

## PANAJACHEL

PANAJACHEL: A GUATEMALAN TOWN IN THIRTY-YEAR PERSPECTIVE. By ROBERT E. HINSHAW, foreword by SOL TAX. (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1975. Pp. 203. \$16.95.)

Paranoia oftentimes results when another anthropologist restudies "your" community. You may feel possessive about "your" community or fear criticism of your research. It is indeed commendable that in this restudy of Panajachel, Robert Hinshaw not only received the blessing of Sol Tax, whose *Penny Capitalism* concerned mainly Panajachel's economic organization, but was given access to Tax's primary data. This provided an enviable baseline to gauge changes there over a thirty-year period.

Panajachel is located on Lake Atitlán, probably the most exquisite mountain lake in the world. Because of its setting, there has been an inundation of tourists and a boom in chalet construction. Certainly these factors would be expected to precipitate change in the native Indian culture, change that might be destructive of identity and community cohesiveness. Furthermore, during the period from Tax's study to the present one (1936–64), the native Indian population has nearly doubled and increases have occurred among Ladinos (non-Indian Guatemalans) and foreign Indians as well. One would expect the expanding population also to affect the Indian economic base with repercussions on other aspects of the culture.

Hinshaw found that the population pressure on economic resources has been mitigated by a broadening of the economic base. Panajachel Indians have branched out into the construction industry and increased Ladino population and tourism have provided more service occupations. However, the increase in the standard of living since 1936 is largely caused by a "spectacular inflation in land values" (p. 22). More surprisingly, stability of identity and community integration have been maintained. Also, of interest as regards economic change, has been a greater freedom in the allocation of resources. *Cofradía* (religious brotherhood) service—which necessitated large expenditures for alcohol, food, fireworks, etc., and which served as a leveling device—has declined in importance. Fewer men are willing to take on this expensive burden as alternative uses for savings become more acceptable. According to Hinshaw, this attitudinal change can mainly be attributed to the influence of Protestantism and Catholic Action.

An important ramification of economic change has been a trend toward greater ladinoization. This is manifested among many Indians in change to Ladino dress, acquisition of greater facility in Spanish, and more frequent utilization of the clinic. The first two changes have been necessary for success in the new economic enterprises. The modified caste system is weakening somewhat with increased interaction between Indians and Ladinos; this is especially ap-

parent among Protestants and those whose schooling exceeds fourth grade. It should be pointed out, however, that caste distinctions persist in the retention of many Indian customs and identity and Indians are still considered inferior on the social scale.

Most fascinating to me was the section on world view. The belief system of Panajacheleños has changed perceptively only among Protestants and those with at least a sixth grade education. The world view of traditionals has remained relatively stable. The only premise that has been weakened significantly among traditionals is that "women passing over men weaken the latter physically and mentally" (p. 110). This especially interested me because of the strength of this premise in the Guatemalan village where I carried out my fieldwork; I was gratified to find Hinshaw questioning its implications. I have also wondered which this implies: inferiority of women or the power of femaleness, including menstrual blood. Also impressive were the carefully compiled statistics on acceptance of propositions, premises, and beliefs; their comprehensive listing would be invaluable to others studying Guatemalan communities.

While emphasizing the expanding economic base to explain continuity and change, Hinshaw also brings in other variables such as Protestantism, educational level, and military service. He is, however, fully cognizant that other factors may be influencing the culture. My research was undertaken in an Indian-Ladino village in 1961–62, and to the best of my knowledge there had not been any appreciable expansion in the economic base—agriculture remained the main source of livelihood and Protestant missionizing had met with scant success. The Indians still clung to their identity despite becoming more ladinoized. As in Panajachel, *cofradia* service was waning, which affected the leadership patterns. (I wish Hinshaw had included information on political organization.) Nearly all Indian men were dressing in Ladino-type clothes, the clinic was becoming more acceptable, and some Indian families were replacing their thatched *bajereque* houses with adobe houses with metal roofs. I believe some of the reasons for change were the influence of national political parties, foreign priests, and possibly increased education. Cultural stability could be partially attributable to the largely voluntary nature of the acculturation process, allowing Indians to select items of change at their own pace.

I have not, of course, covered all of the important points in *Panajachel*. There is much to praise: usefulness to culture change theory and Guatemalan literature and the infinite care in methodology. It was a bit difficult to read at times and I sometimes wondered if I had misunderstood a vital point, but that could be my fault. For example, I understood that living standards had improved (p. 22) but near the conclusion, it is stated that "even in Panajachel there is no significant improvement in living standards" (p. 156). I sincerely hope that the optimism expressed in the Epilogue is indeed warranted—that economic ladinoization will continue without causing instability and loss of identity and that this will serve to bring social equality to the Indians.

EILEEN MAYNARD  
*Rhode Island College*