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Robert Fletcher Manlove

Dr. Rico Medina was an important citizen of the city of Ozamiz. He was the son of a family whose roots extended back to Spanish times, whose male members had held the reins of power in the city government, and whose ownership of a teaching hospital and coconut lands determined the economic destiny of many people. He held a medical degree but practiced little medicine, his time being devoted to the economic pursuits of his family. He granted me an interview one morning as he practiced his golf swing on a piece of land that he had dedicated to be a new golf course. One of the men who worked for his family ran around chasing the golf balls as he drove one after the other down the new fairway.

I told him that I was writing about social inequality in the Philippines and he reacted with condescension. Social and economic differences between families, he told me, were not only a fact of life but the natural order of a society. He had recently visited the United States and he wanted to tell me that, although he had enjoyed his visit, he was glad to be back in the Philippines. In the United States, he said, there was a lack of respect and deference for upper class people. There were few housemaids or helpers or cooks and, if you want to go somewhere, you have to drive yourself or go on a public bus. But the height of indignities came on the golf course. "Imagine," he said, "I had to carry my own golf clubs!"

Dr. Medina and the other wealthy leaders of Ozamiz believe that the people living there know their places and that the social system runs well because of this. Those from "good" families control business and politics and maintain social order for everyone. Inequality is justified on the basis of fair rewards for those who make the system work. It is logical to them that the inequality is perpetuated into succeeding genera-

tions because those receiving higher rewards are better able to educate their children.

In this article, I want to take aim at this rationalization by closely examining the social inequality in one city which I believe is representative of urban Philippines. I will begin by reviewing what others have said about Philippine inequity and I will then present the results of my own fieldwork in Ozamiz, explicating the nature and operation of social classes there.

Past Perceptions of Social Inequality in the Philippines

There are several types of social inequality in the Philippines. There is inequality based upon ethnicity, gender, land ownership, linguistic ability and religious affiliation. However, by far the most blatant, pervasive and important type of inequality is that described as class stratification. Class stratification enters into all interpersonal relations, economic arrangements and political leadership. The other types of social inequality can, in fact, be seen either as extensions of the class system to particular settings (e.g., the church or the classroom) or as the class system in which one dimension (e.g., land ownership or ethnic identity) is emphasized. Class stratification is the framework in which all of the other inequality happens.

With this in mind, it is somewhat surprising that the class stratification in the Philippines is so poorly understood. Different observers have said that there are widely divergent numbers of classes with different compositions and sizes. In some cases, if the name of the country were not mentioned, one would wonder if they were talking about the same society.

One observer, Frank Lynch, S.J., later head of the prestigious Institute of Philippine Culture at the Ateneo de Manila, stated in 1959 that, as far as he could determine, there were *no* social classes in the town that he studied. He had interviewed the town's citizens extensively and had found, first, that the people could not agree upon definitional characteristics of classes and, second, that they could not agree about the placement of their neighbors in a postulated upper-middle-lower class hierarchy. Some would say family X was in the middle class and others would say that family X belonged to the lower class. Lynch stated that the town's citizens understood the concept of social class and could be observed altering their social behavior to reflect status differences between families. However, in the absence of unequivocal evidence, he was forced to conclude that classes were, at best, "latent" (1959, 130).

All other observers have concluded that there *are* social classes but have differed remarkably on the number, composition and size. Shortly after the sixteenth century Spanish conquest of the islands, Miguel de Loarca (1582) and Juan de Plasencia (1589) described the pre-Hispanic Philippine society as a mechanism for more effectively governing them. Plasencia stated that the Tagalog society was composed of four *estates* which he identified as the *datu stratum* (*principales* or *maginoo*), the warrior-nobles (*maharlika*), the commoners (*timawa*) and the "slaves" (*alipin*). The slaves, in particular, were subdivided into two different strata, namely serfs (*namamahay*), who could purchase their freedom, and true slaves (*gigilid*), who could be sold but could also be granted their freedom. The *datu stratum* controlled access to land and in that regard the strata could properly be identified as estates. However, the stratification did not depend entirely upon a legal definition of land ownership and, consequently, the word *class* would have been more appropriate. As in all class situations, families could and infrequently did change their inherited status.

Loarca described Visayan society in roughly the same way, stating that there were four strata, but, as Scott points out (1982, 125), there are some important differences between the Visayans and the Tagalogs. Among the Tagalogs, stratification was more land-based. The Visayans explained their strata with caste mythology, saying that different strata descended from different members of the same family and, hence, inter-marriage would be incestuous. Under the *datu stratum*, the Visayans placed the *tumao*, who were related to the *datu* group; the *timawa*, who were illegitimate offspring of the *datu*s; and the *oripun*, a complex lower group that included serfs and slaves. The Visayan society reduced to two classes if one considers that the *oripun* worked the land while the others did not.

Several questions remained unresolved by these two early observers but it seems clear that stratification preceded the Spanish conquest and was not a product of colonization. Early in the twentieth century, Kroeber (1928, 147) offered a three-strata description of the Philippines in which there were wealthy rulers, commoners and the poor. He equated the commoners with a "middle class" but stated that the poor were, in fact, "slaves." The condition of slavery, i.e., being owned, was inherited but there were two kinds of slaves depending upon whether an individual could purchase his or her own freedom or not. Thus, he suggested that the Philippine society was composed of landowners, freemen and those owned by the landowners.

After the Second World War, there was a considerable increase in interest in the nature of Philippine society by both Filipinos and non-Filipinos. One of the first of the postwar commentators to recognize and accurately assess the complexities of the stratification was Gerald Berreman.¹ In a brief monograph, he stated that Philippine society was characterized by "two widely separated classes *with intergrades*" (1956, 9-10, emphasis added) and by a middle class growing in the hiatus between them. He identified the upper class as landholding leaders ("caciques" or "ilustrados"), the middle class as small landowners, professionals, tradesmen and government employees, and the lower class as landless tenants or, in the urban context, industrial or domestic labor. He acknowledged the inequity between the Filipino population and the Chinese population but regarded this as an ethnic phenomenon rather than an extension of the class system. Berreman thus moved the study of Philippine stratification clearly away from Kroeber's inaccuracies and set the stage for more detailed investigations as, for example, the investigation into the nature of the "intergrades," which, as we will see, are a key element in the inequality.

Unfortunately, in more recent reports, most observers have had a tendency to gloss over the nuances of Berreman's description and to describe the society as simply divided into two classes with an emerging middle class. Eggan (1968, 40) and Hart (1975, 22), for example, both said that there was only the landed elite and those who must work for the landed elite, but added that a middle class was beginning to develop as the result of educational opportunities in the larger cities. In contrast, Pal (1961) denied the existence of an emerging middle class and stated flatly that the society was composed of just two classes, an upper class with 10 percent of the population and a broad lower class, with 90 percent of the population, who worked the land and served the rich. These assessments were simplistic and counterproductive, obscuring rather than illuminating the social inequality.

More complicated descriptions of the stratification have also appeared in the literature. Hunt (1963) attempts to describe the composition and size of the classes in some detail. He suggested that the upper class accounts for one percent of the population and is composed of large landowners, professionals, big businessmen and upper government officials. Below this stratum is the middle class which he states comprise 12 percent of the population and consists of "minor" government officials, "some" teachers, "most" businessmen, and "medium" landowners. A lower class is divided into two parts: an upper-lower

class segment made up of 32 percent of the people and represented by skilled laborers, government clerks, "some" teachers, "some" *sari-sari* owners, store clerks, "small" farm owners, "most" office workers, and "some" tenant farmers. A lower-lower class segment is the remainder of the population or 55 percent, and is identified with unskilled laborers, "small" farm owners (again), "most" tenant farmers and household servants. Unfortunately, the terms given in quotes above are not clarified and there is no indication in Hunt's paper explaining how he decided which occupations belonged to which stratum and how he ascertained the percentages. He also fails to consider that there might be variations in the structure that might reflect different rural and urban settings.

Vreeland and her associates refer to the Philippines as "highly stratified" (1976, 100) and suggest that ethnicity and social group membership are dimensions of Philippine stratification in addition to the more commonly mentioned occupation, landholdings and education. This is, in my opinion, a step in the right direction but, regrettably, their work does not seem to be based upon careful, systematic fieldwork. Having introduced the concept of ethnicity as a class determinant, they fail to separate big businessmen, who are predominantly Chinese, from large landowners, who, in general, are not. Social group membership, such as membership in the Rotary or Masonic clubs, is definitely a reflection of class standing in the Philippines. But it is clear to even the casual observer that these are elite organizations and that few, if any, of the members of these clubs are middle class, identified as "writers, civil servants, teachers, clerical workers, merchants, mechanics, tradesmen, small businessmen and small landowners" (1976, 106). Further, it is simply untrue to say, as they do (1976, 105), that a substantial percentage of the upper class is American, Spanish or Philippine-born Spanish. They give the percentages of the population for each class as follows: one percent upper, 12 percent middle and 87 percent lower class, figures that are not supported by actual survey data.

One final example of the interpretation of Philippine stratification is the work of Benedict Kerkvliet (1980). Kerkvliet did a detailed study of the stratification in a town of 1,400 people, and found the people to be "thoroughly conscious of [their] classes" (1980, 32). He thus suggests that stratification is an emic, rather than an etic, phenomenon. The people recognize and evaluate the several economic forces acting on them (the market value of rice and other crops, the cost of fertilizers and lands, etc.) and their stratification results from this semi-rational evaluation. He identifies seven classes, namely, (1) families periodically with-

out rice, 3.4 percent; (2) families with rice but no cash, 25.8 percent; (3) families with some cash, 38.2 percent; (4) families with cash for extras, 21.3 percent; (5) families with surplus cash and savings, 7.9 percent; (6) families with investments or businesses, 0.6 percent; and (7) families with bigger investments, 2.7 percent. This study is a good contribution to our understanding of the internal structure of a town, in contrast to a village or a city, but it is limited by the author's lack of scope. The strata he identifies are likely to be what Berreman called "intergrades," i.e., substrata of classes that would be more obvious in nearby cities. Aside from this, Kerkvliet has not adequately demonstrated that the social and economic cooperation among the people of the town is guided by the seven strata. If the strata are empirically recognized, this would have to be the case. It is also somewhat disconcerting that he admits using his own judgment regarding the placement of the families in the "classes," rather than objective data.

In summary, it is fair to say that much remains unclear about social stratification in the Philippines. First, most observers have assumed that classes exist in a form approximating a tripartite model, i.e., that the Philippines would have lower, middle and upper classes. This model was an answer that they brought with them and imposed upon the observations, rather than deriving the class structure from first-hand observations. A second problem has been the absence of objective evidence for the classes. It is easy to observe, subjectively, that there is a range of socioeconomic statuses at play here and to use this to propose possible stratification. It is more difficult to demonstrate objectively how the range of statuses is broken down by the families to create exclusive layers in society. Only when we understand this will we understand the nature and mechanisms of the system. A third problem lies in the lack of recognition of the obvious variations in society, specifically, the hierarchy of central places (cf. Christaller 1933). As in most countries of this kind, the Philippines has a large number of farming villages surmounted by a hierarchy of towns and cities ranging from the *protopolis*, the smallest type of city of which Ozamiz is an example, to the primary city (Metro Manila). The differences of power, wealth and status that generate and maintain social classes emanate from the larger central places that must be studied to understand the class system permeating the entire society. And there will be differences in the class system in different places. But, most certainly, towns and farming villages are not the best places to study society's stratification. Most of the families in these places are of the same class.

The Nature and Demonstration of Social Classes

Social classes are ranked groups of families that give a society the character of being layered. The ranking of these groups is emic and done primarily on the basis of access to economic resources, and also on the basis of political power and social status. The consequences of the class identity of a family are very widespread, extending to such things as diet, dress, house type, education, healthcare and religion. As a result, one may think *a priori* that it would be easy to identify the social class of individual families and the class structure as a whole. But such is not the case. Social classes are difficult to recognize, both emically and etically, because they have indistinct and permeable boundaries. Families can move from one class to another by gaining or losing economic resources: new economic resources can appear or existing resources can decline or be reassessed. The net result is that economic mobility within the system partially erases class boundaries. If there were no barriers to mobility, the society would be classless. On the other hand, if there were zero mobility, the class system might transform into a caste system. As Berreman (1979, 300; 1981, 18, 28–30) points out, class identity is identity without functional group boundaries. The lower class can never rise up to overthrow the upper classes in a Marxist revolt because the lower class, like all classes, is not a cohesive, bounded group.

How then are classes to be demonstrated? Since class identity is used to guide social interaction in a society, there must be class characteristics that the families use to symbolize and communicate their social status to each other. Otherwise, the classes would be meaningless. And these class characteristics must be, to a great extent, indicators of the economics of the family. Classes in a society are therefore identified by finding the key family economic indicators of society and then showing that they are not distributed evenly throughout it. Thus, if a frequency diagram is constructed by plotting the percentage of families in a society possessing an economic indicator *versus* the range of values of that indicator, the resulting curve would be multimodal and the number of modes would indicate the number of classes. For example, if there were four classes in a society, the curve would look like figure 1. The area under each mode would indicate the size of each class. The practical application of this method depends upon the careful choice of a suitable economic indicator based upon preliminary surveys and interviews of families. However, since the class standing of a family does not

depend upon a single measure of family economic resources, such as income or the amount of land owned, but rather upon a combination of economic factors, the best approach is to use an economic *index* that combines several specific indicators. This method will be demonstrated in my work on Ozamiz.

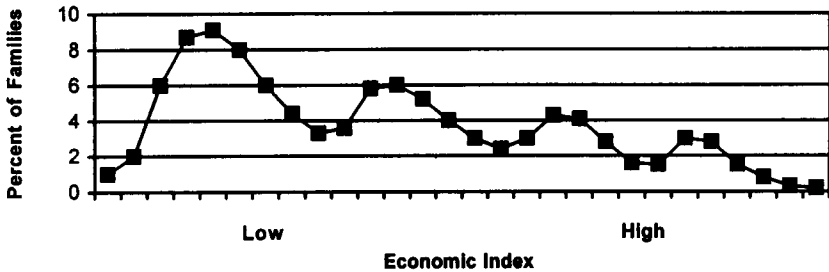


Figure 1. Hypothetical Distribution of an Economic Index in a Classed Society

The Study of Ozamiz

The city of Ozamiz was chosen because it represented, with a 36,000 population, the smallest type of city in the Philippines, a *protopolis*. Characteristically, it has a permanent central food market and acts as a collecting point for farm surpluses and cash crops. In contrast to towns and villages, majority of the population in Ozamiz is not engaged in agricultural activities. In fact, it does not have a large role to play in Philippine society, but rather relies upon larger cities for such functions as a provincial government, industrial employment, national institutions and international commerce.

The study was done in 1975–1976 as part of a Fulbright research grant and built upon two years of Peace Corps service in the Philippines previously. After learning the language (Visayan) and gaining acceptance in the social life of the city, I attempted to learn the nature of urban society by traditional participant observation. However, about four months into the fieldwork, I realized that this approach was inadequate. There were several different zones in the city with markedly different economic conditions. These zones were: (1) the old residential zone built in Spanish times on the gridwork of streets around the Catholic Church, (2) residential zones annexed to the gridwork, (3) the urban barrios or *barangays*, which had been rural but were swallowed by the expansion of the city, (4) the squatter zones along the seashore, (5) the recent suburban zone around the new City Hall and (6) the commercial

zones. To represent the city as a whole, it was necessary to gain an understanding of families in every zone of the city and to sample the different zones proportionately. Only in this way could I produce an accurate composite description of the inequity in the city.

At that point in the fieldwork, I reorganized my approach and embarked upon a carefully controlled sampling of the city. This involved mapping the city, counting and numbering the households, and establishing a random sampling protocol to ensure that the data obtained was not biased by my personal selection of the families interviewed. After reviewing previous studies of this kind in the Philippines (cf. Lynch et al. 1974), I judged that good representation could be acquired with a ten percent sample. So I set out to meet and interview every tenth household throughout the city. In this way, thanks to the wonderful hospitality of the people of Ozamiz, I was able to gather data on all aspects of family life from 494 families.² Much of these data ultimately served simply as a background for the understanding of social inequality. For the purpose of the current paper, I will confine myself to that portion of the data that directly concerns the stratification of the city. The results of the entire study are reported in my doctoral dissertation for the University of California at Berkeley (Manlove 1990).

Before going on, however, I would like to comment that, while the study is now 25 years old, the data remains valuable for revealing class stratification. Class stratification changes slowly and, in any event, the data will provide a baseline for new studies of social inequality there.

Evidence for Classes in Ozamiz

To find evidence of classes, I first looked at two key family characteristics that are driving forces in the economic differentiation in society, namely, total monthly family income and the amount of land owned. However, despite the importance of these two characteristics, it was not possible to use this type of data to demonstrate classes. First, this information is very sensitive and closely guarded. There is no doubt that a logical bias entered my subjects' answers in the interest of self-preservation. One might call this strategic prevarication. Second, despite the careful wording and explanation of our questions in the interview, these questions were probably interpreted differently by different people. Total monthly family income, for example, was a difficult concept for families dependent upon rice or copra harvests.

When asked to estimate the monthly family income from all sources, ninety-five percent of the household heads indicated that their incomes

were less than P2,000 per month in 1976. These responses are shown in figure 2. Reported incomes were heavily skewed toward what would be considered poverty conditions. More than half of the population reported living on P400 per month or less, which, for a family averaging seven individuals, would have afforded a diet of not much more than fish and rice.³ At the upper end of the scale, 5.4 percent of the families reported earning more than P2,000 per month. These uncharted replies ranged from slightly more than P2,000 to a startling P70,000 per month. However, while the data gives an indication of the range of inequality in the city, it does not accurately reflect family resources. For one thing, people are surviving well in Ozamiz. If the monthly income of half of the families was really P400 or less, there would be serious nutritional problems readily observed. Clearly, income was substantially underreported and, in particular, food reciprocity and "in-kind" receipts (e.g., a share of the harvest for helping plant and reap) were not included. However, the objective here is *not* to determine monthly incomes, but rather to determine whether there are nodes representing different classes as in figure 1. And we note that figure 2 does not show any marked stratification; the distribution of the family incomes through the population seems to be more or less uniform. The absence of reliable data behind the graph, however, should caution us to hold this evidence in abeyance and to look at other data for objective verification of the stratification.

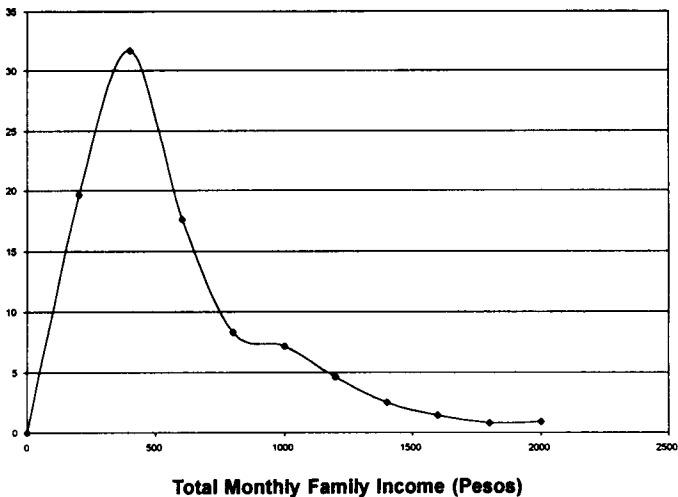


Figure 2. Distribution of Reported Monthly Family Incomes

The distribution of the amount of farmlands owned is shown in figure 3. The most important source of wealth in Ozamiz is copra. Coconut palms from which it is derived are planted everywhere, as far as the eye can see, on any farmland that cannot be used for rice paddies. Land is therefore a much-desired commodity. But urban occupations do not require land and, consequently, land ownership will be an incomplete indicator of social stratification.

In response to our queries, 73 percent of the families said that they owned no farmland at all. In figure 3, these families are off the vertical scale at zero hectares. On the other end of the land-owning spectrum, about one percent of the families were off the horizontal scale, stating that they owned more than 35 hectares of farmland. These are the wealthiest families of the city, the landed elite. Between these two groups, figure 3 shows that there are three groups of families.⁴ One group consists of the food-producing farmers who generally own less than eight hectares. A second group of families owns coconut lands between 10 and 18 hectares. Most of these families are families of professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.) in the city. And a third group of families, owning between 20 and 30 hectares, turns out to be Chinese merchants who have acquired Philippine citizenship and are hence, eligible to own land.

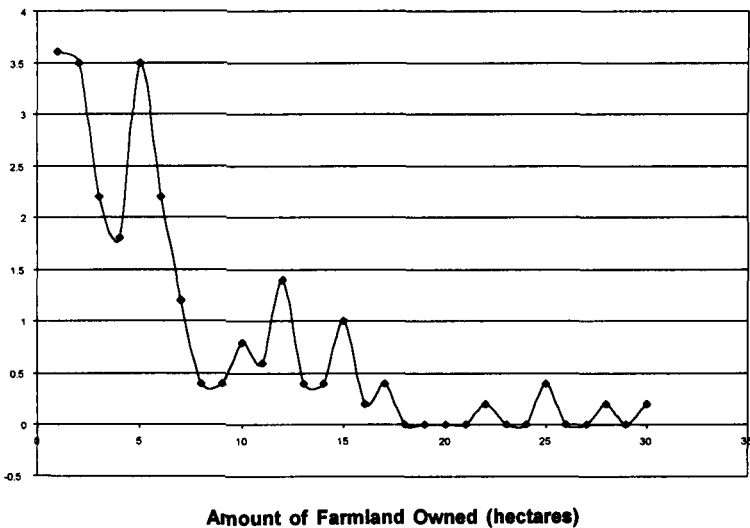


Figure 3. Distribution of Reported Farmland Ownership

Farmland ownership is difficult to interpret. First, land varies enormously in value so it was not possible to sort out the value of each family's holdings. Second, land ownership is complicated by a high inheritance tax. We found several pieces of property owned by deceased relatives because the heirs could not afford to have the title transferred to their names. A family might truthfully say that they owned no land despite the fact that they were using property to which they were entitled. And, third, there are legal mechanisms for controlling and profiting from land without owning it. Among the Chinese families, for example, there are legal entities called *socios* that own land as a corporation. As a consequence of these and other factors, we must therefore look in another direction for more definitive indications of stratification.

Clearer evidence of social classes appeared when I turned to the more tangible symbols of wealth—*housing and possessions*. These are the status symbols that signal class standing in society. Each item in this category (e.g., a particular type of house or a jeep) is, of course, justified by its owner in terms of function; but each item is, in fact, a mechanism for social differentiation.

There were six types of residences in Ozamiz. The first of these, which I called *type zero*, was not really a house but rather a shack or lean-to. Filipinos call this sort of dwelling a *barong-barong*. It was used by 2.4 percent of the families I interviewed or about 120 families throughout the city. In other contexts, these families would be called homeless since a *barong-barong* is little more than shelter from the rain and rarely contains furniture of any sort. These structures, however, are viewed as more or less permanent housing, with some of them subdivided into two or three rooms. The least valuable type of a true house was a *type 1* house. This was the type that you would expect to find in a village remote from the city. It had woven *nipa* mats for walls and *nipa* thatch for roofing. The supporting frame was usually bamboo and the whole house was elevated off the ground by posts a few feet high. This type of house was highly flammable,⁵ afforded little privacy and was used only by very poor families, numbering 2.6 percent of those interviewed or about 130 families total in the city. Somewhat more valuable was a *type 2* house which had wooden walls and a *nipa* thatch roof. This was the most common type of house, occupied by 37.4 percent of the families or about 1,850 families in Ozamiz as a whole. Also a fire hazard, this type of house, however, provided privacy and had a *nipa* roof that kept the internal temperature down by allowing more ventilation. The next most expensive house type, *type 3*, was one that had

wooden walls and a corrugated iron roof. I found 34.2 percent or about 1,690 of the families living in this type of house. The corrugated roof provided more protection from storms and did not have to be replaced as often as the nipa shingled roofs. Even more expensive, a *type 4* house was one with concrete walls (composed of hollow blocks) and a corrugated iron roof. This was the type of house occupied by 15.2 percent or about 740 of the families. Whereas the previous types were commonly elevated off the ground by pillars or by stilts over water, this type was built on a concrete slab. Two stories were common with the upper story frequently made of wood. Decoration was minimal, consisting mostly of paint and little else. On the other hand, decoration was important in a *type 5* house. Structurally, houses of this type were the same as type 4 houses except that in type 5 houses, symbols of wealth were displayed in the form of paint, air conditioning, screens and protective iron grills on the windows, a landscaped yard and a concrete wall around the perimeter of the property. In Ozamiz, 8.1 percent or about 80 of the families lived in this type of house.

Varying in expense if built or bought, the house types should provide evidence of class stratification. But it is not only the type of house that matters; the size and the location of the house also reflect family economics. Consequently, the identification of the family's social class by its house is somewhat risky and impressionistic.

After 494 interviews, I could say that only the poorest families lived in types 0, 1 and 2 houses. These houses were the homes of people who worked for daily wages and usually had little or no improvements on the basic shelter. When I visited type 3 houses, I found that the smaller versions, those constructed with only one, two or three rooms, were also occupied by the same laborer families, while the larger versions of this type, with five or more rooms, reflected a different level of economics. These were the houses of salaried families (e.g., teachers). Such families were also found in small versions of type 4 houses, i.e., those composed of three or four rooms. Then, in larger versions of type 4 and versions of type 5 with fewer than six rooms, the internal and external improvements signaled substantially higher family economics. These houses were frequently associated with doctors, lawyers and other professionals. Lastly, when I visited a large, type 5 house with at least 10 rooms, I could safely predict that the family would be part of the landed elite, drawing its wealth from a large hectare of coconut trees.

The evidence that firmly identified the social classes, however, came from the family possessions. Shortly before my fieldwork, another team

of investigators, Castillo, Cardero and Tanco (1967), found that owning at least fourteen was a good indication of economic success in the barrios. Working from their list and adding urban possessions, I asked each of the families I interviewed to indicate which of the following items the family possessed:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Tables and chairs | 8. China cabinet | 15. Waterseal or flush toilet |
| 2. Books | 9. Sewing machine | 16. Refrigerator |
| 3. Beds | 10. Plumbing | 17. Electric fan |
| 4. Radios | 11. Desk/study table | 18. Typewriter |
| 5. Clothes closet (<i>aparador</i>) | 12. Dresser | 19. Car or jeep |
| 6. Living room (<i>sala</i>) set | 13. Gas range | 20. Television |
| 7. Periodical subscription | 14. Phonograph/stereo | 21. Piano |

Studying their responses, it gradually became clear that the poorest families usually had only a few of the first six items on the list; and that the other, more expensive items served as status symbols to distinguish the other families from the poorest group. Significantly, items 7 through 11 tended to be possessed *as a set* by families who could depend on a salary. Further, other possessions could be seen *as sets* characterizing groups of families. Items 11 and 12 tended to be possessed by one group of families; items 14, 15, 16 and 17 characterized another group of families; items 18, 19 and 20 identified another group and the last item, the piano, was possessed only by the wealthiest families. Only in the home of the city's piano teacher did I find a piano in a home with fewer than ten rooms. This was the first concrete evidence that the society was subdivided into six social classes.⁶

These classes were further confirmed by plotting the total number of possessions in each family against the percentage of families that had that number of possessions (figure 4). In this graph, four classes are indicated by the modes at 4, 11, 15 and 18 items possessed. The two highest classes are concealed by their low numbers but are suggested by the rise in the graph at 21 items possessed. The distribution of the classes overlaps in the graph, but rough estimates of their sizes can be made by postulating the underlying curves. In this way, we can see that the lowest class is approximately half of society. Additional data on occupations and housing will give closer estimates.

One interesting feature of this graph is the rise of the curve at zero possessions. This proved to represent one of Berreman's intergrades, a lower echelon of the lowest class. These people are recently arrived families living in the squatter zones. In most aspects, they are indistin-

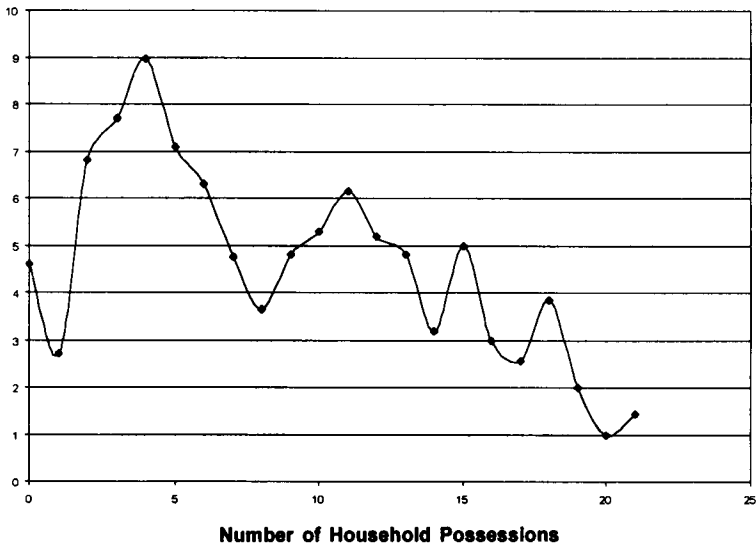


Figure 4. Distribution of the Number of Household Possessions

guishable from the lowest class, living in the same types of houses and pursuing the same occupations.

Another confirmation of the classes could be made after a closer look at the data about possessions. With the relatively large sample, I could calculate the probability that a given family in Ozamiz would have a particular item on the list given above. This is simply the number of the interviewed families that had the item divided by 494. These probability figures are plotted in the lower curve of figure 5.

Notice first that there are major decreases between items 2 and 3, items 6 and 7, 11 and 12, 17 and 18. These breaks are important because they confirm that the possessions are regarded as sets and because they identify which sets are associated with which classes. The class just above the laboring class, for example, will be characterized as possessing a subscription to a newspaper or magazine, a china cabinet, a sewing machine, plumbing and a study table or desk. In this set, the china cabinet is particularly significant because a china cabinet implies a china set, which in turn indicates the ability to serve guests. A sewing machine correlates with this class but is also found in the households of tailors/seamstresses in the lowest class. The major breaks in the lower curve also confirm the classes identified with figure 4, with some significant variations. The lowest class seen in figure 4 is here seen as

broken into two intergrades with two sets of possessions, i.e., items 1 and 2, and items 3, 4, 5 and 6. This evidence and the zero possession group mentioned above suggest that the lowest class is actually subdivided into three intergrades or subclasses. Possessions 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in figure 5 correlate well with the second class in figure 4. However, the families represented in the third mode in figure 4, i.e., the third class, are merged with the next higher group in figure 5. On the other hand, the Chinese merchant group is isolated in figure 5, as characterized by possessions 18, 19 and 20 as a set.

In the upper curve of figure 5, I have gone one step further and plotted the probability that a family would have an item *given* that they possessed the next most abundant item. If the items are possessed *in sets* as symbols of class identity, the probability of owning a particular item in a set should rise if a family owned other items in the same set. Otherwise, it would fall. Hence, the shapes of the segments of the upper curve confirm the classes. Each segment rises toward the completion of the set. And we may note that the third class, which could not be detected in the lower curve segments, is at least suggested by the rise in the curve between items 12 and 13.

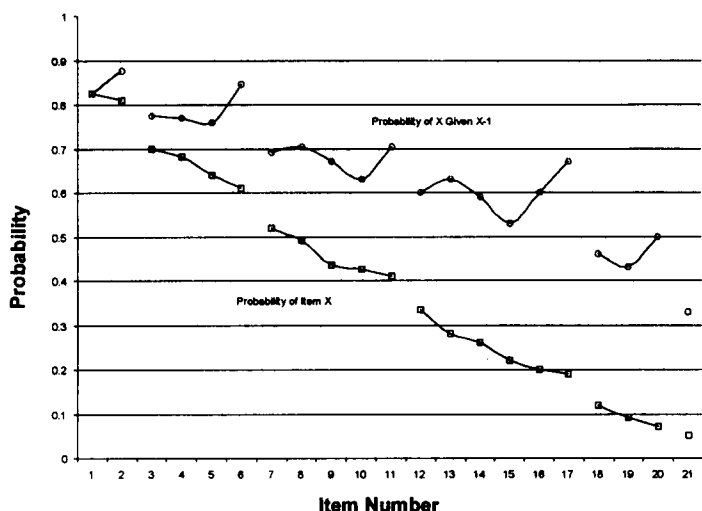


Figure 5. Probability of Owning a Specific Item, Given that the Family Owns the Next Less Popular Item

Correlation with Occupations

The next step in the demonstration of social classes is the correlation between these status symbol groups and occupations. We would expect that all families dependent upon a particular occupation would be in the same class. This correlation turns out to be virtually perfect. That is, the occupation of the breadwinner of the family was a near perfect predictor of which set of status symbols the family possessed. In the few cases where an obvious disparity existed between the set of status symbols and the occupation of the breadwinner, we always found that there was another occupation in the family when we got to know them better. In one case, for example, the breadwinner was a carpenter in the city but also owned a small farm.

The lowest group in figure 4, which I will now call *Class A*, are families dependent upon wage earners that would be called laborers, stevedores, pedicab drivers, ambulant vendors, tenant farmers, jeep/truck drivers, carpenters, house painters, auto mechanics, warehousemen, barbers, seamstresses, tailors, blacksmiths and watch repairmen. Some of these families had more than one wage earner, but, if so, they all had laboring jobs and the income was not enough to change their status. The wages of all of these jobs were very low but the most important aspect of the family economics was that the income was day-to-day and, hence, not dependable. There are no "extras" in the family budget and even the availability of food is not entirely predictable.

In the next higher group, we find families with salaries, i.e., with predictable incomes, and with skills that are in greater demand and are, hence, better rewarded. Those in *Class B* are land-owning farmers with less than eight hectares, sales clerks, clerks in both private and governmental offices, accountants, electricians, tinsmiths, plumbers, soldiers, policemen and teachers of all levels, or from elementary to college.

In the next class, *Class C*, interviews revealed a subtle difference. Several household heads stated that their "mother tongue," i.e., the language they spoke as a child was Tagalog, not Visayan. It soon became apparent that they were representatives of national companies whose headquarters were in Manila. They had been sent to Ozamiz to represent the interests of the company. A few were representatives of international firms such as Singer Sewing Machines. But they alone did not constitute Class C. The status symbols that they employed, consciously or unconsciously, were the same ones used by local (Visayan-speaking)

small business owners and manufacturers. The merchants in this group owned or leased various specialty stores, e.g., stores specializing in automobile parts or tires, and, hence, like the Tagalog speakers, were tied to a distribution network that was larger than Ozamiz. They are a unique group of merchants, it is important to note, and should be distinguished from operators of neighborhood sari-sari stores (who are usually found in Class B) and from the larger (Chinese) merchants that will be discussed below. The other families in Class C were also of local origin and were manufacturers of a product such as rattan furniture or candy. They, too, had an economic network that extended beyond Ozamiz since their products were transported to other nearby cities. Clearly, the ability to manipulate a larger economic network was the hallmark of those who enjoyed Class C status. But this is also another example of intergrades; the Tagalog speakers had higher status and, in general, did not cooperate economically or associate socially with the Visayan-speaking merchants or manufacturers.

Class D was composed of the families of professionals and upper level government officials. Doctors, dentists, engineers and lawyers made up majority of these professionals. Army officers and various city officials (e.g., the city agriculturist, the city treasurer, public school administrators) made up the remainder of this class. The highest elected officials of the city did not belong to this class since they were, without exception, representatives of the landed elite.

The fifth class, *Class E*, was composed of the Chinese merchant families. There has been some argument as to whether this group should be described as an ethnic group or a social class. It is certainly true that the members of this group endeavor to maintain their ethnic identity. They have been instrumental in promoting the education of their children in the Chinese languages and observe family traditions coming all the way from China. Despite this, I would maintain that this is a social class, a semi-closed group of families that cooperate economically. First, the primary identifying characteristic of the group is economic and occupational; its members own or control many of the large stores in the city. Second, being Chinese does not automatically mean that a family is part of this class; some Chinese families have acquired Philippine citizenship and have moved into the highest class, while other Chinese families were found in Classes C and D.

Finally, there are a small number of houses in which a piano is prominently displayed. These are the well-appointed houses of the

landed elite, *Class F*. Each family in this class owns at least eight hectares of rice paddies or at least 50 hectares of coconut palms. Their primary economic activity is the management of the production of cash crops.

The Size of the Classes

Given the ambiguous nature of class boundaries, the estimation of class size is a hazardous undertaking. It is nevertheless crucial to know the approximate class sizes in order to evaluate the nature and effects of social inequality. The estimates here are based on figure 4 and upon the principal breadwinner's occupation in each family. I first identified the Chinese merchant and landed elite families and subtracted them out of figure 4. Then I estimated the area under the curve belonging to each class and finally corrected for families whose principal occupations indicated that they were slightly out of the expected range of possessions. This last correction was never more than two percent.

This procedure gave the following percentages:

| Class | Percent of Families | Percent of Population | Estimated No. of People in Class in 1976 |
|-------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|
| A | 51 | 50.3 | 18,223 |
| B | 33 | 34.8 | 12,608 |
| C | 5 | 4.6 | 1,667 |
| D | 8 | 7.4 | 2,681 |
| E | 2 | 2.2 | 797 |
| F | 1 | 0.7 | 254 |

There is some variation in family size among the classes (see below) and, consequently, the percentage of families in each class does not indicate the fraction of the population per class. There is also a problem regarding "helpers" (maids, cooks and nannies) and boarders who were living with a family but whose class affiliation might not be the same as that of the family. The percentage of the population in each class given above counts only family members and omits nonrelatives. The number of people in each class is simply the percentage of the population multiplied by the total number of people that I counted in Ozamiz, namely 36,230. This information is given to help the reader appreciate the relative sizes of the classes and should be considered only as an *estimate* of the actual number of people in each class.

Table 1. Class Characteristics

| Class | Principal Occupations | Reported Average Monthly Income | Typical House Type & Size | Religions | Household Head | |
|----------|---|--|--|--|---------------------------|--|
| | | | | | Average Education | Clubs & Associations |
| A | Tenant farmer, fisherman, pedicab driver, laborer, cook, barber, carpenter, tailor, market vendor, driver, mechanic | P290 | 2-room Type 2 | 90% Catholic 10% P.I.C., I.N.K. and Baptist | Sixth grade | 93% none; 7% in Catholic clubs |
| B | Small land-owning farmer, clerk, teacher, policeman, soldier, electrician, accountant, mortician, Protestant minister | P610 | 5-room Type 3 | 85% Catholic 15% P.I.C., U.C.C.P. and Seventh Day | Four years high school | 72% none; 28% in Catholic & Protestant clubs |
| C | Agent of national or international company, manufacturer, owner of small business | P1130 | 5-room Type 3 or 4 | 69% Catholic 31% P.I.C. and U.C.C.P. | One year of college | 46% none; 54% in Catholic groups and Jaycees |
| D | Doctor, lawyer, dentist, engineer, army officer, civil administrator | P1500 | 6-room Type 4 or 5 | 80% Catholic 20% P.I.C., U.C.C.P. and I.N.K. | Five years of college | 28% none; Rotary, K.C., C.W.L., Prof. Assn. |
| E | Chinese merchant | Greater than P2000 | 6-room Type 5 (above the store) | 80% Catholic 20% Buddhist and Chinese Protestant | Sixth grade | 11% none; Masonic, Lions, Chinese Protestant groups |
| F | Landed elite | Much greater than P2000 | 12-room Type 5 | 96% Catholic 4% P.I.C. and U.C.C.P. | Seven years of college | 0% none; Rotary, K.C., C.W.L. |

Class Characteristics

Class A

As indicated above, the most important characteristic of Class A families is their insecure and, at times, dire economic situation. They are the labor force, the unskilled and the cheaply skilled, in a labor-surplus economy. The average monthly income reported by these families in 1976 was P290. Since the average family size was 6.4 people, the income translates to about a peso and a half per day per person, barely enough for a fish and rice diet without any nutritional extras. Such a family budget would contain virtually no money for housing, clothing, education or other expenses. Clearly, reciprocity among families is very important to this group in providing necessary food and services.

Table 2. Family Characteristics by Class

| Class | Average Size of Household | Average Size of Family | Percent Nuclear Families | Percent Vertically Extended Families | Percent Horizontally Extended Families | Percent Vertically & Horizontally Ext. Families | Percent Fragmentary Families |
|-------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| A | 6.7 | 6.4 | 57 | 15 | 17 | 6 | 5 |
| B | 7.7 | 6.9 | 46 | 15 | 25 | 9 | 6 |
| C | 8.2 | 5.9 | 50 | 12 | 27 | 4 | 8 |
| D | 7.6 | 6.0 | 54 | 14 | 22 | 5 | 5 |
| E | 9.7 | 7.1 | 22 | 33 | 22 | 22 | 0 |
| F | 9.3 | 6.0 | 50 | 25 | 0 | 25 | 0 |
| All | 7.2 | 6.5 | 53 | 15 | 20 | 7 | 5 |

The data regarding possessions given above indicates that Class A is composed of three substrata or "intergrades" as Berreman called them. In figure 4, one substratum identifies itself as having no possessions at all. These families, or 23 out of the 494, were living in poor type 1 houses built hastily over the sea in the squatter zone. When I visited their houses I was always apprehensive that my added weight might bring down the house into the mire underneath. All of these 23 families, or 4.7 percent of the total, were very recent immigrants, having lived in Ozamiz for barely a year.

A second substratum is indicated by figure 5, which shows that families whose only possessions are a table and chairs or a table, chairs and a book⁷ are a distinct group. This group is also composed of recent immigrants, but immigrants who have been in Ozamiz longer than a year. They had come from remote farming barrios and had not been able to integrate themselves as yet into the urban economics. When asked to

identify their occupation, they would commonly indicate an occupation of the barrio such as a farmer (landless or the son of a small farmer), a nipa shingle maker, a butcher, etc. If they indicated employment in the city, it was likely that of an unskilled laborer. This second substratum was surprisingly numerous, totaling 58 families or 9.6 percent of the total. Aside from their limited possessions and their recent ties to the barrio, however, it was difficult to distinguish them from the third substratum, which made up majority of the class (171 families or 35 percent of the total). The key element appears to be that most of Class A, the third substratum, had found a niche in the urban economic fabric.

As expected, most of the Class A families are squatters or tenants. Interviews revealed that 34 percent of the class comprised squatters, most of whom lived in stilted houses over the sea in the squatter zones, but some of whom lived on unused and frequently contested private lands. Another 23 percent of the families were living in houses that they built on land they did not own. The landowner either allowed them to build or found them there after the fact, i.e., as squatters. In any case, the landowner was collecting rent for the land. Yet another 19 percent stated that they rented their houses from other families. Most of the families in this group lived in the squatter zones. We thus discovered that some enterprising squatter families built more than one house and were renting the extra house to newcomers. Five percent of the class were tenants, using housing provided by an employer, while about half of these were tenant farmers living along the outskirts of the city. Of this class, 19 percent claimed that they or a relative owned their house and lot. We were unable to verify this as there was rarely any mention of these properties in the records of the City Clerk but, since no one else claimed the house or lot and they were not in the squatter zones, this was at least *de facto* ownership.

Table 3. Helpers, Boarders and Class Age Characteristics

| Class | Percent Households with Helpers | Percent Households with Boarders | Percent of Class Under Ten | Percent of Class Over Sixty |
|-------|--|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A | 3 | 5 | 33 | 4 |
| B | 22 | 13 | 27 | 5 |
| C | 46 | 46 | 23 | 5 |
| D | 57 | 19 | 23 | 8 |
| E | 100 | 22 | 15 | 16 |
| F | 100 | 25 | 19 | 22 |
| All | 18 | 12 | 29 | 5 |

Most of the Class A families, or 87 percent, lived in small type 2 and type 3 houses. A few families had boarders or helpers and, consequently, the average size of the household was 6.7. But more than 68 percent of the houses had only one bedroom or none at all. Typically, sleeping mats were laid on the floor at night and rolled up during the day. Furniture in these houses was sparse but there was usually a table and a few chairs along with some efforts to decorate the walls with religious icons.

One question that I sought in vain to answer was whether the class was growing. Many were recent immigrants from farming villages, displaced by population pressures there and by the conversion of farmland to coconut plantations. This source of the growth in number of Class A families continued unabated. Further, the reproductive rate of these families was high; as shown in table 3 with some 33 percent of the class under age ten. However, there was also a high mortality rate in Class A with the average age of death in Ozamiz at 34. A large number of the causes of death⁸ were medically preventable and, hence, were "a poor man's fatalities." Partially for this reason, only 3.6 percent of the class was found to be over 60 years of age.

Accidental death and homicide also seemed more frequent in Class A while I have no numbers to support this claim, my many visits to these families convince me that it was so. One family living in the squatter zones over the sea explained the absence of a child by saying that it crawled out of the house, fell into the sea and drowned. Another lost a son who was trying to fish with stolen dynamite.

But I do not want to give the impression that life is dreary and onerous for the people of Class A. One question that I always asked the families was an open-ended question about life in general, and even the poorest families responded with cheerful optimism. They seemed content with their lot in life even if life or God had not been generous with them. Free education through high school was available to them and was seen as an avenue toward higher status and rewards. The fact that they did not, on average, go beyond grade school is explained by the need for young people to earn money as soon as they were old enough, and by the *actual* cost of going to high school in terms of school uniforms and books. The people of Class A were aware of the opportunities available to them but they attributed their inability to take advantage of these opportunities to forces beyond their control, i.e., to fate.

Religion is a major factor in their lives and serves to provide respite from their difficult living conditions. More members of this class pro-

fessed Roman Catholicism than any other class, except for the landed elite. The strength and stability of this religion offer comfort and assurance in the face of life's many crises. At the same time, the pageantry of the Church enlivens life with an annual cycle of events. Very few of the Class A families, however, participate in the work of the Church beyond attendance at mass and the rituals of the life cycle. Only seven percent of the household heads participated in Catholic groups such as the *Cursillo* or the Holy Name Society; 93 percent did not belong to any club or association. Ten percent of Class A were found to have left the Catholic Church for other religions like the Philippine Independent Catholic Church (P.I.C.), the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (I.N.C.) and a small number became Bible Baptists.

Class B

A family would move from Class A to Class B when the principal wage earner was hired in a salaried occupation and began bringing home a periodic and dependable paycheck. At that point, the family would begin to acquire housing and possessions, a certain lifestyle, social affiliations, political ties and economic associations appropriate to their new class.

Class B occupations were compensated, on the average, by a reported salary of P610 per month, or more than twice the average reported monthly earnings of Class A. This provided a comfortable but simple lifestyle devoid of luxuries. Members of this class commonly lived from paycheck to paycheck without reserves, such that extra financial burdens (e.g., unexpected medical expenses) could cause a family catastrophe. Realizing this, some families worked to establish multiple wage earners within the family to increase security. This set-up would create, for example, a Class B occupation and a Class A occupation or two Class B occupations in the same family. This would definitely enhance their comfort and their general lifestyle, but not their class standing. A double income family could earn as much as a single income family in a higher class and they *could* purchase the status symbols of the higher class, although they do not. Typically, the family expanded to support other Class B individuals, usually collateral relatives. They seemed to realize that any pretensions to higher status could be socially and economically disastrous. Their network of friends and relatives inhibited them from upward mobility and solidified the class.

Class B families typically lived in type 3 houses but, unlike the type 3 houses in Class A, these houses were larger and more permanent in

their construction with, for example, concrete piers under the supporting pillars. Statistically, Class B houses averaged 2.5 bedrooms and had an occupancy rate of 7.7 people per house. While this ratio of three people (or more) to a bedroom would seem crowded to an American, it was normal in *all* classes in Ozamiz except among the landed elite.

Home ownership is the ideal in all classes and Class B is no exception. More than 48 percent of the homes were owned by the family living there or by a close relative. However, in the residential area immediately around the central commercial zone, there were economic and social advantages but few houses were available for sale. Consequently, a Class B tradesman, such as an electrician or plumber, might rent in the central area rather than buy or build a house further out. For this reason, we found 25 percent of Class B families renting homes in the Spanish gridwork zone or in nearby annexes to that zone. We were somewhat surprised to find about seven percent of Class B families living in houses that they had built on another person's land, renting the lot but not the house, and another 14 percent in the squatter zones. These families represented some hope for the newer families in Ozamiz. They were usually older squatter families that had prospered in the city and exemplified upward mobility out of Class A. Significantly, they had not changed their living circumstances, their neighbors or friends as their economic situations improved. The last six percent of the families were found in housing provided by their employers. The employer of many of these families was the national government. These families counted soldiers among them who could claim housing on government land as part of their compensation. In a few cases, the household head was a clerical employee in a rice, copra or lumber milling company owned by members of Class E (Chinese merchant) or Class F (the landed elite).

The household heads in Class B families represented a substantial range of educational achievements. The teachers in this group, including those in elementary and secondary schools and colleges,⁹ in general, had college education. On the other hand, soldiers, policemen, firemen and small farmers tended to have had less education, with some having only finished elementary education, i.e., sixth grade.¹⁰ In addition, the tradesmen like electricians or tinsmiths might have acquired their skill through an apprenticeship arrangement rather than by formal education. Consequently, the average education in Class B was four years of high school but the range of educational achievements was wide.

The correlation between class and religion was an interesting and subtle one. The central Catholic Church and the Philippine Independent Catholic Church (P.I.C.) are attended by members of all classes. However, when one looks at the other religions, some class correlates appear. Only a small percentage, 15 percent, of Class B had switched allegiance from the central Catholic Church to other churches; but the number of different churches chosen was greater here than in any of the other classes. These included the Philippine Independent Catholic Church (P.I.C., 5 percent), the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (U.C.C.P., 3.5 percent), the Seventh Day Adventist Church (2.4 percent) and smaller numbers of families associated with I.N.C., the Assembly of God, Southern Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. When we look at Class C, we will find that they were more at liberty to change religions than any other class; but Class B had the greatest religious diversity. Certain churches consisted predominantly of Class B families. Approximately half of the membership in U.C.C.P. and 75 percent of the Seventh Day Adventist Church were Class B. Consequently, in these cases, joining an alternative church augmented the social ties of their class.

Class C

This was a very interesting group of families with several unique characteristics. As soon as we recognized them, there was no doubt that they would emerge as a separate class, distinct from Classes B and D. Their economic standing, as indicated above, was enhanced by being allied with national and international companies or by manufacturing a product that was distributed regionally. They represented such companies as San Miguel Beer, Coca Cola, Singer Sewing Machines, suppliers of automobile tires and parts, insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies. It was not a surprise that they used this leverage to command a higher salary level than Class B, reporting an average salary of P1,130 per month. This amount was enough to provide comfortable living conditions with a few extras in the budget. One of their favorite activities, for example, was tennis and they could easily afford the equipment for this sport, equipment that would not be seen in a Class B house.¹¹

Their houses, similar to those of Class B, tended to be large type 3 and small type 4 houses. The average number of people in the household increased to an average of 8.2, but the number of people per bedroom decreased slightly from 3.1 to 2.8 due to the larger type 3 houses. Qualitatively, they seemed more comfortable than the Class B families.

The latter had a minimum of furniture with sparse decorations, but the Class C houses had little extras, e.g., pillows, pictures, magazines, that made the house more inviting and comfortable.

In terms of ownership, we found that they paid higher rent than any other class except the Chinese merchants. With 52 percent of the families renting, it was clear that they were more transient than other classes; they were ready to go wherever the economic opportunities were. This was confirmed when we found, as mentioned above, that many of them were Tagalog speakers from the Manila area and had been sent down to Ozamiz to represent their companies. In all, 32 percent of the class came from a non-Visayan region of the country as compared to seven percent of the other classes.

Other unique characteristics had to do with the nature of their families. As might be expected from their transience, their families were smaller than the families of other classes and were more fragmented or incomplete (table 2). When they extended their families, as Filipinos commonly do, they had a greater tendency than other classes to extend them horizontally, rather than vertically, by bringing siblings or cousins to live with them. Also, they saw the profit in having unrelated individuals in the house as boarders and there were considerably more boarders in the houses of Class C than in those of any other class (table 3). This accounts for their having an average family size of 5.9, while the average household size was 8.2. Some boarders were students attending local schools, while working for the same national or international company. Each boarder brought in a small but significant amount of rent money each month.

These family characteristics also had larger implications. The absence of grandparents or family elders was an indication that these families did not have large kinship networks nearby. This, of course, is a double-edged sword; they lacked the security and support of a large kin network but, since large kin networks tended to drain off surplus resources, they enjoyed more financial independence. Socially, these families with all of their boarders were a bit odd. Lacking deep local ties and presiding over households of unrelated individuals rather than kin, these families did not mesh well with the established social life of the city.

Class C families could not be distinguished from Class B families on the basis of educational attainment. The household heads in this group had only slightly more education than the household heads of Class B. But it was clear that their economic assets lay in their business knowl-

edge and business contacts, rather than on their education. This was also reflected in their interest to become members of the Jaycees, which, in Ozamiz, was a young man's business-oriented service club that did not have the status of the Rotary Clubs.

In terms of religion, the percentage of Roman Catholic families was lower in Class C than in any other class. This, too, was reflective of their perspective in life. As a group, they were willing to break tradition to gain an advantage in business. When they adopted a different religion, they would not consider relatively unusual or unpopular splinter groups, like the Southern Baptists or Jehovah's Witnesses, but rather joined P.I.C. and U.C.C.P., religions that could benefit them in business.

There was one other surprise in Class C, namely, that it included the Indian merchant families in Ozamiz. There were very few of these but, rather than being financially comparable to their Chinese merchant neighbors, they were operating at the economic level of the Class C families, way below the Chinese merchants. They had the same possessions as Class C, joined the same club (Jaycees) and had the same family characteristics, i.e., nuclear families that were not vertically extended. They differed in their religious affiliation, being Hindu, and in their housing since they occupied shophouses, like many Chinese merchants.¹² But the data suggests that they were striving to integrate themselves into the society for economic gain and that they should be considered primarily as members of Class C rather than as an ethnic group. This would be an interesting topic for further research.

Class D

The professionals of Ozamiz were found to be scattered throughout the city, but this did not deter them from isolating themselves socially from the lower classes. Many of them were related directly or indirectly to families who were or had been in the higher classes, Class E or F. It was, consequently, not unexpected that they would be socially, economically and politically associated with the upper classes except as obliged by professional duties. Nevertheless, they did not have access to the resources of the upper classes and were distinct from them.

The manner in which they maintained their class status was primarily through the manipulation of status symbols, as we shall see. In Ozamiz, and throughout the country, achievement and honor are much more important as personal attributes than competence. That is, for example, it was more important for most of them to be professionals than to practice as professionals. This gave rise to the emphasis on symbolism.

It also generated two social phenomena unique to this class: non-practicing professionals and the "brain drain." It was not unusual in our interviews to come across a household head who proudly indicated that he was a doctor or engineer but who was not actually practicing his profession. The income of these families came from other sources, most commonly from copra. As we saw above (figure 3), professionals were identified with parcels of coconut land ranging from 10 to 18 hectares. This amount of land produced sufficient income to reduce or even eliminate the necessity of professional practice but not enough to achieve landed elite status. Certainly, growing coconuts was much easier than practicing a profession and it was well known that a small number of professionals had purchased their degrees without fulfilling the degree requirements.

The phrase "brain drain" refers to the emigration of professionals to other countries, primarily to the United States. The most important cause of the exodus was perception of substantially greater economic opportunities in the other country. To some professionals, the attainment of a professional degree was seen as a ticket through the bureaucratic maze of emigration.¹³ But emigration involved the severance of strong emotional ties with family and friends and, consequently, the "brain drain" was not entirely explained by the pull of possible economic advantage. One additional "push" factor lay in a cultural discontinuity between professional education (emphasizing achievement and nurturance) and social expectations (emphasizing responsibility and personal honor). A professional education based upon American concepts and practices produces professionals who are more comfortable in America and, perhaps, less comfortable, with the emphasis on status symbols, in the Philippines.

Professionals in Ozamiz reported an average compensation of P1,500 per month. Such an income would be sufficient for a relatively large house with modern appliances inside and decorations outside (paint, landscaping). About 70 percent of these families owned their homes, while the other 30 percent, perhaps desiring more mobility, were renting. Inside, a visitor would be likely to find an electronic source of music (a phonograph, stereo or tape recorder), an electric fan, a refrigerator and a flush toilet, items rarely seen among the lower classes. The quality of the furnishings also spoke of the class standing of the occupants.

As shown in table 2, the families of professionals tended to be typical of the broader society in terms of size and composition. They had plenty of household help with one or two helpers (maids, cooks, etc.)

for an average family of six. Boarders were infrequent in this class and, when they did have boarders, there would be only one or two. The average number of people per bedroom in this group was two as compared to about three in Classes B and C, and about five in Class A.

Membership in social organizations was important to the professionals. Most household heads (72 percent) belonged to one or more non-familial groups. These included the more exclusive Catholic organizations (Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League, Knights of Rizal and the Serra), service clubs (particularly Rotary) and professional associations. These memberships were symbolized by decorations in the homes. Rotary, for example, gave out elaborate wall plaques each year to its members for attending all of the meetings. But, more important, membership in these groups provided valuable contacts for social, economic and political alliances.

Class E

As mentioned above, the Chinese merchant group constituted a social class, not an ethnic group. First, with the possible exception of Class A, there were Chinese families in all classes and, second, the families of the Chinese merchant group tended to restrict their economic, social and political cooperation to other families of that group, rather than extending assistance indiscriminately to all those of Chinese descent. It was, therefore, important to understand that the members of this group used their ethnic identity to maintain their economic advantage, rather than the reverse. They were more concerned with their class status than with their ethnic identity. Whereas the professionals of Class D were *status* conscious, the Chinese merchants were *class* conscious.

There were many ways by which Chinese merchants used their ethnic identity to enhance their economic position and to unify themselves as a class. They could, if the occasion allowed, shift their social identity from non-Filipino to Filipino and back again. For example, it was not uncommon to find their businesses open on national holidays as they exempted themselves as non-Filipinos. However, on a national holiday such as the anniversary of Rizal's death when the mayor of the city lays a wreath of flowers on Rizal's monument, the president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce would be right behind him with the group's own wreath, proclaiming allegiance to the country.

The Chinese merchants sent their children to a private, expensive Chinese-speaking school for elementary and secondary education. They joined the same overtly Chinese clubs, among which were the Masonic

Club, the Lions, and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. There was also a special Chinese cemetery. Each of these carried a price tag or had hidden admission requirements to ensure that only members of Class E can participate. While they did cooperate with the Filipino landed elite families in some ways, in general they confined their social and economic interactions to members of the same class. They played mahjong with others of the same class status, arranged marriages with other families of the same class status, extended loans and other forms of business assistance to families of the same class status. But there were factors that could dilute their ethnic cohesion. They came from different linguistic regions in China and some hold allegiance to Taiwan while others were more loyal to the Mainland. But these factors rarely overrode economic interest.

Given this social situation, one might expect some antagonism from the other classes, particularly from the lower classes. However, such was not the case. When I asked about relations between Chinese merchants and their customers in a confidential and open-ended manner, I never received negative descriptions of the merchants. They were always seen as individuals upon whom one could depend for valuable commodities and services. This view was carefully cultivated by the merchants who realize that being defined as an outsider, and, hence, disloyal to the country, could have disastrous consequences. Non-Filipino aspects of their lives, e.g., Buddhism and ancestor worship, were practiced behind closed doors.

In their housing arrangements, they were almost reclusive. Sixty percent of the Chinese merchants lived in shophouses where the upper domestic floors are private and seldom seen by non-relations. Whereas, in a Filipino home, a visitor would automatically be invited inside as a matter of hospitality, visitors were rarely invited to the upper stories of a shophouse, even if the visitor is a close friend or business associate. When a visitor *was* invited in, he found the rooms comfortably furnished, air-conditioned, screened and equipped with the latest in electronic entertainment equipment. Rooftop gardens provided secluded areas of "natural" beauty for relaxation. Not infrequently, I found elderly members of the family, whose existence was unknown to all outsiders, living in quiet seclusion in the upper stories, isolated from the day-to-day toiling world outside.

The Chinese merchants always stated that they rented these shophouses because unless they gave up their Chinese citizenship and accepted Philippine citizenship, they could not lawfully own land. But

it was often unclear who their landlords were. In some cases, a landed elite family was named. In other cases, it was a partnership of unknown or unrevealed membership. It was clear, however, that the Chinese had substantial sums invested in these shophouses and it was unlikely that they had not sought to secure their tenancy on a long-term basis, legally or illegally.¹⁴

The other 40 percent of the Chinese merchants owned their homes, usually in the subdivision zone around the City Hall. These were all type 5 houses with air conditioning, screens and considerable decorations. The most obvious aspect of these houses was their provision for safety. All accessible windows were barred and there was always a tall concrete wall with broken, jagged glass projecting from its top. The necessity of this protection was obvious when a visitor was invited inside: almost all merchants were using their homes as storage for merchandise meant for the downtown store. But, in these houses, too, there was an emphasis on family privacy and visitors were unusual and unexpected. After being cordially invited into several other Filipino houses on a typical day for interviews, a visit to a Chinese merchant's house provided a distinct contrast. The front room (*sala*) was notable for its lack of use and lack of comfort, making the interview much more formal and less congenial than others.

As shown in table 2, the Chinese merchant group had the largest families and the largest households in the city. Corollary to this, they had the smallest number of nuclear families and the largest number of vertically extended families (more than two generations). Seventy-eight percent of the families were extended either vertically or horizontally, substantially more than the landed elite families which were only 50-percent extended. All of these families had two or more helpers, maids and cooks living in adjoining quarters, who were, at least nominally, part of the household.

One remarkable feature of the Chinese merchant household heads was their lack of formal education. The average educational attainment among them was but six years of elementary school. However, there was great variability in this. Some household heads, usually those born in China, had no formal education at all and learned their business skills from relatives or sponsors on the job. In contrast, others had obtained college degrees from prestigious colleges. All of them recognized the importance of education for their children; and male children, in particular, were pressed to attend and do well in higher education. One of

my interviewees proudly informed me that his son was attending the University of Chicago.

Religious affiliation was also unusual in this group. When asked what their religious affiliation was, 80 percent indicated that they were Catholic. However, they were only nominally Catholic; very few attended mass regularly and even fewer participated in the service clubs that were associated with and provided leadership for the Church. On Catholic holidays, Chinese stores were open. Those that stated they were not Catholic belonged to two groups. Five percent of the household heads in this class, mainly elderly individuals born in China, indicated that they were Buddhists, while the remaining 15 percent professed Protestantism. The latter were either members of the local Chinese Protestant Church or belonged to the Chinese Christian Alliance. Since both of these groups were exclusively Chinese, Protestantism was another mechanism to close ranks around their ethnic identity. Within these churches, Chinese from other classes could mingle with the Chinese merchant families, but the hierarchy of the offices of the churches reconfirmed class identity. Another interesting aspect of the Chinese Protestants was the international connections they established on this basis. Similar churches were to be found in the United States, and church conventions drew the leaders of the churches from both countries together on an annual basis.

Class F

Dr. Medina and the other landed elite constituted about one percent of the households and about 0.7 percent of the population.¹⁵ Some of these families were engaged in commercial business at the top managerial levels, or practiced a profession; but all of them derived their wealth, political power and social prestige from the legal control of large tracts of agricultural land. Most of these lands were planted to coconut palms. While it was true that a family could be landed elite through ownership of more than eight hectares of rice paddies, the amount of land dedicated to rice was very small compared to the amount of land with coconut palms which now fill the landscape, as far as the eye can see in every direction.

The landed elite has gradually established coconut holdings over the years. Some of these lands were purchased, while others were simply taken during the initial spread of cash crop plantations in the late nineteenth century. Then, when copra profits were high, the landed families

reinvested their profits, expanding their land base by buying out small farmers and converting rice and cornfields. Some large landowners have taken advantage of small farmers using a nefarious arrangement, introduced by the Spanish, called *pacto de retroventa* (Constantino 1976, 123). This arrangement, locally called a *prenda* contract, involved extending a loan from a wealthy individual to a small landowner, usually when the family of the small landowner was experiencing an emergency. A loan of this type carried a stipulation that, until the small landowner repaid the loan, all the produce of the land belonged to the lender. Small landowners would from time to time find themselves desperate for cash because of taxes and high fees for legal and medical services. In such situations, they could be coerced into a *prenda* contract with a large landowner. But the contract left the small landowner with a largely reduced capacity to repay the loan and, consequently, the common result was the forfeiture of land to the large landowner.

Income from the land varies considerably over time as the price of copra on the international market fluctuates. In the early 1970s, a few Mercedes Benz cars appeared on the streets when the price of copra soared from 85 centavos per kilogram to 3 pesos per kilogram. Even when copra prices dropped in the mid-1970s, the monthly family incomes of the landed elite were way beyond the two thousand-peso scale that we used in our survey. In a few cases, the monthly family income exceeded P50,000. In a society where more than half of the people were living hand-to-mouth on fish and rice, these incomes seem markedly out of balance.

From a social point of view, there are two types of landed elite families. One type looks at its income and perceives the social responsibility that accompanies it. These families have large infrastructure and many employees to support. They dedicate their lives to the community by building it economically and by leading it socially and politically. Families like the Bernads and the Ramiros in Ozamiz have repeatedly forsaken easy, comfortable private lives for more difficult, public lives. As a result of their civic responsibilities, their net monthly income is not much higher than that of professionals. Unfortunately, there is also the other type of landed elite families who regard their status as their rightful due, as God's will. They are the absentee landlords who, by travel and by building high walls around their houses, isolate themselves from the rest of the community.

The houses of the landed elite are also of two types and, to a degree, these houses correlate with the two types of families just mentioned. Those families with a long history of community involvement and po-

litical leadership tend to live in large type 3 houses. The size of the house is more indicative of their standing than the construction materials. Other landed elite families live in large type 5 houses, i.e., well-decorated concrete houses with landscaping, window screens and air conditioning. In both cases, one would expect more than ten rooms in the house and furnishings that befit the family status. The sala, in particular, is made for receiving guests and, as noted above, a piano is there as a symbol of gracious entertaining.

Landed elite families are among the smallest in the city, composed of six people on the average. All of their households have helpers¹⁶ who may be maids, cooks, nannies, gardeners, drivers, etc.; and, as one might expect, there are more of these nonrelatives in landed elite households than in any other type of household in the city.¹⁶ An average landed elite household would have three helpers living with the family. This means that, on the average, one-third of a landed elite household consists of nonrelatives who do all the household chores.

While, in general, landed elite families minus their helpers are structurally indistinguishable from other families, there is one statistic in table 2 that stands out. Horizontally extended families that are not also vertically extended do not exist in this class. This curious characteristic is explained by three aspects of life among the wealthy. First, their income is sufficient to allow separate residences for siblings and other collateral relatives. Second, their most important resource, land, is likely to be widely distributed and is more effectively managed by maintaining houses occupied by collateral relatives near important landholdings. The third reason lies in their preoccupation with politics. The course of politics in the Philippines has never run smooth and, inevitably, brothers and cousins find themselves competing for power and honored roles. As long as there is a patriarch or matriarch to hold the family together, brothers and their families can live and are, to some degree, expected to live in the same large house. But the death of the patriarch or matriarch makes this impractical and, frequently, undesirable.

The children of these families are well educated and typically leave home to attend top colleges in the country or in the United States. It is expected that they will acquire a degree befitting their station. We found that most household heads had professional degrees, with doctors and lawyers outnumbering the rest. The families could afford to support the student away from home for as long as the degree required, and it was therefore no surprise to learn that the average amount of formal education among landed elite household heads was seven years of college.

But, as indicated above, the degrees are largely symbolic and, if these professionals practiced at all, it was usually for a short time before they finally retired to the role of agricultural overseer.

Individuals in the landed elite families live much longer than the general populace. As table 3 shows, 22 percent of the individuals in these families are over 60 years of age, as compared to four percent among Class A families.¹⁷ This longevity is attributable not only to access to medical help, but also to a varied and plentiful diet and to their ability to control aspects of their physical environment (i.e., sanitation) more effectively than the lower classes. In many ways, they are shielded from the hazards of life. In a war, it is not the army generals who die.

Fictive kinship is a significant facet of life among the landed elite. Household heads from all classes have godchildren but, among the landed elite, the household heads are frequently godparents of more than a hundred godchildren through baptism and marriage. Individuals who acquire important political office may have as many as a thousand godchildren. This, of course, represents an attempt on the part of individuals of the lower classes to establish patronage by catering to the self-esteem of the landed elite. However, with numbers such as these, it is impossible for the landed elite godparent to have a meaningful relationship with the majority of the godchildren. The patronage is as fictive as the kinship. In general, the landed elite godfather acts as a community guide or counselor in the political, but not personal, arena and commands political loyalty in return. Economic patronage outside of the class is rare. Godchildren and co-parents from other classes receive little from the relationship except a sense of social integration and political security.

Religious, social and political activities are very important to the landed elite. In terms of religion, they are devout and actively participating Catholics. At ninety-six percent, the percentage of the class that was Catholic was higher than in any other class. Members of these families could be found in all Catholic ceremonies and events. Clearly, they see the Church as the central pillar of society that supports the current social structure and their role in it. Socially, all household heads and their spouses belonged to prominent and prestigious social organizations, such as the Rotary, Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League. Typically, they would indicate membership in three or more religious groups, service clubs and professional organizations. Politically, on the other hand, the landed elite carefully controlled political elections and appointments as much as they could. The management of

copra plantations clearly leaves substantial time to seek the honor and obligation of social and political leadership.

Social Mobility and the Stability of the Class System

Once the classes of a society such as the Philippines have been identified, it becomes possible to ask two sets of related questions. One set looks at the class system from the point of view of the individuals and individual families, and asks how their lives are shaped by the class system. The other set of questions looks at the system as a whole and asks how and why it is changing over time.

Social mobility, i.e., the permeability of the classes, is an important question in the first set. In general, class-stratified societies achieve the highest synergy and serve the people best when there is high social mobility within a clearly defined system of differential rewards. This indicates both upward and downward mobility. Ideally, upward mobility serves as a reward to individuals and families for significant contributions to the community, in terms, for example, of justice, cooperation, and leadership; downward mobility occurs when an individual acts against the interests of the community. In reality, individuals seek upward mobility regardless of whether they are contributing significantly to the community or not.

In the Philippines, there are five mechanisms for social mobility: marriage, formal education, informal education (independent study and apprenticeships), patronage and geographic mobility. Of these, marriage and formal education are the most important. Mobility due to informal education is noted more as an exception, like a "rags-to-riches" story, than as a general phenomenon.

Most of the skills that can be learned by oneself (e.g., auto mechanics) will not change one's social class. Apprenticeships occur but tend to be limited to younger relatives of the master craftsman and, hence, do not involve class changes. On the other hand, there is some upward mobility afforded by learning on the job. Patronage, as I have indicated above, is much professed by the wealthy but has little effect in terms of social mobility. Most of it is designed specifically to keep people in their present socioeconomic condition. Geographic mobility, e.g., moving to a city where jobs are available, contributes to upward mobility. This is widely recognized by the Filipinos so that there is substantial movement within the population to try to take advantage of such opportunities. In Ozamiz, 62 percent of the families indicated that they had moved to the city within the 25 years preceding the interview. However, in general,

changes in social class result only when geographic mobility is accompanied by other factors, such as education beyond that required by the individual's previous class standing. Consequently, to assess the nature and amount of social mobility here, we can look primarily at the effects of marriage and achievements on formal education.

Looking first at marriage, a sample of 100 randomly chosen household heads was constructed in which there were 51 household heads from Class A, 33 from Class B, 5 from Class C, 8 from Class D, 2 from Class E and 1 from Class F. In each case, the occupation of the household head's father and the occupation of the household head's spouse's father at the time of the household head's marriage were determined. Somewhat to my surprise, 51 of the 100 marriages involved people from different classes. In this system, class boundaries are not enforced rigorously by endogamy. Individuals are relatively free to choose their mates outside of their own class. Looking closer at the mixed class marriages, it was found that the majority resulted in a household of the lower class. In the Class A/Class B marriages, for example, 73 percent of these resulted in Class A households. Thus, we may conclude that there is mobility through marriage in the Philippines, but most of the time it means downward mobility for the person from the higher class.

This picture was confirmed by all of the male household heads among the 494 that we interviewed, who compared their current occupations with the occupations of their fathers at the time of marriage. More than half, or 52 percent, enjoyed the same class standing. However, of those that did not, 19 percent moved up in status (14 percent up one class and 5 percent up two classes), while 29 percent moved down in class status (24 percent down one class, 4 percent down two classes and 1 percent down four classes). Of course, some of this mobility was caused by factors outside of the family relations established in marriage. But this data confirms that there is mobility between classes and that there is more mobility downward than upward. The figures become more impressive when one realizes that more than half of society is in Class A and therefore cannot move down.

To evaluate the role of formal education in social mobility, we may compare the educational achievement of the household head's father with his own educational achievements, to see if the son had acquired more of the educational qualifications for upward mobility. Such a comparison would be biased toward *upward* mobility by the fact that individuals who did not become household heads are omitted, i.e., the society as a whole would not be represented. However, the comparison

is still revealing. When the data is plotted, as in figure 6, we would initially suppose that the condition of "no social mobility" would produce a straight line with the formula $X = Y$, that is, the father's educational achievement (X) is equal to the average of the sons' educational achievement (Y). But, since there has been some improvement in the availability of education between the two generations, the line of zero mobility is $X = Y + C$, where C represents the systemic educational improvement. Interestingly, C turns out to be 5.1 years of education, implying that to simply maintain a particular status in society, an individual would need, on the average, about five years more education than his father.

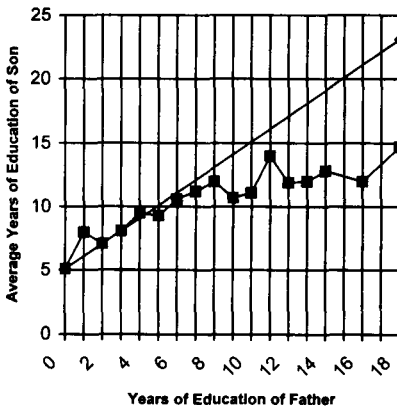


Figure 6. Comparison of Father's Education with Average Education of Adult Male Offspring

These data significantly diverges from the $X = Y + 5.1$ line by turning down to the right, suggesting downward mobility. Part of this divergence, I must caution, is a product of the method: if the father's education was four years of college education (giving a total of 14 years), it would be irrational to expect the average for the sons' education to be nine years of college education ($4 + 5.1 = 9.1$ or a total of 14.1 years). Nevertheless, there is definite evidence of downward mobility among sons whose fathers had between five and fourteen years of education. The household heads who were sons of college graduates, for example, had, on the average, only three years of college education and this was at a time when college education was readily available. Given the bias mentioned, we would conclude that this data presents clear evidence of downward social mobility in the population as a whole.

Lastly, there is some information about the variability in social mobility during the thirty years prior to my research. If the marriages of the household heads were sorted according to the time period in which they occurred and then the percentage of the marriages that involved spouses from different classes determined, we obtain the curve in figure 7. This curve suggests that social class boundaries were gradually becoming less restrictive between 1945 and 1964. This was a time of economic expansion and prosperity in the Philippines as the country was recovering from the war. This was also the time that Class C emerged as a distinct group. All individuals in Class C in Ozamiz married in the period between 1955 and 1964, with more than half of these marriages involving individuals of different, pre-existing classes. With the advent of the Marcos era in the late 1960s, however, there was greater emphasis on class boundaries and the incidence of multi-class marriages began to decline. Even the copra boom in the early 1970s could not reverse the trend.

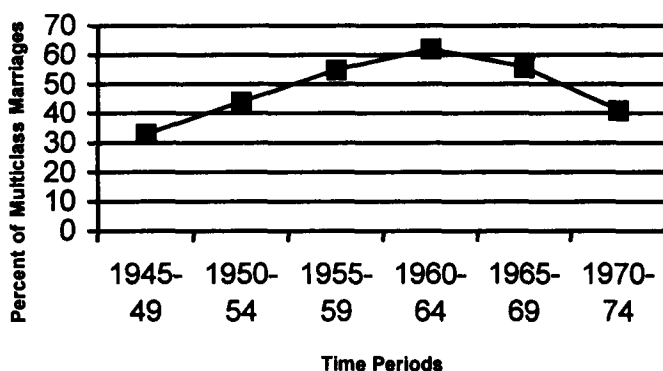


Figure 7. Class Mobility as Indicated by Interclass Marriages

Information regarding the second set of questions, evaluating the nature and changes occurring in the class system as a whole, is more impressionistic. The long-standing dependence on cash crops has produced many problems in the current class structure, most particularly, the great disparity in wealth between the top and the bottom of society. A plantation economy tends to produce labor surplus in the cities. With immigration to the cities and high birth rates in the labor class, the size of Class A is likely to continue to grow in proportion to society as a whole. The stability of the system will depend on the ability of the

landed elite to redirect their profits to the good of the population rather than to their own welfare.

At the same time, members of the landed elite are not in control of the outcomes of their agricultural efforts. The Philippines has become, as many third world nations have, a place where agricultural raw materials are grown for the industrial nations of the world. The value of the agricultural products is determined by events and conditions in the industrial countries. Regardless of this fact, cash crops have become so dominant that the country can no longer feed itself. Rice paddies and cornfields are replaced by the spread of plantations and cities. The municipality of Ozamiz, for example, covering 89 square miles and 12 percent of the province, consumes three times more rice than it grows. In 1975, rice was being imported from Burma and Thailand and entering the port of Ozamiz at the rate of 200,000 kilograms per month, according to Rice and Corn Administration officials.

The overall prognosis for social stratification in the Philippines therefore seems pessimistic. One wonders how large Class A can get before the system collapses under the weight of unmet social and economic needs. The positive aspects include such phenomena as the appearance and growth of Class C and the incredible resilience of the tropical ecology. Social mobility can be achieved and with dedication and effort, the ecology can be changed to support large populations with multiple food crops.

Summary and Conclusions

The present study confirms, extends and refines Berreman's description of social inequality in urban Philippines. The designation of the stratification as lower, middle and upper classes is dropped and the system is shown to consist of six classes. As Berreman discerned, there is a major hiatus between the lowest class and the others as a result of the lack of dependability of Class A resources. Whereas the upper classes have salaried incomes and other reliable resources, Class A, which is the majority of the population, lives in a precarious economic condition with unpredictable, day-to-day incomes. Berreman was also correct in pointing out that the classes are not simple but involve significant substrata as was shown in the case of Class A, in particular. Berreman's emerging middle class is here resolved into three classes, Classes B, C and D, although, in fairness, I should add that Class C appears to have formed after Berreman's work. Class B is the reservoir of skilled and educated people that does the pivotal work of the society;

they are the teachers, policemen, craftsmen and middle managers who make the system work. Class C is the exciting new layer of the system representing economic optimism; specializing in geographic mobility, they bring new products and services to outlying areas and build small businesses that provide employment. And Class D unites the professionals that guide the society's activities; they are the upper management, the ranking officers, the legal, medical and technical experts.

Whereas Berreman described the Chinese merchants as an ethnic group, the present study sees them as a social class, Class E. Since the time of Berreman's report, families of Chinese descent have gradually spread throughout the class system. It is true that the Chinese merchants act to maintain control of their resource base, i.e., the major commercial institutions, and that they work actively to exclude non-Chinese from their social and economic groups, as witnessed by the membership in the Masonic Club, the Lions Club, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and others. They also stress group endogamy and the preservation of Chinese languages. But these characteristics are the characteristics of class as well as an ethnic group. In many ways, the Chinese merchants share the Philippine culture and give it precedence over their own traditions. It is certainly true that the Filipinos regard the Chinese merchants as an integral part of society and as a high status group.

Class F represents the long-standing landed elite whose position of dominance stretches back perhaps even to the time before the Spaniards came. Early in the country's history, the power of the landed elite lay in the control of the food-generating capacity of the land; for without land, one's family did not eat. However, over the centuries of Spanish and American domination, Spanish concepts of land rights and the American perspective of the consumer economy were introduced. Most significant, there has been an inexorable and accelerating march toward dependence upon cash crops and foreign markets. The economic well-being of the highest social class, i.e., the country's leaders, became more and more dependent upon world markets and less dependent on the harmony and mutuality of the Filipinos themselves. When world markets proved unkind, the landed elite exploited their own people more instead of reducing their dependence on those markets.

The general picture of social inequality in urban Philippines that emerged from the study was therefore disquieting. As of 1975, the permeability of the classes was declining and the gap between the wealthy few and the general population was widening. Evidence suggests that,

despite a high mortality rate, Class A, with 33 percent below the age of ten and large numbers of landless peasants immigrating from the remote barrios, was growing rapidly. Society was therefore becoming ever more bottom heavy and was on a trajectory that cannot continue without mounting human suffering. It is *possible* for the trend to reverse, for social inequality to lessen, however. The tropical ecology is amazingly flexible and prolific, capable of growing prodigious amounts of food crops in short periods. But true progress toward lessening the social inequities and stabilizing the country would only come when the landed elite turn their attention to the people and assume responsibility for the fate of the country. Considering that this means land reform and shifting land usage from cash crops to food crops, goals that have been discussed for decades without success, the situation is not hopeful.

Notes

1. Berreman wrote this paper in 1951 as an in-house resource document for the Economic Cooperation Administration in Washington, D.C.; it was later updated and published in 1956.

2. I was fortunate in this work to have the assistance of Elsa Valle who, as a resident of Ozamiz, helped in the translation and interpretation of the data. Two Peace Corps volunteers, Chris Meyers and Claudia Figari, also assisted me in the collection of the data as their schedules allowed.

3. This would be roughly the equivalent of a family of the same size living on \$400 per month in the United States at that time.

4. Figure 3 must be interpreted with the understanding that land tends to come in five-hectare parcels. Thus, the peaks at 5, 10, 15 and 25 are artifacts of the legal system.

5. Fire is a serious problem in urban Philippines. About six months after I left Ozamiz, a fire broke out in the central district and one-third of the city burned before the fire could be brought under control.

6. This approach to the identification of social classes might be difficult to employ in the Philippines today. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the number of Filipinos (mostly women) who worked overseas increased dramatically. Most of them sent a substantial portion of their income back to their families, producing the so-called "katas ng Saudi" phenomenon (referring literally to sap from the Saudi Arabian "tree"). Some relatively poor families, consequently, were able to acquire more possessions than they formerly could, as long as a family member was overseas. Even in 1976, I would occasionally see a television antenna rising inexplicably from a very poor house. When the family member returned home at the end of her contract, however, no comparable employment could be found and the items purchased with the extra income would frequently have to be sold (Sardalla 2001).

7. Usually Catholic literature.

8 The top ten medically-diagnosed causes of death in Ozamiz in 1975, in descending order, were pneumonia, heart disease, avitaminosis and other nutritional

deficiencies, enteritis and other diarrheal diseases, tuberculosis, bronchitis, tetanus, influenza, amoebic dysentery and measles.

9. There was little difference in pay between different types of teachers.

10. There are no seventh or eighth grades in the Philippine education system.

11. If you saw someone on the local tennis court, he or she was probably a member of this class, partly because tennis was more popular around Manila among college-educated individuals.

12. A shophouse is a store whose upper stories are used as the private residence of the merchant's family.

13. This applied particularly to doctors and nurses, many of whom found themselves unable to practice in another country without the benefit of additional education and licensing.

14. A demonstration of their investment occurred one day when a fire siren went off in the downtown area. A large truck immediately backed up to a Chinese dry goods store and the clerks began hurling merchandise into the truck as fast as they could. The city's fire siren alarm had been accidentally set off, but it resulted in a dramatic demonstration of both the large inventory of the store and the fear of fire.

15. Most of these families have Spanish surnames but this means little because the Spaniards required all Filipino families to take Spanish names in the mid-nineteenth century.

16. Helpers in the Philippines are not servants. The relationship between the household head and his or her helper is generally characterized by benevolent paternalism. The helper frequently comes from a lower class family whose support and loyalty the landed elite family wishes to maintain. Typically, the helper may be ordered to perform a task if it is done in a gentle and preferably indirect manner, but he or she may not be abused or even openly criticized.

17. Members of the landed elite always expressed surprise whenever I mentioned the statistics on mortality among the population as a whole.

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