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Segundo Viernes: Miracle in the Valley of the Butterflies

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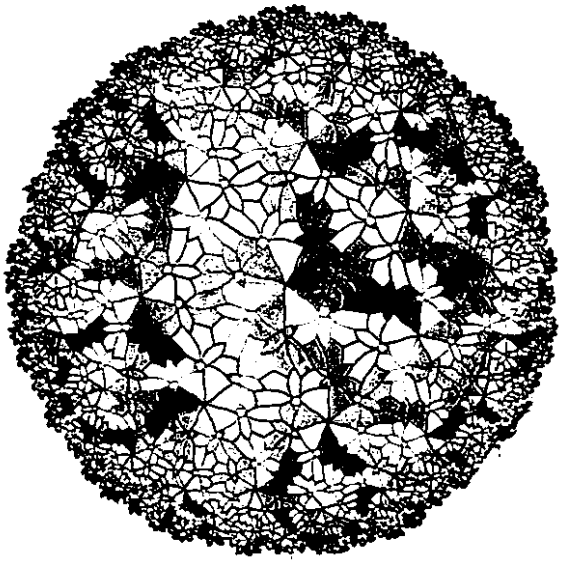

By

Colleen Springer

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Dedications

In the culture of my country, where individualism is so highly valued, I begin with a dedication on behalf of the beauty of partnership, to Edith Turner, the Marings, the McCalls, and *mi primo informante*, Roberto.

A fallen flower

returning to the branch?

It was a butterfly.

-Zen poem

Acknowledgments

My warmest appreciation goes out to all the kind people of San Miguel Papalutla, especially to Don Serapio and Sra. Hilda Perez. A million thanks also goes out to my advisor, Dr. John McCall, and Dr. Frederick Williams of the University Honors Program at Southern Illinois University, for believing in and supporting my efforts.

Introduction

In the category of rituals, annual public celebrations in accordance with the ecclesiastic calendar have generally not been called to the attention of anthropologists on a descriptive level. Such rituals have been paid little attention, probably because the predominantly Catholic ambiance seems quite distinct to say, studies of pre-Colombian or African rituals.

Segundo Viernes de Cuaresma del Divino Rostro is a profane and religious public ritual celebrated by the people of San Miguel Papalutla, a small village in Northeastern, Oaxaca, Mexico.

Fiestas, both religious and secular, are very major occasions, because in Mexico, to celebrate is an important cultural practice. The fiesta, in essence, is the climax of a long process of work. Across the gamut of Mexican celebrations, the "familiar" celebrations, for example, baptisms, birthdays, weddings, and funerals, hold the most cultural weight. Friends, relatives, *compadres y comadres* are socially obligated to attend. These rituals present situations crucial to the everyday lives of Mexican people and occupy a considerable portion of familiar time.

The fiesta serves to strengthen the collective spirit of the villagers. It is an occasion that calls for music, dancing, fireworks, special dishes, rodeos, decorating the town, rosaries, mass, processions, and prayer.

Some celebrations are joyous. Others are mourning occasions. Segundo Viernes is a mix of both, with a symbolic theme of sin and forgiveness, all done in commemoration of a miracle, a blessing which was bestowed upon the entire village, by God the Father of Divine Counsel. It is a time of both diversion and devotion.

Method of Study

In this paper, I use an "ethnopoetic-mirror" approach. This is a participant-observer method, that relies heavily on an aesthetic strategy, for creating an ethnography which is presented from a socio-anthropological perspective, as well as including the psycho-social perspective of the ethnographer. In this way, it is ultimately left up to the reader to make more personal, cultural interpretations, based on the contents of the ethnographic material. It is an all-inclusive approach to ethnographic writing, that can potentially provide a more holistic look at *how* the union of both cultures in the field - the culture of the ethnographer, and the culture of the group in study - has resulted in this particular study. It is an ethnography with twin narratives.

Aim and Purpose

In this paper, I aim to analyze and interpret the structure of the ritual, Segundo Viernes, and to also summarize a general view, of where the ritual fits in the cosmology of the Papalutecos, in which Catholicism, introduced in the 16th Century by the Spaniards, is integrated and appropriated in their indigenous, Mixtec pueblo.

In doing so, my goals are to illustrate:

1. The importance of celebration and hard work in the Mexican cultural tradition
2. The blending of the sacred and the profane, the official with the private
3. Themes of sin and forgiveness
4. The ceremonial confirmation of identity
5. The fundamental activities of communal expression
6. The ritual organization and representation of time, work, space, and objects.

"No autobiographies please";
The Search and the Research

It all started as an honest idea for fieldwork. One evening my friends from work invited me over to watch videos, and it turned out that the videos were not movies that they had rented, but home recordings of a lively festival, *Segundo Viernes*, which takes place annually in their home village in Mexico. The images in the videos were much like ones I had seen in videos of African celebrations, shown in several of my undergraduate anthropology courses.

I began asking all sorts of questions about their village, including if whether or not any anthropologist had ever done research there. They told me that no anthropologist had ever been there, probably because it is too small. "Plus", they added, "...we don't have any showers or running water there. You have to bring a towel to the river when you go to bathe".

They were three young men living in a modern, compact, Southern California apartment. I had worked with two of them for three consecutive summers in the same seaside, tourist cafe during which time I formed interesting friendships with each of them. Oftentimes new workers would be hired on, later to find out that they were cousins or nephews who had come to California - all from the same tiny village in Oaxaca.

As an anthropology student, the contrast between the image I had in my mind of their small village and the reality of everyday life in Southern California, astounded me. Just the thought that my good friends left what sounded like a small paradise to be dishwashers, busboys, and cooks, here in the US, was incomprehensible to me. There, they are all "owners" of communal land. The land is fertile, the water is clean, there is livestock and fowl to raise. I could not fathom any reason, besides money, that they were in the Orange County, tolerating the smog, to earn a minimum wage.

In fact, one of young men could not return to his native land, even if he wished to visit. Unless, of course he was willing to risk paying (and maybe losing) at least $1,000 to the *Coyotes* in Tijuana, upon returning to El Norte. Considering the astronomically high unemployment rates in every state of the Mexican Republic, and the entire present socio-economic crisis in general, even for the love of his family, it is just too large a risk. Besides, the primary reason he is here in the States, is *for* the love of his family. He has been in California so long that he knows nothing of the work of *el campo*, the work of his father and grandfathers.

This does not mean that he does not remember his village, his small *pueblo* in Oaxaca, San Miguel Papalutla. They all speak of Papalutla with a mixture longing and pride in their eyes. The word that becomes the central theme to nearly all conversations with any one or all of them, is *el rio*. I quickly concluded in my mind that the single, small river that runs north of the *Cerro de la Cruz*, is the natural and social lifeblood of their village. It seems that apart from their families, the river is the memory that they hold closest to their hearts.

This is interesting because in actuality, the river is women's territory. They spend many hours washing clothes on rocks, later hanging them to dry on trees and shrubs. The river is where all of the new *chisme* is transferred most quickly amongst kin, (however the communal kitchen and the *molino* run close seconds). The women have an active political role in the safekeeping of the river's environmental well-being. In other words, they are the guardians against pollution caused by non-biodegradable soaps or trash. It is the water for bathing, and the drinking source for all the animals in the pueblo.

Life begins, and is sustained by, the river. Many couples head to small coves beside the river for privacy, as there is usually very little in their homes; small, one-room quarters, full of large families. Young children use the river to barter soft drinks or sweetbreads in the two small, general stores. For x number of trips to the river to carry back two, 3-gallon-sized buckets of water, hanging from a stick placed across their shoulders, they can earn themselves a soft drink or some candy.

In jest, I mentioned during one of the videos that I would really like to go down there sometime to study the entire "Segundo Viernes", three-day ritual. "Do you think you could ask someone down there for me?'

"Ask someone? *We* are *mayordomos.* Oh yeah," they said, "We are *los encargados.* " "You can go with us if you'd like." "That is if *el patron* gives us the time off work."

"...And you know *I* can't go", said Federico, "I only send money down to help with the expenses." "You know those *toros del fuego* cost a lot."

Federico is the one of the three without a green card, and therefore cannot return annually for the fiesta. He is still, however, a *mayordomo.* The *mayordomos* are the people who have kinship ties of some sort to the community, and therefore customarily help economically support the annual fiestas in their *tierra.* In past decades when Mexico's economy was slightly better off than it is now, the town elders of Papalutla would nominate specific persons of the community, and ask them to accept the position of *mayordomo.* It was, and continues to be looked upon, as a great privilege and honorable responsibility, to be asked to be *mayordomo.* Mexican people will sometimes go as far to sell off all of their livestock, to accept the huge honor beheld in this title.

In more recent years, and more specifically since 1994, Mexico has been suffering quite a fiscal crisis. Furthermore, the economy of the state of California, and in particular that Orange County, has not been booming either. Papalutlans of today live primarily in the following three areas: Mexico City, Orange County, California, and the pueblo itself, San Miguel Papalutla.

One thing about the Mexican people, is that they would never risk the loss of a cultural tradition just to save some money. Today, the position of *mayordomo* in Papalutla is a voluntary one, and there are about equal contributions of funds from both sides of the border. Because the value of the money that is sent by those living in the United States is higher, even with less donors, more money comes from *mayoordomos* like Federico, living in The States. The

fiesta would never be canceled on account of lack of funding. That would be not only socially unacceptable, but religiously unacceptable as well.

The summer began tapering off into August and I eventually returned to Southern Illinois, having made plans with my newest friend from Papalutla, Roberto. He was the one of the three that I had not worked with in previous years, and the only one that was given permission to take a leave from his job. He was a cook, and I a waitress. We were both self proclaimed "*vagabundos* ".

Throughout the summer, I essentially "began" my fieldwork. The rapport I was building with my informant, Roberto, grew steadily. In fact, it grew into something more than rapport. I tried to continue reminding myself that he was my informant, my "subject", so to speak. After some time, he no longer looked like "just" an informant to me. Any further explanation is probably unnecessary.

Once back in Illinois, in the safety of the university corridors, I began to re-examine the fieldwork plans I had made for the new semester. Besides a trip to Papalutla with Roberto, I had also set prior plans to do some research in Oaxaca City. There I was to be working with mature adult populations and participating in the Elder hostel program.

Aroumd that time, the fire of the Zapatista movement was still burning bright in Chiapas, Mexico, the state which lies directly south of Oaxaca. I made plans to go see for myself what was going on there. I joined human rights workers, political activists, the international media, anthropologists and other students, for three months in San Cristobal de Las Casas. From there we went to several of the surrounding highland communities, as well deep into the humid lowlands of La Lacandona rainforest.

To aspire to be an anthropologist in Mexico, is a very lofty ambition. It is a field of study that seems as equally respected as music, political science, philosophy, or art. This same view of anthropology does not seem to be held too widely in the US. I was very well received by

persons working for the indigenous movement and, as a result, they took me into many of the communities. Although I was not aware of it at the time, one could say I was actually obtaining pre-fieldwork experience, *in the field.*

Throughout the months of August through late October, I continued a very consistent correspondence with Roberto. I always looked forward to his letters, and for the opportunity to answer them in Spanish, in order to practice my communication abilities. All the while, I was toiling in my mind, trying to analyze, and ideally, rationalize the strong feelings I had for Roberto. Naturally, my initial fear was the typical case scenario: "Anthropologist falls in love with her subject". "Couldn't happen to me", I thought. "I am always careful to keep my academic life separate from my personal life".

But somehow I knew that what I was experiencing was not that simple; That this type of learning was occurring differently.

I looked all around the classroom one morning in senior seminar, eyeballing the left hands of my classmates. I located a few persons wearing wedding bands, and asked them quietly after class, if we could meet for a few moments, to talk. Since we were all in our last year of undergraduate studies in anthropology, I went on the assumption that we were already somewhat, like-minded.

I asked one male classmate who looked in his mid-twenties, "How long have you been married?", just as an ice breaker, of course. My underlying quest was to find out if (potential) anthropologists generally married in or out of their own cultures. Obviously, this was solely for my own information and imagination, and my sample size was much too small to draw any, even semi-confident conclusion.

This first young man I asked had a Japanese wife. He was American. He said it had never crossed his mind that he may had "fallen in love" with his subject. Asia was his area of study in socio-cultural anthropology. I disclosed to him my fears and confusion. I am nearly certain, that he really wanted to let out a laugh at me, and that he found my worries to be quite

comical. I suspect, perhaps, honestly, he had thought about the same things, some time before he married.

Still I was not convinced. I could not shake my initial doubts. I was not doubting Roberto's mutual feelings of admiration for me. What I was really doubting, was my own strength to overcome cultural differences. If anyone, wouldn't anthropologists be the most well trained to do just that, as we are always keeping an eye peeled for human universals? I did not reach this conclusion until several months later, as you will see.

Meanwhile, I could not seem to figure things out, despite how hard I tried to analyze the situation on different levels. I thought the best thing to do at the time, was to simplify things, overall, and this could be accomplished by canceling the Papalutla plans. Hence, I severed my bond with Roberto over the telephone.

After that phone call, my life logically should have had become more simplified and easier to keep well organized. Travel plans to enter the Lacandon Jungle, and later the Elder hostel study, were sure to keep any anthropology student busy.

While in Chiapas, I attended a 8 day national forum for indigenous rights in San Cristobal. Groups from Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Guerrero, the three poorest states in the Mexican Republic (in that order), filled long discussion tables in various *salas*. There were representatives from indigenous groups of this continent, as far south as Peru, and as far North as Canada. Until attending that conference, I had successfully, consciously put Roberto out of the forefront of my mind.

But the rooms were filled with color. Everyone but the spectators and the press were dressed their traditional clothing. There were translators of every dialect to Spanish, so that everyone had the ability to speak, including, especially, the women. The rooms were warm and full of people and sound, as no theme was left unaddressed in the dialogues. It rained softly outside of the old church-turned conference center, each of the 8 days, while three rows of people-

civilian persons, the international press, and *La Cruz Roja* - stood outside, vigilantly guarding all entrances, in a three-link *cadena humana* .

Suddenly, every Mixtec man began to look like Roberto to me. I was haunted from that day forward, by the decision I had made to cancel my research in San Miguel Papalutla. I was not even sure of what region of Oaxaca it was in, because it is too small to be found on any map. But these people *looked* like Roberto. I felt that such a strong resemblance must had meant that they were from the same region. Finally, I had to ask someone. I found an approachable elderman.

"Disculpa si lo moleste, ?Usted es de Oaxaca? ?De un pueblo? ?Como se llama su pueblo, perdon? " "Por casualidad, sabe Usted donde se queda San Miguel Papalutla?" "Trabajo en California con unos buenos amigos que son de aquel pueblito". 'Me han dicho que desde Oaxaca, esta para el Noroeste".

"?San Miguel Papalutla ?", he asked, *"No estoy muy seguro, pero creo que es por la Mixteca Baja, por rumbo Puebla* ".

I thanked him, still thinking that even if Roberto did carry out his travel plans, regardless of my lack company, any search for him that I might think of carrying out would be doomed from the start with no available map. I dismissed it in my mind both as an anthropologist's natural tendency toward adventure and a foolish whim. I attended the indigenous forum for all of the eight days. I felt it was a rare opportunity to exchange ideas with many energetic, social justice activists from all over the world. Most of my time was spent watching the discussion tables of the Oaxacan representatives, particularly those groups from the regions of the *Sierra Mixteca*, nostalgic for the people I *would* had studied, had I not canceled my plans.

I returned to Oaxaca City to carry out the two-week Elder hostel study. It was amongst that group of older adults that I learned the most about myself, about the beauty of partnership, and a simple but profound human universal: we are not immortal. This realization,

somehow, took me by surprise, since I myself pertain to a culture which is so obsessed with youthfulness. It was a lesson that shifted my consciousness a bit, and changed my plans *again.*

What it taught me was that life and anthropology are not separate entities for an anthropologist; that they cannot and should not be viewed as isolates. To quote Toni Flores, "In anthropology, as in life, if you are doing it right, you always find yourself somewhere other than where you planned to be". I have come to hold this statement to be one of profound truth.

Throughout the two weeks in Oaxaca City, I carried out double research: the Elder hostel study, and my own investigation into finding the pueblo, San Miguel Papalutla. I figured, taking it one step at a time, if I were to find the village, I might be just as successful in locating my informant and *cariño perdido*, Roberto. I called back to San Clemente to see if I might be able to get a hold of Federico. Instead, the other roommate answered, and, understandably, he was hesitant to help me. Naturally, he was being protective of his *camarada.* The most he told me was this: " The closest largest city is Huajuapan, from there you can take a taxi. Just ask when you get there, because it's *un pueblo muy pequeño* ".

The following day, I went to INEGI[1] and pulled the 1996 GIS[2] prints of the entire *Sierra Mixteca, Baja* and *Alta.* I also traced a route for myself to Huajuapan and called the bus terminal for prices and times. The ride from the capital was about three hours to the northeast. Once in Huajuapan, I had no idea of how much further.

Until, three days before I planned to leave on my search, I went into *Nuestra Madre de Soledad,* a beautiful historic church, just a few blocks off of the main *plaza.* Having been raised Catholic myself, I felt very comfortable entering the church. However, the irony of its name

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[1] Instituto Nacional de Estadistica y Geographia Informatica

[2] Geographic Information Systems

seemed to be an omen. If anyone, perhaps it *would* be Our Mother of Solitude who helped me find Roberto.

The church had an adjacent museum, as many old, Mexican churches do. The *senor* at the door appeared kind enough, so I asked him the same thing I asked the indigenous family in Chiapas, anyone that looked half friendly in the bus terminal that was obviously waiting for a bus to Oaxaca, the INEGI folks, the men at the *Campesino Union....*, *"Por Dios, ?Donde esta San Miguel Papalutla?!"*

And finally, I was told, ever so surely, by the museum keeper in the Soledad church. Not *only* did he himself know the whereabouts of Papalutla, he went so far as to hand draw me a map, which turned out to be perfectly accurate, down to the curves in the *carretera.* I could have kissed him, I was so excited. Instead I properly and politely thanked him in Spanish and was on my way with the map in hand.

The last day of the Elder hostel study finished off with a farewell party for everyone, complete with music and a full moon to dance by. I was particularly happy to see that full moon hanging in the sky, knowing that the following morning I would be heading out very early to the second-class terminal in order to catch the 6am bus to Huajuapan. Traveling by land in the dark always seems a bit safer with a full moon. I prayed, put on my jade *collar,* and was off to Huajuapan.

Some four hours later, after being told by to 2 different *senoras* , "A young woman is not always safe traveling *solita* ", I arrived in Huajuapan. This city was very busy, and somehow it reminded me of San Pedro Sula in Honduras. I got off the bus and was instantly approached by several different men, all *taxistas* . I suddenly felt unsafe, but kept my mind well fixed on all my senses and wits. I looked one of them, an older man who looked like he had a family, right in the eyes and asked him, "How much to Papalutla?"

"And you mam, are?" ;
Anthropologist's First Arrival

He wagered the price with me a bit, and when I took all I could take of the staring along the throughway and amongst the shops, I got into his taxi and took a deep breath. I would pay 80 *pesos , ida y vuelta.* I was nervous to be in a taxi with a strange man alone in Mexico, not even ever having been to my final destination; I was also nervous because I knew, if I did arrive safely, I would finally be to the pueblo in the next 40 minutes. The *taxista* had a cassette of a beautiful female vocalist from Spain, playing in the tape deck. This put me nicely at a bit of ease. After winding about 20 minutes out of Huajuapan into high hills full of cacti and *guajes* , he spoke to me.

"Is this man expecting you? Or, what, you said you are "looking for him"?" See what trouble love can get you into, the things it'll make you do. I cant believe *this.*"

He made an abrupt turn off the highway. There was a small, green and white, federally posted sign which read, "Papalutla, 6km ". Suddenly we were driving on an unpaved stretch that slowly descended from the mountainside into one of the many fertile valleys of *La Mixteca Baja*, valleys that have been sustaining small, isolated groups of people, for thousands of years. The red and white church steeples were the first things to catch my eye. As we wound down to the single street, the only way in or out of the pueblo, I thought, it looks just like the photo I had seen of it, once before, in the apartment in California. But it seemed smaller in real life now, and even more beautiful.

When we pulled in past the small *capilla*, there were three to four of those similar Mixtec faces of young men and boys working on building a roof. They were smiling very curiously and had the same strong, straight teeth, characteristic of many Mixtec people. The *taxista*

was my ambassador to the village, although I had not asked him to be. He did most of the talking for me.

"Donde vive la familia Perez?"

With just that much word from the *taxista,* they explained, without hesitation, exactly where Roberto's family's house was. *"100 metros a la izquierda, con las puertas azules."*

We drove down several yards, and sure enough, the house was there. However, it was locked up, with a big stick across the doors. What luck, I thought, after all my planning and stress. Then I reminded myself that exactly *this,* is fieldwork.

The *taxista* was turning his cab around when someone came out to speak with us. I might add, that since the all of the women in the village stand in their front lawn or the doorway, when any car enters the pueblo, they had been watching the entire interaction, and especially staring at me with my white skin. A *Senor Ramirez* presented himself, and asked just who I was.

I explained the best I could and the *taxista* interjected when the Spanish words escaped me. *Sr. Ramirez* told us that I had missed the *Perez* family by only two days. Roberto and his father had taken *Sra. Perez* up to the capital, Mexico City, to have an operation, because she had taken ill.

As he was speaking, I noticed that he had a voice very similar voice to one of the two other young men I was working with over the years in California. Out of my pure curiosity I asked, " By chance, Sir, are you the father of Barney?" With a very direct look and surprised smile he replied, "*si*". I was equally surprised with the accuracy of my guess and the sur-reality that probably, at that very moment, Barney was making club sandwiches back in San Clemente and I, of all people, was standing in his village talking to his father. He asked me to wait a moment, I in turn asked the *taxista* who was getting anxious, and a moment later *Sr. Ramirez* came out of his house with a small tablet.

"Here is a telephone number to one of Roberto's cousins in Mexico. This is the best I can offer in helping you find him."

I thanked him as graciously as I knew how and was back to Huajuapan with the *taxista.*

In all honesty, by the time I got back to my little room in Oaxaca City that evening, I was almost completely discouraged. The discouragement I felt almost lead me to believe, that neither my research in Papalutla, nor my relationship with Roberto, were meant to be. I tried to convince myself that all was not lost. I had just completed a different study quite successfully. I would at least be returning to the university with some fieldwork experience.

I attempted to put it all to rest in my mind. It was very kind of *Sr. Ramirez* to have given me the phone number, but I thought that by calling, I would just be in for more disappointment. The telephones in Mexico are not very user-friendly, either. But after being back for three days after my adventure, I thought, what is there to lose now? I went into a *casa de larga distancia* , which helped to ease my overall fear of public telephones in Latin America, and asked the woman there how much it would be to place the call. I counted what I had in my pocket and based my decision to call on that. I had enough for 7 minutes.

The woman dialed the number and asked me to step into booth number 2 and pick up the receiver--it was ringing. After 3 rings there was a female voice on the other end. *"Bueno?* "

As fast as I could, I tried to explain myself, and ask to speak to Roberto. Somehow she already knew, vaguely, who I was. In a country where the use of computers is not common, this woman had somehow been pre-informed of me. Apparently, within three days, news of an American woman's mysterious arrival to the pueblo had traveled fast. This all worked to my advantage in the end. Although Roberto was not there, my luck had begun to turn with that phone call. She asked me to call again in 2 days, at a specific time, so that she would have a chance to locate him for me. I agreed to do so and thanked her, all in the seven short minutes.

Returning 2 days later to the same *casa de larga distancia* , the same woman was working, and now I knew what to do. She did the dialing, and I entered the booth. Again, after 2

rings, a younger woman's voice answered, and she told me that I was probably looking for her mother. "Just a moment", she said.

Then her mother, Roberto's cousin got on the line. I could tell, instantly, just by the tone of her voice, that this time I was finally going to be able to speak to Roberto. Five months had passed already since the regretted phone call I made to him from Illinois. I figured he may had been mad, and might still be, but that by now he would at least willing to speak with me by phone. After sort of a ritual introduction, which included a blessing for the both of us, she said, "Here's Roberto."

And he was there. I could not believe I had successfully found him after all. I spoke to him in English because I was too emotional, and it is most natural to emote in one's native language. He was not angry, but excited and sort of relieved as well. He asked of my whereabouts and assured me that he would be there on the following Thursday. He had to wait a few days to make sure his mother was recovering all right before leaving Mexico.

Those few days in between were very long. After finding Roberto again I felt like giving all the street beggars everything I had. Now that I had found him, I felt like I would not be needing anything. Finally, on Thursday afternoon as I was drying my hair outside in the courtyard under the sun, he arrived earlier than I had calculated possible, coming from the *DF*. He had taken the earliest bus. I thought I was hearing his voice, but did not look up, until I heard him say my name to the *señora* of the *posada* . It was a reunion as warm as the Oaxacan afternoon.

"La Mera Güera";

Anthropologist's Second Arrival

My second arrival in the pueblo was already anticipated by the community, as word had traveled via kin in Mexico City. Roberto and I arrived together, and we were very well received. Although I am American, and *el Norte* represents wealth, divorce, and women who only know how to cook in microwave ovens, I think they accepted me on these two premises: I was raised Catholic, so we at least shared a similar belief system and, by having already come alone to the pueblo seeking Roberto, they felt that I had proved my admiration for their kinsman. This worked greatly to my advantage as anthropologist because rapport was built much more easily than I had expected. People began calling Roberto and I over to their doorways, while we walked together through the street, to retell the story of my first arrival *in front of me* . Each person had a slightly different version, but just about everyone had a dramatic story of my emotional, first arrival, which they had either seen firsthand themselves, or had been retold to them by someone who was out on the street that afternoon.

I should also mention, however, that it is very common in *campesino* culture to accept any woman that a son "brings home", even if they do not like her. If parents see one of their sons coming toward the door, with a woman with a suitcase, they must welcome her with open arms. That is simply their way.

We arrived ten days before the start of the festival. The Perez's were still in Mexico, because Sra. Perez was still recovering from surgery. The taxi was paid, and I was very happy to have not arrived *solita* this time. We looked for the house key under the mango tree, and then under *la leña*. The key was not there, but we did find a huge spider. I said to Roberto, "What do you call these kind in Spanish? I'm pretty sure we have these too in Southern Illinois."

"We call them *"tarantulas* ", *hay que matarlas, eh* ? *Lo siento Budhista* ."

"*Tarantula, tarantula* ," I muttered in Spanish to myself. "Oh! Tarantula! I was hoping for a false cognate this time, but had no such luck. I would try not to think about them at night.

We were having no luck finding the key either when, all of a sudden as Roberto was checking the top of the roof, we hear his aunt call him, "*!Roberto! ?Ya venieron?* "

She brings us the skeleton key and about a dozen tortillas, *calientitas* , wrapped in a dishcloth. We are introduced warmly, and she does not stop smiling. She is a very dark skinned, hearty woman who wears her hair in two long braids, indigenous style. Just as quickly as she appeared, she leaves us alone to "eat and rest", smiling all the way home.

Roberto opens the two front doors of the adobe home, and inside it smells of damp earth after a rain. Once the doors and window are both open, the house feels very fresh. It has just one small window that opens directly above a narrow path. Behind lies the highest cerro, where goats and cattle graze, from sun up to sun down, and pastors and sheperdesses of all ages watch and care for their animals. Josefa, who is close to a hundred, can be seen from the window, daily. By now she has lost all of her family, and only has her cows, which she takes to graze upon the hillside. She is easily identified by the colorfully embroidered *morral* which is always strapped over her shoulder. In it she carries her food for the day, *unos taquitos de frijol* , some fruit, and water. It is incredible to see how the work of the *campo* maintains her, and many others like her.

Primarily, cattle raising is a male occupation in Papalutla, an occupation passed down from father to son. Young boys go out in the mornings with their fathers, grandfathers, and uncles, *before* school, learning the livelihood of the Mixtec peoples. However, today, there are also many young, adolescent women in charge of hundreds of goats. These young women run up the *lomas* on almost direct inclines with ease and spunk, right alongside the men.

Within the first three hours that the village learns that someone has "come home", even more importantly, with a *companera*, small gifts of food, such as tortillas, cheese, and

chocolate, are sent to the home of the individual. They are usually delivered by young children, with the motive of letting them be the first to make the judgment of the newcomer, and report home to the adults and rest of the family, with their innocent impressions. In this instance, the question was "*?Como es la güera?* ", "*la güera* " being me, because my skin is very light. I was glad to learn that unlike in Southern California where it has a negative connotation in the adolescent Hispanic community, here in Papalutla "*güera* " is an affectionate nickname.

The following day, the same *tia* with the key, told us that we needed to clean the family's section of land along the path that goes to the river. The *mayordomos* draw up a list of jobs that must be done in preparation to enhance the presentation of the pueblo. Not doing these jobs could cause the family a fine. Besides a fine, if not done, it could cause a negative impression upon the invites, an even worse consequence.

"Of preparations and orations";
Atmospheric Charges of Energetic Anticipation

We grabbed rakes and a machete and went down the hill to get started. It took us a good three to four hours to finish, not so much because it was a very long task, but because in those four hours, the entire village intentionally, but nonchalantly, passed us by. With each person or group of persons, we stopped working for introductions and new news of the community. It seemed as if Roberto were in some way related to every one of them. They were cousins, uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews, or at least that is what he called them. I would not have been able to keep all the names straight if I had tried. Nevertheless, I started right in that same day, setting up appointments for interviews with several of the people that were willing to listen to me explain my plans for my project.

I learned that, at least in Papalutla, and perhaps in all of Mexico, anything that is not formally agreed upon to be an *actual* appointment, is viewed as something very tentative. Many people that I thought I had interviews with did not show up to talk. However, I did speak with Sr. Ismael, the man first recommended to me by Sr. Ramirez on the day that we arrived. He invited us to speak with him in his home on the following evening.

Although he and his wife were expecting us, at first they did not seem ready to have us. This faded within a few seconds as Sr. Ismael's wife put on a flowered housecoat and some water to boil. Soon Sr. Ismael initiated some questions, which broke the ice very nicely for all of us. Then the jar of instant coffee and a plate full of breads was placed on the table in front of us.

We talked for quite awhile, and I was sure to ask all of my prepared questions. He pulled down an old, political document that had been framed and was hanging on the wall. It was the founding declaration of the pueblo that contained the census information for the year 1883, the year San Miguel Papalutla was originally founded (according to the original community document). In those times, the village consisted of three or four unified families, "descendants of the legitimate Aztec race, practicing the Catholic religious tradition that was passed on to us by our ancestors, but recognizing that the legitimate religion of the Aztec race was of the sacred nature, venerating the sun and the planets" (Torres). Roberto, and Sr. Ismael, are direct descendants of one of the three founding families.

I spent the week collecting as many interviews as I could. Two evenings before the start of the fiesta, I went with the men of the community (including Roberto, of course) to clean the collected branches of *laurel*. For some reason, this job is done exclusively by the males. When I asked why, the villagers simply told me the origins of the tradition. It goes all the way back to Roman times, and their tradition of crowning Olympians and honorable persons in woven *laurel* branches. For the fiesta, the men weave the branches into a wreath to crown the head of the sacred image of the *Divino Rostro*. Later, it is removed from the head of the sacred image and the leaves are shared and distributed amongst the *mayordomos* and guests, and they take them home with them in knotted plastic bags. It is drank in their homes as a type of sacred drink and as well as a

recuerdo of the fiesta. They believe that the *sudor* of Jesus Christ, and the calming, digestive aid of the laurel, grown from the soil of their homeland, makes it a holy tea, "*un santo remedio* ".

Although I was still unclear as to exactly why it was a male job, I did feel better knowing that I would not be intruding on some type of Mexican, male bonding occasion. There was a second explanation given to me as well. The men clean the *laurel* because at the same general hour, the woman are all usually in church praying the rosary. This fact also makes it a male space.

A significant part of the "work time" is spent in blessing each preparatory aspect separately. *Novenarios* are complete rosaries prayed on behalf of different community sponsors as "preliminary" type blessings. A rosary, which by its repetetive nature could actually be called a chant, is a meditative action prayer. In fact, it a set of many prayers, which are counted out with strung beads, with each bead representing a specific prayer. Consequently, the rosary sponsors are usually major contributor *mayordomos*. Rosaries are said the entire week, each night before the start of the fiesta. Ringing churchbells and the simultaneous booming of firecrackers, is the signal that the rosary is about to begin. It is a customary practice derived from an Iberian tradition. In times past, the King of Spain ordered the *novenarios* to be an obligatory practice during the start of all religious and civil festivals (Barrios).

Working with the men is much unlike working in the community kitchen with the women, where it always a female bonding occasion. In the kitchen, women speak of familiar knowledge: of their children, of their work, grandchildren. They share pains, successes, and failures. It is a time for catching up on all that is happening within the families. The women usually bring their children to the kitchen as well. It is the central meeting place for the youngsters, where they quickly part into small groups and situate themselves outside the *comisaria* , in front in the street, on the swings, or with the band, until they get hungry. When they are hungry, they reappear suddenly at their mothers' sides.

Like in many cultures, the kitchen is really where the majority of valuable information was revealed to me. The day prior to the start of the fiesta, a call was placed very early

in the morning over the town loudspeaker, to all the *mayordomas* , and any other women who were willing to help in the community kitchen. Preparation of the *mole* was to begin.

Mole is a ceremonial dish made famous by the state of Oaxaca, which has at least six different known varieties in black, red, yellow, green, orange, and *chicillo.* It is a *Nahautl* term, which is the native tongue of the ancient Aztecs, meaning "mixture" (Trilling). For Segundo Viernes, red *mole* is made from a recipe that has been traditionally continued, and has remained unchanged for centuries. In fact, it is a common (unconfirmed) belief that archeological remains of red *mole* have actually been found in the ruins at Monte Alban, the great urban center of the ancient Oaxacan peoples. Monte Alban was occupied by the Olmec, Mixtec, Zapotec, and Aztec empires, in that order, and abandoned all together by the 9th Century. The Spaniards arrived to the same area much later in 1591. Seeing as though a few of the ingredients which go into the ceremonial *mole* of today have non - indigenous origins, this belief may be based on an excavatory dating error, or perhaps the ingredients got to the region earlier, by some previous routes.

Although only the *señora* with the most seniority, and most distinct sense of pallet, secretly holds the recipe in her mind, I did observe the following ingredients going into the red *mole* , originally made famous by the Mixtec people, called *mole coloradito* : garlic (Spaniards), onion (indigenous), cinnamon (from China), chocolate (indigenous), green tomatoes (indigenous), a mixture of at least five different chilies (indigenous and Europe), *clavo* (from Moluccas), sesame seeds (from East India), and the seemingly most special of all the ingredients, *guajes* (indigenous). The parenthesis indicate the origin of the ingredient at the time of Spanish Conquest (Friedlander). All of these ingredients are toasted and charred on the *comal* first, to bring out each of the unique flavors.

Guajes are the seeds of the pods of the *guaje* tree. They are highly nutritious legumes, potent with B vitamins, which are used to add spice to *mole*, salsas, soups, and other Oaxacan cuisine. The state of Oaxaca actually gets its name from this native tree, which grows most abundantly throughout the valleys of Oaxaca, as compared to other regions of Southern

Mexico (Sobel). I found it quite interesting that a place be named after a tree, as opposed to a man in Mexico, because, it is very common for the states to be named after indigenous rulers or Spanish Colonists. *Guajes* are a main staple to the diet of many contemporary Papalutecos, and I have also seen them sold in many markets throughout the state of Chiapas.

Because Roberto was a *mayordomo,* in all fairness, I was respected as and called a *mayordoma*. What this meant, however, was that I was expected to do my share of the work, equal to that of all the women of the village. I assured Sra. Perez that I was more than willing to help, as long as I could wait to come to the kitchen, until the men were done slaughtering the goats and chickens. My mentioning again that I was a vegetarian helped her to better understand my request. I did not want to see or hear the goats or chickens in their last moments.

Thinking that since the men were done with the chickens, and almost done with the goats, I should be sent for, a young boy came to my room, to tell me that Sra. Hilda was ready for me. We walked down to the *confradia* . The men were *almost* finished. But what that meant was that out of six goats, four had already been slaughtered. There were two left to go.

I was there already, so I could not really turn back or sneak out. The *comadres* had a coal oven, wooden stool, and my own bottle of cooking oil all ready and waiting for me.

"No mas volteas tu sarten que no veas a los chivos," said one *comadre*. As if to "just turning my frying pan around to not face the goats" were any solution. But I did so, and tried to think other pleasant thoughts when I heard the death cries of the last two goats.

After she let the curiosities of all the women boil up a bit, Sr. Perez introduced me at once to all of them as her "daughter in law"; first in Spanish and then in *Mexicano* (also simply called *Nahuatl*), a surviving Aztec dialect which belongs to the *Olmeca - Mexicano* liguistic grouping (Paddock). The announcement not only came as a big surprise to the women, but also to me. Before that moment in the kitchen, she had not called me anything other than "*La Guera* ", like almost everyone else. Needless to say, I was not at all prepared to answer the plethora of questions that followed...all the day long in the hot, smoky kitchen.

Besides trying to elucidly answer the overload of uncomfortable questions about my "marriage" to *Comadre Hilda's* son, in a language I did not yet dominate, I knew nothing about cooking; *mole* , or anything. By that point the best thing I could do was to fake it by watching what the other women were doing, and by listening for the context of the conversation when they were not speaking their dialect. The entire time I remained as close as I could to Sra. Perez, behind the big kettles, stirring diligently. And when she left the kitchen, I left the kitchen.

I miraculously made it through the remainder of the day, despite mistakingly tripping over the bucket of goats heads. This had been another pinnacle day for realizing just how difficult fieldwork can become at times. After the long clean up, on my way out of the kitchen, the ladies said to me, "Hope you're not too tired. Today was nothing. Tomorrow there is twice as much work".

There is much more work than money donated to the cause of celebrating Segundo Viernes. This works out fine because, in essence, time and work are inseparable for the popular classes in Mexico. The only division in the labor is a gendered one. The village has no leisure class and therefore, people of all ages do physical labor. In rituals and celebrations, there is a larger than normal quantity of work and inverted courses, and the celebrating actually starts, with the preparations.

A theme which is repeated throughout my research is that Mexican people go to great efforts to continue feasts and celebrations so that tradition remains preserved. Two relatively recent, social traditions have emerged from this philosophy and remain strong, especially in the rural areas of the three southern states of the Republic. The first, called "*Tequio* ", was introduced in the state of Oaxaca by Benito Juarez, Mexico's first, full blooded, indigenous president, in the 1860's. "*Tequio* " are organized labor drives for community service, wherein the government supplies necessary materials and some highly skilled "supervisors", and the community members

supply the labor. It was introduced nationally, however, these days it is less evident in the more metropolitan cities of the northern states.

A second system of communal effort for tradition's sake is "*La Guelaguetza* " which is also a native custom of Oaxaca. It is a matrimonial custom which is believed to have developed during the *Revolucion* years, when most everyone was experiencing a strictly limited, economic budget. "*La Guelaguetza* " was initiated to offer economic assistance to young couples wanting to have a proper marriage celebration. In this custom, the closest relatives are called upon first, with the announcement that the couple will marry in the near future (6 months or so in advance is common). First, the grandparents are obligated, followed by the aunts and uncles, cousins, etc. Each relative or, "sponsor", is responsible for a certain part of the celebration. For example, one couple will purchase (or bake) the wedding cake, and they are called "*padrinos* " of the cake. There are *padrinos* for every aspect of the wedding from the rings to the beverages. By sharing expenses with the entire, extended family, the couple can afford to have a traditional wedding, and culture is preserved.

As the years progress in Papalutla, unfortunately traditions are becoming weaker. Granted this is the largest festival of the year, there are less and less woman willing to learn the secret recipes and effectively lead the other women in the kitchen. For this reason, other elderwomen are oftentimes called in from surrounding pueblos to join, assist, and supervise the *mayordomas* ; those from Papalutla and those who come as guests from other areas. These older women are paid quite well. They spend each of the three days in the communal cooking area, in constant preparation, even sleeping there in the evenings on *petates* .

The *mayordomo* committee handles the economics of the fiesta in ways similar to the *Guelaguetza* tradition. Besides the monetary denotations, time, energy, effort, livestock, bread, firewood, corn, and candles are given for the cause. Furthermore, all of the townswomen donate their plates and cups, and utensils from home. They could not fathom the idea of paper plates or disposable cups. As a general rule, nothing is wasted in a Mexican kitchen. Each *señora* marks all of her goods with a certain color of paint or nail polish, in order to identify them and later

recollect them when the fiesta is over. In question of accommodations, aunts and grandmothers are expected to welcome guests and extended family into their homes, going to great measures to create a space for everyone, and making sure that they are comfortable and have enough to eat.

"Comes the dawn and the drums";
The Fiesta Begins

The following morning I wake to the sound of a drum beat in the distance. It is 4:30am and the drum is crescendoing to higher volume, telling me that it is definitely not part of a dream, because it is getting closer. With this sudden realization I am filled with adrenaline and a sort of urgent curiosity. The rhythm pulls me from my bed as the band marches past my window. It *is* a window, however, it has no glass, only a curtain, which make it quite easy to poke the head out, literally, onto the street. This is exactly what I did on this, the first morning of the fiesta.

The township band is welcoming the guests who were arriving by the busload from the *DF*. In spite of the economic climate, it is a good year: 5 busses. The success of the celebration can almost be predicted by simply counting the number of busses. They had been in route 6 hours, throughout the night, from the *Colonia Nezahuacoytl* , Mexico City. That is the neighborhood where the kinship majority lives in within close proximity. While the chauffeurs park alongside the pueblo entrance, passengers scramble to come down off the buses, to hear the music and greet their loved ones. Despite the early hour, the serenades continue, as they are lead to the church in procession. The tradition of welcoming family with song is called *los peregrinos* . The actual songs are called traditional *mañanitas* , "songs of morning salutations", and are sung to God and the Virgin Mary.

For a moment, I stood parlayed in my window, watching the entire pueblo come from their beds and kitchens all at once. It felt as if some sort of visual alarm clock was going off in front of my eyes. The men who were already in the street, looked as if they had been there all night, drinking and carousing. Most had been, and others came straight from bed, which on this morning, is socially acceptable. This specifically, male gendered aspect of celebration is called "the *desvelada* ", which is another word for socially condoned, public drunkenness. Even when the women do think to take a break from working, they do not drink any alcoholic beverages. In any setting where beer or brandy is available, it is offered exclusively to men. Women are always offered soft drinks. Roberto offered me a beer once, only once, and I drank it. Again, all the women stared at me. I decided it was my first and last beer in Papalutla.

The pueblo was still dark except for the many visible stars, on the cool, February morning. Suddenly, the streets lit up with tiny firelights, as people came out singing with candles in their hands. They tried to shield the flames with cupped palms, eagerly relighting one another's candles as quick as they blew out. Soon, Sra. Perez came into the room from behind, handing me a cup of warm *atole*. "Dress quickly now so we can join the procession. Today begins the fiesta!"

I threw on the same outfit from the day before. It was not too wrinkled, and I figured it would suffice as I was trying to hurry without a candle. It was too dark to see anything outside anyway. Sra. Perez was out by the fire roasting corn in the same place I had left her some four hours ago, around midnight. She shoots me a look of horror. "Don't you have any other skirts or dresses clean? You can't wear the same clothes from yesterday!"

This sudden command nearly hurt my feelings. I suppose Sra. Perez *can* see in the dark. I quickly returned to my room to change again. Within 3 minutes we were off to join the procession to the church, ultimately giving thanks for the safe arrival of the guests, and asking for a blessing to begin the festivities.

. *Segundo Viernes de Cauresma del Divino Rostro* is a profane and religious festival to honor the image of Our Father of Divine Counsel. It is a celebration of the anniversary of a miracle which occurred in San Miguel Papalutla in the year 1935. In the times before the miracle occurred, the same festival was celebrated earlier in the year, on January 30, a date which does not fall in the Lenten season of the Catholic church. However, January 30th is still a memorable date, as it is the date the village was originally founded.

But on the first Lenten Friday in the year 1935, the sacred image of the *Divino Rostro* actually began to perspire. This first occurrence was on a Friday, and the following Wednesday, it happened again. The sacred porcelain image was perspiring on Wednesdays and Fridays only.

At first, the perspiring figure was not recognized as a miracle. However, the second time that it occurred, a town elder called a high priest in Huajuapan, the nearest large city, to tell him of the rare occurrence. He asked that someone from the diocese be sent to Papalutla, to observe the sacred image, and to bear witness to the "miracle in the pueblo".

A priest arrived the following Tuesday. He spent the entire night in the church, filled with suspicion and curiosity, expecting to find the person that had been sneaking in and applying water to the statue.

The following morning at 10:00am, which was a Wednesday, when the priest went to the altar, the sacred image was perspiring again. At that moment, he proclaimed it a miracle of God, and excitedly rang the church bells. 200 people came running from their homes to see the miracle for themselves. One man fell down on the altar floor, upon seeing the sacred image with beads of perspiration covering the porcelain brow. Many said that the beads of sweat looked just like tiny pearls. News of the miracle spread rapidly to nearby villages and, within a few days, many outsiders began bringing their sick and elderly to the small village *capilla* with hopes of being cured. The visiting priest returned to Huajuapan to report to the high authorities in the diocese all that had happened in the small community of San Miguel Papalutla. The diocese in turn declared that a mass be celebrated, *una branza*, as soon as possible to mark the importance of the miracle.

The Catholic Church authorized that from this year forth, the annual anniversary festival of the 30th of January, be changed to pertain to the Lenten calendar. Now the people of San Miguel Papalutla believe there are two big reasons to celebrate: the founding date of their land, and the miracle which occurred on it, some 50 years later. They believe the miracle to have been a direct blessing from God on their land and people. It is the largest celebration of the entire year in San Miguel, and family members return from all other parts of the country, and even as far as the United States. For many, it has become a sight of pilgrimage to the miraculous image of God.

Chocolate is an aspect which is richly woven into Oaxacan culture. Cultivation of the sacred *cacao* bean dates back to pre-Colombian times. In the pictorial histories of the Zapotec and Mixtec peoples, woman are painted drinking "*tejate* " from ritual gourds (Sobel). *Tejate* was a ritual drink made from *cacao* and ground corn. It was, and still is, called "the drink of the Gods" because of its delicious flavor and enzymatic ability to elevate the mood. It is a very high calorie beverage which provides a lot of energy.

Today, any fiesta without chocolate is incomplete. The *cacao* beans are grown in the pueblo and donated by the women who prepare it from scratch. Chocolate usually takes about 2 to 3 weeks to prepare, from start to finish. The bean pods are dried, and then later toasted on the *comal* . Once toasted, they are ground with a *metate* , as they have been since antiquity. When the Spaniards arrived to the valleys of Oaxaca, they thought that chocolate tasted quite bitter, and added sugar, almonds, and sometimes cinnamon. Today it is prepared the Spanish way in Papalutla, and in most places. It is added to warm milk and served at every celebration, almost always with bread, as a symbolic offering of respect and a "welcome" to the home.

Following the early morning, greeting procession, the brotherhood of *Colonia Neza*, friends and family file into the *comedor* of the *confradia* for *desayuno*. The chocolate and bread is the *desayuno*. The first real meal of the day is called *almuerzo* , and is served next, directly following *desayuno*. There are ritually specific menus for each of the three days of the fiesta. On the first day, the red *mole* is served over patties of dried shrimp, battered in corn meal and fried in oil. Because it is a Lenten Friday, the rules of Catholicism state that no meat be eaten, as a show of sacrifice to God. The meal is served with homemade tortillas, which are heated on a huge *comal* (about 2 feet in diameter), placed over an open flame, or, "*en las brazas* ". The *mayordomas* and other volunteers bring dozens of tortillas, and buckets of blue and white corn *maza* with them when they arrive in the morning, each day of event. In addition to those, they continue to clean the *mazorca* and roast the corn at their private homes, when they are not at the *confradia*. This is to ensure that the tortillas never run out.

There is a definite serving order in Papalutla. First, the bands are received alongside all the men of the village. If there is a band from a neighboring pueblo, playing as honorary guests, they are received first, followed by the local band. A male elder *mayordomo* enters the women's kitchen space only to notify them of the band's arrival. At the same moment that the women are advised, the men file in at once, and quickly seat themselves at the benches and tables to be served.

Mostly the younger women do the serving. The *comedor* was built on a raised platform, so there is a set of stairs from the cooking area to the dining room, which makes serving somewhat difficult for the older women. The older women and all the other women who are not serving, remain in the back to dish out second helpings, wash the dishes, and continue to heat tortillas. They do not begin eating until all the men are satiated, and their own children have gotten something on their plates. They remain for the most part in the kitchen, to eat and work simultaneously, seated on logs, small stools, or on the ground. They are rarely seen at a table during the entire fiesta.

In the evenings, the dinner meal, or *cena* , is usually eaten around sundown, in the private homes with the extended family. The evening hours are for relaxation, and the time to confer in the home, to see what action may have taken place during the day. Men, usually already heavily intoxicated, check in with their wives. Children come back from bathing at the river. When the family majority is present and accounted for, they eat.

The second day is similar to the first, however it includes more festivities. Again at 4:00am traditional mananitas begin. The band marches down the main street once more to wake the residents and visitors. All join in the *comedor* again for desayuno just after sunrise. Almuerzo is served next, and is followed by a mass at 11:00am, which joins together family, friends, country people, and neighbors in worship.

At approximately 10:00 in the morning, the *mayordomomo* men begin to shoot off fireworks in front of the church. Elders of the community say this is done in reverence to God, in accordance with the Bible, as he was raised to heaven from the dead, on the third day. They are also interpreted as a motion for the community to begin assembling in front of the church for the grand procession. Fireworks are a very important aspect of the celebration, rich with symbolism. They are found in almost every primary activity of the ritual, both religious and profane.

The second day of the traditional menu is different. Today instead of chocolate, *atole* is served. *Atole* is an ancient warm, easily digested drink of the Aztecs, made from corn. Many flavors are added such as chocolate, *panela*, cinnamon, or most commonly, it is just served plain (*atole blanco*) and sweetened to one's own taste with sugar. For the second day of the event, both atole with chocolate and plain atole are served, Coffee is also available. As always, the hot drinks are served with bread.

The *almuerzo* today is a dish called *pozole*, which is another originally Mixtec food. It is a type of thick soup made with corn and chicken, served with the very spicy, red mole on top (called *pozole blanco* without the mole). More fresh, hot tortillas are served.

After *almuerzo,* another procession to the church is underway. This time, it is broad daylight, and the sun is in all her glory. This time, everyone is carrying freshly cut flowers instead of candles. The sacred image is taken down from the front wall of the church, and carried through the street. It is covered with a purple, silk shroud, which has hundreds of *milagritos,* small photos of children, pinned to it. The eldest *mayordomos* take turns carrying the image, as pallbearers would carry a casket at a funeral. It is a great honor which requires each individual's, own spiritual prepeartion. They believe that the sacred image is weightless, and each of the men carrying it only feels the weight of his own sins. Another complete rosary is said en route, walking around the circumference of the pueblo. The mood is serious, almost somber. The sun is at its apex in the sky, making it close to 90°. Nevertheless, the elderwomen and some of the more traditional younger women, reverently cover their heads with black *mascadas.* For this very special occasion, the mass is said by three priests, instead of just one. Interestingly enough, the ages of each of the three priests seem to be separated by approximately 20 years. In a way, the 3 priests represent the overlap of generations. In the same way, this is the one day of the year when the most people from each of Papalutla's generations, can be found united in church; senior residents, new born babies, and all ages in between. This is definitely the climactic religious event of the fiesta. It is the big day; the official, second Friday of Lent.

Later in the day at about 3:00pm, the popular diversion of *jaripeo* takes place. Many enthusiastic participants mount and ride live bulls within a corral while the public cheers them on. The onlookers gather around the corral, squeezing in amongst their family members, and climbing into trees for a better view of the action. The band accompanies in the background playing different traditional melodies if one succeeds by not falling off, and other numbers when a rider hits the ground. Although it is an event open to women, not one woman takes the challenge. I would personally call this event a risk rather than a challenge, especially after having witnessed for myself a horrible fall, which badly injured the man's neck. Nevertheless, despite the inherent danger, many men and young men rise to the occasion. The beer seems to help ease the fright of the reality of breaking the neck, getting jabbed with a bullhorn, etc.

The corral for the bull riding is constructed by the men of the pueblo 2-3 days prior to the start of the fiesta. They each donate their own wood. It is cut into long planks which are wired together and reinforced with rope. This year, however, the men ran short of wood, and for a small section of the corral, steel tubing was used instead. It took them no longer than a total 3 hours construction time, and even less to dismantle it, the morning after the end of the fiesta.

The rodeo begins at the same hour each of the 2 days. Bulls of all sizes are donated by several cattle ranchers from the community. Mainly the largest, meanest looking ones are selected, but a few smaller and tamer ones are selected for young boys to ride with less fear. Many of the Papalutecos when asked, "Why *jaripeo* ?" said several different things. Some mentioned that it is a very old pastime in rural Mexico with pre-Biblical origins. Others mentioned folkloric tradition, in which the bull has always been seen as a symbol of masculinity and "the power of man over nature" (Tubb). Most do not know what symbolic significance *jaripeo* has, and just view it as entertainment.

The original "bull fight" tradition comes from the Spaniards. The first, "official" bull fight, was ordered as an obligatory practice of the Spanish gentlemen during the start of all civil and religious festivals. The bulls were killed "for the love of God", and the meat was given to monasteries and hospitals (Hernandez). I suspect *jaripeo* may be some derivative of the original Spanish bull fighting, perhaps with an added "cowboy" influence, especially since there is no (known) pictorial evidence of it in the indigenous codices. This is not too surprising since the cattle arrived with the Spaniards.

The themes of the bull and the fireworks continue into the nighttime hours. Each night at 10:00pm, colorful *"toros de fuego"*, "bulls of fire" are set off. These fireworks, however, are different, because they are worn as a costume. They are actual, paper mache headdresses, specifically made to resemble those of the ancient Aztecs. Donning the animal figure represents the taking on of the spirit of the bull, and the colors in the fireworks represent the colors of the feathers that decorated the original headdresses. While the people take turns dancing with the headdresses

in the streets, the band plays *"antiguos"*, traditional, regional songs. The bulls of fire shoot out to the rhythm, filling the sky and the street with color.

The object of this event is to successfully pass the headdress without dropping it, stopping the dance, or burning one's self (and ideally, anyone else). The dancers euphorically volunteer themselves from the audience at the side of the street, hoping that they can get a chance before all the fireworks are blown. Anyone who participates inherently knows the traditional moves which accompany the "passing of the fire". The dance steps come directly from a traditional Aztec *danza*, called *Danza del Venado*, or "dance of the deer". The Aztecs believed the deer to be a very astute animal. His instincts help him to perceive impending danger. His prance is funny and light, with nervous movements of the head and body. This dance honors the deer, representing in movement , the nervousness and strength of the animal. The imitative characteristics of the indigenous dance are conserved, as persons symbolically take on the spirit of the deer. The music is a set, simple melody of binary beats, whose rhythm accents the jumping motions (Alvarez).

For the most part the participants are mainly males, young and old. However, by the end of the second night of the fiesta, a few young women did join in to pass the fire. Judging by the surprised expressions of the crowd, it appears as though any women's involvement has only begun in more recent years.

The dance continues for approximately 2 hours while the Papalutlan sky is lit with moonlight, and stars, and streams of color, twirling and spinning, with some shooting off into the streets, startling the people into screams and laughter. This is the activity which honors and confirms their indigenous heritage. They feel that the music calls directly to their blood, their *sangre de Indio,* the blood from which they say "they cannot escape".

On the last night of the fiesta, the bulls of fire are replaced by a big contemporary dance, with live music performed by a group brought down from the capital. It is a modern, popular band called a *con junto*, which consists of several male and female vocalists with electric guitars, synthesizers, a bass, drum set, and other small percussion instruments piped into the street

by 2 huge speakers. Throughout the night and into the early morning, all types of popular dances are seen. This is definitely the climactic non-religious event. Everyone attends and gets very dressed up for the occasion. If you can afford to buy new clothes, this is usually the only day of the year for which they are bought or made. After several hours of playing, the band "passes the hat" for more donations, "*mas oferia* ". The band plays as long as the money keeps coming. The dance usually continues until about 4:00am.

"I remember *tu abuelita* , *Lancha,* looking beautiful, dressed up, walking through the *plaza* here with your *abuelo* . *Ella tambien era güerita, güerita igual como e'sta* . I remember how strange it was to see her with shoes. She had bought a pair of shoes especially for the *fiesta.* In those times, it was very rare to own a pair of shoes."

A woman of about 80+ years told Roberto and I this story. It is interesting the way, sometimes, the information finds the anthropologist. We had simply greeted her "good morning", and she shared with us her precious memory of a Segundo Viernes long ago, when it was not yet called "Segundo Viernes", before the miracle occurred.

As was mentioned earlier, the 30th of January had traditionally been celebrated as the pueblo founding day. It was on this date in 1905 that the sacred effigy of Christ crucified on the cross, was delivered to the *Cerro Colorado*, the mountain that forms Papalutla's natural border to the west. After its arrival, the annual celebrations were begun. According to the few recorded notes of the elders, the holy image was purchased by a society whose formation preceded, and later aligned with, the beliefs of Emiliano Zapata during the Mexican Revolution. The group, called *La Sociedad Agricula* , had very few funds, but pooled them together nevertheless to purchase the sacred figure.

According to written legend (Torres), as the few families came together to found the pueblo, a senior sculptor from the village of Chila de las Flores, in the state of Puebla, was commissioned to sculpt a holy image of Jesus for the pueblo *capilla* . Several months later,

Guadalupe Pastrana, the sculptor, had his finished work sent down to Oaxaca via mule, to be delivered to the village.

The members of *La Sociedad* constructed a cross upon which to place the sacred image. The cross was made of wood taken from the mountainside, in the canyon denominated *"Suelo Hondo"*, extracted from a tree called *ocote,* a type of Mexican bamboo. The same cross and sacred image hangs in the church today.

The elders of the community passed down the story of the years 1914-1915, in the midst of the Revolution. They were called the years of the "prodigy of constant sweat", brought on by the irregularities of the times, and the conditions of hunger and sickness, in the time of revolution. It was during these years that the Papalutlans were forced to hide all of their religious articles in the hillsides.

Much later, after nearly two decades of Revolution Agrarian reform, the times began to change somewhat for the better. The people said amongst one another, "The reason that the figure began to perspire, was because there was drought, hunger, revolution, and death. We have passed very extreme times. Thanks to God, many of us who still exist in this valley of butterflies, now a valley of tears, lived to see with our own eyes, the marvel of the perspiring statue in 1935".

During the Revolution, many famous historical figures passed through Papalutla. According to the ancestors, General Vincent Guerrero from the Mexican Independence Party camped in the *cerro* with his troops for six days. Venustino Carranza and his regiment also camped in the "Cerro de las Calaveras", just east of the pueblo, where in those times, there had been a natural well. This is known because many items have been uncovered in the caves that surround Papalutla. Much archeological evidence has been discovered by community members over the years, such as food and fauna remains, soldiers' diaries, and important public documents.

Today's village of San Miguel Papalutla existed only as a large ranch during the years of revolution which they called, in those times, "Pueblo Viejo". Due to the urgency of the conditions, the residents carefully buried important church and public documents into surrounding caves. This included all the religious articles of the church, the sacred image of the *Divino Rostro,*

and musical instruments, including the church bell. The Zapatistas had been robbing homes and villages all over the Republic.

The area where the bell and the religious articles were buried is now called *"Cerro de la Campana"* , but was then called *"Cerro Colorado"*, when it was part of Pueblo Viejo. Today there are many legends about the *"Cerro de la Campana"*. For example, one elder told me that after 14 years of watching cows, one day he and a friend were sitting, building their fire to warm their hands and their coffee. At about 6:00am, as the sun was rising, they heard the sound of bells ringing from the *"Cerro de la Campana"*. By 9:00am the same morning, they had returned to town to tell all their friends and neighbors of the pueblo that they had heard the buried bells ring.

The next day they brought a young man with a metal detector out to the cave where they heard the bells ringing, to see if by chance there were still any forgotten instruments or bells buried in the cave.

No other instruments were found with the detector, but they did find a human skeleton. This caused the young man a sickness that was unable to be cured by anyone in the pueblo. Eventually, he had to be taken to see a doctor in Huajuapan de Leon. The doctor could not explain the cause of the sickness other than just plain fright or *"susto"* . Many say that to this day, they still hear the bells ring every so often, from the cave in the *"Cerro de la Campana"*. They also say that animals have entered the cave and never come out. No one, young or old, wishes to adventure into the cave to search for any instruments or other items that may still remain buried. I was intrigued to do some of my own archeology, but I could not find an interested soul to accompany me. Not even Roberto was willing.

Even if some of the instruments remained buried after the Revolution, the air and percussion instruments which *were* successfully excavated can most definitely be heard, from early in the *madrugada*, to the wee hours of morning, throughout the entire fiesta of Segundo Viernes de Cuaresma.

"Butterflies in the hill of clouds";

Village History and Geography

By the 16th Century, the Mixtecs and Zapotecs were subordinate to the Aztecs and their tremendous empires were the capture of the Aztecs (Paddock). When the Aztecs were still a very young civilization, the Spaniards arrived with Catholicism to Valley of Oaxaca in approximately 1591, which began the Colonial period (Acevedo). According to Mixtec scholar, Fernando Benitez, between 1528 and 1964, the Mixtecs have died 100 times. For the most part, the Aztec conquest ended the pure Mixtec culture. It was, however, very similar to the culture which flourished in Puebla, and both constitute the immediate antecedent of the Aztec culture. Tracing back with a look at the archeological record, it is known that the whole territory of Oaxaca has a very rich indigenous history which continues to live on in many ways.

As a result of investigations at Monte Alban, the archeological record has shown that the following groups occupied the 3 main valleys of Oaxaca in chronological order: Olmecs, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, and Aztecs. Monte Alban is described by Paddock as, "the largest temple of the urban center of Oaxaca".

As a geographic location, the area in which San Miguel Papalutla is located is called *La Sierra Mixteca,* "Highland Oaxaca". *La Sierra Mixteca* is divided into two separate regions, *La Mixteca Baja* and *La Mixteca Alta* , according to elevation levels*. *La Mixteca* borders the

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* please see map inserts

present day states of Puebla and Guerrero, however, the ancient culture area did not have political boundaries. The ancient cultures say that the mountains of *La Mixteca Alta* is the residence of mythical gods and animals (Benitez). It is stimulating, spiritual countryside , that occupies 189 municipalities, including Huajuapan de Leon, the one to which Papalutla officially pertains (INEGI).

It is interesting to note that the elders of Papalutla still speak *Nahuatl* (*Mexicano*), the original tongue of the Aztecs. Although Spanish is the official language of the village, the elders will often converse in Nahuatl amongst themselves. Because the location of Highland Oaxaca is basically out of the way, as it is not located on a coast or major migration route, historically the people of the region had little contact with outsiders. For this reason, many of the languages, recipes, and overall traditions of the Highland Oaxacan peoples have remained much less changed than those of other regions of Mexico.

The village itself has seen very little change since it was founded in 1894*. According to one of the three (only) official, written documents held by the mayor of Papalutla, "the legitimate religion of the Aztec race was the sacred nature and the veneration of the sun and the planets" (Torres). The Spaniards have brought many changes of cosmology to the idigenous, and, for the most part 4 centuries of Colonial exploitation have remained unalterable. The pueblo is still about 98.5% Catholic, except for one Protestant family and some recently converted Evangelists. The Papalutlans still nostolgically acknowledge that they are descendants of the *La Raza* , the Aztec "race". They are most likely, however, a mix of Mixtec and Aztec blood, as the Mixtecs were the original inhabitants of the geographical area.

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* This is the date according to official documents in the state capital. It refers to the date when Papalutla became recognized as a municipality, which differs from the date on origianl docuaments of Papalutla, which claim 1883 as the founding year.

Very few recorded facts can be found regarding the physical arrival of the Spaniards to *La Mixteca.* The Aztec conquests began about 1458 and by the late 1500s begins the Colonial period (Acevedo). It is known, however, that in the early 1800s, many indigenous rebellions were underway in *La Mixteca* regions, including the areas surrounding Huajuapan. In the constitution of the state of Oaxaca dated 1825, the state was divided into 8 departments, 3 of which corresponded to *La Mixteca.* To the triumph of the indigenous revolutionaries, the region was economically and socially reborn (Sobel). Schools were funded, streets and roads were improved, health services were augmented.

However, probably due to its location, the pueblo has not received much governmental attention since the late 1880s. From remote times until today, Papalutla is considered by all to be an *ejido,* which means it is communal land. The *ejido* system is officially recognized by the Mexican government, yet not much political attention is given to the pueblo, or to many other *ejidos* nationally. The attention that has been given to the people of Papalutla (installation of electricity, a paved road, the confederation hall, swings for the children) has come from the PAN political party by way of *tequio.*

Besides the 2 military helicopters which fly over each day checking for marijuana harvests, the only other governmental attention that can be more or less counted on, comes around national presidential election times. Each election year, there is (minimal) attention paid to Papalutla, as the two leading political parties compete for the 100+, potential votes. The Institutional Revolutionary (PRI) and the National Action (PAN) parties offer the town eldermen tempting "tokens of gratitude" in exchange for votes. Luckily, in my opinion, most of the elders see through their promises. In essence, what they are doing, are making attempts for creating a dependency by the Papalutlans upon the government. They cleverly call things like huge tractors and bulk seeds, "gifts of aid". The only problem is, is that the tractor cannot run so well upon hilly terrain. The seeds that they offer are completely incompatible to the region and would actually require the use of more water than they even have now. The region suffers for water because it is

so dry. Planting the seeds offered by the government would do complete harm. They would never see the potential food sources as there is not enough water to nourish the seeds.

These are just two examples of the type of governmental attention that the *ejido* system, nationwide, is receiving. The situaion is much worse in the very wooded areas of Mexico, where the political parties offer replacement church pews in exchange for tons of indigenous lumber. Where material gifts are not involved, large money sums are offered to the community leaders. In these cases, it is interesting to note that even the dead rise up to vote for their favorite party. Since the leaders hold all the records, they can easily mark their *X* s on the ballot. There are still many regions of Oaxaca where they do not speak or read Spanish. An *X* is all they are required to mark on official, political ballots. Since the corrupted politics of Mexico only seem to get worse, I can only hope that the people of Papalutla continue to chose their leaders wisely, since whether or not the aid is accepted, still depends upon who is making the highest decisions at election time.

Papalutla became recognized as a municipality pertaining to Huajuapan de Leon in 1894. Before that date, the first 3 families that were in the countryside which is designated as *"El Cuajilote"*. As they crossed the land into the valley which is now the pueblo, they encountered many *"papaloquelite"*, beautiful flowers known to the Aztec race to attract and feed butterflies. Naturally, there was also an abundance of beautiful butterflies which filled the valley with color and movement. Logically, the grandparents named the new village "Papalutla", Valley of the Butterflies and "San Miguel" for a traditional Catholic namesake blessing. Saint Michael was the archangel of God in the bible.

The original boundaries and lines of demarcation were geographical landmarks: to the west, *"Cerro Colorado"* to the north, *"Cerro de la Cruz"*, to the south, *"Loma de Abrojo"*, and to the east, *"Cerro de la Calavera "*. These boundaries have also become the official boundaries over time. The natural lanscape of the pueblo is very much part of psychological map of all the

residents. It has everything to do with their identification of place, which in a large way also accounts for thier identification of self.

In the distant times when the community was in its beginnings, there was no formal system of education in place. The children learned only from their elders and the church. From time to time, women from within the pueblo would volunteer to teach. Even less frequently, state provided teachers would be sent in to teach the young children of the community. Eventually, in 1928, the first official school was established. They named it Rural Primary School Benito Juarez. He was a Zapotec (and therefore a Oaxaqueno) who during his term as president of the Mexican Republic, separated church and state, which had not been separate since the arrival of Cortez.

Over the years, the "progress" has been slow but sure in Papalutla. In 1953 the *confradia* and public *comedor* were constructed, especially for celebrating events such as weddings, *quincineras*, and Segundo Viernes. In 1954 the main street was paved in cement. In 1966, the government built the road that connects to the highway, 6 kilometers up and out of the valley. Finally, in 1981 a well was dug for *agua potable,* which runs non-drinkable water to the main street through a single pipe. This was another successful *tequio* project. There is still no telephone service, no public transportation routes, no clinic, or order of rural schooling that offers anything higher than an eighth grade education.

The only occupations in Papalutla are agriculture and animal husbandry. Most of the women work in their homes. There are some women who wash others' clothes for small sums of money. Men will collect and chop firewood for extra earnings as well. Social control is everyone's responsibility, although there is only one man, *el comandante*, who can legally carry arms. Ther e is a one room jail which generally serves for nothing longer than an overnight detainment .

The community philosophy is as follows, and I quote Torres,

"Those which will be the best elements realized are made of religious, cultural, civil, and military events, however within the circle of loyalty and honor to this modest and sacred land that we have seen grow, and where we were born."

Summary, Analysis, and Conclusion

I would like to analyze and interpret the structure of the public ritual, Segundo Viernes de Cuaresma, on the various levels stated in the introduction.

We can affirm that the aspect of celebration is very important in the Mexican culture. A ritual celebration in Mexico is a time of enjoyment and a time of work. The celebrating actually begins with the start of the grand quantity of preparation work. The preparations begin with the collection of funds from the *mayordomos*, wherever they may be. The groups of *mayordomos* form committees, and pre-select organizers and coordinators at central meetings which are held both in *Colonia Nezahuacoytl*, Mexico City and San Miguel Papalutla.

Since time and work are essentially inseparable for the popular classes in Mexico, "ritual" time offers many inverted courses. Celebrations express situations crucial to everyday life and occupy a significant portion of familiar time. The fiesta of Segundo Viernes is a climax of a process of work and convivencia. It temporarily breaks the line of life encoded. It completes a social function, wherein culture is transmitted, and tradition is actively preserved.

The time of celebration crosses a diverse variety of moments which are later simultaneously incorporated into the psychological memory bank of each individual, as well as that of community as a whole. The goal of the community is to leave an impression upon the invites. The unspoken, subconscious motto is "Anything to prolong the party". It is manifested through the sharing of strong alcoholic drinks, passing of the hat so the band plays on, fricticious fights, and other indiscriminate activities. At the end of the Segundo Viernes celebration, the community hopes to have made the pueblo an object of attraction to other pueblos, as well as the original inhabitants and their guests. When the end of the fiesta is arrived at, a mental inventory of strengths, weaknesses, gains, and losses is made: the good and bad impressions, the flavor of the meals, the sound quality of the bands, the number of participants, the decorations, etc. The overall

passing of the charged atmosphere is noticed, and casually, but thoroughly, discussed amongst the community members.

Segundo Viernes is primarily a time of devotion. It is a time wherin the secular becomes actively integrated in the sacred. The most important aspect of the fiesta, is the energetic devotion of the people. The inherant Catholic themes of sin and forgiveness are repeated daily in the masses, rosaries, the fasts and abstainance from meat. The community members see the fiesta, especially the main procession, as a sort of mythical drama, which is performed in an exclusively, determined pattern. All of the dramatics have a religiously, historical background, whether it be from a Catholic or an Indigenous worldview. They understand the event as a repetition of a sole theme to express their religious devotion.

The aspect of the church (as a physical structure) and its appearance, causes one to think much about the beliefs of its parishoners. Each year the *mayordomos* go to great efforts to present a good reflection of the community, by painting the church's interior and exterior, and extensively decorating the inside with flowers, linens, and candles. Outside in the church yard, the men hang colorful flags and banners from the trees. Since the church is where most of the contemplative action takes place, it is imperative for them to create the appropriate atmosphere for worship. Even on the first morning of the fiesta, the salutation to the sun is completed indoors, inside the church.

San Miguel Papalutla has become a site of pilgrimage for its principle inhabitants. For most, Segundo Viernes is the only event event that brings them to thier homeland once a year. They count on thier families, thier friends, and countrymates to be there. The entire community of people who have any sort of tie to their land attends the fiesta. Each individual sees the ritual as an opportunity to confirm thier own identity, as well as the others' identities. The event gets carried with them all in thier collective memory. Consequently, if someone does not attend for several years, the principle community takes notice. When the person does finally return in another year, he is put through a certain degree of harassment and ridicule, about having lost his identity. More often than not, the men are pestered about having "turned American", which is logical, as the men

living in the States do not attend as frequently as those residing within the Republic (woman generally do not leave the village). Of course, this is only done in gest. It is not uncommon to hear men chanting, "*Somos Papalutecos!!*" , embracing, with beer or brandy bottles in hand. And surely, it is the place where they feel most at home, most like themselves. If only for 3 days, all is *their* time, *their* land, and *their* space.

The nature of a communal ritual to fulfill several psycho-social needs. Segundo Viernes does not differ in that aspect. Once "at home", the people are able to rid themselves of the frustrations that they feel throughout the year. The fiesta fulfills the human need for expression. It cleanses the community from inner-resentments, strife, and grief. It provides a comfortable environment to externalize the divergences which separate them, usually under the influence of alcohol. It is a source of social therapy wherein it is socially permitted to be joyous and forget about everyday problems.

Daily order ceases, and a ritual time frame is put in place. The usual times to rise in the morning and go to sleep at night, are turned completely around. The hour of the first meal of the day is changed and strategically scheduled much earlier, to cater to all night drinkers. This is done in attempts to avoid as many hangover sicknesses as possible, and so that the men are in good enough shape to attend the religious events of the day.

All the normal, everyday action is moved from the private homes to the public ritual spaces*. The ritual work and work spaces are divided by gender, and only slightly by age group. As a general rule, the eldest person present holds the most seniority, with the seniority shifting from person to person as they come and go. For example, the women govern the communal kitchen, the dining room, the active planning and delivery of the ritual masses, guest

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* Please see table insert

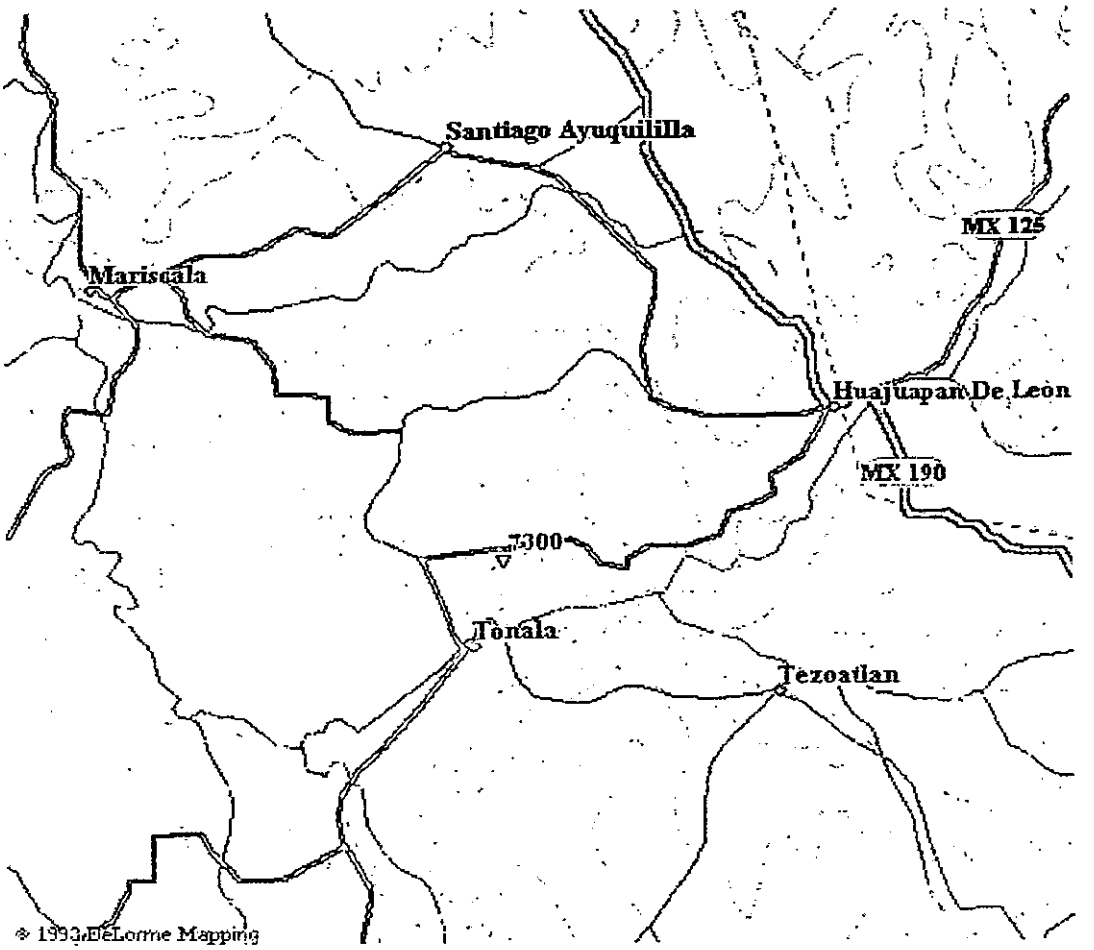
accomodations, etc. The men govern the inside of the church, the handling of the ritual objects, the street decor, the monetary economics, liqour purchases, band selections, etc.

The ritual objects are indispensable elements, and have significant, symbolic importance as represetations of a predominantly, Christian cosmology. The most important of all the objects is the sacred image of the *Divino Rostro* , the miraculous statue that sweat in 1935. It is only handled by the men. The candles represent the light of Christ. The flowers represent the renewal of life which comes with springtime, and with the Resurrection of Jesus. The fireworks represent Jesus' ascent into heaven after miraculously rising from the dead. The colors of the fireworks represent Aztec plumes in the bull headdresses. Corn, the food item of most preferance and most reverance, is traditionally used in all of the ritual dishes. Even the word corn, is expressed in several different ways (*maiz, mazorca, maza, elote*) in the pueblo of Papalutla. The music, the incense, the songs-religious and secular-all have great sybolic imporatnce to each particular aspect of the event as a whole.

Overall, it can be concluded that, in Mexico, the "familiar" fiesta is a time of enjoyment and work. More specifically, Segundo Viernes de Cuaresma de Divino Rostro, celebrated in the small, Oaxacan village of San Miguel Papalutla, is a religious, public fiesta, which integrates the sacred and the profane. The celebration is a mixing of times, places, traditions, and peoples. It is a spiritual time, a social time, and an economic time. It is a time of devotion and diversion, wherein historical and modern cultural aspects are manifested; some Catholic, others indigenous. The ritual itself, is a climax of a process of work, which responds to a social need for communal expression, and therefore, completes an important social function in the lives of the Papalutecos.

Table of Fundamental Activities

	Rodeo	**Dance**	**Fireworks**	**Food**	**Mass**
Principle Organizer	Mayordomo/ Committees	Mayordomo/ Committees	Mayordomo/ Committees	Mayordoma /Committees	Mayordoma/ Priests
Character	Social Diversion	Social Diversion	Social Diversion	Ritual Preparation	Individual & Communal Religious Devotion
Participation	Exclusively Male	Male & Female	Predominantly Male	Predominantly Female	Male & Female
Place	Corral	Behind Church	Town Square Adjacent to Church	Communal Kitchen	Church
Space	Exterior/ Public	Exterior/ Public	Exterior/ Public	Exterior/ Private	Interior/ Public
Dress	Functional	Party Clothes	Casual	Functional/ Clean	Formal/ Clean
Music	Municipal Band	Hired Band/ Contemporary	Municipal Band	Municipal Band	Cantors/ Hymns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Mariscala
Huajuapan De Leon
MX 190
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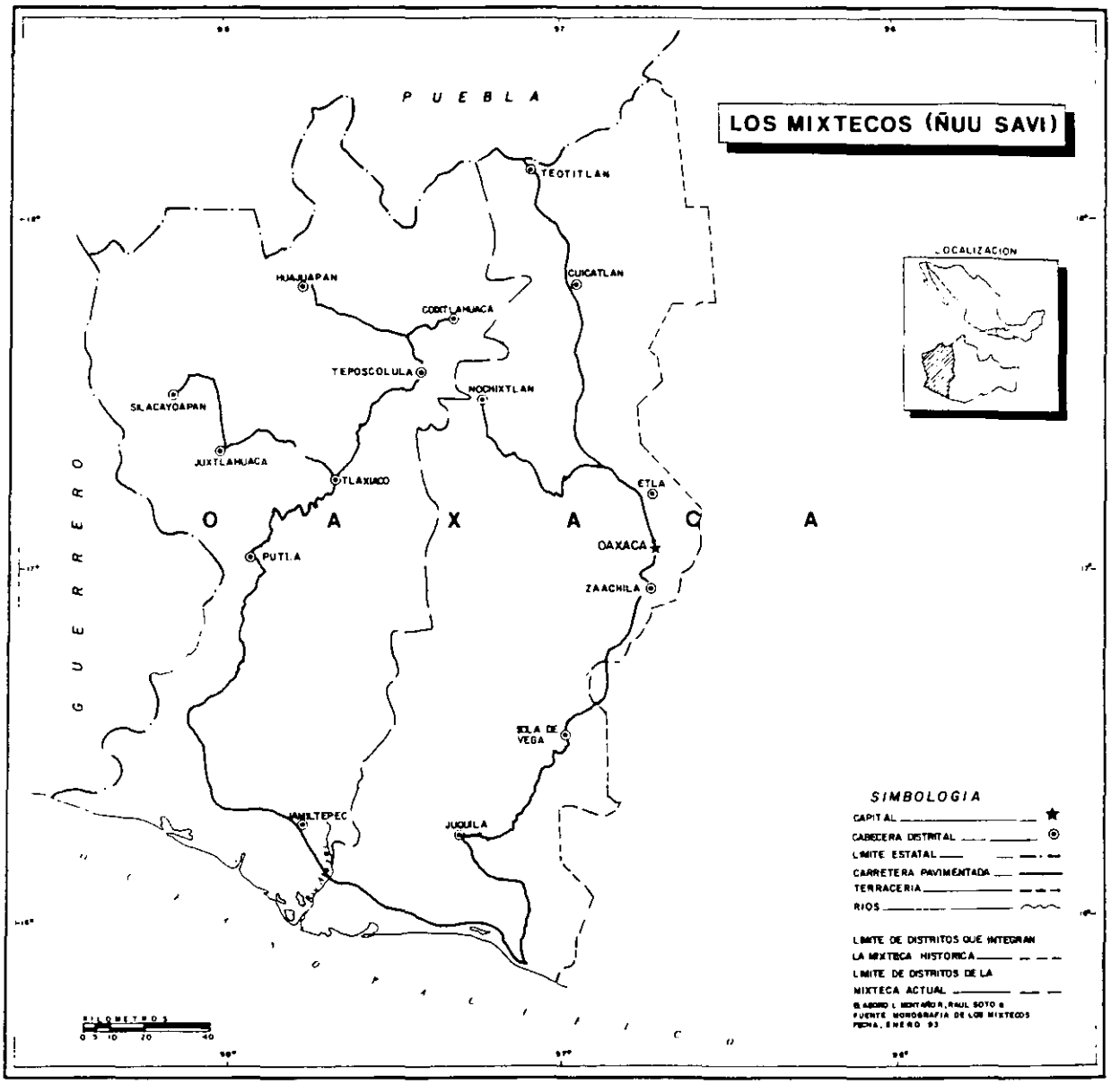
Tonala
Tezoatlan
© 1993 DeLorme Mapping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GUERRERO
OAXACA
TEOTITLAN
CUICATLAN
HUAUTLA
COATLAHUACA
TEPOSCOLULA
NOCHIXTLAN
SILACAYOAPAN
JUXTLAHUACA
TLAXIACO
ETLA
PUTLA
OAXACA
ZAACHILA
SOLA DE VEGA
JAMILTEPEC
JUQUILA
LOCALIZACION
SIMBOLOGIA
CAPITAL
CABECERA DISTRITAL
LIMITE ESTATAL
CARRETERA PAVIMENTADA
TERRACERIA
RIOS
LIMITE DE DISTRITOS QUE INTEGRAN LA MIXTECA HISTORICA
LIMITE DE DISTRITOS DE LA MIXTECA ACTUAL
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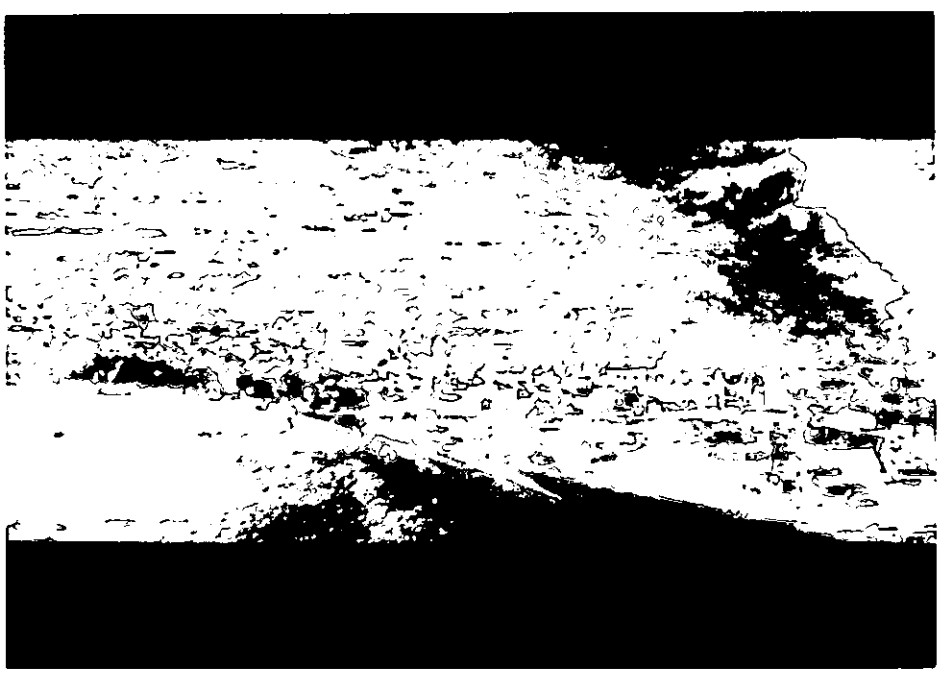


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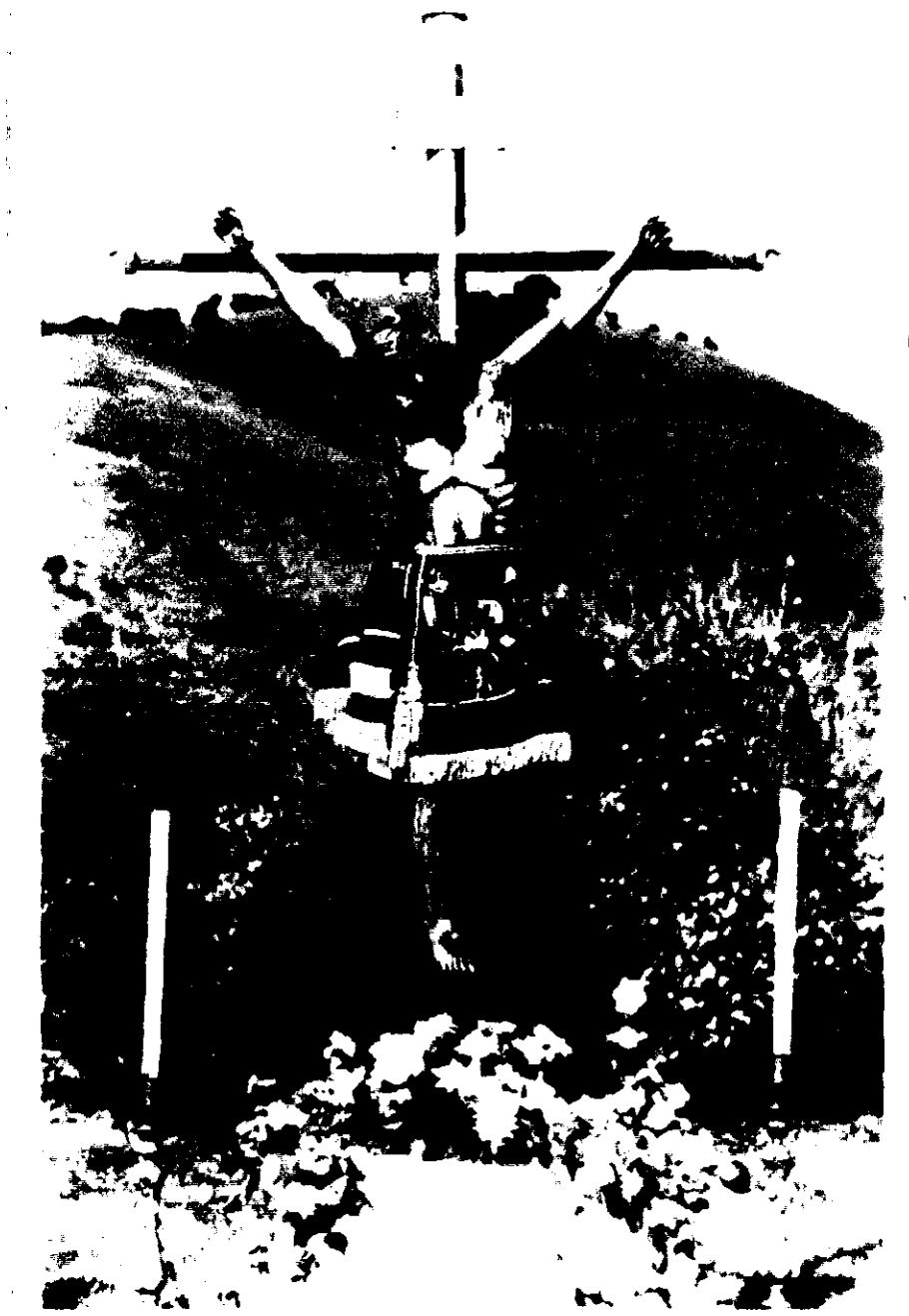

Defining Terms

almuerzo- first substancial meal of the day; roughly equivialnt to "brunch"

antiguo- traditional, regional piece of music

atole - an originally Aztec, warm drink made of ground corn and water

branza - a Catholic mass, celebrated especially for an honorable occassion

cadena (humana)- human chain; persons interlocking hands to form a united, human barrior

calavera- skull

calientitas- hot tortillas, freshly made by hand

comandante- commander

camarada - comrad, brother

campana- bell

campo--field; countryside

capilla--small chapel

carretera- highway

chisme- gossip; hearsay

clavo- clove spice

cofradia- public structure which houses the communal kitchen and dining room

collar- necklace; pectoral adornment

comadre / copadre - ladyfriend/gentleman friend; literally "co-mother", "co-father"

comal- round piece of metal cookware used for charring foods and heating tortillas over open fire

con junto- contemporary musical band

cruz- cross

cuaresma- Catholic holy season of Lent

danza- folkloric dance

desayuno- breakfast

ejido- communal land

encargado- person in charge

guajes- (also spelled) *huajes, oaxes,* legumes/seeds from the pod of the guaje tree

ida y vuelta- roundtrip; there are back; both ways

jaripeo- Mexican-style rodeo

luarel -bay laurel herb

loma- low hillside

madrugada- very early moring, roughly between 4:00am and 6:00am

mañanita- song of early morning greeting and praises, sung to the Virgen Mary and God

mascada- piece of cloth, usually black or dark colored, worn on women's heads in reverance to God, during a mass or holy ceremony

maza- ground corn mixed with water and kneaded into a dough

mazorca- the loose granuals of corn which are popped off the sides of the cobs with the fingers

mayordomos- the persons in charge, usually in reference to a community event; major contributors

metate- three-legged, stone vessel in which corn is ground with a separate, stone, cylindical piece

Mexicano- (also) *Nahuatl,* a surviving dialect of the Aztec civilization

milagrito- small photos of children attached to decorative pins and ribbons

molino- the community corn grinder

morral- colorul, woven shoulder-strap bag

Nahuatl- (see *Mexicano*)

ocote- Mexican bamboo

oferia- (vulgar) cash offering, unofficial bribe

padrino- Godfather, Godparent

panela- solidified brown sugar

papalotl- butterfly; symbol of movement

patron- boss, usually owner

peregrino- songs of welcome sung to friends and family

petate- small mat of woven palm

posada- small, economically priced inn

pozole- indigenous porridge, made with corn and some type of meat, usually chicken or goat (similar to fried hominy)

rio- river

sala- large room used for various public activities

santo remedio- blessed remedy

Segundo Viernes- second Friday

solita/o- all alone

sudor- sweat, perspiration

susto- illness of the nervous system brought on from a strong, sudden fright

taxisa- taxi driver

tejate -ritual drink of the ancient Oaxacan peoples, made with corn, water, and cacao (chocolate)

tierra- land; place of origin

toro del fuego- paper mache headress in the image of a bull, having hundreds of colorful fireworks attached, worn as a ritual dance costume

vagabundo- vagabond

venado- deer

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