also blossomed in the north and south of the country. The intervention of the smallholding fills historiographic and analytical gaps found even in the most persuasive works that examine the link between the agrarian and the agricultural, such as John Gledhill's *Casi Nada*, or Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantará's studies on the Green Revolution. Both authors and others often leave a sense of an incomplete transformation and a paradigm of defeat for the great majority of rural society. This chapter seeks to present a different picture of agriculture and rural society than those traditionally presented. Historical and interdisciplinary analyses of agriculture and land tenure have often heavily relied on ethnographic approaches, coined at times "community studies," that focus on deeply localized processes, investigating a case study, only one municipality, or a so-called "community of refuge."¹ The case studies present a framework of Mexican agriculture during this period as

¹ The twentieth century history of agriculture in Mexico is vast but please see especially the following works: Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *Regiones de refugio: El desarrollo de la comunidad y el proceso dominical en meztizoamérica*. Sección de obras de antropología. 1st ed. Vol. 9, (Veracruz/Mexico City: Instituto Nacional Indigenista: Universidad Veracruzana, Gobierno del Estado de Veracruz; Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991) and *El proceso de aculturación*. Problemas científicos y filosóficos. 1st ed. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1957), Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Cholula: La ciudad sagrada en la era industrial*. Colección Historia. 2nd ed. (Puebla: Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 1988), Frank Cancian, *Change and Uncertainty in a Peasant Economy: The Maya Corn Farmers of Zinacantan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), George Allen Collier, *Fields of the Tzotzil: The Ecological Bases of Tradition in Highland Chiapas*. Texas Pan American Series, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), Scott Cook, *Zapotec Stoneworkers:*

being a monopoly of wealthy landowners, businessmen, bureaucrats, corrupt politicians, and greedy ejidatarios.² According to this perspective, agriculture produced great yields as a result of this fraudulent system of business and government deals while rural society in general suffered the consequences by being excluded from the fruits of this productivity. The indigenous question is also very salient in these studies, often narrating this socio-economic exclusion from new agriculture across a white/mestizo-Indian archetype.

There are a few studies, led particularly by Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantará and others, that reflect a key departure from this tradition because they examine agriculture and rural society through the framework of technology, agronomy, and transformation, more precisely, through the Green Revolution and the possibilities for generalizing its effects throughout the countryside. Her work however does limit the social critique of agricultural transformation to a similar story of the social inequities experienced by rural society, which became primarily rooted in a heavily unregulated form of commercial farming. Why do these studies, however diverse their

The Dynamics of Rural Simple Commodity Production in Modern Mexican Capitalism, (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), Ernest Feder, *Strawberry Imperialism: An Enquiry into the Mechanisms of Dependency in Mexican Agriculture*, (Mexico City: Editorial Campesina, 1978), George McClelland Foster, *Tzintzuntzan: Mexican Peasants in a Changing World*, (New York: Elsevier-New York, 1979), Susana Glantz, *El ejido colectivo de Nueva Italia*, (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones Superiores, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1974), Merilee Serrill Grindle, *Bureaucrats, Politicians, and Peasants in Mexico: A Case Study in Public Policy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantará, *La modernización de la agricultura mexicana, 1940-1970. Economía y demografía*. 3, (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1982; 1976), Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1951), Guillermo de la Peña, *A Legacy of Promises: Agriculture, Politics, and Ritual in the Morelos Highlands of Mexico*, Texas Pan American Series. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), Ricardo Pozas, *Chamula, Un Pueblo Indio De Los Altos De Chiapas*, Instituto Nacional Indigenista (Mexico). Memorias. Vol. 8. México: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1959), Robert Redfield, *Tepoztlán, a Mexican Village: A Study of Folk Life*, The University of Chicago Publications in Anthropology, Ethnological Series, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974; 1930), David F. Ronfeldt, *Atencingo: The Politics of Agrarian Struggle in a Mexican Ejido*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), Steven E. Sanderson, *The Transformation of Mexican Agriculture: International Structure and the Politics of Rural Change*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Social Classes in Agrarian Societies*, (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1975), Evon Zartman Vogt, *Zinacantan: A Maya Community in the Highlands of Chiapas*, (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), Arturo Warman, *"We Come to Object": The Peasants of Morelos and the National State*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

² For a critical analysis of the agrarian problem centered around the ejido, which also critiques the subject's historiography, please see Emilio Kourí, "La invención del ejido," *Revista Nexos*, 1 January 2015,, <<http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=23778>>, Accessed January 3, 2015.

approaches, arrive to similar conclusions? Why do their conclusions continue to provoke more indignation than critical understanding?³ Are these studies reacting to and revising histories that were framed by a kind of modernization theory that oversold a story of twentieth century transformation and prosperity? Why is the history of Mexico's agricultural transformation framed into such distinct polar opposites?

The missing piece, agriculture, shines by its absence amid the predominantly agrarian focused histories. I argue that an agricultural history of the smallholding is crucial in closing this gap in our understanding of Mexico's twentieth century transformation precisely because its rise as a dominant form of land tenure is intimately rooted in agriculture.⁴ The shift toward achieving food sufficiency and agricultural commercialization was also significantly, and in many regions solely, defined by smallholders who adeptly maneuvered through traditional and new roles in the changing field of agriculture. Often, too, they benefitted from a series of broader events that prepared the field for such change, such as the demise of the hacienda by 1940 and a proto-Green Revolution pushed by many state governments during the 1930s, including that of Jalisco. In this chapter, I will present the case of the Caxcana because it reflects the general twentieth century agricultural history of the smallholding in two suggestive ways. First, unlike the common stereotype of relative unproductivity, Mexican states with large

³ See also contemporary studies such as Angus Wright, *The Death of Ramon Gonzalez: The Modern Agricultural Dilemma*, (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1990 [2005]). Here, as in other arguments, one is taught to think about the agrarian-agricultural problem through the prism of the southernization of rural Mexico, whereby we can only meaningfully understand conditions throughout rural Mexico in general through the lens of the south. See for example, Friedrich Katz, "Labor Conditions on Haciendas in Porfirian Mexico: Some Trends and Tendencies," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54: 1 (Feb. 1974): 1-47.

⁴ The countryside in the twentieth century is largely about agriculture but seldom is this quality reflected in the historiography of rural Mexico. In this sense, please see Emilio Kourí's essay, who underscores the need to bring into focus the heretofore blurry image of rural life in Mexico by incorporating a serious and comprehensive, in-depth, analysis of agriculture to any examination of land tenure, particularly across ten main categories: social relations, climate, water, prices and markets, roads and transportation, plagues and epidemics, technology, credit, demography, and nutrition and public health, Emilio Kourí, "Lo agrario y lo agrícola: reflexiones sobre el estudio de la historia rural posrevolucionaria," *Boletín del Archivo General Agrario*, 3, (May/June: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Registro Agrario Nacional, 1998): 10-21.

smallholding societies, such as Jalisco, produced great agricultural yields and served as a catalyst for the commercialization of farming and industrialization of many rural sectors. Secondly, even smallholding regions characterized by relative economic stagnancy, such as the Caxcana, were able to participate in the agricultural transformation of Mexico by fluidly integrating state and federal level policies while not jeopardizing their growing political power as smallholders. In time, despite the natural barriers and political violence that had kept the Caxcana from inserting itself more concerted into the broader regional economy into the late nineteenth century, agricultural transformation in the decades that followed leveled the playing field for the region. The Caxcana's smallholders protected their economy by diversifying their agriculture whose main crops came to serve the demands of their regional livestock and manufacturing industries. Lastly, this history of the smallholding serves to better understand the relationship between the agrarian and the agricultural in Mexico, suggesting that the link between both was a deeper social problem of generalized violence, which rancheros of the Caxcana perpetuated but over time were instrumental in also uprooting.

The Long Agricultural 1950s, or the Golden Age of Mexican Agriculture

What characterized the smallholding, agriculturally? Did the rise of a political and cultural smallholder identity lead to any particular kind of agriculture in the Caxcana? Did the smallholding have any discernable impact on Mexican agriculture, enough to see rural society's lives improve? This section explores these questions from the standpoint of the broader context of what might be termed Mexico's golden age of agriculture. In the midst of this context, while national efforts aimed at confining the rancho to seasonal agriculture, the regional politics and culture of the smallholding compelled production in a trajectory that went beyond and often

defied the particular national agenda. The smallholding exercised this desire for autonomy in the politics and economy of its agricultural sector particularly in the Bajío central region of Mexico, known traditionally for its lack of water and difficult access to labor.⁵ By 1964, when the Mexican government commissioned prominent historian and engineer Jorge L. Tamayo to provide the most up to date state of agriculture in the country, he outlined his famous *problema fundamental de la agricultura mexicana*.⁶ In it, he makes no mention of the smallholding as a central unit of rural life, instead characterizing it as a large landholding in disguise. In addition, he suggests that areas like the Bajío should resort to traditional agricultural techniques brought by the Spanish during the colonial period.

According to Tamayo, the chief problem of Mexican agriculture was one of water: Mexico on the one hand did not know the exact level of subterranean water of its territory and, on the other, made very poor use of its surface natural and artificial runoff. Tamayo concluded that irrigation systems should be promoted in the commercial agricultural sectors, particularly of northern Mexico, while regions like the Bajío should base production on seasonal agriculture. Here as in other instances, the Mexican government excluded the smallholding from its national agricultural agenda for two chief reasons: the smallholding was seen with suspicion, either as commercial great landholding and therefore in no need of special assistance and or it was understood to be a very basic unit of agricultural production that would fare better if it practiced

⁵ For the standard critical formulation of Mexican regional analysis please see Friedrich Katz, "Labor Conditions on Haciendas in Porfirian Mexico: Some Trends and Tendencies," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54: 1 (Feb. 1974): 1-47.

⁶ Translated as "the fundamental problem of Mexican agriculture." Jorge Tamayo predates Katz in the regional formulation of Mexico's rural economy albeit with a less critical understanding of history and with an eye on attempting to put forth key markers for policy-making. See, Jorge L. Tamayo, *El problema fundamental de la agricultura mexicana*, (Mexico City: Instituto Mexicano de Investigaciones Económicas, 1964) and also his presentation imparted before the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics, also titled "El problema fundamental de la agricultura mexicana," based on his original work, *Comercio Exterior*, (Sept. 1964): 643-646. Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, <<http://revistas.bancomext.gob.mx>>, accessed March 2015.

traditional seasonal agriculture. Tamayo's assessment did not prove to be a condemnation for smallholding regions such as Jalisco, however. On the one hand, the policies of the Green Revolution favored commercial agriculture, which concentrated and invested its resources in Mexico to areas of large-scale crop production and intensive water exploitation—namely northern Mexico. On the other, the policies and rhetoric of the Mexican government favored the ejido, which developed institutions that not only provided credit to ejido farmers but also gave them access to a modern agricultural infrastructure and a market to receive their crops. Nevertheless, seen regionally, in places where the post-hacienda smallholding thrived, such as Central Mexico, those smallholders that assumed the politics of *both* ejido and commercial agriculture arguably stimulated the development of generalized commercial farming and the commodification of social relations in rural Mexican society.

The 1940s signaled a great crisis in the agriculture-livestock sector to the Mexican government. The lessons from these years and the beginning of the 1950s taught that in order to adequately feed the nation and have a competitive agricultural sector it needed to intervene as an investor and protector of the rural economy, particularly its agriculture and infrastructure. The 1940s, however, was not just characterized by crisis and uncertainty but also promise because this period witnessed one of the world's most significant agricultural experiments with Mexico as a prime laboratory. The Rockefeller Foundation had chosen Mexico as a site for experimenting with new technologically improved seeds and fertilizers that promised to produce yields never before achieved in the history of agriculture. The specific regions in Mexico were carefully and selectively chosen for their pre-existing infrastructure suitable for the application of these new superior seeds: these regions already enjoyed irrigation systems, nearby roads, and relatively new farming machinery and equipment. The experiment began in 1943 and became an

astounding agricultural success, with the production of the target crops of corn, beans, and wheat doubling or even quadrupling.⁷ The Mexican government was instrumental in cementing this success both for the Rockefeller Foundation but also for the country's agricultural sector as a whole: They ensured the resources necessary for the Foundation's experiments to take place (including donating vast tracts of land for preliminary experiments) but also promoting the expansion and application of these experiments to Mexican farming more generally. It was in this way that "Mexican agricultural production multiplied sixfold" in the decades since 1943.⁸ By 1950, 76.9% of the arable surface in Mexico was used to produce the following key crops: corn, beans, sugar cane, wheat, cotton, and coffee.⁹ By 1960, that percentage rose to 79%. Wheat and cotton owed their increased in value production through high yields whereas with coffee, sugarcane, corn, and beans, the increased in production was due to an expansion of the land cultivation surface.¹⁰ At the beginning of the period, namely from 1945 to 1954, saw a sustained period of growth for the agricultural sector of approximately 6.9% annual average rate.

Notwithstanding the astonishing figures, a critical social history of Mexican agriculture and later of the Green Revolution soon emerged, one that depicts this agricultural success as one built at the expense of Mexican rural workers and farmers. Agricultural success, according to

⁷ Billie R. DeWalt, "Mexico's Second Green Revolution: Food for Feed," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol. 1, 1 (Winter, 1985): 29-60. The author explains that of the three experimental crops (corn, beans, and wheat), the wheat seed technologies were the most successful yield producers, stating, "[...] yields per hectare have more than quadrupled, production of wheat went from an average of only 425,000 tons per year in the early 1940s to over 2.7 million tons in the later 1970s," 37. Regarding corn, "yields per hectare doubled and the result is that production went from less than 2 million tons in 1940 to over 12 million metric tons in 1980," with the general price of corn in consistent decline, notwithstanding, 32. Lastly, beans, for their part, saw yields increase "3 times their levels of 1930," 35. The author obtains his information from two of the leading scholars on the subject of the Green Revolution in Mexico, especially Wellhausen and Hewitt de Alcantará.

⁸ James D. Cockcroft, *Mexico's Hope: An Encounter with Politics and History*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998).

⁹ Rosario Robles Berlanga, "Estructura de la producción y cultivos. 1950-1960," in *Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana*, (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1988), 46.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

these critics, did not translate into the social betterment of rural society. On the one hand, from a government's standpoint, generalizing the Green Revolution to all parts of Mexican farming society was a daunting task. The technology required to shift agriculture into higher productivity, for example, required new machines to replace the traditional implements. As early as President Ávila Camacho's presidency, the government pressed farmers to change the face of sowing by replacing the traditional to the modern plow, initiating an unprecedented importation of sowing machines. Seen at least through the relative limits of a single presidency, Ávila Camacho's mark in this arena was nonetheless measurable. In 1946, for example, Mexico imported "50,700 plows, 1,741 tractors, 1,408 harrows, 815 sowers, and 862 cultivators" for the Banco Ejidal alone.¹¹ In order to conceive of the general dimension of these machines, by 1950, Mexico's estimated number of tractors was 39,000 (the largest number of any other country in Latin America in absolute terms).¹² But historians would argue that his tenure of counter-reform also crucially applied to Mexico's agricultural transformation. When it came to irrigation, a key pillar of the Green Revolution, the unequal access was much more apparent. Ejidatarios, and, as Gledhill would argue, *the landless*, fared the worst. In her analysis, Rosario Robles highlights why most ejidatarios would ultimately opt for renting out their ejidos rather than working on these themselves:

"La política de irrigación favoreció en aquellos años sobre todo a los grandes agricultores dedicados a los cultivos de alta rentabilidad. En 1950, el 51% de la superficie irrigada estaba en manos privadas, aumentando al 59.3% en 1960.¹³ [...] En 1958, se calculaba que en el valle del Yaqui, el 34% de las tierras ejidales estaban arrendadas y la situación en La Laguna no era distinta."¹⁴

¹¹ Robles Berlanga, 41.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 29.

¹⁴ Ibid., 30-31.

When it came to improved hybrid seeds, perhaps the protagonists of the Green Revolution, the access was also imbalanced. There was a type of investment generally termed by experts and scholars as the “agricultural technologies” needed to transform agriculture from subsistence to commercial yields. That technology was broken down into four main categories: fertilizers, irrigation, improved/hybrid seeds, pesticides, and machinery. The government often implied that given their infrastructural lag, campesinos and ejidatarios should keep to traditional open pollination seeds. According to this logic, hybrid seeds would be most effectively used for those practicing commercial farming or even medium to large rancheros with vast tracts of hectares to exploit who also had more experience using newer seed technologies.¹⁵ The figures mark an impressive growth in the use of new seed technologies across a significant number of key crops, including wheat, potato, bean, cotton, sorghum, soy, sesame, rice, chili, tomato, barley, and oats. Hybrid seeds for corn alone went from being planted on 32,000 hectares in 1950 to 300,000 hectares in 1960.¹⁶

The 1950s was still a time period of experimentation, where high quality seeds were predominantly imported and namely used by commercial agriculture (the sector where the vast majority of seeds were used, concentrated especially in irrigation zones). Arguably, however, with the widespread use of hybrid seeds among smallholders, it is only until the 1960s that high quality tiny technologies saw a break from that pattern of selectivity, becoming generalized and intensified throughout Mexico even among small-scale smallholders and minifundistas. Smallholders were also crucial in generalizing the use of fertilizers and insecticides throughout Mexico. The Mexican government focused on the distribution of fertilizers only to ejidos

¹⁵ Robles Berlanga, *ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

located in the states of Baja California, Sonora and Sinaloa, regions with preponderantly ejidal commercial farming. Thirty percent of the total distribution of fertilizers was divided namely in the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Mexico and Jalisco, leaving smallholders wishful for more. There was a black market for government-subsidized fertilizers which was fed in good measure by ejidatarios who had little if any experience in their application. While ejidatarios saw the fertilizers with estrangement, calling them “bags of white powder,”¹⁷ smallholders incorporated them into their sowing routine never to return to farming without them. Since large-scale commercial farming secured fertilizers for their operations through their set infrastructure of operations, it is likely that smallholders were preponderantly the greatest “private buyers” of the black market for fertilizers. The early 1950s was characterized by the expansion of another key infrastructure: Irrigation systems. Irrigation systems ranged from not just dam buildings but the development of causeways (both dirt and, less commonly, concrete) that transported water from digged wells to the fields. The expansion of irrigation systems throughout Mexico was so unregulated, one might suggest it was a major factor in leveling the playing field for smallholders who had been excluded from national agricultural development policies. When national laws passed by the mid 1950s to stem the tide of pervasive well digging, regions rich in smallholders pressed forward with the shift from traditional to intensive farming.¹⁸ In the Bajío, for example, “the set requirements for the use of water for farming was capped at 3,000 cubic meters per hectares; nevertheless, in practice, an average coefficient of 7,000 cubic meters was used.”¹⁹ Such a shift into intensive, commercial, farming was costly for smallholders, with wheat

¹⁷ Robles Berlanga, 37.

¹⁸ Ibid., 28.

¹⁹ Ibid., 29.

being a particularly onerous crop, spending an average of 500 to 1,000 pesos per hectare to grow wheat by the 1960s.²⁰ Nearly or more than half of the total investment of these were concentrated on fertilizers, which by 1975, smallholders in the Bajío were spending up to 550 pesos per hectare on sowing wheat.²¹

There were key changes produced by intensive agriculture brought on by the Green Revolution and green revolution-type national policies, crucial among these were its impact on labor and the rural economy. New categories of labor emerged, prominent among them was the Bracero laborer, which worked alongside a growing mass of undocumented agricultural laborers. Agricultural laborers more easily made the switch into manufacturing labor both by the measure of intensity required but also because soon rural work demanded less and less rural workers. As cited in the *Centro de Investigaciones Agrarias*, for example, “in 1940, 925 active people were still required to produce one million pesos of agricultural products but by 1960 only 420 people were required.”²² But the rural economy also transformed the landscape of the agricultural sector by espousing an emphasis on the livestock industry. The 1950s also posed a problem for Mexican agriculture in the livestock-raising sector. During this period, Mexico dedicated fifty million hectares to livestock raising, or *ganadería*, but such vast quantity did not translate into enough productive capacity to feed the growing urban population.²³

²⁰ Robles Berlanga, 37.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 45-46. In his study of labor in Porfirian haciendas, Friedrich Katz has already proven that during the important transformative period under Porfirio Díaz, Mexican agriculture in the south underwent a period of intensive agricultural exploitation and high yield for the export market without the need for employing machines because rural labor was readily available and cheap enough.

²³ Robles Berlanga, 74.

The Mexican government and experts of the Green Revolution still considered Mexico to be practicing a predominantly traditional form of livestock raising. From the standpoint of those seeking to transform Mexico's livestock industry, complicating this situation were the waves of plagues that struck the traditional industry. The Mexican livestock industry was threatened with its first known outbreak of hoof and mouth disease in 1946, prompting the federal government to pass a decree that same year outlining new laws of livestock disease prevention; the following year it would establish a committee to eradicate hoof and mouth disease specifically. The Mexican government would spend the following years announcing the severe punishments that livestock owners would suffer should they not follow the phytosanitary mandates of keeping and transporting their animals; any ruminant caught without a vaccination ear tag would be immediately seized and destroyed in the local municipal slaughterhouse.²⁴ The outbreak of 1946 became an immediate crisis because Mexico was forbidden from exporting cattle to the United States. The embargo would not be lifted until years later, on September of 1952, when Mexico were allowed by the United States Department of Agriculture to export 500,000 heads of cattle.²⁵ By 1954, the Mexican livestock industry had been declared free from hoof and mouth disease after nearly a decade of eradication efforts that led to the destruction of 880,000 heads of cattle. These years drove a deep dent into Mexico's cattle industry but the intensive vaccination campaigns, on the other hand, were able to save 17,000,000 heads of cattle.²⁶ What this fact obscures, however, is that while the large-scale commercial livestock industry never truly

²⁴ "Se Lleva Ganado," *El Informador*, 28 October 1949, 1 and 2.

²⁵ "Exportación de Ganado a EE.UU.," *El Informador*, 3 September 1952, 1. The only states allowed to export the 500,000 heads cited were the northern states of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Nuevo León, and Baja California, please see "No Pasará de 500,000 Cabezas la Exportación de Ganado," *El Informador*, 6 September 1952.

²⁶ César Lobo, *Situación de la Fiebre Aftosa en las Americas*, (Mexico City: Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación Para la Agricultura, 1988), 6-7.

recovered, smallholders inserted themselves into regional markets through a small and medium scale revival of the livestock sector. In so doing, smallholders were able to significantly remap the agricultural landscape by shifting into crops that served the livestock sector.

In the agricultural and livestock sector, thus, the smallholding shifts our understanding of this story of transformation-as-defeat. A key problem for the study of the smallholding is not just one of ideology (as explored in chapter three) but in the case of agriculture, it is also one of sources and definition. Throughout the historiography, one finds that the smallholding is constantly lumped together with either large-scale agri-business or ejidos. In studies largely based on a near-literal reading of the Mexican agricultural and livestock censuses, the question of landed production is treated in terms of any productive land of *five hectares or more*. Rarely, if at all, is the question of the *pequeña propiedad* placed in any meaningful context. In one glaring example, when referring to the use of fertilizers and insecticides in the widely commercial cotton-producing region of Mexico, we find that the terms to categorize farmers are “grandes agricultures” or “agricultores privados” who own “five hectares or more.”²⁷ Commercial farms, particularly those of the northern region of Mexico, could hardly be classified in a category of “five hectares or more” because these averaged scales of over 1,000 hectares; if one is to include the additional subcontracted lands these private holders used then the range can be in the thousands. By the same token, analyses of the ejido often run the same weakness. Studies that are deeply critical of the turn to commercial farming at the expense of the landless and ejidatarios would gain a greater critical perspective if they instead drew a comparative analysis between the ejido and the smallholding. In Gledhill’s scathing anthropology of the ejido, the comparison is made between large-scale commercial agri-business and hopeless ejidatarios, rendering a bleak rural dystopia:

²⁷ Robles Berlanga, 45.

“Even these figures should be taken with a pinch of salt, since the official census can take little effective cognizance of the rental of ejidal land to private entrepreneurs. In a real sense “the problem of the countryside” is not the problem of the ejidatarios, who constitute a relatively privileged minority, but the problems of the landless who remain in the countryside, or move between countryside, city and the United States. These include, of course, a high proportion of the ejidatarios’ own children.”²⁸

In this case, we are met with a zero-sum game of land ownership and landed agricultural production in Mexico, with commercial farming reigning supreme alongside a tiny minority of ejidatarios who serve as a mere foil for declaring social justice for campesinos. The conclusion thus rendered, is a return to critical abstraction:

“Yet as Hamilton (1983) has observed, the apparent reorientation of state policy may simply reflect the lack of objective autonomy enjoyed by the post-revolutionary state in the Cárdenas epoch itself: Cárdenas’s room for maneuver was effectively circumscribed by the pragmatic social power of private capital, leaving aside any contradictions in Cardenismo’s relationship to the masses it represented or links between political factions within the state apparatuses and private class interests.”²⁹

The transformation of agriculture from subsistence to commercial is thus understood as a transformation of social inequality and exclusion. In a Mexican countryside in which agricultural transformation required access to agricultural technology, many farmers were kept from participating. The history of the smallholding complexifies, if not revises, the notion of such marginalization from transformation by first examining Jalisco more broadly and, in the last section, analyzing the smallholding’s history of agricultural transformation in the Caxcana.

The Precursors of the Green Revolution and Agricultural Transformation in Jalisco

Nearly a decade before the Green Revolution boasted success in its key experimental areas, the state of Jalisco had already set the bases for an unprecedented yield in production and a

²⁸ John Gledhill, *Casi Nada*, 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 119.

qualitative change in how agriculture was undertaken. Upon the demise of the hacienda, the government's key protagonist in the agricultural sector became the smallholding. Jalisco maintained respect for nationally led efforts to promote agrarian reform, but by 1940, locally, it would uphold the primacy of the *pequeña propiedad* as the engine of agricultural growth and productivity:

“the issue revolving around the consolidation and respect for the *pequeña propiedad agrícola*, which has come to constitute a basis for particular concern because it is considered a pillar in which the future of the new agricultural economy of the country rests.”³⁰

While the technological basis was still in its infancy, the political basis, centered on protecting the smallholding, was set to open the doors to the Green Revolution in Jalisco. By 1940, the state had fully acknowledged the primacy of the smallholding over the ejido when it came to its agricultural sector.³¹ The question of the primacy of the rancho was not an age-old position but was rather the result of tense political conflicts and violence on all levels of government. During the 1920s, for example, Jalisco governors exalted the post-Revolutionary national government's push to generalize land distribution as part of their definition of bringing justice to the Mexican countryside, seldom if ever making mention of the *pequeña propiedad* or *pequeños agricultores* in political terms as they would with the ejido and ejidatarios. This is evidenced in the pronunciations in favor of agrarian reform by key Jalisco governors, from 1919 to 1939: Luis Castellanos y Tapia, Basilio Vadillo, José Guadalupe Zuno, Margarito Ramírez Miranda,

³⁰ Jalisco Testimonio de sus gobernantes, Tomo IV, 172. “Dentro de las funciones que por ley corresponden a la Comisión Agraria Mixta, se mantiene el ritmo de la realización del programa agrario del Gobierno General y del Estado; sin omitir el punto referente a la consolidación y respeto para la *pequeña propiedad agrícola*, que ha venido constituyendo una base de general preocupación, por considerarse como uno de los pilares en que descansa el future de la nueva economía agrícola del país.”

³¹ *Jalisco Testimonio de sus gobernantes*, Tomo III, 336-339, 435-437, 518, 616-618, 1085-1086, and in passim.

Sebastian Allende, and Everardo Topete.³² These post-Revolutionary governors left an indelible mark on Jalisco's agrarian landscape, helping dot its territory with numerous ejidos covering a surface of 1,520,671 hectares by 1950. Nevertheless, Jalisco remained a land predominantly of smallholders, with a total of 74,296 of properties (*predios*) covering a surface of 5,492,891 hectares.

From the 1940s onward, smallholders gained political clout with the broader momentum of Ávila Camacho's counter-reform, with Jalisco governor Silvano Barba González representing this new shift away from cardenista policies at the state level. Soon thereafter, the way smallholders protected their land from expropriation or trespass was to participate in the state government's request to smallholders to declare which crops they intended to grow that year.³³ The government underscored that smallholders still ran the risk of losing their land, not by any legitimate appeal to agrarian reform but through illegal means, and should seek protection from the state government. That same year, for example, the state received "130 complaints of illegal invasions of private property" and "102 claims of presidential decrees of immunity [from expropriation] of livestock and smallholding."³⁴ The state of Jalisco after 1940 would frame the politics of land tenure favoring the smallholding through agriculture. If agriculture lacked in productivity, then the smallholding would require more assistance and when productivity rose, the smallholding would take the political credit. While suffering the effects of drought, the

³² While Allende and Topete were known anti-cardenista callistas, their local politics were deeply immersed in the rhetoric, praxis, and ideology of agrarian struggle, which bred deep familiarity with cardenismo. Please see Laura Patricia Romero, Alicia Gómez, Jaime Tamayo, Jorge Regalado, Patricia Valles, *Jalisco Desde La Revolución: Movimientos Sociales 1929-1940, [vol.] V*, (Guadalajara: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco/Universidad de Guadalajara, especially 1988), see especially Jorge Regalado, "Los agraristas," 99-197.

³³ *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernantes*, Tomo IV, 102.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 102.

government promoted the use of pesticides and the crop diversification, importing from other Mexican states plants and fruit trees to distribute to key regions:

“For the promotion and development of the small farms in the State, we acquired 46,000 orange and avocado plants of various fine varieties from the state of Guerrero, which were distributed for free among the ejidatarios and smallholders that requested them. Most recently, we also acquired 29,000 orange, plum, avocado, peach, quince [*membrillo*], and apple fruit trees which have begun to be distributed. The total costs for this cause ascended to \$13,796,67.”³⁵

The state during this period also promoted the generalization of irrigation works, at this stage with small grants.³⁶ But such small state-level grants over the next ten years would transform into sizeable revenues linked to the federal government in order to build hundreds of small, medium, and large-scale dams throughout Jalisco. Lastly, a crucial precursor to Jalisco’s green revolution came in the form of agricultural statistics, which up until the 1940 the state lacked. Jalisco’s government saw an appreciable transition from the older nineteenth century way of collecting agricultural statistics between 1930 and 1940.³⁷ By 1940, Jalisco’s government declared that it would make all efforts to have control over the statistical collection of agricultural data from all of its (up to then) 123 municipalities.³⁸

Thus, while it is true that national policies that promoted the Green Revolution favored those pre-existing large-scale commercial farming sectors of the north, smallholders during the

³⁵ Ibid, “Para el fomento y desarrollo de las pequeñas granjas en el Estado, fueron adquiridas 46,000 plantas de naranjos y aguacates de diversas variedades finas del estado de Guerrero, las cuales fueron distribuidas gratuitamente entre los ejidatarios y pequeños agricultores que las solicitaron. En última fecha fueron también adquiridos 29,000 árboles frutales de naranjo, ciruelo, aguacate, durazno, membrillo y manzano, que comensaron ya también a ser distribuidos. Los gastos por este concepto ascienden a la suma de \$13, 796, 67.” 103.

³⁶ Ibid, 103.

³⁷ Each state and region in Mexico varies in the degree with which the agricultural statistics are collected during the nineteenth century. For Jalisco, one relies on the works by Bárcena and Longinos Banda and studies on particular haciendas.

³⁸ *Jalisco, Testimonio de sus gobernadores*, Tomo IV, 101.

same time frame developed the politics and infrastructure to welcome a regional green revolutionary form. The smallholders of Jalisco did not need to expand the amount of agricultural land because these new technologies allowed them to grow more on less land; their livestock sector followed the same predisposition of such intensification of land use. The use of nitrate to fertilize the soil was beginning to be widely used throughout Jalisco. Chilean nitrate, which held a virtual monopoly of the nitrate market into the Second World War, was the most common and widespread fertilizer advertised in Jalisco.³⁹ Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, it was not uncommon to find advertisements in Guadalajara newspapers selling “Nitrato de Chile, superfosfato de cal, de doble concentración” aimed toward farmers, asserting that a fertilized soil meant prosperity.⁴⁰ Attesting to the power of these fertilizers is the scale of land use in Jalisco. Of Jalisco’s approximate 6.5 million territorial hectares (or less than 4% of Mexico’s total national territory), only approximately 1.5 million of those are agriculturally productive.⁴¹ Nonetheless, agricultural productivity soared over essentially the same scale of land from 1930 onwards. The Caxcana’s four municipalities studied in the next section also reflect this tendency of intensive agricultural productivity per arable hectare. Given such a limited extension of arable land, of the four pillars of the Green Revolution in Jalisco, fertilizers had perhaps the most marked effect on the trajectory of agricultural production for smallholders.

³⁹ Chile was one of the world’s major suppliers of nitrates until the development of synthetic nitrate discovered by German scientists during World War II. Since nitrate is used not just in agriculture but is also a crucial element for making gunpowder, Germans were pressed for developing a new synthetic form of nitrate (extracted from oxygen) in order to overcome Chile’s embargo obligated by its alliance with the Allies. Please see Ricardo L. Barbas Nieto-Laina, “La Publicidad Del Nitrato De Chile En El Primer Tercio Del Siglo XX. Ejemplos de Art Deco En El Valle Del Henares. Azulejería, Cerámica Y Publicidad,” Santiago: Biblioteca Nacional Digital de Chile. < http://www.memoriachilena.cl/602/articles-123277_recurso_2.pdf >. Accessed 5 January 2016.

⁴⁰ “Agricultor [Advertisement],” *El Informador*, 19 June 1930, 5. In English: “Chilean Nitrate, lime superphosphate, of double concentration.”

⁴¹ Aldana Rendón, *Desarrollo económico de Jalisco, 1821-1940*, 53.

The agricultural trajectory set forth by these new technologies also served the livestock sector. Not unlike the northern, central, and eastern regions of Mexico, livestock cadavers casted a deep shadow over Jalisco's countryside during this period. Of the approximate 880,000 heads sacrificed throughout Mexico, Jalisco's destroyed *ganado* accounted for almost a quarter, with 108,689 heads put to sleep.⁴² But out of these carcasses, so to speak, rose again a robust regional porcine, bovine, and avian set of industries. In fact, smallholding regions throughout Jalisco over time would be characterized by the subordination of agriculture by the livestock sector. It is typically believed that livestock and agriculture are complementary partners yet a notable tendency for a smallholder is to subsume the latter under the former. The world of the smallholding in Jalisco was constantly in tension with wanting to break with a predominantly *agricultura temporalera* (seasonal agriculture), an identity attributed to them nationally but also a reality for many. Smallholders saw the gains that could be made in making the most of seasonal agricultural (low costs for high yields) in order to transition into producing for the livestock raising market. As alluded to earlier, however, Jalisco benefitted from broader efforts to revive the entire livestock industry as a whole. In 1954, leaders from the Confederación Nacional Ganadera successfully pressured the Ministry of Agriculture (*Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería*) to cede to their specific demands for a livestock industry-focused agenda. The Ministry declared that in order to promote the industry, primarily in two regions it deemed especially suitable (Tamaulipas and Veracruz), cattle farmers would receive special tax exemptions and enjoy a new set of simplified paperwork for the movement and transportation of their animals.⁴³ But the onerous labor of productivity also demanded an even greater arduous

⁴² "La Campaña Contra la Fiebre Aftosa en el Estado de Jalisco," *El Informador*, 9 April 1950, 2.

⁴³ "Mejoramiento de la Ganadería," *El Informador*, 1 March 1954, 1.

labor: Securing peace in the countryside. The Confederation insisted on not just more investment and incentives to rekindle the livestock industry but demanded guarantees for a safe countryside free of cattle rustlers.⁴⁴ From the standpoint of farmers of all socioeconomic groups, cattle rustling was its own kind of disease that would prove just as difficult to eradicate than hoof and mouth disease, if not more so:

“El problema de la ganadería es el mismo de la agricultura: la falta absoluta de garantías y de seguridad en el campo, y resulta inexplicable verdaderamente como las autoridades superiores de la Federación y de los Estados, no pueden, contando con los medios eficaces de que disponen, darle al país esas garantías y seguridades que están demandando nuestras industrias rurales con más urgencia que las obras de riego y la apertura de nuevas tierras.”⁴⁵

The idea of security seemed immensely pressing for the government of Jalisco, the vaccination campaigns had shown the state to be one of the region’s largest cattle-owning entities.

According to one report:

“Según datos recientes tomados del censo pecuario que viene levantando la Comisión de Lucha Contra la Fiebre Aftosa, Jalisco tiene un total de 2.143,254 cabezas de ganado, de las cuales 1.488,675 son bovinos, 69,813 ovinos, 212,086 caprinos y 372,680 porcinos [...] En la primera etpa [sic] de la lucha contra la fiebre aftosa, durante la cual se llevó a cabo el sacrificio de los animales enfermos como medio de erradicación de la epizootia, fueron sacrificados en el Estado de Jalisco 108,689 cabezas de ganado mayor y 36,941 de ganado menor, habiéndose pagado a sus propietarios por concepto de indemnización \$27.305,618.05.”⁴⁶

On the heels of the national economic and social devastation of hoof and mouth disease, the government of Jalisco initiated efforts to fill the gaps in the rural economy. The government of J. Jesús González Gallo disseminated a new agricultural consciousness, promoting the idea of the

⁴⁴ “Editorial: Una Gran Industria En Ruinas,” *El Informador*, 3 March 1954, 4.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ “La Campaña Contra la Fiebre Aftosa en el Estado de Jalisco,” *El Informador*, 9 April 1950, 2.

modern farmer that thinks scientifically about the problems of the countryside; his anti-erosion and reforestation campaigns, for example, were novel for their time.⁴⁷ Perhaps as a measure to indirectly address the specter of hoof and mouth disease, he began to mechanize the countryside, distributing 500 steel plows and one hundred tractors targeted to small and medium-scale farmers. While the plows were destined for the use of ejidatarios, the tractors were divided between other larger ejidatarios and pequeños propietarios.⁴⁸ González Gallo's politics stood at a careful equilibrium between appeasing the old agrarian political guard and securing Ávilacamachismo in Jalisco. The old guard had pushed concertedly against the smallholding, characterizing it as a great landholding of well over a hundred hectares. As late as 1934, during a national agrarian Congress, the Liga Nacional Campesina Ursulo Galvan delegate, Alberto Cortés, spoke in favor of weakening the provisions that kept the smallholding from *fraccionamiento* (read here: expropriation and division):

“[...]Que se derogue de la Ley lo relativo al fraccionamiento ejidal [...] toda vez que se establece la pequeña propiedad individual que es contraria al principio socialista, y por lo tanto debe implantarse el sistema colectivista.”⁴⁹

This exhortation calling for the weakening of the smallholding from the standpoint anti-latifundismo alluded directly to a proposed bill moving through Congress:

“[...] también se propuso que el Congreso resolviera sobre la petición de reforma al Código Agraria para que, en vez de 300, los terratenientes sólo tuvieran 50 hectáreas con carácter inafectable”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Ibid., 1948.

⁴⁸ *Jalisco Testimonio de sus gobernantes*, Tomo III, 615.

⁴⁹ Speech as cited in Regalado, “Los agraristas,” in *Jalisco Desde La Revolución [vol.] V.*, 146.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 146.

González Gallo, then a senator, had attended this Congress as a guest of honor. By 1947 he became governor of Jalisco and followed in Barba González's footsteps of ushering a new era of anti-cardenista policies. In the countryside, the upward shift of agricultural productivity would be the cornerstone of this new corporate politics, socially legitimated by the growing power of smallholders. His land, the Caxcana, proved to be one of a handful of laboratories in Jalisco used to overcome not just the politics of cardenismo but to shore up the new politics of the smallholding via the rise of a great agricultural, livestock, and manufacturing industry.

	Corn	Wheat	Sugar Cane	Bean	Garbanzo
1930	189,431,480 kg	14,890,083 kg	265,296,144 kg	7,251,568 kg	
1940	299,360 tons	16,733 tons	349,525 tons	18,371 tons	10,792 tons
1950	328,874 tons	32,958 tons	1,062,552 tons	25,101 tons	17,691 tons

Table 5.1 Agricultural production of key crops in Jalisco, 1930-1950

Source: AHAI

The Caxcana's Green Revolution

González Gallo is an ideal figure with whom to begin to examine the Caxcana's historic transformation from economic stagnation to agricultural modernization. Thought in critical terms, his family was one of prosperous smallholders who had inherited land from hacendados and rose in political influence from the Cristero Rebellion. But their family was unique in the region because, as examined in chapter five, they held control over the Caxcana through the institution of the *Defensa Rural*, which they managed, presided, and commanded locally. But the Caxcana was first and foremost a land of *pistolerismo*, an informal institution of sorts that employed the landless and the jobless. Throughout the region, amid the oak-filled foothills and valleys still untilld, it was not uncommon to find *pistoleros* (armed men) perched on trees

waiting to catch their next victim.⁵¹ The market for contract killing enjoyed great supply and demand in the Caxcana. Such a market influenced the landscape of social relations in the region, for smallholders themselves would fashion a quasi-pistolero identity that served as a measure of protection against others. One respected smallholder's son, for example, earned the nickname of "Chava Loco" ("Crazy Chava") for shooting at objects and men in both sober and drunken caprice.⁵² But such reputations not only helped smallholders ward off potential enemies but they also drew a boundary of respect, however tenuous, around their crops and livestock. That boundary of respect was also one of fear when it came to the González Gallo family, of which different smallholding members owned land throughout the Caxcana. Arguably, the clearest link between the agrarian and the agricultural in the Caxcana is precisely this problem of an entrenched insecurity that originated with the landless and characterized even the highest sociopolitical and economic echelons of the region. Uprooting this system of mutually assured destruction would prove to be the greatest marker of agricultural transformation in the Caxcana.

The Caxcana had a lot of this old system of pistoleroismo to uproot; the boundaries of fear would be replaced by barbed wire and the oak-filled valleys that dotted the landscape would be made arable by the sheer number of smallholders with more access to new agricultural technologies. But how did the system of pistoleroismo stop being the general rule in the Caxcana? The region had already been first purged of its hacendado-owning class in the late 1920s yet the void had been filled by a culture of pistoleroismo. The second purge was somewhat more protracted and twofold: From the mid 1940s and beyond, gun-carrying men experienced the possibility of employment elsewhere and the region's last known cacique, Felipe González

⁵¹ Interview with Ernesto Ruvalcaba and Faustina Molina de Ruvalcaba, Juchitlán, Cuquío, Jalisco, March 4, 2011. "Chava" is short for the name Salvador.

⁵² Ibid.

Gallo, was murdered in 1957. The upswing in violence of these years forced men like “Chava Loco” and his father to leave the region. When the former returned, however, he forged a new reputation, becoming an industrious smallholding farmer, bringing the local CONASUPO to the community, and towards his last years of life setting up the town’s first electricity lines and soccer team. Like Salvador there were hundreds of smallholders in the Caxcana who collectively made social stability the norm rather than the exception. The top political echelons also followed suit in an equally consequential twofold process: throughout the 1950s the region experienced the benefits of infrastructural development brought on by González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez and, in 1964, the cacique’s name was officially erased from history in a symbolic overshadowing by his younger brother. That year, the municipality of Yahualica was renamed as Yahualica de González Gallo by official state decree. The process of uprooting took place through a series of tensions that were mediated through a complex of violence, legal proceedings, emigration, politics, but also increased agricultural productivity.

The Caxcana’s green revolution in this sense was birthed through an implementation of new agricultural technologies and a local culture that worked at cross-purposes, with unresolved political infighting that persisted from the Cristero Rebellion. For example, in Cuquío, the federal army continued to impose a strong visible presence, surveilling the region alongside locally appointed Defensas Rurales or Defensas Sociales, known simply as *defensas*.⁵³ In Mexiticacán, local armed men still rejected the presence of the federal army and their *defensas* and in 1930 attacked the municipality’s Defensa Social.⁵⁴ At the same time that greater access to fertilizers grew, so too did violence persist in the Caxcana. In the midst of these tensions,

⁵³ “Fue Batida Enérgicamente La Gavilla de los Hermanos Valdovinos,” *El Informador*, 1 October 1930.

⁵⁴ “En Mexiticacán Se Registró un Zafarrancho,” *El Informador*, 10 October 1930. Also see, “Hay Seguridad En Los Caminos A Cuquío,” *El Informador*, 4 January 1930.

agrarian problems also emerged, with complaints against corrupt local judges ordering the invalidity of ejidos in Cuquío, one of the region's most agriculturally fertile municipalities, in one case, the community of Las Cruces, who's ejido enjoyed access to prime agricultural land.⁵⁵ Ixtlahuacán del Río, also an epicenter of agricultural fertility, was especially prone to attacks having a huge canyon as its southern border, called the Barranca de Huentitán. The Barranca was home to known bandits who targeted close-by Ixtlahuacán residents but also arrieros (muleteers) who transported goods to and from the region.⁵⁶ While both Cuquío and Ixtlahuacán were so close to Guadalajara on map, the canyon, but especially the Barranca's bandits, made it nearly impossible to participate in supplying the city's market. As late as 1939, for example, there were cases of illegal importation of wheat with Jalisco and Michoacán as main recipients; the only other place where wheat could be imported legally was Yucatán, every other place was protected by the Comité de Productores de Trigo de la Republica (The Committee of National Wheat Producers).⁵⁷ Guadalajara was undoubtedly cut from a crucial source of agricultural goods through its blockade of the Caxcana imposed by geography, but especially banditry. Even inland, far from the canyon, between 1934 and 1936, years in which a second Cristero Rebellion was attempted, was also a period of intense violence in the Caxcana; dozens of cases alone made it to the courts, complaints filed against local judges, local municipal presidents, and military detachments stationed throughout the region.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ "Amparos En El Juzgado Primero de Distrito En El Estado," *El Informador*, 16 July 1930.

⁵⁶ "Se Perseguirá A Una Gavilla: Esta ha aparecido a inmediaciones de Ixtlahuacán, en donde comete fechorías," *El Informador*, 28 January 1931. Also see, "Se Bateo A Unos Salteadores," *El Informador*, 15 January 1931.

⁵⁷ "Viene Trigo de EE.UU.," *El Informador*, 31 May 1939, 1.

⁵⁸ "Teme Ser Privado de la Vida en Cuquío y Pide Amparo," *El Informador*, 13 Septiembre 1934, 4, "En los Juzgados de Distrito," *El Informador*, 21 February 1936, 3, "El Ejecutivo del Estado Objeta," *El Informador*, 29 September 1936, 2, "Por los Juzgados de Distrito," *El Informador*, 5 April 1937, 4. Also see the precedent of counterrevolution, beginning in 1932 when the state government attempted to pass legislation that reduced to fifty

But toward the late 1930s, cuquienses, yahualicense, ixtlahuaquenses, and mexticaquenses began to see state employees that were not just federal soldiers. By 1941, Jalisco's countryside had twelve *Centros de Higiene Rural* (Rural Hygiene Centers) where basic health services were given to residents, such as antivirals and antibiotics. The Caxcana had one of these Centers in Cuquío that serviced the entire region.⁵⁹ However sluggish the region's economy, the government set minimum salaries, which in the Caxcana these ranged between \$1.10 pesos and \$1.30 pesos. The price of corn per ton in 1934 also ranged as follows: \$57 pesos in Ixtlahuacán del Río, \$55 in Cuquío, and \$56 pesos in Yahualica.⁶⁰ Wheat farmers supplemented their income by selling some of their seeds in the Guadalajara market. The 1940s was characterized by an economic upturn that arguably help set the precursors for Jalisco's green revolution in the region. In order to promote agricultural development in the country, the governments of Ávila Camacho and Miguel Alemán offered a rural economic package that included rural credit, guaranteed prices on main crops, crop reception warehouses, irrigation, promotion of soil conservation, experimental sites, mechanization, and aid with combating plagues and diseases.⁶¹ The Caxcana received the benefits of most of these federal programs all the while rejecting agrarismo, which both governments, as a matter of ideology, no longer imposed on smallholding regions throughout Jalisco. The results for the Caxcana in terms of agriculture and livestock raising was measurable, between 1940 to 1970, land use was intensified. Crop yields rose with relation to the average rising yields at the state level and

the number of priests that could impart mass in all of Jalisco, "Solo 50 Sacerdotes Oficiaran en Jalisco," *El Informador*, 20 October 1932, 1. Also see "Interpuso Demanda Otra Demanda de Amparo El Sr. Obispo Don José Garibi Rivera," *El Informador*, 7 July 1932, 4. By 1932 more military detachments had been deployed to and had settled in Cuquío, see "Nuevo Destacamento," *El Informador*, 7 July 1932, 4.

⁵⁹ "Interesante Informe Que El C. Gobernador [...]" *El Informador*, 1941.

⁶⁰ "Se Fijo El Precio Del Maíz en los Mpos. Del Estado," *El Informador*, 6 January 1934.

⁶¹ "A Los Agronomos De La República," *El Informador*, October 1945, 8

livestock raising showed a deepened intensification.⁶² By 1980, Cuquío and Ixtlahucán del Río became top producers of cattle fattening corrals in Jalisco, ranking, respectively, in second with 6,525 heads of cattle and fourth place with 4,960.⁶³

While pistoleroismo still ran rampant, smallholders in Cuquío benefitted from a dam that serviced 1,600 hectares of land and in Yahualica, the Presa del Estribón serviced upwards of 500 hectares with a capacity of 6.5 million cubic meters of water.⁶⁴ The intention of both dams included providing a source of water for livestock. As mentioned earlier, the Caxcana became increasingly mechanized, replacing traditional plows for steel ones and experimenting with motorized tractors for the first time. Roads were also built, expressing the tense politics between González Gallo and Yáñez (as examined in chapter three), but also underscoring the dire need landowners (minifundistas, smallholders, and large-scale) had for these. A consortium of large landowners and large smallholders, respectively headed by Silvano González Ramírez and J. Refugio Sánchez González, mobilized rural workers and landowners to help build the local roads.⁶⁵ The state government also assisted smallholders with sizeable loans for the development of small, private, irrigation of which Cuquío was a prime beneficiary.⁶⁶ Not long after, smallholders throughout the region, namely medium smallholders (please see table below), would follow suit, requesting assistance in building artificial prairies (*praderas artificiales*), a

⁶² Please see the tables beginning at the end of this study's conclusion. While, in some cases, yields for some crops decrease slightly, note, for example, that crop yield overall rises given the increased diversification of crop selection. The livestock sectors for Yahualica and Ixtlahucán del Río demonstrate measurable growth and dynamism.

⁶³ Citing data from the Departamento de Agricultura, Ganadería e irrigación del Gobierno de Jalisco, please see Gabriel Ascencio Franco, *Los mercaderes de la carne*, (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 1992), 46.

⁶⁴ Ibid and "El Presidente Ávila Visito," *El Informador*, 25 November 1946, 3. Also see a key study of the construction of Yahualica's dam in Adrian de Garay y G., "Presa de Yahualica, Estado de Jalisco," Thesis, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Escuela Nacional de Ingenieros, 1946).

⁶⁵ "La Carretera Guadalajara-Cuquío será Comenzada en Octubre Próximo," *El Informador*, 20 August 1944, 8.

⁶⁶ "Préstamo de 122 millones de pesos para obras de pequeña irrigación: Lo otorgó el Banco Interamericano; Estas obras se localizarán en cinco municipios de Jalisco," *El Informador*, 18 November 1964.

system for feeding livestock over smaller (more controlled) plots of land which presupposed access to irrigation.

List of Medium Smallholders⁶⁷

J. Salomé Toledo Mercado
Porfirio Mercado Sandoval
Feliciano González Gómez
J. Pilar Ruiz Rodríguez
Gregorio González Gómez
Moisés Limón Toledo
Isidro Gutiérrez
Pedro Rubalcava Campa
José Molina Martínez
Miguel Angel Limón Rubalcava
Victor Limón
Ing. Pedro Limón
Ignacio Álvarez
José Medina

Table 5.2 Artificial prairies, Yahualica, 1962

Source: AHAI

By the 1950s and 1960s, farmers could purchase all farming essentials including fertilizers, hybrid seeds, barbed wire, tools, and equipment.⁶⁸ Local municipal governments also helped expose landowners to the latest trends in seed technologies. In 1962, a handful of landowners received the now traditional Maíz Cafime, an improved corn seed ideal for seasonal agriculture. The seeds came along with instructions for farmers:

“Variety stabilized for 95 days; given it’s precociousness it produces less yields than hybrids but it is superior to the fast-cycle creoles, given its moderate resistance to drought

⁶⁷ Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Yahualica de González Gallo, Ramo de Agricultura, Exp. 2, “Oficio Num. 157 Asunto: Enviando los nombres de personas que pueden convertirse en cooperadores en el Programa que lleva a cabo la Comisión Lerma-Chapala-Santiago [10 abril 1962],” 5.

⁶⁸ Farmers would continue to use the traditional method of fertilization, estiercol, or animal manure, for growing crops, particularly in vegetable gardens. Please see Raúl Aceves Ortega, “Informe General Sobre la Exploración Sanitaria del Municipio de Mexicacán, Estado de Jalisco. Trabajo que para sustentar examen profesional de Médico Cirujano y Partero,” Thesis, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Facultad Nacional de Medicina, 1944), 25-26.

and it's ability to mix [*cuatear*] in favorable conditions. The harvested seed can be used in the center of the cornfield.”⁶⁹

Two types of hybrid seed sorghum were also distributed to these farmers, Sorgo de Grano Breve 100 and Sorgo Forrajero Honey, the instructions for the former stating:

“This is the most drought resistant plant. It is sown in furrows for corn 5 centimeters deep, *a chorrillo ralo* [continued small amounts] (5 cms one seed apart if it's crop aided by irrigation or 10 cms if its completely seasonal). Crops are similar to corn though generally do not require the second benefit but it is important to eliminate the bad weed—during the first weeks of the plant's life. It shouldn't be grazed upon while still young, shriveled by drought, or frosted because occasionally they will form prussic acid, a toxic substance that disappears once ensiled, haymade, or fully dried.”⁷⁰

Seen more broadly and collectively, the 1950 census reflects the improvements the region began to experience. All four municipalities made heavy use of fertilizers (hardly any was used in ejido lands):

Use of Fertilizers Per Municipality	
Ixtlahuacán del Río: 1,180 Ha	Cuquío: 1,230 Ha
Yahualica: 464 Ha	Mexticacán: 704 Ha

Table 5.3 Use of fertilizers per municipality, 1950

Source: *Tercer Censo Agrícola, Ganadero y Ejidal, 1950, Jalisco*.

Fertilizers and improved and/or hybrid seeds were widespread in a region still predominantly rich in seasonal lands (*tierras de temporal*), so rich in potassium (which aids plant development) but scanty in nitrogen⁷¹ (which aids in yield):

⁶⁹ AHMYGG, Ramo de Agricultura, Exp. 2, “Maiz Cafime,” 2. According to these circulars, the information was sent to the associated municipalities of the Comisión de Fomento de la Región de Los Altos, headquartered in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco.

⁷⁰ AHMYGG, Ramo de Agricultura, Exp. 2, “Sorgo de Grano Breve 100,” 1962, 5.

⁷¹ Rito Villalpando Z., “La industria avícola en el municipio de Yahualica, Jalisco. Que para su Examen Profesional de Medico Veterinario Zootecnista,” Thesis, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Escuela Nacional de Medicina Veterinaria y Zootecnia, 1959), 15.

Types of Agricultural Land, Irrigation vs. Seasonal Per Municipality, 1950

	Irrigated	Seasonal
Ixtlahuacán del Río	43 Ha	13,981Ha
Cuquío	10 Ha	22,133 Ha
Yahualica	352 Ha	13,410 Ha
Mexticacán	23 Ha	10,399 Ha

Table 5.4 Types of Agricultural Land, Irrigation vs. Seasonal, 1950

Source: Rito Villalpando Z., “La industria avícola en el municipio de Yahualica, Jalisco.”

All municipalities, in addition, made use of hundreds of hectares for grazing on communal foothills, Mexticacán being the heaviest user of wooded areas. Arguably, by the 1960s, smallholders institutionalized the livestock sector, forming cattle-raising associations that followed the guidelines set by the greater Federación Nacional Ganadera. It is through such institutionalization that smallholders on the one hand entered the formal economy and paid taxes⁷² but on the other, it also effectively ensured continued investment in the infrastructure necessary to meet the market demand’s for meat and animal products.⁷³ While Ixtlahuacán del Río rose as the prime cattle-raising municipality in the region, met with a comparative lack of agriculturally fertile land, Yahualica would push to also strengthen one aspect of the livestock sector. In particular, Yahualica not only became the Caxcana’s largest egg and poultry producer but it also integrated itself as a significant player in the greater Los Altos and Jalisco avian industry—which today is Mexico’s top supplier of poultry and eggs.⁷⁴

In 1959, a doctoral study focused on Yahualica’s livestock sector demonstrated the municipality’s rise as a successful egg and poultry-producing region.⁷⁵ In his study, he shows

⁷² See the dozens of receipts of purchase that indicate the amount of taxes paid for livestock ownership for the fiscal year 1967-1968, AHMYGG, Ramo de Agricultura, Expedientes 4, 5, 6 and 7.

⁷³ AHMYGG, Ramo de Agricultura, Expediente 2, “Memorandum presentado ante la Comisión de Fomento de la Región de Los Altos, por la Presidencia Municipal de este lugar.[5 Febrero 1962],” 2.

⁷⁴ According to the latest SAGARPA figures, Jalisco is the number one supplier of eggs; alongside the state of Veracruz, Jalisco’s is Mexico’s top supplier of poultry.

⁷⁵ Villalpando Z., “La industria avícola en el municipio de Yahualica, Jalisco.”

the steep underreporting in the government census regarding livestock. The author cites that while the 1953 Census reported the existence of 25,825 chickens, the local Unión de Avicultores de Yahualica (Union of Poultry Farmers of Yahualica) reported 51,783, well over double the government's count.⁷⁶ The green revolution also applied to this subsection of the livestock sector, leading the municipality to develop a robust poultry industry.⁷⁷ Yahualica found success in introduction and reproduction of high quality hybrid birds widely used in the United States, such as "Hy-line, Kimber, Dekalb, Babcock and H. & H." for egg production and "Vantress, Indian Rover, among others like Cornish birds" for meat production.⁷⁸ The municipality's growers found productivity increases by rendering chickens of "double aptitude" obsolete, preferring to use a system whereby egg and meat production are separate. In this respect, the author argues that the success of Yahualica's poultry industry rested on applying new technical training rather than relying on knowledge passed down by their parents.⁷⁹ Indeed, advanced caging systems for breeding chickens were also widely used because the infrared lighting administered "provided enough heat to breed 100 chicks" per hen "unit."⁸⁰ In addition, growers generally implemented instructions on how to provide a balanced, vitamin-rich, diet to their birds. The key link here between the Caxcana's agricultural sector and Yahualica's poultry industry is precisely ensuring a nutrient-rich diet for adequate protein development in the chickens. The nutrients key for amino-acids in particular were found in feeds that mixed "corn,

⁷⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 24

⁷⁸ Ibid., 19-20.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 39.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 22.

sorghum, barley, and oatmeal” particularly if mixed with complementary “cottonseedmeal [harinolina], sesame seed paste, and peanut.”⁸¹ It should be noted that not all breeders shifted to more advanced forms of caging and feeding, those that practiced less expensive systems often experienced greater losses due to the misapplication of production guidelines, such as guarding against bacteria and bird injuries. Yahualica secured a healthy economy by diversifying into the poultry industry, but the northernmost Mexticacán, typically known as the municipality with the greatest struggle in agricultural productivity, similarly developed other economic avenues to keep afloat.

During the early 1930s period of great economic stagnation, people in Mexticacán were known for making matches but suffered a severe crackdown when the federal government actively upheld its monopoly in that industry.⁸² During the 1940s growing economic spur experienced in the region, mexticaquenses experimented with profitable non-agricultural ventures such as candy-making; many preferred to leave the region to Guadalajara or Mexico City, finding a boon in the bar shop business. A few mexticaquense families brought the traveling movie theater to the Caxcana. But Mexticacán is widely known for its popsicle industry; these entrepreneurs monopolized the market for popsicles not just in the entire region but throughout Mexican towns and major cities such as Monterrey, Guadalajara, and Mexico City. Popular perception attributes the monopoly of the *industria paleta* (popsicle industry) in Mexico during this period to the few families of Tocumbo, Michoacán, creators of name brands such as La Michoacana. But mexticaquense families took a sizeable portion of the Mexican paleta market as well by innovating methods of production and distribution, including the

⁸¹ Ibid., 28.

⁸² Jack Rollwagen, “The Paleteros of Mexticacan, Jalisco: A Study of Entrepreneurship in Mexico,” (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Oregon, June 1968), 16.

implementation of the wheel-pushed refrigerated popsicle cart.⁸³ By 1965, one family alone owned thirty *paleterías* throughout the country.⁸⁴ By 1970, mextecaquense families held a near 90% monopoly of the popsicle market in Monterrey.⁸⁵ Loyal to their regional identity, those families established their home base in the municipality, continuing to manufacture and cater to the Caxcana's market and contributing thus to the economic development of the region. This economic leap also changed the social and cultural life of the municipality, which reports by 1940 had attested to the great malnutrition suffered by its residents and the greater underdevelopment that characterized its landscape.⁸⁶ Mexticacán in this sense sheds light on one dimension for understanding the experience of agricultural transformation in the Caxcana: That while new, Green Revolution-type, agriculture did not solve the particular problem of landlessness, it opened a more flexible system of production that crucially fed into non-agricultural sectors within the region.

Conclusion

The case of the Caxcana underscores that it is nearly impossible to meaningfully conceptualize agricultural production and productivity without understanding land tenure and violence.⁸⁷ Violence, in particular, engrossed the minds of the rural workers and landowners

⁸³ Rollwagen, "The Paleteros of Mexticacan, Jalisco: A Study of Entrepreneurship in Mexico," 23.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁸⁶ Aceves Ortega, "Informe General Sobre la Exploración Sanitaria del Municipio de Mexticacán, Estado de Jalisco," 27-33 and in *passim*.

⁸⁷ Aldana Rendón, "El Liberalismo y la propiedad indígena en Jalisco (1855-1858)," in Sergio Alcántara Ferrer and Enrique Sánchez Ruiz, comps., *Desarrollo rural en Jalisco: Contradicciones y perspectivas*, (Zapopan: El Colegio de Jalisco), 30. The author cites the following primary source: "Las depredaciones y horribles escenas ejecutadas por los ladrones en Yahualica, Tapalpa y últimamente en Tizapán, han llamado la atención pública, y las diversas clases de la sociedad lamentan, con razón el malestar de la inseguridad...(El País, 16 de agosto de 1856)." For a

ahead of the stresses and trials of farming. Landowners who were not adept at combating crime through self-defense fared particularly worse, locking themselves inside their homes before sundown. By the twentieth century, the promise of greater agricultural production and the greater distribution of land pushed the problem of rural insecurity and crime into stronger relief. Landowners and rural workers found themselves scurrying home by sundown in order to avoid gunmen looking to steal personal belongings, livestock, and crops. Even weddings were not complete without a shooting or a murder.⁸⁸ The reigning problem in the Caxcana was pistoleroismo controlling a region of economic stagnation; the typical struggle between agrarismo versus latifundismo, as commonly understood in other parts of Mexico, is not a story that meaningfully explain this region of study. One story, as told by the son of a smallholder, perhaps underscores the meaning of how pistoleroismo-as-a-rule is uprooted from the region. In finishing his conversation about his father's changing reputation, from "Chava Loco" to simply "Chava," my interviewer tells the story of a pair of domestic petty thieves, known in the vicinity as "The Manacos." The by now reformed Chava would encounter the Manacos from time to time while overseeing his crops and grazing cattle. One afternoon, Chava caught the Manacos picking corn from his stalks, filling an entire sack. When confronted, one of the Manacos asked rhetorically, "Chava, ¿qué te hace un costalito?" (*Chava, what's a small sack going to do to you?*). In a gesture acknowledging that something deeply profound had changed, whereby even such piecemeal theft was tolerated to keep the peace, the Manacos and Chava both went their ways.

deeper analysis of rural criminality and its role in national development, please see Paul J. Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police, and Mexican Development*, (Delaware: SR Books, 1984 [1992]).

⁸⁸ López Gutiérrez, *A punto del olvido y la tumba: Historias de vida de Mexicacán*.

CONCLUSION

...la *vedette* Rhea [...] en reportaje publicado por la revista *Mañana* –no. 1304, México, 24 de agosto de 1968—, dijo, o la hicieron decir estas filosofías: “Un pasado negro, blanco o gris es lo que hace a una persona ser como es en el presente – Francamente no sé qué puede hacer en la vida un hombre sin pasado—. Sólo me arrepiento de no haber hecho mejor todo lo que he hecho”.[...] Con lo cual la criatura [Rhea] refutaba –y hacía evaluar— la tesis de que las mujeres honradas y las ciudades felices no tienen historia. En efecto, ¿qué honradez, qué felicidad puede haber sino por el tamiz de lo vidido? Gracias, desconocida muchacha, por la confirmación que brindas al *Plan que peleamos*: hondura dramática de la vida en múltiples dimensiones, regidas por el pasado imperfecto, perfecto y pluscuamperfecto, proyectado al antepresente, al presente y al futuro recóndito.

Agustín Yáñez, 1968

An avid reader of Agustín Yáñez knows that the foundation of his oeuvre is history. In a reflection on the entire structure and unifying thread of his literary work, titled “Perseverancia Final,” his central theme is always the past, critically understood through the particular *circunstancia mexicana*, which Yáñez also deems to be universal.¹ Arguably, the history of the *pequeña propiedad* appears in his novels as his Mexican circumstance, unfolding its concealed before, revealed present, and remote future. Unfound in the hacienda-centered historiography, the jalisciense novelist thus sets out to reconstruct the history of a people rooted in the rancho, emphasizing its relationship to the hacienda, the overcoming of traditional forms of oppression, and, finally, the transformation of rural social, cultural, economic, and political life. Therein lies

¹ Agustín Yáñez, “Perseverancia Final,” in *Obras uno*, (Mexico City: El Colegio Nacional, 1998), 117-121 and in *passim*.

Yáñez's theory of history: A convergence of creative, literary, *extratemporality*,² critical thought, historical methodology, but, most importantly, praxis. He uses this theory to bring to bear the use of history when thinking about social conditions and social justice:

“Durante varios años, en otoño e invierno, he sido huésped del Observatorio; he asistido al afanoso escrutinio del cielo, hasta la madrugada; he tenido a mano las fotografías celestiales, con su hermosura y sus enigmas, que no alcanzo a comprender, pese a la sabiduría de las explicaciones; resuelvo entonces quedarme con la contemplación estética y dar rienda suelta a la fantasía, bajo el estímulo de luces y sombras recogidas por la paciencia de mis doctos amigos; a la mañana, bajo con ellos al pueblo donde ha muerto por atropellamiento criminal un indígena, donde agoniza un niño por falta de atención médica, igual que una mujer aúlla su parto en desamparo; bajo al pueblo donde toda endemia y epidemia tienen asiento; donde faltan agua y condiciones sanitarias; donde los caciques locales hacen sentir su voracidad y ferocidad; donde fanatismos e ignorancias ofrecen fácil pasto al abuso. Sobre raptos y violaciones de doncellas, asesinatos y hurtos, enfermedades y necesidades, el relato traza la hecatombe perpetrada por los españoles en Cholula, cuando su infausto avance conquistador. Después, acompañado a los astrónomos, matemáticos, físicos, ayudantes empeñosos del Observatorio, a reclamar justicia en la Presidencia Municipal o en la cercana capital del Estado; a promover la terminación de las nuevas escuelas, de los centros asistenciales, de las obras de ingeniería sanitaria; a procurar la reparación de daños.”³

As a man whose family origins were established in the Caxcana, Yáñez sets out to uncover, in the process, his own past which he found missing from the Mexican national metanarratives. Such past is ridden with social injustice, political assassinations, generalized violence, but also other parallel commonplace dimensions of daily life, menial work, and farming routines that

² Yáñez, “Perseverancia Final,” 123 and in *passim*.

³ Ibid., 125-126. “During several years, in the fall and winter, I have been a guest at the Observatorio; I have attended to the arduous examination of the heavens, until dawn; I have on hand celestial photographs, with their beauty and their enigma, that I cannot manage to understand, despite the wise explanations; I resolve, then, to remain in aesthetic contemplation and to give free rein to fantasy, under the stimulus of lights and shadows taken up by the patience of my learned friends; come morning, I come down to the town with them where an indigenous person has died from a criminal run over, where a youngster agonizes from a lack of medical attention, just the same as a woman howls lonely through child labor; I descend onto town, where all endemic and epidemic disease settle; where there is a need for water and sanitary conditions; where local bosses make their voracity and ferocity palpable; where fanaticisms and ignorance offer free pasture for abuse. Regarding the kidnappings and rapings of damsels, assassinations and theft, sickness and need, the story traces the catastrophe perpetrated by the Spanish in Cholula, upon their fateful conquering. The, accompanied by astronomers, mathematicians, physics, diligent Observatorio assistants, to demand justice to the Municipal Hall or the nearest State capital; to promote the completion of new schools, public assistance centers, and sanitation; to ensure the reparation of damages.”

always defeated in Yáñez the temptation to romanticize his history. With no comprehensive analysis in the histories of twentieth century rural Mexico, this dissertation similarly aims to bring to the fore a history of the rancho.

I have examined the rancho taking as point of departure the demise of the hacienda as the basic unit of rural economic life. The smallholding had existed for hundreds of years, but had been overshadowed by the hacienda and the vast documentary evidence it left behind. I show how Caxcana rancheros were instrumental not only in forcing the hacienda's demise but were also participants in the new rural politics that eradicated caciquismo throughout Jalisco. This project then connects rancho agency to the broader political struggles occurring at the state and federal levels of government between those who wanted to maintain a Porfirian-like system of regional strongmen and those who wanted to break from this tradition of caciquismo. At the federal level, the key power struggle occurred between callista versus cardenista alliances battling across the latter's hard-pressed attempts to undo the hacendado-callista coalitions that restricted the greater penetration of cardenismo into rural Mexico. At the state level, the key struggle unfolded between supposed political allies of the same Partido Revolucionario Institucional: Jalisco governors J. Jesús González Gallo and Agustín Yáñez.

While González Gallo was born in the Caxcana, the region was also Yáñez's motherland. Both keenly understood the social and economic problems of the region and worked to cement a rural politics that would best produce a loyal popular base and an economically, agriculturally productive, prosperous countryside. In so doing, their governments presided over nearly a decade of unprecedented political stability and prosperity in Jalisco and the Caxcana. Each differed ideologically, however. The way in which transformation would come about had distinct ideological underpinnings. González Gallo's ideology, summarized in his

administration's motto "progreso como meta," was fixed to the idea of progress and modernization strongly established, with its particular connotations, since the Porfiriato. The hacienda was a *sine qua non* of the order and progress ideology in Mexico, and while this domineering rural institution became defunct in González Gallo's lifetime, he allowed for the continuation of caciquismo as the last standing bastion of that porfirian political tradition and continuity. He brought great infrastructural development to the region but in following with his ideology, such modernization was blatantly and unabashedly selective, concentrated in his native Yahualica, which benefitted the cacicazgo of his older brother, Felipe González Gallo. The 1957 assassination of Felipe González Gallo through the scheme planned between rural workers and smallholders, as examined in chapter five, was thus not merely an act of commonplace violence but a political and ideological stance that resonated deep into state levels of government.

Yáñez, on the other ideological hand, resuscitated a different particular kind of liberalism, one drawn from a deep familiarity of juarismo but inspired by post-Revolutionary and post-Cristero War concerns predicated on the social justice and freedom of the masses. His experience and personal archive blossomed from the struggles of a peasant and smallholder's class, many of who fled to Guadalajara, Mexico City, or the United States to escape violence and a lack of opportunity. This is why Yáñez was born in Guadalajara and not in his mother's native Yahualica. His ascent to the governorship was preceded by two developments that were key to the successful implementation of his ideologically driven praxis: Firstly, rancheros had begun to mark their influence and blaze the path to their rise throughout Jalisco and, secondly, as a novelist, he was convinced that the prototype of an emancipated ranchero society that arose from his novels could be possible. It was indeed becoming possible and his administration aided in the efflorescence of such a newly redefined ranchero rural society. During the years of his

administration, 1953-1959, Yáñez set out to break the selective modernization of his predecessor, González Gallo (1946-1952), by generalizing infrastructural development projects in a way that would impulse a twin-process of economic effervescence and simultaneously dissolve the power of local caciques throughout Jalisco. This dissertation demonstrates that the changing rural landscape that began in the 1940s had as much to do with top-down state-driven Keynesian economics as it did with regionally held competing ideologies and competing visions of infrastructural modernization.

This history of the rancho, thus, is not merely a socioeconomic analysis but also unfolds its intimately related cultural and intellectual history without which an examination of transformation is incomplete.⁴ The order and unfolding of the chapters is deliberate, in this sense. Chapter three's close examination of power and ideology, for example, teaches that the agricultural transformation examined in chapter four was far from inevitable or necessary. The Green Revolution was institutionalized by the Mexican government but only in selective few parts and no critical interpretation indicates that it would have spread to states such as Jalisco or regions like the Caxcana of its own structural volition. Smallholding regions were developing a proto-Green Revolution but it was through the efforts, actions, and exiles of smallholders that agricultural productivity was generalized throughout Mexico. Both governors drew from smallholders to then carefully re-craft the meaning of agrarian reform in Jalisco. They placed the *pequeño propietario* at the forefront of the struggle to implement federally-mandated rural policies in order to develop the countryside according to the smallholding society that had been forming since 1940 over the formerly hacienda landscape. The relatively lack of expressed definition of what the *pequeña propiedad* meant made the process of exaltation and political

⁴ For a series of critical essays that further underscore the significance that these intertwined histories meaningfully provide for our understanding of change and continuity, please also see Eric Van Young's *Writing Mexican History*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

strategy less onerous for the Jalisco governors who had to ascertain party loyalty through a post-Revolutionary pro-peasant/pro-ejidatario national rhetoric but also establish smallholder's trust at the regional level. Terms such as "agricultor," "trabajador del campo," and even "campesino" were applicable to the agrarian reform's ejidatario but, in places throughout Jalisco, they became veiled connotations for the pequeño propietario. Even this rhetorical shift signaled a transformation in itself, particularly when one understands the politically and culturally overshadowed role the smallholding had vis-à-vis the hacienda throughout the nineteenth century and early twentieth century as examined in chapter one.

But without a definition and contextualization of the smallholding, through a fine-grained approach, we are left with a historiography that continues to revolve around landless and large landowning politics. Chapter two, in this sense, attempts to propose a method, definition, and meaningful context of the smallholding. Collected from over one thousand agrarian reform litigations, from 1922 to 1992 encompassing my four Caxcana municipalities of study, I demonstrate the possibilities for constructing a history of the smallholding based on archives once thought only pertinent to ejido or hacienda analyses. The parallel methodological foundation of my work, however, is oral history. The interviews conducted with smallholders in rural Zacatecas, rural Jalisco, and U.S. cities over the course of seven years guide the interpretation of the documentary evidence. The robust political leverage of smallholders is evidenced by the way they applied agrarian reform in the region on their terms. To be an ejidatario, he or she had to not previously own more than a couple of hectares and directly preside full time over the granted ejido as a local resident. The agrarian rules were altered in the Caxcana, however, to fit the particular context of the broken monopoly of the hacienda, intensified agricultural production, greater competition, and ever-replenished opportunities to

travel to and from the region. Medium smallholders not only shared ejidos with other small and medium smallholders but over the course of their lifetime also lived in Guadalajara and cities across the United States. Smallholders also inherited this tradition to their sons and daughters, so that local agrarianism would not become an adversarial hindrance but rather a way to be politically and economically relevant in the region.

A critique might be made by traditional agrarianism studies that Caxcana smallholders were merely perpetuating a set of practices commonplace in other parts of Mexico, where the laws of agrarian reform were broken and the spirit of *agrarismo* was sold to the next best bidder. Yet a sharp distinction can be drawn through a critical analysis of land tenure and agrarian-agricultural politics. Unlike great landowners and peasant *ejidatarios*, smallholders had to carve a space within an *agrarismo* that had hardly accounted for their presence and role in rural society in the first place. The *pequeña propiedad* represented an ambivalent category for the centers of federal political power. As demonstrated in this dissertation, leaders might have on occasion lauded the idea of a rural middle class rooted in the smallholding but their loudest and most consistent rhetoric always favored peasants or promoted the essentiality of large landowning agriculture or commercial farming. The federal government and even policy experts in fact constantly diminished the smallholding by characterizing it as a pseudo form of land tenure, implying that in reality it was the hacendado's new veil and way of avoiding expropriation. Even when the federal government acknowledged the smallholding as a real form of land tenure, it still diminished its potential for substantial agricultural potential, branding it incorrectly as an obstinate backwater of traditional farming. This study debunks both stereotypes. Hacendados in the Caxcana carried out their own form of land distribution after being severely debilitated by two wars (1910-1920 and 1926-1929) and by succumbing to the pressures of changing

demographics that placed the smallholder in a strategically beneficial position. A couple of large landowners that attempted to veil behind a *ranchero* identity were immediately exposed; the small handful of large landowners that remained were protected by deeds that gave them immunity from expropriation, or *certificados de inafectabilidad*. Landowning *ranchero* society, in addition, broke from traditional agriculture and became a key actor in the agricultural boom that aided in the transformation of rural Mexico.

At the heart of this federal government ambivalence, if not outright distrust, of the *rancho* thus lies a political and cultural dimension. Exempt from land expropriation mandated by agrarian reform, *rancheros* represented an indefinite and potentially disloyal political bloc that easily slipped from the PRI's hands. The so-called notion of a rural middle class so acclaimed by *callismo* and *cardenismo* (perhaps, as the saying goes, *de dientes pa'afuera*)⁵ had formed into a politically aware group who would not necessarily follow the drumbeat of PRI politics. Agrarian reform did not persuade landholding *ranchero* society in the Caxcana; *rancheros* reformulated the spirit of agrarian social justice in their image and not that of the peasant. Even at the height of the counter-reform period under Ávila Camacho and Alemán Valdés, smallholders worked to contest and reject PRI politics, efforts that culminated with the brutal assassination of the PRI's representation and local arm during the presidency of Ruiz Cortines. A *ranchero* culture became more visible and connected to the process of transformation, creating thereby a new rural tradition linked to agriculture, livestock raising, but, as Yáñez would underscore in his literary creation, autonomy and freedom from local landholding elites and state power. But neither smallholders nor state and federal governments needed a solid loyal base or a firm political bargaining position amongst each other; votes equaled a tacit degree of relative autonomy and a set amount of budget-based allocations to *pequeños propietarios* in a sporadic

⁵ Popular Mexican expression, literally "from the teeth, outward," describing an insincere statement.

political ballad that both seemed satisfied to dance. Smallholders, instead, mostly relied on regional markets, migratory chains, and strengthened intra-municipal exchange to develop a society that came to mark the culture, politics, and economies of Mexico and the United States in what comes to be known as a pivotal Mexican circumstance, the *arancheramiento* of Yáñez's Mexico.

In this sense, the purpose of this study is to also invite further research into the cultural and ideological dimensions of ranchero society. In particular, ranchero conservatism is generally assumed when examining their culture and ideology. My work demonstrates that ranchero land tenure and agrarian politics point to a profoundly more complicated ideological set of operative values. In my examination of the rancho, we can observe a wide-ranging gamut of practices guided by liberalism, progressivism, and modernism, not just converging or diverging scales of conservatism. In terms of the gender dimension, likewise, ranchero land tenure politics was not a system closed off for women; while a minority in the registers landownership, rancheras nonetheless participated decisively in the transformations that produced and cemented the power of ranchos. This work invites an exploration of their role in the process of forging ranchero identity, politics, and economy over time and space, particularly into the late twentieth century, when rural society experienced a significant wave of male-heavy emigration and greater economic connection to the United States. Delving more into the question of women in general, this dissertation's point of departure put forth the rural problem with violence against women as a central implication of the social transformation hoped by rural society, one that would guarantee freedom from fear for both genders. In a context of violence and concentration of power, women without male protectors fared the worst, regardless of their status as landowners. The degree to which this project gauged socioeconomic and political transformation is thus

limited by the gender question. A study on whether the eradication of caciquismo and the rise of the rancho produced peace for women in the countryside is the most poignant question proposed by this work and left unanswered.

APPENDIX A:
Population in Jalisco (Source: INEGI)

Population of Jalisco

1895	1,107,227
1900	1,553,891
1910	1,208,855
1921	1,191,957
1930	1,255,346
1940	1,418,310
1950	1,746,777
1960	2,443,261
1970	3,296,586
1980	4,371,989
1990	5,302,689

APPENDIX B:
Agricultural Production and Number of Rancho and Hacienda Properties in the Caxcana
Source: Jalisco's *Censo Agrícola, Ganadero y Ejidal*, 1950, 1960, and 1970.

Number of properties, 1950

	Total Number of Properties	Total Surface (Hectares)	Land for Agriculture	Land for Livestock	Mixed Use
Ixtlahuacán del Río	880 (Including 10 ejidos)	51,924 (8,561 ejido)	469 properties 25,244 hectares	104 properties 7,967 hectares	147 properties 10,278 hectares
Cuquío	2,465 (Including 10)	62,290 (14,588 ejido)	1,409 properties 35,477 hectares	210 properties 7,816 hectares	222 properties 12,646 hectares
Yahualica	1,580 (Including 3 ejidos)	33,797 (1,595 ejido land)	896 properties 24,949 hectares	101 properties 1,826 hectares	154 properties 4,215 hectares
Mexticacán	965 (Including 3 ejidos)	18,827 (673 ejido land)	692 properties 14,488 hectares	40 properties 1,287 hectares	59 properties 1,662 hectares

Total Livestock Production and Values in the Caxcana (Private and Social Properties), 1950

	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán	Jalisco
Ganado, aves y colmenas	\$4,391,722	\$6,785,801	\$4,881,965	\$3,025,424	\$517,542,683
Total Surface Harvested	7,281	13,043	8,115	5,952	663,315
Value of Total Surface Harvested	\$2,440,847	\$3,062,548	\$3,592,769	\$2,424,021	\$234,221,605

Total Agricultural Production, 1950

	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán
Alfalfa Verde	2 hectares 70,000 kg \$3,500		9 hectares 479,860 kg \$23,993	
Camote		7 hectares 19,850 kg \$4,169	15 hectares 79,200 kg	6 hectares 29,250 kg \$6,143
Caña de Azúcar (socas)		2 hectares 81,000 kg \$2,430		
Caña de Azúcar (plantilla)	1 hectare 32,633 kg \$979		8 hectares 800,000 kg \$24,000	
Cebada Verde (forraje)			1 hectare 5,000 kg \$200	
Cebolla		5 hectares 25,000 kg \$6,750	8 hectares 37,500 kg \$10,125	1 hectare 2,200 kg \$594
Cacahuete con Cáscara	150 hectares 163,650 kg \$98,640		5 hectares 6,600 kg \$3,960	20 hectares 19,950 kg \$11,970
Chile		7 hectares 2,500 kg \$8,275		
Chile Verde			15 hectares 29,300 kg \$16,701	
Frijol Solo	151 hectares	1,188	257 hectares	194 hectares

	42,254 kg \$29,578	hectares 334,753 kg \$234,331	109,577 \$76,704	53,364 kg \$37,355
Frijol Intercalado	961,789 \$679,694	944,324 kg \$659,282	1,748,346 \$1,216,382	968,205 kg \$677,882
Garbanzo			7 hectares 5,600 kg \$2,800	
Haba Seca			5,600 kg \$2,800	
Jícama			1 hectare 10,500 kg \$2,520	
Maíz Común Solo	1,212 hectares 993,852 kg \$298,706	2,338 hectares 1,676,280 kg \$502,884	1,189 hectares 994,417 kg \$307,907	1,182 hectares 1,103,890 kg \$331,17
Maíz Común Intercalado	5,702 hectares 3,621, 828 kg \$1,085,251	8,565 hectares 3,874,415 kg \$1,159,211	6,538 hectares 5,239,487 kg \$1,575,989	4,534 hectares 3,778,020 kg \$1,142,216
Maíz Mejorado o Híbrido	3 hectares 3,500 kg \$1,050		21 hectares 18,200 kg \$5,460	
	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán
Maíz Alcacer (para forraje)			5 hectares 100,000 kg \$5,000	
Zacate de Maíz (siembra grano)	5,003,147 kg \$207,561	6,194,273 kg \$247,490	6,390,424 kg \$256,487	5,416,589 kg \$198,750
Papa			10 hectares 47,600 kg \$19,640	
Tabaco (beneficiado)		4 hectares 2,250 kg \$4,045		1 hectares 500 kg \$870
Tomate Rojo o Jitomate	1 hectares 3,000 kg \$1,620	2 hectares 7,300 kg \$3,942	2 hectares 5,300 kg \$2,862	
Tomate Verde (con	7 hectares 11,400 kg	9 hectares 14,510 kg		

cáscara)	\$3,306	\$4,210		
Trigo de Riego (invierno y verano)	15 hectares 10,500 kg \$5,040	6 hectares 4,000 kg \$1,920	9 hectares 8,000 kg \$3,840	
Trigo de Jugo		881 hectares 416,745 kg \$198,470		
Paja de Cebada y Trigo	12,000 kg \$480	437,290 kg \$17,492	7,000 kg \$280	
Remolacha Forrajera		1 hectare 6,000 kg \$240		
Legumbres	1 hectare \$720	6 hectares \$2,472	\$1,205	
Otros Cultivos (alpiste, chayote, etc)	36 hectares \$32,432	1 hectare \$298	15 hectares \$17,282	14 hectares \$16,234
Aguacate		5 plants 225 kg \$234		
Ciruelo del País	2 hectares 422 plants 8,450 kg \$2,958			
Chirimoyo y Anona		8 plants 240 kg \$29		
Durazno		58 plants 2,700kg \$2,106	1 hectare 200 plants 5,000 kg \$3,900	
Guayabo		120 plants 4,900 kg \$1,225		
	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán
Mango	3 hectares 174 plants 9,600 kg \$3,072			
Naranja		1 hectare 25 plantas 2,500 kg	9 hectares 1,025 plants 107,500 kg	

		\$675	\$29,025	
Nuez (encarcelada)		1 hectare 45 plants 1,575 kg \$1,575		
Otros (guanábanas, papaya, etc)	1 hectare \$405		10 hectares \$17,633	

Land Productivity in the Caxcana, 1960s:

Municipalit y	Total Surface (Hectares)	Productiv e Land (Hectares)	Number of Propertie s (Includin g Ejidos)	Ejido s	Surface Harveste d (Hectares)	Harveste d Under Irrigatio n (Hectares)	Value (Pesos)
Ixtlahuacán del Río	52,974	11,456	730	10	5,350	11	\$4,437
Cuquío	69,582	15,881	1,421	11	11,074	49	\$8,080
Yahualica	32,077	13,367	1,157	3	8,836	327	\$6,834
Mexticacán	16,959	5,952	739	3	2,840	102	\$2,024
Total	171,592	46,656	4,047	27	28,100	489	\$21,375
Jalisco	5,729,780	1,321,859	63,108	1,134	690,456	58,288	\$595,752

Source: IV Censos Agrícola, Ganadero y Ejidal. 1960.

Production in the Caxcana, 1960:

	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán
Alfalfa	0	0	11 hectares 371 tons \$32,000	3 hectares 98 tons \$9,000
Caña de Azucar	0	11 tons \$1,000 pesos	2 hectares 101 tons \$5,000	0
Frijol	283 hectares 929 tons \$1,200,000	89 hectares 1,834 tons \$2,384,000	207 hectares 1,047 tons \$1,364,000	16 hectares 442 tons \$589,000
Garbanzo	0	0	0	0
Maiz	4,654 hectares 3,531 tons \$2,508,000	10,135 hectares 5,945 tons \$4,280,000	8,441 hectares 5,991 tons \$4,449,000	2,796 hectares 1,660 tons \$1,215
Trigo	11 hectares	790 hectares	12 hectares	0

	11 tons \$10,000	756 tons \$697,000	11 tons \$10,000	
Aguacate	0	0	0 hectares 2 tons \$2,000	0
Mango	5 hectares 79 tons \$31,000	0	0	0
Naranja	1 hectare 9 tons \$8,000	0	0	0
Palma	0	0	0	0
Platano	0	0	3 hectares	0
Tequila	0	0	0	0
Other	14 hectares \$33,000	0	20 hectares \$72,000	5 hectares \$37,000

Total Livestock Production and Values in the Caxcana (Private and Social Properties), 1960

	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán	Jalisco
Total					
Vacuno	19,118 \$18,352,000	13,082 \$11,844,000	11,860 \$12,656,000	5,794 \$5,634	1,274,020 \$1,307,241,000
Lanar	296 \$46,000	699 \$75,000	406 \$69,000	103 \$14,000	51,327 \$8,528,000
Porcino	3,462 \$871,000	3,102 \$812,00	5,050 \$1,457	1,205 \$316,000	518,024 \$165,171,000
Caballar	2,771 \$2,724,000	1,642 \$1,893,000	412 \$351,000	375 \$370,000	221,280 \$235,948,000
Mular	254 \$220,000	171 \$149,000	70 \$48,000	101 \$81,000	39,901 \$35,698,000
Asnal	788 \$91,000	686 \$59,000	2,007 \$201,000	1,085 \$99,000	134,743 \$13,184
Caprino	1,092 \$310,000	311 \$75,000	695 \$214,000	371 \$95,000	220,324 \$61,644,000
Animales de Trabajo	3,582 \$2,584,000	3,598 \$2,312,000	1,881 \$1,096,000	1,620 \$1,423,000	292,748 \$198,458,000
Aves	35,973 \$442,000	37,679 \$441,000	50,212 \$634,000	16,070 \$188,000	3,838,878 \$46,959
Colmenas (Enjambres)	4,244 \$331,000	632 \$25,000	1,019 \$41,000	540 \$18,000	135,940 (cajones) \$7,791,000

Livestock Production in the Caxcana Ejidos, 1960

	Ixtlahuacán del Río	Cuquío	Yahualica	Mexticacán	Jalisco
Total	\$3,080,000	\$2,291,000	\$418,000	\$75,000	\$431,000,000
Vacuno	2,012 \$2,027,00	1,644 \$1,297,000	339 \$294,000	49 \$42,000	240,999 \$242,876,000
Lanar	11 \$1,000	4 \$0	0 0	0 0	4,810 \$617,000
Porcino	773 \$187,000	639 \$145,000	120 \$24,000	63 \$12,000	126,781 \$35,703
Caballar	398 \$330,000	388 \$360,000	41 \$34,000	8 \$6,000	75,440 \$62,338,000
Mular	60 \$46,000	42 \$33,000	6 \$5,000	0 0	9,137 \$7,950,000
Asnal	187 \$19,000	236 \$21,000	75 \$5,000	34 \$3,000	36,018 \$3,343,000
Caprino	213 \$47,000	180 \$36,000	10 \$3,000	1 \$0	83,211 \$18,991,000
Animales de Trabajo	582 \$423,000	538 \$399,000	89 \$73,000	17 \$12,000	93,277 \$59,821,000
Aves	11,004 \$122,000	9,977 \$107,000	599 \$8,000	2,873 \$34,000	954,950 \$10,508,000
Colmenas (Enjambres)	423 \$11,000	145 \$10,000	1 \$0	0 0	33,434 \$1,483

1970s

Production in the Caxcana, 1970:

Municipality	Total Surface (Hectares)	Productive Land (Hectares)	Number of Properties (Including Ejidos)	Ejidos	Surface Harvested (Hectares)	Harvested Under Irrigation (Hectares)
Ixtlahuacán del Río	45,161.8	15,253.9	750 (651 de labor)	11 10,921.4 ha	15,253.9	200
Cuquío	49,696.4	13,497.8	858 (688 de labor)	11 15,983 ha	13,497.8	492.7
Yahualica	51,228.9	14,132.4	1,084 (971 de labor)	4 1,784	14,132.4	297.9
Mexticacán	24,470.2	6,822.9	654 (531 de labor)	3 383 ha	6,822.9	137.8
Total						
Jalisco	6,099,703.9	1,442,475.2	52,302	1,259	1,442,475.2	118,384.3

			(38,247 de labor)	2,793,369 ha		
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1970

Number of Smallholdings and Total Hectares in the Caxcana, 1970

	5.1 to 50 ha	50.1 to 100 ha	100.1 to 200 ha	200.1 to 500 ha	500.1 to 1000 ha	Minifundios (5 ha or less
Ixtlahuacán del Río	364 units 6,247.4 ha	52 3,699.6	49 6,941.7	24 7,101.3	11 7,936.7	178 548.4
Cuquío	367 7,164.6	73 5,254.7	50 7,444.3	34 10,095.6	4 3,112.0	244 667
Yahualica	509 10,967.7	183 14,760	121 16,251.9	23 7,046	2 1,620	218 583.3
Mexticacán	321 5,558.9	83 6,612.6	55 8,050.2	13 3,756.0	0 0	182 492.5
Jalisco	21,616 443,577.3	5,371 396,700.2	3,907 565,295.6	2,643 837,339	969 687,502.6	10,129 25,248.2

Number of Great Landholdings and Total Hectares in the Caxcana, 1970

	1000 to 5,000 hectares	5,000 and more hectares
Ixtlahuacán del Río	8 units 12,686.7 ha	0 0
Cuquío	9 15,958.1	0 0
Yahualica	0 0	0 0
Mexticacán	0 0	0 0
Jalisco	836 698,380.5	105 445,660.5

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