

## II. SETTING

### A. Physical Stage.

#### 1. Topography.<sup>4</sup>

The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two thirds of the island of Hispaniola. The island is located south of the Tropic of Cancer, between 18 and 20 degrees north latitude, falling thus within the Torrid Zone.

On the western third of the island is the Republic of Haiti. Ninety miles to the west of Hispaniola lies Cuba; seventy-five miles to the east is Puerto Rico. The island of Hispaniola is the largest of the Greater Antilles.

The Dominican Republic has an area of 19,322 square miles, with a maximum north-south axis of 170 miles, and a maximum east-west axis of 240 miles. The nation forms a sort of rough triangle; the base of this triangle is the irregular 224 mile land border which the country shares with Haiti, and the tip of the triangle is the far eastern end of the island, where the north shore veers south to meet the south shore veering north.

The topography of the island is a series of sharp contrasts between upland and lowland. There are few instances of gradual transition between the two. Two thirds of the surface of the nation is covered by mountains, and these mountains are for the most part located west of a meridian drawn through the capital city of Santo Domingo on the south coast. The mountains consist of four parallel mountain ranges

in the west, and a smaller one in the northeast.

The principal chain is the massive Cordillera Central, whose principal axis runs in a northwest-southeast direction through the center of the island. The community of Pino Tumbao is located in the Cordillera Central.

The following is a description of that mountain chain:

The Cordillera Central is the most elevated, highly dissected and complex range in the Republic. Its component ridges, densely forested and piled on top of one another in complete disorientation, crest erratically between 5,000 and 8,000 feet but contain several peaks of considerably greater height. One of them, almost centered in the massif, rises to 10,414 feet and is the loftiest pinnacle in the West Indies.... The rugged slopes of the Cordillera Central, sometimes faceted and always precipitous, with gradients as high as 40 degrees in many places, are the principal watershed for all of Hispaniola. Innumerable streams have carved the range into a jigsaw of yawning canyons and rocky gulches that make it almost impassable.... The Cordillera Central has remained wild, primitive, undeveloped and virtually uninhabited.<sup>5</sup>

This topography has profound influences on the agriculture, principally in terms of the soil erosion which rapidly follows upon deforestation.

Pino Tumbao is located on the northern flank of the Cordillera Central, in a rural district (sección) whose southern boundary is the ridge of the sierra, where the north flank of the Cordillera meets the south. The variations in altitude within the district are sharp (between a low of about 1,800 feet and a high of 5,000) and sudden (the rise takes place within a north-south linear distance of less than 10 miles). Most of the horticultural activities which I observed took place between 2,000 and 3,000 feet, but cultivation has been extended up to the

dividing ridge, and down on into the province on the other side of the sierra.

2. Soils Not much has been written about the soils of the Cordillera Central, and the few references that are available conclude that the region is unsuitable for agriculture. The parent material for the mountain soils is igneous rock that originated in the volcanoes of the late Cretaceous Period some sixty million years ago. The residual topsoil is extremely thin and poor, in comparison to the rich alluvial deposits which have formed most of the nearby, geographically more recent lowland soils. The high crop yields which characterize the first year of planting "virgin soil" in the Cordillera is probably less a result of inherent soil fertility, than of a small store of nutrients in the surface soil which is characteristic of most sites having a mature vegetative cover.<sup>6</sup> This "ersatz" fertility is depleted after one or two years of cultivation. That this is the situation in Pino Tumbao is indicated by the consistently low yields reported on reworked sites that have lain fallow for even as many as fifteen years.

3. Climate. Though Hispaniola is located in the Torrid Zone, it is spared the extremes of heat and humidity which plague many other tropical regions. This is due to three factors: it is an island, it is mostly mountainous, and there are constant trade winds from the north.<sup>7</sup> Thus the climate is generally mild and pleasant.

But there is great regional variety in the climate, a variety brought about principally by orographic factors. Thus the moisture-laden northeast trade winds from the Atlantic, as they meet the successive chains of mountains, lose much of their moisture in the form of orographic precipitation, and arid rain shadows are created immediately behind the mountains.

Pino Tumbao, since it is on the north flank of the Cordillera Central, and high enough to escape the rain shadow of the smaller Cordillera Septentrional just to the north, is blessed by an abundance of rainfall. It is located in a very humid subtropical climatic zone.<sup>8</sup> In a country where the rainfall reaches a high in some areas of 100 inches a year, and a low in others of 24 inches, the zone in which Pino Tumbao is located receives an average of about 75 inches per year, well above the average.<sup>9</sup>

Because of its varying, wild topography, there are several distinct types of orographic niches throughout the Cordillera Central, resulting in distinct precipitation regimes, which in turn result in differing calendars for agricultural activities. Thus the specific calendric timing for each of the scenes to be described below will vary in nearby regions. The shifting cultivation of the Cordillera Central is characterized by great variety.<sup>10</sup> Part of the variety is due to the factors now being discussed.

These minute regional variations in the onset of the

rainy season, and in the quantity of water which eventually falls, are also characteristic of the tropics in general.<sup>11</sup>

The safest generalization to make about seasons in the Dominican Republic is that there is a wet season and a dry season, but a fairly constant temperature throughout the year. In the country as a whole, the rains tend to fall between April and October, the rest of the year being not dry, but "less rainy." In Pino Tumbao the pattern is somewhat different. The rains do not begin until April and last throughout May. They slacken off until September, when there is a slight increase. Then in the months of December and January, there are frequent cold drizzles and days of cold mist, which contrast sharply to the sudden but torrential warm downpours of April and May. The only definite dry season is in February and March.

The overall national mean in temperature is 77 degrees Fahrenheit. Though no readings have been taken in the sierra, the annual mean for Guaroa is 70 degrees, and the readings for Pino Tumbao would most likely be a few degrees lower. The temperature of Pino Tumbao becomes much colder during the months of November, December, and January; and at evening and in the early morning those who have them wear sweaters or leather jackets; in these months it is too cold to sleep comfortably without some sort of a blanket at night.

In general there is more climatic seasonality in the Dominican Republic than in many other tropical areas, because of

of its distance from the equator. But the seasonality is not very marked.

Information on the floral environment will be given when the scenes involving clearing of the forest are treated.

## B. Population.

### 1. Definition and general trends.

The vast majority of the Dominican population are concentrated in two lowland regions: the Cibao valley east and north of the Cordillera Central, and the flatland coastal area in and around the capital city of Santo Domingo. Though 70% of the population is still rural, most of these campesinos live in the lowlands and practice permanent-field agriculture under varying conditions of land tenure. The serranos of Monte Adentro (including the paraje of Pino Tumbao) belong to a numerically small subset of the campesino population (perhaps not exceeding 100,000 all told, though no reliable figures concerning this matter are at my disposal) defined by the following characteristics:

a. Practitioners of shifting cultivation, which was once the most common form of agricultural exploitation in the Dominican Republic, but which in this century has given way in the lowlands to permanent-field cultivation.<sup>12</sup>

The serranos are the few retainers of a horticultural system whose crops and technology date back to the conucos

of the pre-Columban Arawak.

b. Squatters practicing their horticulture extralegally on government land, but with a locally evolved system of recognized rights to land. Though they possess no land titles, they behave toward the land--fencing it, selling it, passing it on to their children--as though they did. In this aspect they are operating as most campesinos in the Dominican Republic operated up until this present century.

c. In their language, in their religious practices, in certain aspects of their kinship organization, in certain items of their material culture, retaining traits which were reported to be widespread in centuries past.

In short the serranos are a numerically small subset of the campesino population which has retained to the present day the essentials of the way of life which was practiced in past centuries. They are the subset of the Dominican population which, because of their physical isolation and the marginality of the mountain lands for advanced agricultural practices, has in general been less subject to the processes of change or expropriation which have come over the nation's population as a whole during this century, notably during the era of Trujillo. That they have not entirely escaped will be made clear in the following pages.

The population of Monte Adentro is shown to be 3,016 by count of the individual house by house census sheets

made available to me. The census was made early in 1970. This population of 3,016 is distributed into 512 households, giving a modal household size of 5.9.

This total population figure for the district is extremely revealing. The figure arrived at in the census of 1960 was 3,170, indicating a fairly stable local population (with slight decrease). This is especially remarkable in light of the 34.6% increase which the nation as a whole is calculated to have experienced in the same ten-year time period. With an annual growth rate of over 3.6%, the Dominican Republic has one of the fastest growing populations in Latin America. The decrease in Monte Adentro indicates that migration patterns have definitely reversed; that the deluge of mountain migrants who peopled this part of the sierra in the thirties and forties have begun to move down into the cities. The vast unpopulated mountain reaches which welcomed the earlier migrants have now been filled up or put out of bounds by government decree. And whereas the former generation of migrants engaged mostly in rural-rural migration, the present generation as it leaves the hills moves into the urban barrios.

2. Sex Distribution. The data reveal a noticeable, though not unexplainable, surplus of males in the local population. Whereas the national breakdown is 50.5% males and 49.5% females, the breakdown in Monte Adentro is 52.3% males and



47.7% females--a disparity which would have occurred randomly less than four out of every hundred chances in a population of 3,016. This disparity is common throughout the country, where urban populations manifest a surplus of females, demonstrating selectivity by sex in rural-urban migrations. But this selectivity is apparently even greater than in the national rural breakdown by sex, which is 51.9% male and 48.1% female.<sup>12</sup> Thus the emigration which reveals itself in the stable population is seen to be heavier among the females.

### 3. Age Distribution.

The Dominican Republic has an extremely young population as compared to most of Latin America, and Monte Adentro has a population which is younger than that of the nation as a whole. The national breakdown shows 44.6% of the population to be under 15 years of age, 52.5% between 15 and 65, and 2.9% over 65.<sup>13</sup> In Monte Adentro the breakdown of the 3,016 inhabitants is: 49.8% under 15, 48 % between 15 and 65, and 2.2% over 65. When children are separated from their mothers, the chances are greater that the mother will be in the pueblo and the child will still be back up in the hills.

4. Population Density. With the aid of detailed topographic maps, generously given me by the Instituto Cartográfico Universitario in Santo Domingo, I was able to compute

the probable local density of the population.

The question of population density of shifting cultivators is one which has come to dominate the interest of recent students of the phenomenon.<sup>14</sup> Spencer points out a correlation between the level of technology of the shifting cultivation group and the density of population able to be supported. He points out primitive groups of integral shifting cultivators in highland New Guinea who support populations of up to 500 per square mile with a sophisticated brand of shifting cultivation.<sup>15</sup> The typically low population density associated with shifting cultivation is less a result of any inherent productive limitation to the system than of the intrusion of disruptive forces--political and economic--which upset the balance of the system and prevent it from reaching its maximum carrying capacity.<sup>16</sup>

The visible gradation by which an increase in technological sophistication is associated with denser populations is a very gradual pattern. A given cropping system in combination with other aspects of the productive or appropriative system will have its own unique maximum carrying level, beyond which density the group will have to change its technology or migrate. Not only technological practices, but also topological and edaphic factors work together to determine what will be the maximum carrying capacity in any given case. In the Cordillera Central of the Dominican Republic a complex combination of technological, topographic, edaphic, climatic and cultural (in the form of intrusion of outside agencies) factors

have apparently worked together to set a ceiling of some 40 persons per square mile as the maximum population density which can be supported easily by current practices in the sierra. This is the density at which the population has levelled off. For at least the past decade, some 3,000-odd people have occupied the 200-odd square kilometers of Monte Adentro. They have kept this level fairly steady, and have sent out members of the community--mostly females, as seen above--when the population density threatened to become too great.

This is a comparatively sparse segment of the population when viewed against the overall national population density of some 214 persons per square mile, which is one of the highest in Latin America. And it is also sparse when compared to the population reported for many primitive practitioners of shifting cultivation. The principal reason for the low carrying capacity of the mountaineer shifting cultivation is not its low technological level, though this is indeed low, as will be shown. Rather the prime limiting factor, I believe, is the combination of conuco making with extensive grazing of cows and pigs on the hills. One of the primary causes underlying the decrease of livestock has been the increasing population of the hills (up till the fifties). These two systems of economic endeavour are compatible only when the population density is extremely sparse--as it was in the Dominican Republic up till the second and third decades of this century.

5. History of arrival of population into the hills.

In the earlier decades of this century, the sección of Monte Adentro was practically uninhabited. The first permanent group of settlers were four families, related consanguineally and affinally, who came to where their livestock was and eventually settled down, in the year 1924. Reference must be made to the hato, the cattle raising economic institution which dominated the island's economy during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The traditional hatos were enormous ranges used for extensive grazing of animals. Those who did not have access to hato land on the lowlands frequently chose the option of branding and earmarking their cows and pigs, and bringing them up to the mountains, where they were turned loose to forage for food, and searched out once or twice a year to brand and earmark the newly born. The families who practiced this type of extensive grazing (called in local terminology "criar en el sitio") supplemented this activity with shifting cultivation. The first settlers of Monte Adentro were a small colony of this class of campesino who separated from their relatives in the mountains farther back east, and settled down in Monte Adentro, which is closer to the Haitian border. Each generation would eventually move several kilometers farther west and slightly higher up.

The first years of the settlement in Monte Adentro were

characterized by extremely sparse population, but by the mid thirties, the hills of Monte Adentro began to fill up.

What was behind this migration? The answer which the older men invariably give to the enquiry as to why they came here was "Adiós, buscando mejora," "Heck, looking for improvements." The majority of the migrants came from the mountain province directly to the west of Monte Adentro. The population had reached the point there where no more virgin land was available; and as will be seen the steepness of the hills and poverty of the soil prevents decent crop yields except for the first year of cropping on previously unworked land. Frequent droughts were also listed as causes of the move. This was all in the period when the Dominican population had just begun to soar. The mountain inhabitants saw just to the west of them empty hills, and began moving in that direction. The political frontier with haiti was officially far to the west. But in the mountains the demographic frontier was still east of Monte Adentro. The flood of migrants which came in the thirties and forties pushed the demographic frontier to its political limits. The westward movement then ceased, and the only direction left to go was south--up to higher altitudes of the northern flank of the Cordillera Central.

But in the late forties Trujillo, who was then heading toward the summit of his eventual economic power, sold lumber rights to the pine trees to a Santiago-based Company, and forbade the clearing of more land. He also established a

Parque Nacional, a forest preserve which included much of the higher reaches of Monte Adentro, above the altitude where pine trees were common, and thus this area of potential cropping land was also closed to the serranos. The population movement was frozen in its tracks. From the fifties on the population began trickling back out of the hills. The golden age of Monte Adentro, talked about nostalgically by the older serranos, had passed. As we have seen, the population in Monte Adentro, for at least the past ten years, has manifested numerical stagnation and decline.

Though the population move which filled the mountains was frequently carried on by lone individuals, most of the migration was done in the context of kin groups. The initial settlers, we have seen were small groups. Kinsmen of these small groups came from back east and settled nearby. Thus the initial population of the hills was composed of a limited number of kin groups; the occurrence of marriage between first cousins was a common affair; there are a small number of last names which occur repeatedly throughout the entire sección.

#### 6. Ethnic composition.

The Dominican population is for the most part the product of a mixture between White-European and Black-African, giving the nation a mulatto character, in contrast to the mestizo character of ~~many~~ other parts of Latin America.

The rapid extinction of the aboriginal population--the 1,000,000 that are estimated to have been on the island were reduced to 500 by mid-century--explains their lack of contribution to the present day Dominican racial stock. Roughly 12 percent of the national population is classed as white, 20 percent as black, and the rest, 57 percent, mulattoes. (The racial terms current throughout the Dominican are: white--blanco, rubio; mulatto--indio; black--moreno, negro, prieto. The indio of mulatto has nothing to do with "indio" meaning aboriginal. In the present usage of the Dominicans, indio is brown skinned, corresponding to triqueño of Puerto Rico, with no reference being made to aboriginal ancestry.)

The ethnic composition of Monte Adentro is distinctly lighter than that of the population as a whole. It is not unusual to see fair-haired, blue-eyed serranos. Marriages which would be classed as interracial occur with some frequency, the darker partner usually being the man. One possible explanation for the preponderance of light skin in the sierra would have the ancestors of the present population fleeing from the Haitians, who invaded the island several times in the first half of the nineteenth century. The majority of the fugitives would have been white or lighter skinned; and their descendants are the present population of Monte Adentro. One folk version explaining the scarcity of Negroes in the hills is the belief that the Negro could not adapt to the colder climate, needs the heat of the lowlands.

## 7. Residence Pattern.

It has already been mentioned that the 3,016 individuals in Monte Adentro are distributed into 512 households. The physical distribution of these households throughout the sierra manifests similarities and environmentally induced variations from the residence patterns common in other campos of the Dominican Republic.

Though I have seen this documented in only one work,<sup>18</sup> the majority of Dominican campesinos appear to live in nucleated clusters of houses, or in "roadside villages" which spread out along both sides of some roadway. My own observation in dozens of villages in different parts of the country indicates that in cases where an alternative is available the Dominican campesino builds his house in centralized clusters and travels out to his land, rather than building his residence on his land if the latter is distant from other dwellings.

The dependence of a group on shifting cultivation is not in itself predictive of one of the other settlement pattern--dispersed or nucleated. Both are compatible with the effective practice of shifting cultivation. In primitive groups examples abound for both types.<sup>19</sup> The pre-Columbian Arawak on the island of Hispaniola had developed a somewhat advanced social organization, in which there were four classes; chiefs, nobles, commoners, and slaves. Their primary economic mainstay was the shifting conuco, and their normal residence pattern was nucleated clusters of houses,



tanging from small settlements to large villages. After the arrival of the Spaniards, the aboriginal villages were gradually concentrated and shifted to areas where the Indian labor would be of most use to the Spaniards.<sup>20</sup>

The two economic institutions which dominated the country during the subsequent centuries were the hato (already alluded to) and the estancia. The former, as we have seen was a pattern of extensive livestock raising, in which masters and slaves lived in centralized quarters and made occasional excursions to the outlying reaches of the hato as need arose. The latter was a small agricultural unit, usually located near towns, producing both subsistence and cash crops. In both of these the settlement pattern was also nucleated.

Thus there are documented historical antecedents for the pattern of nucleated settlements in the Dominican Republic. But there are also historical antecedents--less well documented--for a quite different type of residence pattern. The mountains which cover two thirds of the nation's land surface have historically been the refuge of at least three different groups. Many Arawak fled from the control of the Spaniards up to the mountains. Almost from the beginning of their importation, many African slaves adopted the same measure.<sup>21</sup> And most recently, on the wake of the Haitian invasions of the nineteenth century and the subsequent forced encriptions into the armies of various local Dominican caudillos, many peasants chose the path of

living in the hills and hiding from the events which were devastating the lowlands. In all of these cases we may suppose that the nucleated residence patterns which characterized the lowlands gave way to more sparse settlement patterns. Such a dispersed settlement pattern would not only make strategic sense for the task of avoiding detection, but is the only type of settlement pattern which is consonant with the topography of the mountain areas. In short, though the lowland campesino residence patterns are nucleated, there are probably recent historical antecedents for semi-dispersed residence patterns in the mountains.

In Monte Adentro the 512 households are spread out over the mountains, and in comparison with the more typical Dominican campo, the residence pattern is very sparse indeed. The population density of 40 persons per square mile national population of 214 need only be recalled. Because level plots of land are practically nonexistent in the sierra, it is physically impossible to construct large nucleated settlements. Not only does the topography physically impede it, but the travelling time to a conuco a few kilometers away as the crow flies will be much greater in the mountains with steep ups and downs and rivers to cross, than a corresponding distance in the lowlands. This combination of sparse population and rugged topography has resulted in a settlement pattern characterized by very small nuclei of houses throughout the hills. Few houses are made in complete isolation (though these do occur);

the preference for living in proximity to other houses is maintained to the degree consistent with the mountains. The small nuclei that do form are usually not as compact as in a lowland village; there is a considerable breathing space of several hundred feet or more between most bohíos .

The clusters of households that have arisen in the past three decades are generally patrilaterally related tri-generational extended families. As the children of the first settlers grew up, their children tended to move farther west. But now that the westward movement has stopped, sons tend to build houses in proximity to their fathers and bring their women in, the daughters generally marrying out and going out to live near the parents of her spouse. Though this pattern is occasionally broken, as when a man goes to live near the parents of his wife, the predominant practice is for a man's first move toward independence to be the construction of a house in proximity to that of his father.

Within these small clusters of patrilaterally related households there is much interhousehold interaction. Though the modal household pattern is the nuclear family, the economic cooperation and food exchange that occurs between these households is great enough to warrant the construction of supra-household clones for analytic purposes. This matter will recur in this paper as the question of labor exchange comes up.

The community of Pino ?Tumbao strongly manifests the

above mentioned settlement pattern. The thirty one households are spread out over some five square miles of mountains (approximately 36 people per sq. mile). There are four clusters of households in which the children are inter-related principally through patrilineal ties.

The one exception to this residence pattern is the nucleus of houses in La Sabanita, where the forest rangers and other government-paid employees live. In this community the twenty-odd houses are arranged in fairly close side-by-side order around a flat field. This pattern, which is common in other parts, is more in line with the traditional way of laying out a community. At one end of the sabana is a church and a new school, as well as the house of the chief forest ranger and political leader of the district. The anomalous (for the hills) settlement pattern is only partially a result of the availability of an extended flat piece of land. It is more directly a result of the anomalous economic position of this community. The forest rangers, principal local businessmen, and the medical practicante, as well as the driver of the jeep which is the principal connection between La Sabanita and the outside world, live in La Sabanita. Thus most of the inhabitants of La Sabanita do not live by shifting cultivation. Their presence in the hills is related to some service or supervisory function which they fill in relation to the shifting cultivator communities farther into the hills.

Thus the physical establishment of their community is not made in light of the same considerations which govern the placing of the houses of the shifting cultivators. They are able to retain to a greater degree the closely nucleated residential pattern which is more typical for the lowlands, and consequently for the Dominican population as a whole.

The relative dispersion of mountaineer settlement morphology has been touched on above. The question of its relative permanence will now be broached. At one point in his life, the man in the hills will probably get legally married (after he already has children), build a sturdy bohío in one place, and settle down. Marital data on the 512 households shows this pattern very clearly: men begin their marital careers in consensual unions (usually, but not always, coresidential). Legal marriage typically comes late. The first age bracketed at which more than 50% of the men are legally married is the 40-49 bracket, where 65.4% of the men are legally married (23.8% still being in consensual unions.). This action of getting legally married is ideally the casting of roots whence the man will ne'er more budge. Quite a few men do budge again, and a startling number of old men have expressed the desire to leave the sierra and chance life in the pueblo with children or other relatives already there. But these moves are not a part of the typical shifting cultivation cycle. The pattern which is considered

Ideal, and which appeared to be the common practice before hardship hit the sierra in various forms, was for the shifting cultivation to be practiced from a permanent residential base. A man did his migrating in his youth, but eventually settled down. Shifting cultivation is a way of life, but shifting residence is not.

If a man has settled down, but available land is distant; or if a young man still in his father's house needs to go a distance to find land, the practice today is to set up temporary residence on the conuco. At certain critical periods in the cropping season, some family members may have to move out and actually live on the conuco if this is very far from the family bohío. The temporary dwelling erected on the conuco for this purpose is called a rancho. It is an extremely primitive type of shelter in which cooking and sleeping implements are crowded into an extremely small one room hut. The walls of the hut are most often irregular boards from the wood of the palm tree, nailed to thicker uprights; the top is covered with a makeshift roof of cana or yaqua. Though cases were seen where a man will live completely alone in the rancho, an effort is usually made to have at least one female present to do the cooking and washing of clothes. Because the ranchos are located in well-nigh inaccessible sites, food must be transported by animal from the principal residence to the rancho. Residence on the rancho does not usually last for more than a week at a time.

The households for which census data were made available comprise the population of Monte Adentro, which is an administrative unit called a sección; this unit is divided up into smaller units, called parajes. Pino Tumbao and La Sabanita are both parajes within the larger sección of Monte Adentro. But though everybody knows what the name of his paraje is, there is little value in treating the paraje as a functional unit in any sense. My choice of one paraje, Pino Tumbao, as a focus of intenser observation was a practical choice. By no means is Pino Tumbao a closed system or a corporate entity in any sense of the word. Though each paraje has its local authority, appointed from without but a member of the local community, the population dwelling within the bounds of a given paraje in no sense coordinates its behavior in any special way with the other members of the paraje. The genuine group boundaries--in the sense of observable interpersonal and interclonic interaction--cut freely across paraje boundaries. The only important functional units above the level of the individual are the coresidential units generally--but not exclusively--composed of close consanguineally or affinally related individuals. These units I have been calling households. Over and above the household unit a higher-level functioning unit can be isolated on the basis of joint participation in certain types of activities. These units have already been briefly discussed when mention was made of the patrilaterally related household clusters which dot the hills.

This distinction between functional units and administrative units is essential to keep in mind. In this sense the situation in Monte Adentro, and the Dominican Republic as a whole, differs fundamentally from the situation reported in several Central American communities.<sup>22</sup> In these latter communities the administrative unit of the village possesses genuine clonic status. An individual's access to extravillage land, for example, is contingent on his membership in a particular village. And squabbles occur between villages as units over access to portions of land not located in either village. Such a situation would make no sense to the Dominican mountaineer. Initial, continued, and exclusive access to plots of land is based on other factors, later to be treated. Anybody can come in from the outside and, if other conditions are met, acquire access to land. There are innumerable cases of cultivators in one paraje being recognized as owners in one, two, or more parajes other than the one in which they reside. Thus the unit called a paraje scarcely merits the status of "community." My use of the term community throughout this paper is merely a terminological convenience.