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Author(s): Sidney W. Mintz

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## THE FOLK-URBAN CONTINUUM AND THE RURAL PROLETARIAN COMMUNITY<sup>1</sup>

SIDNEY W. MINTZ

### ABSTRACT

The folk-urban construct may not suffice to deal with certain community types, such as that associated with the modern plantation. Redfield's studies in Yucatan ignored the plantation communities, although henequen plantations are fundamental to Yucatan's place in the world economy. Studies of Puerto Rican sugar-cane production suggest that communities of this kind are neither "folk" nor "urban" but rather distinctive forms of sociocultural reorganization. The formulation of a "plantation type" would make possible predictions about the sociocultural effects of a particular kind of agricultural organization. The type could be constructed inductively and tested in field situations. Typologies ought not be discarded but should be based on empirical observation and refined as necessary.

It is twenty-two years since the publication of Robert Redfield's first work dealing with the "folk society."<sup>2</sup> Since that time Redfield has elaborated the concept considerably,<sup>3</sup> his students have used it as a theoretical jumping-off place in their research,<sup>4</sup> and a body of articles and studies, critical of the concept, has accumulated.<sup>5</sup>

The folk-urban concept is by now so well known that there is little need to review its premises here other than most briefly. Folk society and urban society are conceived of as polarities at opposite ends of a continuum. Were these polarities viewed as sepa-

rated in time, the continuum would represent the course of history. But, since they are ideal types, actual history is not viewed as an essential of the construct.

Redfield states that it was his aim

to seek through this method of comparison of differently affected communities some general knowledge as to the nature of society and of its changes. . . . [The] conclusions are generalizations on many particular facts. The assertions are "on the whole" true. To reach these conclusions it is not necessary to report the history of any one of the communities: they may be compared as if they all existed at the same moment of time.<sup>6</sup>

As Miner and Foster have recently pointed out,<sup>7</sup> the folk society and the urban society have a very abstract relationship to social reality, since each is a synthetic compound

<sup>1</sup> The writer is indebted to John V. Murra, Julian H. Steward, Elman R. Service, and Eric R. Wolf for much of the thinking and discussion which led to this article. The writer alone is responsible for this particular formulation.

<sup>2</sup> R. Redfield, *Tepoztlán* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930).

<sup>3</sup> R. Redfield, "The Folk Society and Culture," in *Eleven Twenty-six*, ed. L. Wirth (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940); "Culture Changes in Yucatan," *American Anthropologist*, XXXVI, No. 1 (1934), 57-59; *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941); "The Folk Society," *American Journal of Sociology*, LII (January, 1947), 292-308; *A Village That Chose Progress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950).

<sup>4</sup> E. Spicer, *Pascua: A Yaqui Village in Arizona* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940); H. Miner, *St. Denis: A French-Canadian Parish* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939); J. de la Fuente, *Yatalag: Una villa Zapoteca Serrana* (Mexico: Museo Nacional de Antropología, 1949); etc.

<sup>5</sup> N. Gross, "Cultural Variables in Rural Communities," *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (March, 1948), 348-50; M. Herskovits, *Man and His Works* (New York: Knopf, 1947), pp. 604-7; O. Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1951), pp. 432-40; J. Steward, *Area Research: Concepts and Methods* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1950), pp. 111 and 113; S. Tax, "World View and Social Relations in Guatemala," *American Anthropologist*, XLIII, No. 1 (1941), 22-42; H. Miner, "The Folk-Urban Continuum," *American Sociological Review*, XVII, No. 5 (October, 1952), 529-37; G. Foster, "What Is Folk Culture?" *American Anthropologist*, LV, No. 1 (1953), 159-73.

<sup>6</sup> *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, p. 342.

<sup>7</sup> "The Folk-Urban Continuum," *op. cit.*, p. 529; "What Is Folk Culture?" *op. cit.*, pp. 160-62.

of characteristics lifted out of real social situations. Redfield does not maintain that either the ideal folk or the ideal urban society can actually be found anywhere in the world. His conception of ideal type is one in which the type is not a reduction of the particular characteristics of many societies to those features which they share in common and which together might make for a necessary and sufficient description of the type wherever it is found; rather, it consists of an enumeration of as many characteristics as can be abstracted from any number of societies, preconceived to be folklike, put together to form the type.

The folk society is marked by isolation; a high degree of genetic and cultural homogeneity; slow culture change; preliteracy; small numbers; minimal division of labor; simple technology (with every individual a primary producer), great functional coherence (so that every act tends to be related to every other, and the culture shows an almost organic quality in the interdependence of its materials and the behavior of those who live by it); social organization based on blood and fictive kinship; behavior which is traditional and uncritical; a tendency to view the inanimate and nonhuman world personally; the viewing of traditional objects and acts as sacred; the pervasive importance of magic and religion and, thus, resulting ritual behavior in all areas of life; and the absence of economic motives which fail to fit in with, and conform to, all other aspects of life.<sup>8</sup>

Miner has pointed out that Redfield defines urban society primarily as the absence or opposite of these characteristics.<sup>9</sup> Redfield describes three principal processes of change from folk to urban: secularization, individualization, and disorganization. To what degree these processes are interrelated has not been made clear, although Redfield has welcomed the work of those who have sought to show in various cases that change of one kind may take place without change

of another. Tax, for instance, has described a folklike social situation for Guatemala, where individualization and commercialism are well advanced.<sup>10</sup> Spicer has studied what he and Redfield regard as a folklike society existing on the very margins of an urban center, and features of both the folk and urban types are present in curious juxtaposition.<sup>11</sup>

Criticism of the folk-urban construct has come from many social theorists. Hershkovits, in his critical distinction between form and process,<sup>12</sup> attacks Redfield's selection of a series of unit characteristics which may or may not travel together and which fail to fit some specific cultural situations.

The most detailed criticism of the folk-urban construct has come from Lewis, who restudied Tepoztlan some twenty years after Redfield's original work there.<sup>13</sup> Although Lewis' six points of criticism<sup>14</sup> are clear and useful, his most important critical contribution in the present writer's opinion, comes in his over-all emphasis on the value of careful historical research in the study of culture change. Redfield has never questioned the value of such research but has sought in his analysis to get at the nature of social change without reference to historical particulars.

It is important to note that few of Redfield's critics have been willing to accept his primary emphasis on culture types as an entrée to the study of culture change and to seek to sharpen this methodological tool by a refinement of the typological system itself. Rather, the emphasis seems to have been to discard typological systems in general, along with the particular folk-urban formulation. The purpose of the present article is to suggest that typological characterizations can prove useful in social science theory and methodology, even though the type to be described suggests the limitations of the

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-42.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 604-7.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 432-40.

<sup>8</sup> Redfield, "The Folk Society," *op. cit.*, pp. 292-308.

<sup>9</sup> "The Folk-Urban Continuum," *op. cit.*, pp. 529-37.

folk-urban continuum. The delineation of this type, the modern plantation, may prove of some interest, since the most impressive application of the folk-urban construct, that of the study of four Yucatecan communities,<sup>15</sup> did not include a study of a henequen plantation, even though henequen production is the backbone of the Yucatecan economy, according to Redfield.<sup>16</sup> The only comment regarding the possible choice of one of these plantation communities is made in a footnote to chapter i of *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* where Redfield notes that "the difference between a community of hacienda employees and a community of independent farmers . . . would be of importance in any study planned with immediate reference to the practical social and economic problems of Yucatan."<sup>17</sup>

The present writer feels that a study of a community of plantation<sup>18</sup> employees might have had considerable theoretical value, quite apart from practical social and economic problems. This is not merely a question of pick-and-choose in community studies. The plantation represents a special kind of industrial organization. Many of the features of life generally associated with "urban," "Western," or "modern" society, such as a wage-labor pattern, standardized wage rates, and industrialization, are introduced through plantation organization and seem to produce particular sociocultural effects. Yet the people are not affected in terms of an "urban" or "Western" complex but rather in terms of the impact of specific innovations. The plantation system may

<sup>15</sup> Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*; R. Redfield and A. Villa R., *Chan Kom: A Maya Village* (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1934); A. Villa R., *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo* (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1945).

<sup>16</sup> The writer is indebted to John V. Murra for this singular insight.

<sup>17</sup> *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, p. 370.

<sup>18</sup> I prefer the term "plantation" to "hacienda" in this connection. According to a typological scheme for these various forms of large landholding organizations now being developed, the Yucatecan henequen-growing farm organizations are plantations and not haciendas.

thus bring about a very distinctive social and cultural reorganization. The henequen plantation brought something quite new to Yucatan, something which conceivably might not fit at all on the folk-urban continuum. Merida, "the one real city of Yucatan,"<sup>19</sup> may indeed be "dominant . . . in the economic, political, and social life of Yucatan,"<sup>20</sup> but "henequen . . . is the money crop of Yucatan; . . . henequen determines the role of Yucatan in the world economy. . . . The important change in the economic life of Yucatan since the Conquest occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, when henequen became a commercially important crop."<sup>21</sup>

For the present argument a study of a henequen plantation might have proved of particular theoretical value, because Yucatecan plantations have always been manned by Yucatecans. If there are distinctive social and cultural features which flow from the reorganization of life which this writer feels the plantation system entails, then the ethnic continuity of the people subject to this change is very important. Frequently, plantation development has brought about the importation of labor with a culture quite distinct from that of the local inhabitants. In such cases the differing character of social life and culture might be explained by reference either to the effects of the system itself or to the antecedent culture of the migrants. In the case of Yucatan, the relatively pure ethnic continuity of the population involved in plantation development minimizes the operation of differing ethnic elements as factors in social and cultural change. The plantation system itself could be analyzed as the source of change, the differences in culture between *milperos* and plantation employees as the results of the imposition of the plantation system. But, unfortunately, no anthropological study of a henequen-producing plantation community can be found in the literature.

There may be some value in discussing

<sup>19</sup> *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7, *passim*.

modern plantation life in another area. The plantation is a distinctive form of agricultural organization and may, accordingly, exhibit distinctive social characteristics. Whether or not this turns out to be the case will depend on the rigor with which the variation in plantation types is assessed and the care with which plantations in different geographical areas, having different histories, growing different crops, and manned by different personnel are studied. Material from only a single community is summarized here, and the development of a typological abstraction will consequently be subject to considerable refinement as more comparative work is done.<sup>22</sup>

Since the seventeenth century the plantation has been the dominant method of European agricultural development in tropical regions. In the earlier periods there was little mechanical equipment, even less scientific cultivation, and labour represented a capital investment in the form of slaves, while land was usually a free gift. The present situation is exactly the opposite in almost every respect. Land is obtained by rent or purchase—although the price is in some places low—labour is paid money wages, methods of increasing the fertility of the soil have greatly improved, and in every industry capital is extensively employed. The form of cultivation that may legitimately be called plantation production now represents a permanent investment and a long-range interest in a defined area of land.<sup>23</sup>

Such a characterization, for Latin America, appears to apply particularly to sugar and banana crops, only to a lesser extent to coffee and henequen. One measure of the

<sup>22</sup> Ethnographic studies of plantations, in this case producing sugar cane, were carried out in Puerto Rico by the writer and Dr. E. Padilla Seda in 1948-49, under the direction of Julian Steward and John Murra. To the writer's knowledge, these were the first studies of this kind. They will be published in a work under Steward's editorship during 1953. Since their completion, more studies of the same kind have been initiated. Cf. C. Wagley, "A Typology of Latin-America Subcultures: A Research Hypotheses" (manuscript).

<sup>23</sup> I. Greaves, *Modern Production among Backward Peoples* (London: Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1935), p. 170.

plantation type is the degree to which production is "streamlined." Not only are large holdings a feature, but the control of land, labor, and machinery is centralized, and a production discipline similar to that of a large factory is maintained. Heavy capitalization for fertilizer, pesticide, irrigation, farm machinery, transport, export facilities, and land is customary. A corporation, often foreign, operates the enterprise. Most subsistence activity is supplanted usually by the production of a single cash crop, which is either exported or at least sold commercially throughout the national economy.<sup>24</sup> A credit and stores system may be present which provides commodities for the laborers but which also serves to tie them to the enterprise. Production is rationalized in every possible manner. Modern cost-accounting governs operation costs, and the work system is standardized at the most efficient level. Investment is initially heavy, not only because modern agricultural methods and world competition require it, but also because the system is no "landkiller," as the slave plantation was, and looks to permanency as an objective.

The imposition of the sugar plantation system on the south coast of Puerto Rico affected the emergence of large numbers of rural proletarian communities.<sup>25</sup> In these communities the vast majority of people is landless, propertyless (in the sense of *productive* property), wage-earning, store-buying (the stores being a chain owned by the corporation, with few competitors), corporately employed, and standing in like relationship to the main source of employment. These rural proletarian communities might also be considered class isolates, in the sense that economic alternatives to wage labor in the sugar-cane industry, other than via migration to the United States main-

<sup>24</sup> International Labour Organisation, Committee on Work on Plantations, *Basic Problems of Plantation Labour* (Geneva: I.L.O., 1950), pp. 5-10.

<sup>25</sup> S. Mintz, "Canamelar, the Contemporary Culture of a Rural Puerto Rican Proletariat" (unpublished dissertation, Columbia University, 1951).

land, are very scarce. The working people not only stand in like relationship to the productive apparatus but are also interacting in reciprocal social relationships with each other and subordinate social relationships to members of higher classes (such as the managers). The rural proletarian community associated with the plantation emerges as isolated in a very different way from that of the folk society. In the later case the isolation is primarily geographic, and the society can be discussed almost completely in terms of itself. In the former case the isolation is socio-economic. The rural proletarians form a part society, and they are members of a class which can be analyzed adequately only with reference to other classes in the total society, while having minimal opportunities to change their class position in the local community.

Unlike the ideal folk society, which is ethnically homogeneous, the rural proletarian community may be ethnically heterogeneous. In Puerto Rican sugar-cane-growing communities of the type described here, the antecedents are Spanish, West African, and Arawak. The material culture of Puerto Rican rural proletarians contains elements of all these ancestral cultures. But the commonality of class identity, stabilized over a fifty-year period, and built upon a history of pre-occupation sugar haciendas in the region, makes for a kind of cultural homogeneity. House types are limited in variety and reveal many common features. Food preferences are clear cut and strikingly uniform. Spanish is spoken, with some Arawak and African terms added; it is a kind of Spanish quite different from that spoken by middle-class merchants or university professors. Similarities in life-ways among these rural working people extend to child-training practices,<sup>26</sup> ritual kinship practices (not merely the Catholic system of *compadrazgo* but the particular ways in which this system is employed and standardized),<sup>27</sup> political attitudes, attitudes toward the land, atti-

tudes toward the position of women, similarities in dress, and other expressions of taste, religion, and so on.<sup>28</sup> Needless to say, these similarities do not hold for every single rural proletarian in a given community, but they are manifestations of unmistakable over-all likenesses. In short, while ethnic homogeneity and geographic isolation are lacking, a very real kind of cultural homogeneity, partly class determined, prevails.

The rural proletarian community is small, and daily life has much of a primary-group character. Admittedly, it is vastly different from that of a migratory hunting band or a community like Tusik in Quintana Roo.<sup>29</sup> Geographical mobility, especially migration to mainland United States, militates against the inner coherence of the rural proletarian community. People frequently leave permanently or for long periods. Newcomers enter into the community, usually in search of work. Thus the stability of personnel in such a community is not high, as in a settled small-farm area. At the same time the idea that geographical mobility entirely destroys community coherence may be overemphasized. It would appear that the stability provided by *common knowledge of differing roles* may to some extent take the place of the stability which depends on having exactly the same personnel in the same community for considerable lengths of time. Bonds of kinship and of ritual kinship unite relatively large numbers of members of the same class. Broadly similar features of life underlie the likeness of behavior of class members. Class patterns of learning and behaving may reduce the cultural stresses caused by high geographical mobility. Similar conditions of life which produce similarities of culture over large areas may make possible inter-

<sup>27</sup> S. Mintz and E. Wolf, "An Analysis of Ritual Co-parenthood (*Compadrazgo*)," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, VI, No. 4 (winter, 1950), 341-68.

<sup>28</sup> Mintz, "Canamelar, the Contemporary Culture of a Rural Puerto Rican Proletariat," *op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. A. Villa R., *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo*. This village was the folk community "type" in the synchronic series of four studies directed by Redfield in Yucatan.

<sup>26</sup> K. Wolf, "Growing Up and Its Price in Three Puerto Rican Subcultures," *Psychiatry*, XV, No. 4 (November, 1952), 401-34.

changeability of personnel while maintaining over-all cultural uniformity. Redfield himself has noted that a folklike society may change its personnel with considerable rapidity and yet retain a high measure of consistency. In his introduction to Spicer's study of a landless wage-earning community of Yaqui Indians near Tucson, Arizona, he writes:

One wonders if the interesting . . . system . . . by which relations among members of the society are established and regulated fully developed only after settlement in Arizona. The hypothesis may be entertained that the extension of the sponsor system to include all the community may have been a response to a need for solidarity in a new and alien world. . . . It strikes at least this reader that the present form of social organization is well adapted to the situation in which the Yaqui now find themselves—in that, while security and status are provided for everyone, the kinship relations are, as Dr. Spicer puts it, "generalized," so as to make it possible for individuals to drop out and the composition of groups frequently to change, as must be the case where men leave to work in other fields or on other outside jobs. The looseness of the household groups is another corresponding feature. Pascua social structure preserves the solidarity of the whole society while it is so flexible as to allow for frequent changes in its personnel.<sup>30</sup>

In essence, what Redfield has noted here is a situation where common knowledge and acceptance of roles seem to have compensated partly for the loss of homogeneity of personnel. The persistence of folklike features in Pascua life is attributed to the folk society background of the people, and their retention of these features is remarked upon by Spicer and Redfield. The homogeneity of these landless, wage-earning Yaqui Indians is attributed to a common cultural heritage. But the people of Pascua have not only an acquired cultural homogeneity but economic homogeneity as well, effected by their common class status. Spicer notes that in Pascua relationships with outsiders are mainly employee-employer, wage-earning ones. Yet the exchange of goods or services for money

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. ix.

among Yaquis is rare, surpluses are small, and there is little or no capital accumulation within the village.<sup>31</sup>

Rural proletarian communities in Puerto Rico exhibit many features similar to those found in Pascua. Money is pervasive, but most relationships between villagers are noncash; credit is common, and interest on money loaned by one rural proletarian to another is unheard of. Blood and ritual kin ties presuppose certain economic obligations, but these are not fixed and do not involve interest, and, if a relationship is abused by taking financial advantage of kinfolk, the customary obligations of the ties may be suspended or discarded. In the case of Puerto Rican rural proletarian communities, these patterns cannot be explained entirely by reference to a common cultural heritage but may be due in part to a common class identity.

In the rural proletarian community (as in Pascua), no man is a primary producer. Every man works for wages and buys necessary commodities at retail stores, supplementing his cash income with certain minor subsidiary economic activities, such as fishing, raising a pig or chickens, selling tickets on the illegal lottery, etc. Yet, while no man is a primary producer, to a surprising extent every man does as every other, every man thinks as every other. Again, the curious similarity of the ideal folk society to the rural proletarian community is only analogous. The first case rests on treating the whole society *in vacuo*; the second has meaning only in so far as the community is seen as a mere reservoir of manpower. The rural proletarian community tends to be a class isolate, its existence predicated on the existence of other classes who own the instruments of production, provide the work opportunities, pay the wages, and sell the commodities to be bought.

The analogy of a rural proletarian community with the ideal folk society might be carried even further. Thus, for instance, some areas of life are handled in traditional,

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36-39.

spontaneous, and uncritical ways. The system of ritual kinship is a sacred one, used primarily to bind together contemporaries who are of the same socioeconomic group and who live in the same community. This fictive kinship system is employed to reduce economic competition and to strengthen bonds of co-operation and, in fact, appears to reinforce class identity and to hamper both geographic and socioeconomic mobility.<sup>32</sup>

There is, however, another side to the picture of the rural proletarian community, evidenced by the ways in which these communities have come to resemble the urban pole of the folk-urban continuum. The same forces which made of its people a class isolate also revamped and reorganized its way of life. The plantation exists to satisfy needs outside the local milieu—the national or international market. In the local setting it requires for its successful operation a large working-class population; a monopoly over the land; a standard medium of exchange (money); standardized rates of pay; a purely impersonal set of relationships between employed managers and employed workers; means of maintaining control and discipline over the labor force (in some cases obtained via the extension of credit to workers for purchases in corporation retail stores); and the efficient regulation of work procedures, usually involving the reduction of tasks to their simplest essentials, any job being easily learned, and any laborer therefore easily replaced. In short, the successful plantation requires all those features of economic operation which have come to be called rationalized, or “high capitalistic,” as Sombart puts it.<sup>33</sup>

The same forces which have molded the rural proletarian community into an unexpected analogue with the ideal folk society have also been those which have made it more “urban.” Independent freehold primary production has been replaced uniform-

ly by plantation estates; exchange labor, tenancy, and share-cropping have been replaced by cash labor; cash is used exclusively to buy essential commodities; personal relationships between employer and employed (or between owner and tenant) have been supplanted by purely impersonal relationships, based on the work done, and with a standard payment for that work; home manufacture has practically disappeared; consumption commodities have been standardized; and outside agencies of control and service—medical, political, police, religious, military, and educational—have developed. As a result, the rural proletarian community associated with the modern plantation system exhibits a character which is superficially folklike in some ways and yet might be labeled “urban” in others. But actually such communities are neither folk nor urban, nor are they syntheses of these classifications. They are, rather, radically new reorganizations of culture and society, forming a distinctive type not amenable to the folk-urban construction. It is for these reasons that a study of a henequen plantation in Yucatan might have upset, or at least greatly modified, the sequence from the “folk society” of Tusik to the “metropolis” of Merida and back again. To a large degree, it would seem that Merida’s very existence hinges on the continued success of the henequen plantations. The forces for change seem to originate not in the metropolis but in the world outside, and Merida is important in its intermediary relationships with the key economic area where henequen is produced.

The objective of this article is not to criticize the folk-urban construct *in vacuo* or, with Hershkovits, to conclude that “classification must not be accorded too prominent a place in scientific study.”<sup>34</sup> Classification strikes this writer as most necessary in studies of culture change. But the classification ought to be based on empirical research, with the types so abstracted that they may be easily tested, improved, or discarded. It is conceivable that the rural proletarian com-

<sup>32</sup> Mintz, “Canamelar,” *op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> W. Sombart, *A New Social Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937), pp. 11 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 607.

munity described in association with the plantation type in the present article may have its counterpart in many other plantation areas. The underlying assumption here is that a particular kind of economic agricultural organization, the plantation, may produce predictable changes in culture and in social organizations. If similar sociocultural features seem to be correlated with plantation organizations in different world areas, it may be possible to posit regular relationships between the plantation "type" and the sociocultural forms which appear to accompany it or to be derived from it. The Puerto Rican community described above has been typologically characterized elsewhere by the writer.<sup>35</sup> It will differ somewhat from a type characterization for the henequen plantations of Yucatan, which lack the high capital outlay, magnitude, industrial development, etc., of one of the most advanced sugar-cane production and processing systems in the world. To this degree, the way of life on henequen plantations in Yucatan might not turn out to be so fully at variance with the folk-urban construct as the Puerto Rican analogy would lead us to believe. Yet a large number of comparative studies of plantations, treated with sufficient historical depth, might provide both a fuller type characterization and an opportunity to check aspects of culture change in a number of relatively like cases. What is proposed here is that both form *and* process be studied via typological constructs based on specific field studies, so that like and unlike features may be assessed. The construction of a plantation typology would

hinge on the enumeration of those features of the plantation which are, in each case, essential to the successful operation of the system and on the contemporary culture of the people who must live by the standards which the plantation imposes on local life. Where a feature of operation appears to be essential in one case, and not in another (e.g., standardized wages), a special explanation would be necessary (or perhaps the "essential" feature will turn out, in fact, to be not essential after all). The resulting type formulation would be considered in terms of its sociocultural effects on the local communities, and some cause-and-effect relationships between the type and the local cultures might be posited. The type could then be tested in other areas where the communities were not yet investigated but where the plantation system had all the essential features of the type delineated. Such research would aim at determining whether the posited correlations or causal hypotheses actually stood up; that is, whether the typology really provided any predictive power for the observer.

The present formulation deals with changes of a certain kind, hinging on the imposition of a fairly standardized set of features (such as large-scale production, "assembly-line" industrial organization, wage-earning, standardized norms and rates, etc.) on local cultures, and the results of such an imposition. It ought not to carry the implication that change proceeds fixedly or regularly along a single continuum or that other kinds of change may necessarily be analyzed by its use.

<sup>35</sup> Mintz, "Canamelar," *op. cit.*