

**BEWARE THE TIGER: THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF TIGER MASK
PRODUCTION IN MEXICO**

by

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B.A., Concordia University, 1985

**THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

Master of Arts

in the Department of

Sociology and Anthropology

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April 1996

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Beware the Tiger: The Commercialization of Tiger

Mask Production in Mexico

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my Committee, Marilyn Gates, and Michael Kenny for their help and support. I would also like to express my gratitude to Robert Anderson for his time and interest, and Gary Teeple for his consideration and the confidence he has shown in me. In addition, a special thank-you goes to Gladys Durksen, Mickey Naisby and Chris Szafnicki from the Department, as well as Allan Rothenbush from Academic Computing Services and David Goodwin from Micro-Computing Facilities for their assistance and kindness.

I am very grateful for having had the privilege to work with the skilled mask-makers of *Zitlala* (Guerrero) and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (Oaxaca) and their families. I would like to thank them for their co-operation and their trust in me. This thesis would not have been possible without them. I also appreciate the assistance given to me by various members of the *Instituto Nacional Indigenista* (National Institute of Indian Affairs), Professor Andraka in Chilapa, the staff from the *Museo Nacional de Antropología* (National Museum of Anthropology) in Mexico City, and Alejandro Siqueiros and Martha Wood from the Mexican Consulate in Vancouver, Canada.

Finally, I thank my family and friends for their loyalty, their understanding and their encouragement. They gave me the courage to complete my work.

PREFACE

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand, and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

(Blake in Reeves, 1968: 23).

ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the symbolic and ideological implications of the commercialization of tiger mask production in two Mexican villages. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (Oaxaca) commercialization is quite extensive, whereas in *Zitlala* (Guerrero) tiger masks are limited to the market economy. Patterns of meanings attached to the tiger masks, and shifts occurring within these patterns as ritual symbols and commercial products, are identified and analyzed. Primary factors affecting the growth of the markets in Guerrero and Oaxaca, which include the expansion of the transportation network and tourist industry, are described in detail. The secular and sacred nature of the tiger masks are explored in a symbolic context.

The data upon which the thesis is based were gathered in the following ways: participant observation; as a field researcher in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala* for four months and one month respectively beginning in January and concluding in early June, 1992; an interview survey of fifteen professional mask-makers in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and ten in *Zitlala*; fifteen *intermediarios* (i.e., middlemen including also representatives of government organizations and artisans cooperatives, store owners and market vendors with their own stalls); and a survey of the costs incurred by tiger mask production.

Participant observation focused on the *Dance of the Tejorones* (young men who play the role of hunters in the *Dance*) taking place annually in early February in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and the *Tiger Fight* taking place in *Zitlala* from May 2nd to May 5th also every year. Survey interviews elicited information on local conceptions and explanations of the contexts and meanings underlying tiger mask production, while the cost survey provided prices of tools and materials used, as well as information on transportation costs. A framework of Turnerian symbolic theory and theories of household production are applied to the data collected.

In general, the investigation provides a correlation between the economic and symbolic processes underlying tiger mask production which tend to be dealt with separately in the current literature on tiger mask production. In addition, the socio-economic significance of tiger mask production is often discussed as though they are separate in meaning and does not take into account the syncretic nature of the tiger masks as ceremonial symbols. The thesis serves to illustrate that the economic and symbolic are not mutually exclusive as confirmed by the mask-makers of both communities who demonstrate that the commercialization of the tiger mask does not diminish its importance as a ritual symbol.

DEDICATION

To my parents and my sister, Myrna for their patience and support.

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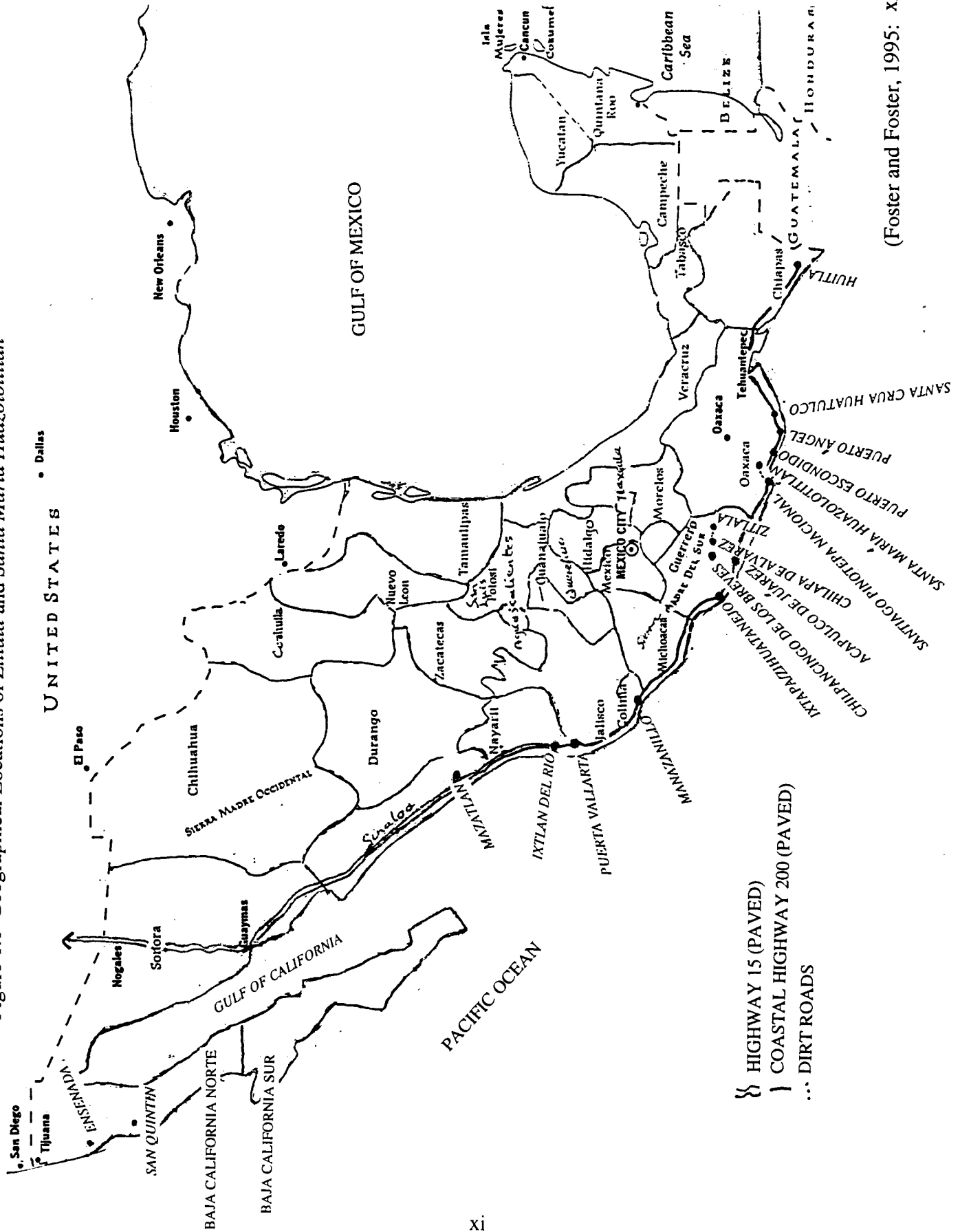
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Figure 1.1 Geographical Locations of Zitlala and Santa María Huazolotitlán



(Foster and Foster, 1995: xxiv).

I THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH PROBLEM

The central aim of the thesis is the investigation and explication of tiger mask production in two Mexican villages, *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (Oaxaca) and *Zitlala* (Guerrero). Tiger mask production has both economic and social meanings which are reflected in the material and spiritual and conceptualizations of the mask as a specific symbol. This investigation attempts to identify the meanings underlying tiger mask production and the shifts occurring within them.

In pre-Columbian times, jaguar (e.g. tiger) masks were considered luxury items and were circulated through long-distance trade. The acquisition of a jaguar mask represented individual prestige and high social standing. Jaguar masks and skins were worn mainly by rulers, high-ranking warriors, and sometimes exclusively by priests. Important deities also appeared in the form of a jaguar, including the god of rain who was associated with the jaguar in all its manifestations. The tiger is the central figure in the *Dance of the Tejorones* of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and the *Tiger Fight* of *Zitlala* and retains a connection to the ancient rain gods. The appearances and performances of the *tigers* from each community differ according to the cultural composition of the community.

Zitlala is located in the hills of Guerrero and is only accessible via a dirt road from the nearest town of *Chilapa de Álvarez* (about one hundred kilometers, forty minutes drive away). The nearest tourist resort of *Acapulco de Juárez* is thirteen hours drive away (refer to map, Figure 1.1). There is no direct route to *Acapulco de Juárez* from *Zitlala*; instead one has to pass through the capital city of *Chilpancingo de los Breves* which is about six hours drive from *Acapulco de Juárez* and eight hours drive from *Chilapa de Álvarez*. Although the mask-makers participate extensively in the capitalist market through wage labour outside the community, tiger mask production in *Zitlala* is limited to gift exchange which facilitates social and political alliances. However, tiger masks are rarely given as

gifts, especially to outsiders - perhaps because of the low level of tiger mask production and also because they are considered to be meaningful only to the members of the community. Tiger masks are produced exclusively for ritual purposes and are consumed directly by the producers themselves. *Zitlala's* geographical location has insulated it from external influences to a large degree, but over the last ten years the *Tiger Fight* has attracted a steadily increasing influx of outsiders, ranging from researchers to tourists. Although this has influenced the structure of the *Fight*, it has not changed the essential character of the *Fight*. However, what the long term effect of this 'opening-up' will be is debatable and will be further examined in the thesis.

Santa María Huazolotitlán is situated on the coast, a short distance away from the tourist resorts of Puerto Escondido, *Puerto Ángel*, and *Santa Cruz Huatulco* (refer to map, Figure 1.1). It is easily accessible from either tourist resort and from the neighbouring town of *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional*. All three locations offer regular air and bus service to other parts of Mexico. *Intermediarios* (middlemen) are very active in the community and provide a link to a wide range of markets. They are motivated by profit gain, and may be considered as exploitative agents in this respect. Some are also owners, vendors in the marketplace, or representatives of agencies promoting crafts. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, tiger mask production extends to both the local, traditional economy and the larger, capitalist market. Participation in the local economy has helped the Mixtecs of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* to survive economically and to maintain a connection to the land. Participation in the international economy has led to forms of innovation in terms of design in tiger mask production without debasing those elements which are native to the Mixtecs. The thesis examines innovation in tiger mask production and the influence of the buyer on the process of production, as well as the impact of tourism.

In *Zitlala*, the *Tiger Fight* is supported largely by remittances sent home while in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* the *Dance of the Tejorones* is supported by revenue generated from within the community. Tiger mask production among the Nahua and Mixtec Indians

is primarily for the purpose of ritual, but also involves a set of obligations and responsibilities which have material connotations. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the participants who usually make and wear their own masks, expect to be given food and drink by the *mayordomo* (high ranking official of the civil-religious hierarchy; ritual steward) who bears all the costs involved and arranges food/drink preparation with family members. By contrast, the *Tiger Fight* in *Zitlala* is supervised by various officials from the civil-religious hierarchy and food/drink is prepared collectively by the women of the community. The provision of food/drink to the participants of the ritual may be regarded as a form of payment, and is therefore material. However, this material aspect does not diminish the importance of the tiger mask as a ritual symbol. The rituals of the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* are imbued with symbolism, derived from a number of indigenous and Christian religious and cosmological ideas.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A number of questions arise from the issues raised in the research problem discussed in the previous section. They have been divided into primary and secondary research questions.

Primary Research Questions

1. What is the economic and social significance of tiger mask production?
2. What shifts have there been in the meanings of the tiger mask, and why?
3. Does the importance of the tiger mask as a commercial item diminish its importance in ritual?

Secondary Research Questions

1. What impact has tourism had on tiger mask production?

2. Does a buyer influence the direction of tiger mask production in any way?
3. What is the degree of innovation in the production of tiger masks, and is it indicative of the cultural vitality of Nahua and Mixtec culture?

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The Trouble with Tourism

Tourism is very difficult to define because it is often combined with other activities which are oriented towards work rather than leisure. Etymologically, the origin of the word tour is from Latin for 'tornare' meaning a circle, e.g. "the movement around a central point or axis" (Theobald, 1994: 6). The suffix -ism "denotes one that performs a given action" (ibid). When the two are combined, they suggest the action of someone moving around a circle. A tour then, constitutes a 'round-trip'. Graeburn (1977) suggests that tourism, as a form of travel, has its roots in pilgrimages and compares the search for 'exotic' goods from tourist locations to a search for the "holy grail". Tourism offers a chance to break away from the routine of daily life and leave the ordinary behind.

There are three key elements which are the cornerstones of tourism: leisure in a temporal sense, available income, and positive local sanctions for travel such as being retired or the working wife choosing the family vacation spot, in relation to the motivation of the tourist. Different types of tourism exist to accommodate a wide range of tastes ranging from ethnic tourism which focuses on the customs of indigenous peoples from exotic locations to recreational tourism which stresses pure entertainment and relaxation (Smith, 1977). The rise of mass tourism in the twentieth century corresponds to the presence of a strong middle class, the creation of the commercial jet in the 1950s, and an increase in more affordable and accessible transportation (Theobald, 1994).

The anthropology of tourism encompasses a wide range of concerns ranging from the role of tourism in modern industrial society, to the consumption of leisure as a conspicuous status symbol, and the study of tourism as culture contact. The two main

approaches in the anthropology of tourism literature are tourism as it affects traditional culture and tourism as an instrument of development. The study of tourism in anthropology is important for a variety of reasons. With a growing tourist class and a well established and extensive transportation network, even the most remote societies are becoming accessible and experiencing some form of culture contact. In such areas tourism is accelerating and intensifying the process of modernization (Isola, 1987).

Young (1973) defines the impact of tourism on culture contact as a "blight" which accelerates modernization at the cost of destroying traditional culture. Greenwood (1977) has a similar perspective and views tourists as the catalyst for debasing traditional culture through commodification. His study focuses on the *Alvarde* (a ritual performance recreating *Fuenterrabia's* victory over the French in A.D. 1638).¹ As a result of tourist intervention, the *Alvarde* was turned into a show for the benefit of the spectators and stripped of the meaning it held for the original participants. It even began to look like a performance for money. In other words, it was turned into a package made to entice tourists and the feelings of exhilaration and pride experienced previously by the participants faded. In addition, the municipal government felt obligated to have the *Alvarde* performed twice in the same day to allow everyone to see it, particularly tourists because of their economic importance in the town. In a similar example, García Canclini (1993) observed the replacement of traditional officials such as *mayordomos* by experts used to arrange loudspeakers, lighting and staging during the ceremonies of the nights of October 31 and November 1 (All Souls Eve and the Day of the Dead) taking place in *Janitzio*, Morelos. The result was the creation of a "giant make-believe venture" for the entertainment of tourists, instead of a traditional ceremony (Canclini, 1993: 98).

1. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, *Fuenterrabia* was an important town located in North Eastern Spain on the border of Spain and France, where both crowns contested the rights to control territory. As a result it was besieged many times, including 1638 when there was a siege by the French lasting sixty-nine days which the town withstood.

Other scholars maintain that tourism can be an instrument for cultural preservation as a result of the economic and social incentives offered by modern tourism. The incentives are varied and include a means of augmenting income, the generation of employment, and innovation in art forms. The advent of tourism can also be a means of asserting and solidifying a sense of self. Van den Berghe (1980) found that the presence of the tourist (the 'other') served to foster a feeling of solidarity among indigenous peoples in Peru. In a later study, conducted in *Chiapas*, Mexico, Van den Berghe notes that the state retains its character instead of "remaking itself into a Disneyland" (1994: 50). In fact, the presence of the tourists has led to the restoration and preservation of historic buildings, and inspired the creation of Maya-style murals in hotels and restaurants (Van den Berghe, 1994). In his discussion of African societies, Schädler (1979) demonstrates that although traditional crafts are produced to appeal to tourist taste every item retains the essence of native Africans beliefs and experiences. Tourism provided a market for ethnic art and stimulated the production of ethnic art these goods among Cuna women in Panama (Swain, 1977) McKean (1977) found this to be true in Bali as well, where tourism promoted the production of ethnic art and the performing of traditional ritual dances. Among the Amish, events were staged especially for the tourists, but performed in such a way that the tourists were only able to see what the Amish wanted to be displayed (Buck, 1978).

Tourists can be valuable allies for promoting and supporting the rights of a particular group. In the case of the Aborigines of Australia, the presence of tourists to whom Aborigines could sell 'aboriginality' and thereby possibly gain support for their struggle for land and other rights is useful (Mercer, 1994). In Iran increased interaction with tourism during the 1970s generated an interest in antiques and strengthened the position of the Persian Jew. The Persian Jews, a minority, were very much involved in the buying and selling of antiques purchased by tourists. The tourists' interest provided a form of economic and social support in a society where the minority status of the Persian Jews rendered them more vulnerable to the hostility of the majority (Loeb, 1977).

In terms of tourism as an instrument of development, tourism may be a factor in generating employment and creating new opportunities for the community. However, it may also displace the local population and generate or expand patterns of inequality. Van den Berghe (1994) shows that the incursion of tourists into the state of Chiapas has increased the amount of revenue brought into the community and increased jobs. But, it has also exacerbated inequality by most of the profits remaining in the hands of about twenty-five percent of the population. A study by Nancy Evan (1978) illustrates that by actively encouraging tourism, a more dependable economy developed and new economic roles for the natives of *Puerto Vallarta*, (Guadalajara) were made available. However, in a second study of *Puerto Vallarta* a year later, Evans (1979) states that the local population was losing control over their land and do not participate in decision-making. Another case study on a similar theme focuses on the resort of *Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo*, (Guerrero) and shows that the local population can no longer afford to live in the community as the standard of living increases and so do prices of services such as electricity (DeRegt and Valle, 1979).

A restructuring of the local economy often has a profound effect on the role of women. While there is more opportunity for employment and a chance for economic independence, it is often detrimental to family life (De Kadt, 1979; Johnson, 1978; Valle and DeRegt, 1979). Divorce rates are higher and mothers have to leave their children in someone else's care while they are working. In countries like Mexico, the ideal of *machismo* which emphasizes male virility and sexual prowess, is pervasive and partners resent the earnings of their spouses and the hours spent working away from the home. In addition, women may become more assertive and are more likely to leave an abusive situation, forcing the men to fend for themselves, when they can attain economic independence through the sale of crafts in tourist markets.

Generally, tourism can be a positive force in society fostering ethnic cohesion and economic independence, and revitalizing the host culture. It can also cause dissension by

creating or widening the gaps generated by economic factors, cause havoc with the environment, and commodify the art and ritual of a people to such an extent that they lose their meaning even for those to whom they belonged originally. The impact of tourism is very difficult to measure because of its transient nature and very difficult to control due to the large numbers of tourists who visit the various resorts every year in search of relaxation, entertainment, 'exotic cultures' (i.e. the 'holy grail'), as is the case in Mexico.

Tourism is one of the leading industries in terms of income and employment in Mexico due to its extensive range of tourist resources including a wide range of beaches and other ecological sites, a large diversity of archaeological sites, and equally diverse ethnic and cultural features including the extensive number of indigenous groups whose crafts and dances are a major attraction for tourists. In addition, Mexico is easily accessible from North America. North Americans, largely Americans mainly interested in recreational tourism (Van den Berghe, 1994), comprise 91.65 percent of Mexico's tourists (Chant, 1992). There is also a small group of (cultural) tourists from Western Europe and more recently, from Japan. In 1988, Mexico received 5.69 million foreign visitors who generated well over a million jobs. In addition, domestic tourism is thriving in Mexico and brought in over seventy percent of the revenue for Mexican hotels in the 1990's (Van den Berghe, 1994).

García Canclini: Concerns About Commoditization

García Canclini examines popular culture in Mexico in relation to craft production and relations of production on the basis of research carried out in villages located in the Tarascan Indian regions of the states of Michoacan and Morelos between 1977 and 1980. The objective of the research was to study and explicate changes occurring in the popular crafts and *fiestas*. In particular, García Canclini examines why Mexican indigenous groups make their crafts and *fiestas* "increasingly for others" (1993: vii). In order to bridge the distance between what he terms "the romantic solution" which focusses on the conception

of natural, almost pristine communities untouched by capitalist development, and "the market strategy" which centres on crafts, *fiestas* and traditional beliefs in terms of marketing profitability, García Canclini explores both the symbolic and economic aspects of the products of popular culture.

García Canclini argues that economy and culture are inextricably linked. Cultural products emerge from and are deeply rooted in material living things. For a material item to be developed, a cultural conception of it must first exist. The production of culture is supported by a material organization particularly suited to the needs of each culture. For instance, for an intellectual process of learning to take place, there must be a building (i.e. an object made from material things) or a designated space signified by material things (e.g. a piece of tarpaulin) where the process of learning can take place becomes a cultural symbol which represents this process of learning reflecting García Canclini's argument that any practice is simultaneously economic and symbolic. Education is part of the social system which is part, in conjunction with the socioeconomic infrastructure, of what determines culture.

In his analysis of culture as production, García Canclini states that cultural products such as crafts or *fiestas*, must be assessed as representations in terms of the relationship between social reality and ideal representations, as well as the structural link between the means of production (materials and methods) and the social relations of production. In addition, the social relations involved in the aesthetic processes must be considered. Every phase of the process of production, including the "social circulation of objects and meanings that different recipients attribute to them" (García Canclini, 1993: 13) are vital in order to understand the meaning of production. Economic capital, which is central to determining relations of production, is governed by cultural apparatuses generating different structures of aesthetic taste. These apparatuses include "all material institutions and structures through which meaning is carried" (ibid.: 17). The appropriation of culture occurs when there is unequal participation in capital as a result of lacking ownership of

economic capital. The peasant artisans of *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* do not own the economic capital to be gained by the sale of their tiger masks through *intermediarios* or others. They do not have the same amount of economic capital at their disposal as tourists and shop owners and are therefore in a somewhat vulnerable position vis-a-vis market forces such as inflation. Furthermore, argues García Canclini, the peasant artisans relinquish ownership of any capital they do have when third parties such as *intermediarios* are involved in marketing tiger masks.

García Canclini states that crafts, born of popular culture, endure because of their connection to the relations of production in capitalism. Popular culture, as such, as derived from "specific forms of representation, reproduction, and symbolic re-elaboration of peoples social relations" (ibid.: 22). Four factors govern the need for artisan production: "the deficiencies in the agrarian structure, consumption needs, the incentive from tourism, and sponsorship by the state" (ibid.: 38). Land scarcity, a low level of technology, the poor quality of the land, deteriorating prices of agricultural produce, and accelerated demographic growth have created a subsistence economy in rural areas. Craft production provides a viable option and reduces the risk of having no income at all in the face of a low level of agricultural production without a reliable surplus and a variation in seasons. It also helps to sustain the family unit in the familiar, domestic environment of the villages where they have lived for generations. In addition, craft production is important to the growth and reproduction of capitalism as "an additional source of income" in rural areas (ibid.: 45), a way of renewing consumption, as a means of attracting tourists and as a tool of ideological cohesion. Thus, craft production becomes "hybrid" - as being and not being precapitalist. Crafts themselves may also be considered as hybrid representing both economic and aesthetic aspects. By being hand-made and based on indigenous designs they denote a precapitalist condition and by being sold as merchandise with a commercial value they adhere to the conditions of capitalism.

Interaction with the *intermediarios* and organizations promoting craft production, are part of the process by which peasant artisans become absorbed into the capitalist market. They become the instruments through which artisans are cut off from the process of production, and are separated from the ideal and material aspects of production. This ultimately results in "a rupture between the economic and symbolic, and between the material (commercial) and cultural (ethnic) meaning" (García Canclini, 1993: 61). According to García Canclini, this fracturing of the community serves the interests of capitalism in that it is a means of controlling the divergent cultural elements in society. In a country like Mexico, which comprises more than fifty ethnic groups whose sense of identity is derived from the global, cultural and economic membership of the group, this is an important point. Peasant villages with Indian roots, such as *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, have managed to "preserve a certain degree of communal experience sustained by economic and symbolic structures" (ibid.: 60) from which cultural meaning is derived, resulting in a large variety of distinct communities.

But capitalism as such, argues García Canclini, does not only fracture, separate and isolate; it creates a new system from the scattered pieces. This he refers to as the globalization of culture. Globalization and the expansion of capitalism lead to standardization. Thus, while globalization of culture opens communication between groups through the exchange of ideas which may lead to forms of innovation in craft production, it may also result in the mass production of items according to a generic standard lacking individuality. García Canclini maintains that standardization is useful to the artisans as it creates the need for something 'different' and 'exotic' which they can produce. In an age where everything is machine-made, anything made by hand assumes an added lustre. The products of the artisans acquire new meanings and functions as a response to changes in consumption and as a response to the demands of capitalism. However, this process of innovation also takes place as a result of the artisan's own desire for learning and trying new things which may or may not have been introduced by

capitalism. Innovation by definition indicates movement and change. Mixtec and Nahua culture have always been dynamic adopting elements from other cultures and accommodating them into their own socio-economic and political systems and beliefs.

Fiestas are defined by García Canclini as "movements of communal unification to celebrate events of beliefs" (1993: 31) that originate from a community's daily experience. *Fiestas* are held to preserve the (material) order that structures people's habits and hopes. They act to consolidate emotional communal relations and promote a sense of belonging, as well as a sense of self. To be centered around communal life when a time and space is set aside for collective participation, communities must ensure that all aspects of the *fiesta* are carried out to their own, internal standards rather than those imposed exclusively by outsiders. García Canclini states that *fiestas* are based only to the reasons for sowing, harvesting and rains which reflect the community's needs for food and health. In addition, he stresses the continuity between "work time" (i.e. preparation time) and *fiesta* time.

In both *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the rituals of the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* continue to center around communal life and there is a specific time and space set aside for them to take place. The sacred spaces used (e.g. the mountain summit and the cave where part of the *Tiger Fight* takes place) during the rituals and the times of the rituals (May, the season of Spring and the time for sowing crops, in the case of the *Tiger Fight*) have been selected primarily for spiritual reasons, and contain a relationship to the agricultural themes of fertility and rain expressed in them. In addition, the emphasis on the *zócalo* (central plaza) as the focal location for the *Dance of the Tejorones* and the *Tiger Fight* is significant.

In Pre-Colonial times, the *zócalo* was the centre for ceremonial activity and the core of the religious complexes. The most important buildings, such as the temples, were located in the *zócalo*. Other structures of the community, like the dwellings of the commoners, were built away from the *zócalo*. When the Spanish arrived, they introduced a grid-type pattern or "chess board design" for the construction of towns (Foster, 1960: 34)

which first consisted of "two main streets crossing at right angles at the center of a quadrangle, terminating at gates in each of the four walls" (ibid.: 38). Soon after the Medieval Period (twelfth and thirteenth centuries), open plazas similar to the early Roman plans were formed consisting of four quarters formed by principal streets crossing at right angles to midpoint, leading to an open plaza (i.e. the *zócalo*), on which faced the church, town hall, jail and other public buildings (ibid.). In addition, these *zócalos* often served as sites for local markets, as they do today. Although the *zócalo* has remained as the nucleus of community life in Mexican villages, it is no longer a purely ceremonial center.

Although García Canclini also acknowledges that the *fiesta* involves a degree of discontinuity, he dismisses the notion of sacred time. He supports his position by referring to the presence of saints' images being kept in the home and worshipped there with the same intensity as if this were a church. Given that one of the first areas used for ritual activity was the home (Spores, 1984), the presence of and devotion to saints' images in the home is not necessarily a negation of sacred time. Furthermore, other scholars (Abrahams and Bauman, 1978; Myerhoff, 1982) argue that the amount and intensity of the time involved to prepare for special occasions suggests otherwise and shows how much capitalist society still needs ritual. Capitalist society lacks the totality of expression and significance, as well as the collective voice found in a sacred context. In an effort to combat the feelings of isolation, confusion, and separation people seek resolution through ritual and escape from ordinary, structured time (Campbell, 1956; Myerhoff, 1982).

García Canclini regards *fiestas* as an articulation of the tensions between rural and urban conditions, traditional (pre-capitalist) and capitalist relations of production, and Indian and Western elements. In this sense, *fiestas* are hybrid as is demonstrated by the coexistence of indigenous and Western elements in both the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones*. For instance, mainly Western clothing is worn during the depiction of traditional rituals and food items include *tortillas* made from maize (the traditional staple crop) which are consumed together with soda pop. García Canclini states that *fiestas* in

Indian peasant villages are firmly rooted in production and the rhythm of the agricultural or religious calendar. The domestic unity of life and work is reproduced through the collective nature of the ritual and the participation of the family. But, rather than acting as a leveling mechanism to reduce social inequalities and differences, García Canclini believes the *fiesta* serves to reassert them because those wealthy enough to support the *fiesta* do not redistribute their wealth to the other members of the community. However, in *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* respectively foster the cohesion of the communities and provide a way to cope with the internal friction generated by differences in social status and economic capital. As collective experiences, these rituals do not reassert or perpetuate these differences. The differences existed prior to the times of the rituals and re-emerge afterwards, but are not disruptive to the communities. As a global phenomenon, *fiestas* incorporate every aspect of social life and reveal the role of economic, political, religious and aesthetic elements (García Canclini, 1993).

Tiger mask production does involve a set of social relationships with capitalism, often articulated through the consumption of industrially manufactured goods. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán* these relationships are also expressed through the extensive use of *intermediarios* and the sale of tiger masks for money. In *Zitlala*, this is expressed indirectly through the distribution of the remittances sent back to the community to preserve the *Tiger Fight*. However, both communities continue to have ties with the traditional, smaller markets and the rituals are still governed by standards they have defined according to their own norms and values. In addition, both rituals are an articulation of and a way of resisting the various tensions existing in the communities. These tensions include the struggle with nature and the connection to the land; friction because of disparities in roles and statuses between community members; the conflict between the indigenous population and the 'other' (tourists); and indigenous cosmological and spiritual beliefs as opposed to Christian conceptualizations.

The Rhythm of Ritual

Ritual contains the "images and meanings and models for behaviour which constitute the cognitive and ethical landmarks of culture" (Turner, 1975: 62). Each ritual has phases or stages with a specific purpose and subunits which include episodes, actions or gestures (Turner, 1975). There are four genres of ritual: seasonal or cyclical reflecting a change in time such as the agricultural cycle; contingent arising from individual or group crisis; affliction in which supernatural beings or forces inflicting disease and so on are placated or exorcised; and divinatory ritual involving fertility rites to ensure the health and prosperity of human beings in society, animals or crops (Turner, 1985). Both the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* are a combination of the seasonal/cyclical, divinatory and to a degree, contingent genres. Both are determined by agricultural cycle, focus on the theme of fertility, and are born out of the need for rain which ensures the growth of staple crops for their consumption. Symbols constitute the molecules of ritual (Turner, 1991). Victor Turner defines these ritual symbols as "a storehouse of tradition and knowledge"(1975: 38) with each facet corresponding "to a specific cluster of norms, beliefs, sentiments, social roles and activities and relationships in the total cultural system of the community performing the ritual" (ibid). In other words, each aspect of a ritual symbol is a manifestation of socio-economic and religious contexts of a particular cultural ideology.

Each ritual symbol has four attributes or properties: significata which refers to the actions or objects (e.g. symbol vehicles containing multiple meanings) perceived by the senses; condensation referring to the ability of many things or actions to be condensed into one single unit of formation; and the polarization of meaning consisting of sensory and ideological poles of meaning. The former refers to phenomena which stimulate the senses and the latter is linked to the moral and social order (Turner; 1982a; 1989; 1985). The sensory pole is effective in facilitating the release of thoughts and emotions which are considered dangerous (e.g. threaten existing cultural patterns) and disruptive to the social

fabric of the community. These thoughts and emotions are released and communicated to the community through ritual. In this way, the cohesion of the community is protected (Bott, 1972; Douglas, 1992; Geertz, 1972; Myerhoff, 1984; Turner, 1977). Thoughts and emotions are usually disguised and transformed as a protective measure (Bott, 1972). This is illustrated during the Balinese cockfight when participants will bet only on the cock towards whose owner they owe some form of allegiance through kinship or other ties. In this way, the ties between community members are reinforced and their obligations acknowledged. The risk of conflict as a result of expressing disloyalty or being openly insulting to each other is eliminated (Geertz, 1972).

Similarly, the young men who depict tigers in the *Tiger Fight* do not battle with members of their own *barrios* (districts), but only with those from other *barrios*. Also, after the *Tiger Fight* has ended, members of the community as a whole re-establish a form of peaceful coexistence. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, members of each *barrio* dance together reinforcing the ties of *barrio* members to each other. Since the *barrios* are situated side by side, it is necessary to find a mechanism of minimizing tensions and avoiding conflict. Competing with each other on an economic level would inevitably have led to some conflict and it would have been necessary to develop a mechanism to cope with it. Ritual is a means of reaffirming loyalty and allegiance to a particular *barrio* and resolving any conflict in a manner acceptable to the community.

Each symbol contained in ritual has three dimensions: exegetic which concerns the "explanations given by the actors in the ritual system"; operational which is related to a symbol's meaning and use; and positional which refers to the interaction between one symbol and another source of meaning as one theme from a symbol's assemblage is arranged vis-a-vis similar themes, objects or activities. An effective way of achieving this arrangement is through binary opposition. Victor Turner defines binary opposition as the "relating of two symbol vehicles whose proposed perceptible qualities or quantities suggest, in terms of association with the rules of cultural, semantic opposition" (1985; 58).

Although the two symbol vehicles may be asymmetrical, like/unlike, they are equal in value. In the Balinese cockfight, the cock is a symbolic expression of the owners male ego, as well as an expression of animality which the Balinese consider the direct inversion, aesthetically, morally, and metaphysically of human status (Geertz, 1972). In the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones*, the tiger is a symbolic expression of a human being's alter ego, of the darker side of the human soul which is associated with aggression, brutality and bestiality. As with the Balinese, this is regarded by the Nahua and the Mixtecs as a direct inversion of what separates humans (i.e. culture) from animals (i.e. nature).

Symbolic inversion occurs in many cultures in a variety of forms: "transvestitism, men dressed as animals or supernatural beings, sexual license and other behaviours that are opposite of what is supposed to characterize everyday life" (Abrahams and Bauman, 1978; 194). During the peyote hunt of the Huichol Indians of North-Central Mexico, the Huichol Indians make a pilgrimage to *Wirikuta*. *Wirikuta* refers to the high desert close to where the Huichols live and also to a paradise linked to a mythical past. Instead of expressing joy, the pilgrims weep as they re-enter *Wirikuta* and show exultation in leaving it (Myerhoff, 1978). In the *Dance of the Tejorones*, the *tejorones* mock and ridicule the authorities and elders of the community instead of showing them the proper respect. Symbolic inversion is also present in both *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* in the form of transvestitism. Both rituals have characters who are female, but the roles are played by men. Transvestitism is achieved through cross-dressing and an exaggeration of what is generally regarded by men as female behaviour.

A number of theories for cross-dressing are offered by scholars. Cross-dressing may be adopted for "status gain achieved by dressing like and acting like the dominant gender in society; as a means to adapt to circumstances in which behaviour of 'the other' is required (Bateson, 1958); as a means of balancing out individual temperaments and socially demanded requirements of a culture such as bravery expected in warfare (Mead, 1935).

Originally, cross-dressing was used to protect women from exhibiting themselves in public (i.e. making a spectacle of themselves) and thereby overstepping the bounds of what was considered respectable, moral behaviour. This belief was sanctioned by reason of anatomy: because women's sex organs were hidden, they were not meant to expose themselves by performing in public (Bullough and Bullough, 1993).

In Mexico, this attitude towards women's sexuality as something mysterious and almost shameful is based on the concepts of *machismo* and *marianismo*. *Machismo* may be defined as an exaggeration of male sexuality and virility. The identity of the male and the strength of his image in society is tied to his sexual prowess as it is reflected in his ability to acquire sexual power and, through this, socio-economic domination over his female counterpart. By contrast, *marianismo* has its foundations in the cult of the Virgin (Mary) which finds expression in the ideals of purity and suffering. Suffering is considered a virtue and the only means women have to achieve purity. Closely tied to the ideal of purity are the notions of shame and honour, and chastity. As single women, they are expected to remain a virgin and when women are married they are expected to conduct themselves in a chaste and modest manner (Melhuus, 1990).

The Virgin is a paradoxical figure: as a mother, she has participated in the act leading to the creation of life which is shameful and dirty, and yet she is the epitome of all that is pure, new and good (Brandes, 1980). The worship of the Virgin is also an essential part of Catholicism in Spain and incorporates "a cult diversified by a multitude of incarnations and representations of the mother of God, each linked with a local tradition" (Defourmeaux, 1970: 113). There is no doubt of the importance of the mother figure as the ultimate role women may achieve both in Mexico and in Spain (Arnold, 1978; Defourmeaux, 1970; Melhuus, 1990). The power to give birth is one that cannot be equaled by any male. The Monteros Gypsies of Andalusia use joking to deal with and minimize conflict resulting from their feelings of genital inferiority and powerlessness, in the face of the realization that they cannot give birth (Brandes, 1980). Brandes (1980)

suggests that the definition of women's sexuality as something shameful was also promoted by the Catholic church as a means of economic and social control to ensure that their position was not threatened by the strength of the family unit. Given the patriarchal nature of Catholicism, this is very likely.

The depictions of the characters the Beautiful and the Ugly Woman who appear in many Tarascan villages on the day of the Virgin of Immaculate Conception and act as models of appropriate moral behaviour for the women of the communities, support Brandes' theory. The Beautiful woman represents the Mother (i.e. Virgin) and has as her counterpart the Ugly Woman who is the antithesis of all that is good and virtuous. The former dresses beautifully (in clothes she has sewn herself), is modest and reverent in her demeanor, and moves in a sedate manner. By contrast, the Ugly Woman wears ragged clothing, behaves in a vulgar and bawdy manner, and cannot master the steps of the dance (Esser, 1983). The Beautiful Woman is admired and treated with respect as opposed to the Ugly Woman who is ridiculed, and poked with sticks. Esser (1983) suggests that since these roles are performed by men, this is intended as a means of controlling the female members of the communities.

Cross-dressing is a necessary device for men to play a female role. During the Christmas Carnival in St. Vincent, young men dress up as women in order to gain entrance to the kitchen where they behave in a flirtatious manner and joke in a lewd and bawdy manner. The kitchen is considered the "stronghold of respectability" (Abrahams and Bauman, 1978; 205). The transvestites invert this sense of respectability through their behaviour. The kitchen is regarded as the female domain and constitutes the nucleus of the household. By intruding on the domain of the female 'other', the transvestites turn everything upside down bringing disorder into the household. In the same way, the *tejorones* of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* invert the norms for appropriate social behaviour by disrespecting their elders and flaunting authority, and the masked dancers of *San Pedro Chenalho* (Chiapas) mimic and ridicule the *regidores* (high-ranking official of civil-

religious hierarchy; town councilmen) during the Carnival (Bricker, 1983). Among the Yaqui of Sonora, during the Carnival the *paskola* (meaning clown) also inverts norms of behaviour by acting excessively foolish, taunting the deities and engaging in lewd sex play among themselves (Lutes, 1983). This type of behaviour provides a release from the concerns of daily life, and the restrictions of prescribed roles and statuses.

The act of masking also constitutes a form of symbolic inversion as human beings become supernatural beings or animals possessing supernatural qualities. The mask, as the headdress is essential to the identity of the character reflected in its image (Gillmor, 1983). Furthermore, as Steven Lutes points out (1983), the mask is a particularly powerful ritual symbol which can be made to attract and rivet the attention of those present by its impressive and sometimes grotesque design. This is made possible by the wide range of materials, forms, colours, markings and designs used to represent many symbolic themes. Masks may be defined as representing liminality or mediating the relationship between the aesthetic and the transformation of individual or social contexts. On Good Friday (Friday of Lent), when the Mayo Indians of Northwest Mexico celebrate Easter, a group of *priserom* (masked soldiers) led by a *pilato* (masked ranked officer) ride up to the houses in the community, pull up the cross found in the patio of each home and place them in a cottonwood branch bower which is metaphorically the tomb of Jesus. Ultimately, Jesus is killed as swords are run into the bower which surrounds a large and a small crucifix thereby recreating the moment of crucifixion. Thus, the ritual represents the death of Jesus and his resurrection, and mediates the moments between life, death and rebirth (Crumrine, 1983).

In essence then, ritual is instrumental in articulating and resolving the tensions that exist in society. Ritual symbols are an important factor in social action and a "dynamic entity within the appropriate context of action" (Turner, 1982a: 22). Ritual acts have a relationship to a community's past and are repeated at a certain point of time every year. The repetitive nature of ritual familiarizes the community with the ritual and exposes

people's view of themselves (Geertz, 1972). In modern, industrial society governed by an ethos of individualism, it has become necessary for communities to develop their own rituals employing symbols in increasingly private contexts (Campbell; 1956; Myerhoff, 1982). In *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, however, it is still the collective conscience which is the impulse of ritual. The repetition of the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* rituals reasserts ethnic identity and reinforces a sense of community. In addition, they act as leveling mechanisms to resolve tensions created by economic and social disparities, as well as differences in gender and revitalize the community.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

The thesis combines paradigms from economic and symbolic anthropology. The economic aspect of the thesis focuses on theories of household production, especially the work of Scott Cook and Leigh Binford (1990). The symbolic aspect of the thesis centers around the theories of Victor Turner. The work of other scholars such as María de los Angeles Crummett (1987), Carmen Deere (1987), Mircea Eliade (1957), Clifford Geertz (1972), Barbara Myerhoff (1982) and Manning Nash (1966) is also examined in relation to the primary paradigms employed in the thesis.

The Principles of Household Production

The household is the central unit of production and consumption. The constitution of the household requires the examination of how cultural components such as the kinship system, the division of labour by gender, household size and generational composition affect the economic structure of the household (Cook and Binford, 1990; Crummett, 1987; Deere, 1987). Peasant artisan households tend to be larger, often including extended family members. The scheduling of available labour is usually based on gender and involves separate domains. However, there are also occasions when these divisions do not apply depending on the need to allocate labour to specific activities. Cook and Binford

(1990) separate the activities of peasant artisan households into subsistence-producing which refers mainly to agricultural production and cash-earning in reference to artisan production, although artisan production can also be for subsistence. They define peasant artisans as "peasants who, in addition to growing crops, routinely fabricate non-agricultural commodities" (ibid.: 12).

Peasant artisan households "operate in a money economy in which land, labour, and products are partially or completely commoditized" (ibid.: 14). The reproduction of the peasant artisan household depends on the social relations of production, exchange and distribution it shares with other households in the community and with other communities in the outlying region. To assure reproduction, the household sells agricultural or non-agricultural products or wage labour. In *Zitlala*, the wage labour of the young men ensures the reproduction of the household. Selling surplus agricultural produce also occurs, but is not enough to ensure reproduction. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, reproduction of the household is ensured through the sale of agricultural produce and through the sale of tiger masks.

In order to ensure reproduction of the household at an economic level, artisans must obtain cash. They may be able to supply a portion of household consumption, including food, clothing and so on, but the rest needs to be purchased in the market with cash. In this sense, the artisans of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* are petty commodity producers (e.g. peasant artisans who own their own means of production, engage in commodity transactions and are dependent on the corresponding market mechanism to acquire goods and services they need) (Chevalier, 1983). While the members of both *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* participate in the market, they continue to be involved in the smaller, traditional markets. These traditional markets are characterized by a relatively simple technology; a division of labour based on sex and age; productive units organized around established social and political relations; and forms of exchange based on barter and

reciprocity, and an investment of wealth and capital as a means of regulating social relations (Nash, 1966).

Intensive involvement in the market by peasant artisan households is usually associated with consistent agricultural production. This is not always the case, as a peasant household could specialize solely in craft production, depending on such variables as access to land and means of production, and household size. Household size and structure develop in a context of economic and social ideologies, and determine the amount of income needed to maintain it on a subsistence level. Access to land, means of production and labour supply are key factors in defining production at the subsistence level. Peasant artisan households also participate in a number of material exchanges over which they exercise little or no control. Market prices are set by forces such as supply and demand and inflation. The price of a tiger mask may change more than once if the client of an *intermediario* re-sells the item to a fourth party. However, this participation in a wider economy is what makes peasant-artisan households viable.

The dual involvement in crafts and agriculture also protects peasant artisans from "vulnerability to the accidental" (Cook and Binford, 1990: 105). They participate in a more flexible economy and employ strategies to deal with the risk factor which are not accessible to those employed in the formal urban sector. These strategies include intensifying home consumption, selling less agricultural produce, cultivating subsistence crops on marginal lands and raising prices to the level of the buyer. Ironically, then, while Indian peasant communities are generally disadvantaged and marginalized, they have options that their urban counterparts do not.

Victor Turner: *Liminitas* and *Communitas*

The concepts of *liminitas* and *communitas* are essential to Victor Turner's theory of ritual. The concepts were originally inspired by the Belgian folklorist Van Gennep (1960) who examined life cycles in terms of a series of rites of passages (e.g. puberty to

adolescence). *Liminality* is the state of being in the middle of sacred ritual time and space (which is between the past and future of profane social existence and social order) the initiates find themselves in during the rite of passage. The initiates find themselves in a state of limbo waiting to be instructed in the knowledge and wisdom of the community. The attributes of initiates in a state of *liminality* is ambiguous since their position is between that ascribed by the cultural codes of the community (Turner, 1991; 1984; 1982b). This *liminal* state may be defined as a "temporary interface whose properties partially invert those of an already consolidated order constituting a specific cultural cosmos" (Turner, 1982c: 41). Factors of culture are isolated and recombined in numerous, different ways and the initiates are defamiliarized with the familiar. The initiates enter into sacred time, time that is cut off from ordinary time and constitutes a mythical time made present for the duration of the *liminal* phase (Eliade, 1957).

In the state of *communitas* the members of the community experience a sense of group unity without the constraints of social structure. Individuals are freed from prescribed roles and statuses confronting each other in a direct and concrete manner. *Communitas* promotes a sense of attachment to one's fellow human beings, but also a sense of detachment from one's social structure as it "tends to ignore, reverse, cut across, or occur outside 'obligatory' or 'necessary' structural relationships" (Turner, 1982b: 206). Eventually *communitas* itself acquires a structure where free relationships between individuals become regimented by norms-norms governed by sacred time and space. In essence, *communitas* provides the community with a means of rejuvenating a social structure which is itself regarded as being of divine origin born out of a mythical and sacred past (ibid.).

There are three types of *communitas*: existential or spontaneous, normative, and ideological. Existential (or spontaneous) *communitas* refers to a spontaneous event (e.g. a 'happening'). Normative *communitas* focuses on the organization of a spontaneous event into an enduring social system, and ideological *communitas* is applied to a variety of

utopian models which are based on existential *communitas* (Turner, 1991). The three types of *communitas* are inter-connected and may occur simultaneously. Both normative and spontaneous *communitas* involve structure. Ideological *communitas* is the outward form of the inward experience of existential *communitas* and defines the conditions under which it can thrive and multiply (Turner, 1977). Existential *communitas* is highly subjective and involves an extremely intense style of interaction. Ideological *communitas* provides the ideal conditions for the experience of a spontaneous event (e.g. existential *communitas*) to be exhilarating (Turner, 1982c). In the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones*, interaction between community members is intense and also exhilarating, as well as being an important part of the social system.

Victor Turner regarded the relationship between *liminitas* and *communitas* to be representative of the tensions and contradictions existing in society. He referred to *liminitas* as anti-structure (e.g. a process of destructuring the familiar) and *communitas* as structure (a process of restructuring). The process of *liminitas* may be a time of creation and innovation in the community propelled along by the sense of joy and exhilaration invoked by the sharing taking place during the ritual. In essence the community is revitalized and is better able to cope with the difficulties of everyday existence.

METHODOLOGY

Apart from library and archival research conducted both in Vancouver (Canada) and various parts of Mexico, the thesis is based on data gathered in the course of five months fieldwork. The fieldwork took place from January to June of 1992. The first three months of fieldwork took place in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (Oaxáca) and the remaining part in *Zitlala* (Guerrero). Familiarity with Oaxáca from previous fieldwork (1986-1987) and the intensity of tiger mask production in both communities were influential in my selection of these villages. My fluency in Spanish and the professional and personal networks I had already established were very helpful to me. The knowledge and experience gained during

my first year of fieldwork instilled the desire to return and do my thesis research among the Mixtecs and provided me with valuable insights on the complexities of contemporary Mixtec society. In addition, I had the opportunity to work with other anthropologists and other professionals.

In June, 1986 I was accepted into the Canada-Mexico Exchange Program funded jointly by the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa and the *Consejo Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnología* (National Council for the Development of Science and Technology). I spent one year in Mexico working with a team of professionals, including doctors, a sociologist, an economist, and another anthropologist from the *Instituto Nacional Indigenista* (National Institute of Native Affairs). We were based in the *Valle de San Quintín, Baja California Norte* located 193 kilometers south of *Ensenada* by the American border. The objective of our research was to study and develop projects to improve the socio-economic conditions of the migrant workers, primarily Mixtecs from Oaxáca, who came to work as wage labourers for the transnational agricultural companies in the hopes of procuring the economic means, through earning good wages, of bettering their lives. Some also see this type of work as an opportunity to access the United States and work there illegally.

The migrant workers endured many hardships in the camps, including miserable living conditions, lack of proper medical care, long hours in very bad working conditions and a poor diet—in many respects, not that different from the situations from which they sought escape. Ironically, however, since the migrant workers sent a large part of their earnings back to their communities to maintain their families and support the religious *fiestas*, they are usually not much further ahead. Religious *fiestas*, such as the Day of the Dead which takes place in November every year, continue to be so important to the migrant workers that they return for them, sometimes from as far away as the United States, regardless of the financial cost and the risk of losing their jobs. This is indicative of the strong sense of community and of family, as well as the religious faith sustained by the

migrant workers. Another part of their earnings is often spent on industrially manufactured products, including walkmans or kitchen appliances, which may not function in their native communities, and become prestige symbols of the successful provider or worker looking for a wife. A good example of this is the case of one migrant worker who bought an electric blender, mixer and so forth, but could not use them when he returned to his community which did not yet have electricity. Nevertheless, he proudly displayed his kitchen appliances and was admired for his wealth. However, despite the desirability to acquire these types of goods, the migrant workers retained a sense of cultural identity tied to their native communities which was manifested by their support in perpetuating the local religious *fiestas* and the adherence to their own traditions. The latter was well illustrated by the case of a young man who used his walkman to listen to "music from home" (i.e. music typical of the region or particular to the community he came from).

The living conditions were appalling—worse or as poor as those they had left behind. Furthermore, they did not have the support network provided by a collectively centred community bound by kinship ties, ritual obligations and a common sense of identity. This situation was further exacerbated by the presence of different or even closely-related groups with distinct dialects like the Mixtecs of the *Mixteca Alta* and the Mixtecs of the coastal region who did not understand each other and therefore could not communicate. The housing itself consisted of one-room shacks per family constructed from sheet metal, tarpaulin, plastic bags, and cardboard with a range of four to ten people living in the one room. The majority of the camps had no sanitation other than outhouses which were never cleaned, no electricity, no garbage dumps, and no running water for washing. A couple of the camps did have a row of sinks outside, otherwise water had to be carried from the nearest available source. In an effort to improve the situation, we tried to organize those living in the camps to help themselves in various ways (e.g. to dig a garbage dump), and developed projects such as training workshops for women (e.g. in sewing) and an ambulatory school to teach basic reading, writing and math skills to school

children whose parents worked the field all day, for which I prepared the proposal and budget. In addition, I did the research and wrote the initial text for the video *Journaleros del Tiempo* (Migrant Workers of the Season) which was completed the year after I left Mexico.

During the time of my fieldwork in the *Valle de San Quintín*, I spent several weeks in Mixtec villages situated in the mountains and lowlands of Oaxáca and interacted with the members of the communities. If it was possible, I lodged in the communities themselves or in a neighbouring village, otherwise I stayed at branch offices of the INI. Due to the high level of migration, and the hardships incurred by harsh terrain and very low agricultural production, sometimes the villages were almost empty with only some officials from the civil-religious hierarchy and a few women present. This phenomenon of out-migration is common among the Mixtecs of the *Mixteca Alta* (mountainous region) and the *Mixteca Baja* (lowlands) in Oaxáca, but does not occur with the same intensity and frequency in the coastal region of Oaxáca as is demonstrated by the stability of the population of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and the tendency of community members to remain in the community continuing the tradition of tiger mask production. By contrast, *Zitlala* experiences a high level of out-migration and a parallel may be drawn between the socio-economic of those Mixtecs living in the *Mixteca Alta* and *Baja* and the Nahuas living in the highlands of Guerrero. The Nahuas are in similar situation and also face the difficulties of coping with rigorous terrain as *Zitlala* is located in the central region of Guerrero which is also very hilly and mountainous.

The field data gathered for the thesis is based on an ethnographic approach and consisted of participant observation and two types of questionnaires developed for mask-makers and buyers (including shop owners, market vendors, *intermediarios*, and representatives from government agencies dedicated to the promotion of handicrafts). In addition, a comparative survey of the prices of the tool and wood used by the mask-makers was done in *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* and Oaxáca City (refer to Map, Figure 1.1).

For my questionnaires, I used a set of core questions about the tiger mask and a series of questions concerning socio-demographic characteristics including age, level of (formal) schooling, location and type of community, and household composition. These questions provided background information about the mask-makers and buyers. The core questions elicited information on the symbolic and economic significance of tiger masks. I interviewed fifteen mask-makers in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and ten mask-makers in *Zitlala*. The mask-makers are all male members of the communities ranging in age from twenty-five to sixty-five, and from twenty to twenty-eight respectively.² The buyers interviewed are of both genders, ranging in age from twenty-five to sixty-four. I also spent some time talking to the women and children of the mask-makers about their role in tiger mask production, the disadvantages and/or benefits of tiger mask production, and their views on the meaning of tiger masks, but did not conduct any formal interviews with them as such.

The extreme shyness of the women, their lack of Spanish (the majority spoke only Mixteco or Nahuatl), and their perception of me as doing work which entailed much travel and lengthy absences from home away from my family (usually only man's work might involve this) made communication awkward and difficult, but never unpleasant. A recording device was sometimes used, with the permission of the informants. If photographs were taken, a second copy was given to the informants. However, before beginning any formal interviews, I spent time with the mask-makers and their families watching them work and giving them the opportunity to 'interview' me, a process which both sides found entertaining and amusing.

Initially, I began my fieldwork by contacting the staff at the *Instituto Nacional Indigenista* (INI) and the *Museo Nacional de Antropología* (National Museum of Anthropology) in Mexico City in order to verify that the villages I had selected were still

2. A few informants were uncertain of their birthdates, so the ages given in a couple of cases may not be precise.

fully involved in tiger mask production and to do some archival research as well. The director in charge of the coastal region of Oaxáca from the INI gave me a letter of introduction to assist me in entering the communities and to introduce me to any branch offices I would need to contact. During the course of my fieldwork, I did stay on occasion at different branches of their office. Due to the assistance of the branch office near *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* and the *Consejo de Las Costas Unidas* (Council for the Coastal Regions), I was able to make a video about tiger mask production in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* entitled: *El Rostro Mágico del Tigre* (The Magic Face of the Tiger).

When I first arrived at the villages, I approached officials at the municipal hall to ask for permission to do fieldwork in that particular community and to introduce myself. In both cases, I was fortunate to meet people from the communities who proved to be invaluable assistants and facilitated my work in the communities. In the bus on the way from *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* to *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, I met a young girl³ (*Susana*) who had a photography business there and was on her way to work. She spent the day with me and introduced me to various mask-makers and their families, as well as accompanying me to the *Presidencia Municipal*. She lived in a small community nearby, about twenty minutes away called *San Andrés Huaxpaltepec* and invited me to her home where I stayed frequently while I was working in *Santa María Huazolotitlán*. When I needed an interpreter to speak to one of the older mask-makers who did not speak Spanish and only Mixteco, she 'loaned me a friend' who was very helpful.

In a similar manner, I made the acquaintance of a young man (*Pepé*) on my way from *Chilapa de Álvarez* to *Zitlala*, who turned out to be the *head tiger* of one of *Zitlala's* three districts. He had left his teaching position to return home especially for the *Tiger Fight* and offered to assist me in any way he could. His family also offered me accommodation and I stayed for one night. Neither *Susana* nor *Pepé's* family would accept any money towards expenses incurred by my presence and were more interested in

3. The names have been changed to protect my informants.

anything Canadian I might have to give away. I gave each of them a small pin (I had bought a dozen or so of the Canadian flag, mooses, the Canada goose and so on along for such contingencies) and some postcards. In addition, they got copies of any photographs I took while I was in the communities, and I took *Susana* to *Puerto Escondido* and *Pepé* for an excursion.

Despite the presence of two rival groups of mask-makers in *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, I encountered no difficulties collecting data. In fact, during the *Dance of the Tejorones* which takes place every year in February, the *tejorones* of each *barrio* district took great delight in teasing me which did not deter me from taking pictures and generally joining in the fun from the periphery of the *zócalo*. As long as the mask-makers felt they were being treated equally, I did not encounter any hostility and I was able to move freely in the community. I was also careful to purchase masks from both groups. However, I did encounter some resistance from the *intermediarios* who were frequently passing through *Santa María Huazolotitlán*. They never stayed for more than a day in the community and were generally reluctant to talk to me, especially about profits netted and expenditures incurred through the buying and selling of tiger masks as they did not wish to appear unscrupulous.

In *Zitlala*, I had to overcome several obstacles in order to carry out my fieldwork. Because the young men who performed the role of the tigers and who produce the tiger masks do not live in the community during most of the year, it was almost impossible to do any interviewing before the beginning of the *Tiger Fight*. As soon as the mask-makers arrived they began to consume large quantities of alcohol and became intoxicated very quickly, and did not want to answer "so many questions". It was *Pepé* who introduced me to other tigers and was very helpful in facilitating the interviewing I was able to accomplish. He also made it possible for me to observe the *tigers* from his district get ready for the big *Fight* on the last day of the ritual, which seemed to be something like

gaining admittance to the boys locker room in a North American setting. *Pepé* seemed to think of himself as my protector, for which I was alternately grateful and frustrated.

In terms of archival materials, there was not as much information available on *Zitlala* (or Guerrero) as on *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (and Oaxáca). I was unable to procure any current statistical information on *Zitlala* at all. The *Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática* (National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Information, INEGI), had not yet completed a population census for Guerrero and did not have an earlier one available. I was also unable to purchase or borrow a book containing any recent studies of the communities of Guerrero. Travelling to Guerrero was strenuous and entailed a long bus ride since there was no direct route available either from *Oaxáca City*, *Mexico City* or *Santa María Huazolotitlán*. However, I was able to complete my research activities in both *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, and found the members of both communities interested in my work and willing to share their ideas with me.

ORGANIZATION

The thesis material is divided into five chapters. The objective of this chapter is provide is to familiarize the reader with the data discussed in the thesis and to provide the theoretical basis for the thesis. The second chapter consists of the following sections: "Introduction"; "Guerrero and Oaxáca: Past and Present"; "Meeting at the Marketplace"; "Pawprints in the Mud of Time"; "Rebellion and Responsibility at the *Fiesta*"; and "Summary and Conclusions". The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with some background information on the general history and characteristics of Guerrero and Oaxáca, the development of market systems and the symbolism surrounding the figure of the tiger within various indigenous cultures. Interaction with the capitalist market is not recent and both communities participate to some degree in it. The contemporary tiger of Nahua and Mixtec culture appearing in the *Tiger Fight* of *Zitlala* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* has grown out of a fusion of cultural influences

stemming from culture contact with indigenous, European and African groups. In order to understand the process of tiger mask production and the meaning of the tiger mask of today, it is necessary to examine its roots from the past.

Chapter three has five sections: "Introduction"; "Socio-Economic Organization"; "Preparing for Battle"; "Tigers in Combat"; and "Summary and Conclusions". This chapter is concerned with the analysis of the data from Zitlala. The first part of the chapter gives the reader an overview of the social and economic organization of the community with particular reference to the process of tiger mask production, market systems, and religion. The second part of the chapter examines the significance of the tiger in the *Tiger Fight* and the meanings associated with the tiger which are manifested through the *Fight*. In the conclusion, data is summarized and a connection is drawn between the economic and religious/ceremonial symbolism associated with the tiger. Photographs are integrated into the text.

Chapter four focuses on *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and is divided into the following sections: "Introduction"; "Socio-Economic Organization"; "Ingenuity and Innovation"; "Selling the Magic"; "*Dance of the Tejorones*"; "Selling the Magic: Marketing the Masks"; and "Summary and Conclusions". As in the previous chapter, the first part offers the reader information on the nature of economic and social organization of tiger mask production with particular reference to the process of tiger mask production in terms of its economic and social connotations. The second part of the chapter examines the impact of tourism and the intervention of *intermediarios* (and as well as other buyers) on tiger masks production. The *Dance of the Tejorones* is also discussed in detail. The conclusion examines the shifts in the meanings of the tiger mask as it is reflected in tiger mask production. Photographs are integrated into the text.

Chapter five entitled: "Summary and Conclusions" offers a brief synthesis of all the material examined in the previous chapters and explores the symbolic implications of integration into the capitalist market economy on tiger mask production. The chapter also

looks at how the intervention of tourists and buyer has affected tiger mask production, and whether their presence has affected the *Tiger Fight* and *The Dance of the Tejorones*.

II ORIGINS

INTRODUCTION

This objective of this chapter is to provide a background for the field data presented in the following chapters. Economic and symbolic aspects connected to the process of tiger mask production are examined and discussed. The economic aspect focuses on the structure of the market systems into which *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* are integrated. The symbolic aspect explores the development of the tiger as a ritual symbol. The chapter is divided into the following six sections: "Introduction"; "Guerrero and Oaxáca: Past and Present"; "Meeting at the Marketplace"; "Pawprints in the Mud of Time"; "Rebellion and Responsibility at the *Fiesta*"; and "Summary and Conclusions".

"Guerrero and Oaxáca: Past and Present" is intended as a brief introduction to provide background information on the geographical nature, and social, economic and political contexts that have created the current conditions in both states. This is important to understand the situation of the Nahuas and the Mixtecs who form the dominant ethnic groups of each state respectively. The gradual expropriation of Nahua and Mixtec lands through the introduction of various institutions such as the *ejidos* which have been and still are the most formidable and are a major cause of out-migration, especially among the Mixtecs and Nahuas living in the mountainous regions of the states. These issues, as well as the extent and importance of tourism will be examined in this section.

"Meeting at the Marketplace" discusses the development of markets and the types of market systems which are operational in the regions of the two communities studied. Emphasis is placed on the structure of Aztec markets because the creation of the Aztec Empire was an important factor in integrating specialized production and expanding the market. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán* tiger masks are incorporated into the *solar market system* characteristic of the coastal region of Oaxáca. In *Zitlala*, the *fería system* (series of trade fairs or village markets) predominates, but tiger masks are not yet sold in the markets.

Although the marketplace is primarily a site where material exchanges take place, it is also significant as a centre of communication where communities reaffirm social and economic ties to each other.

The tiger as a contemporary ritual symbol can trace its origins to the jaguar cult which existed, to varying degrees, among many early indigenous civilizations in Mexico. In "Pawprints in the Mud of Time" the influences of other earlier indigenous civilizations, including the Olmecs, Toltecs, Zapotecs, and Aztecs are examined in relation to the sacred and spiritual meanings of the tiger mask manifested by the Nahuas and Mixtecs in their symbolic elaboration of the mask. These influences surrounding the figure of the tiger have fused and re-fused together with the passing of time turning the tiger mask into a highly complex symbol. As a symbol, it is linked to rain and fertility (creation), as well as death and destruction. Thus, the symbolism of the tiger is a manifestation of the concept of duality. Shifts in the symbolic meanings of the tiger mask are occurring for a number of different reasons, including culture-contact with 'outsiders' as a result of the encroachment of capitalism. The extent of these shifts are analyzed in relation to these factors in terms of the symbolic elaboration of the tiger mask, as well as the interpretation of the symbolic meaning of the tiger by earlier cultures related to the Nahuas and Mixtecs.

The symbol of the tiger mask operates within the *Fiesta Complex*. The *Fiesta Complex* involves an intricate set of social relationships and obligations (both moral and financial) which are enacted through the ritual use of the tiger masks. These social relationships and obligations reflect cultural codes for appropriate behaviour and are instrumental in preserving the cohesiveness of the community. Leveling mechanisms, such as expenditures incurred by *fiestas*, are in place to minimize the accumulation of individual wealth. In "Rebellion and Responsibility at the *Fiesta*", the relationships and obligations of the *Fiesta Complex* are explored in connection to the wearers of the tiger mask as they pass through the stages of *liminitas* and *communitas* altering their behaviour accordingly. The

role of the *mayordomo*, under whose stewardship the rituals are carried out, is very important and is considered as well.

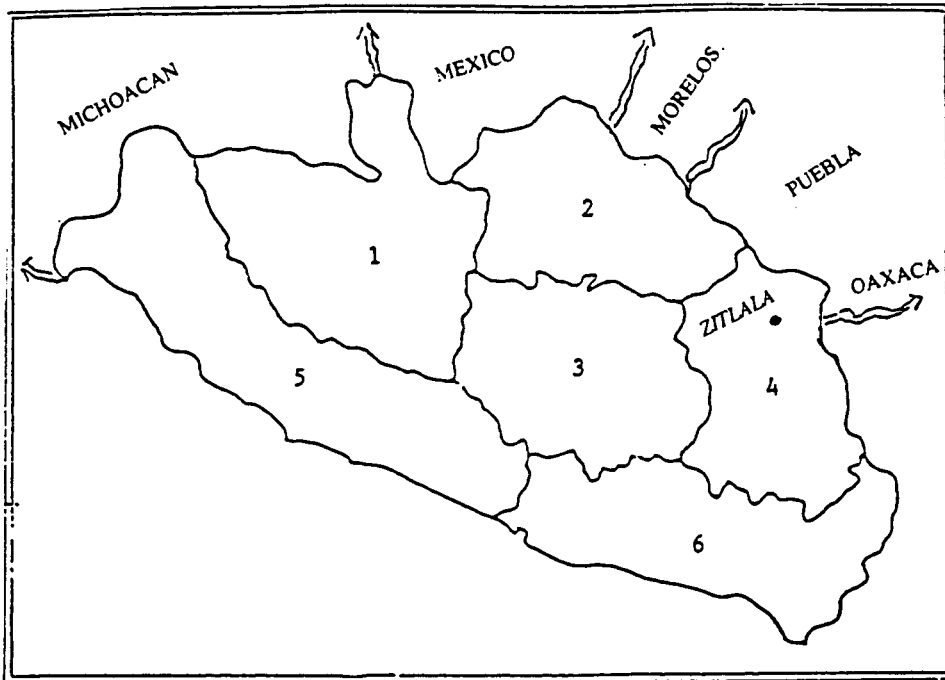
"Summary and Conclusions" reviews the material discussed. Overall, this chapter explores the socio-economic context of the Nahuas and the Mixtecs in their respective states (i.e. Guerrero and Oaxáca), and the history of tiger mask production in relation to the market, and the tiger mask as a ritual symbol in the *Fiesta Complex*. In my concluding remarks, I look at the implications of this history with reference to the communities of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala* where tiger mask production is vital to the material and spiritual well-being of the communities.

GUERRERRO AND OAXACA: PAST AND PRESENT

Guerrero and Oaxáca are located in the South of Mexico. Both comprise many different regions with extensive variation in climate, vegetation, and terrain ranging from rugged mountains to low-lying plains and sandy beaches. In addition, Guerrero is located in a seismic area and is therefore very vulnerable to earthquakes.

Guerrero is divided into six geo-cultural (geographical regions with distinct cultural features) regions: the *Sierra del Norte* (Mountains of the North), the *Valles Centrales* (central valleys), the *Montaña* (mountains, including the *Sierra Madre*), the *Costa Grande* (the coastal region stretching from *Acapulco* to the American border), and the *Costa Chica* (coastal region stretching from *Acapulco* to the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec* in Oaxáca) (refer to map, Figure 2.1). The ethnic composition of Guerrero accommodates twenty-four distinct cultural groups, including Mixtecs (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*, 1987). The Nahuas are the dominant ethnic group, as they have been for many generations already. Scholars have debated the ancestry of the Nahuas and their connection to the Aztecs. They have also speculated about a possible relationship to the early Toltecs—or an off thereof—semi-nomads who had migrated from the South to the central valleys of Mexico some

Figure 2.1. Geographical Regions of Guerrero.



1 - *Tierra Caliente* - Region with the Hottest Climate.

2 - *Norte* - Northern Region.

3 - *Centro* - Central Region.

4 - *Montana* - Hilly/Mountaineous Region.

5 - *Costa Grande* - Main Coastal Region beginning at *Acapulco de Juárez*.

6 - *Costa Chica* - Coastal Region stretching from *Acapulco de Juárez* Southwards to the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec*

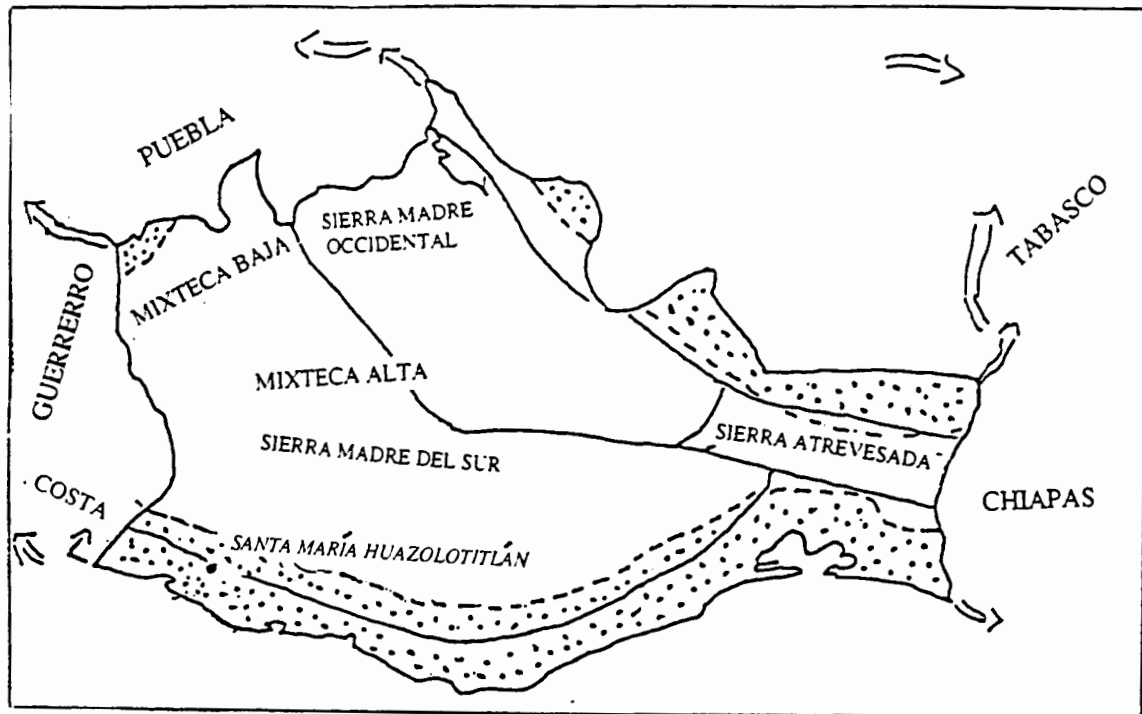
(*XII Congreso Nacional Para Maestro de Danza del IIDDN* - The XII National Congress for Dance Teachers of the IIDDN, 1984: 5).

1,500 years earlier and who spoke *Nahuatl* (an early form of *Nahuatl*) (Berdan, 1982; Gayles and Sayer, 1980; Lockhart, 1991; Peterson, 1962; Wolf, 1969).

Oaxáca consists of three geo-cultural regions: the *Mixteca Alta* (the mountainous region including the *Sierra Madre Sur* and *Occidental*), the *Mixteca Baja* (low-lying region), and the coastal region (refer to map, Figure 2.2). Oaxáca is one of the most mountainous regions in all of Mexico and is therefore very difficult terrain. In addition, the vegetation varies extensively (refer to map, Figure 2.3). The regions are dominated by the Mixtecs, although they number less than the Zapotecs, and also include the Nahuas, as well as between sixteen and eighteen other distinct ethnic groups speaking over fifty dialects (Alvarez, 1981). There are also pockets of the population descended from the blacks brought to the New World by the Spanish during the sixteenth century who now live primarily in areas along the Pacific and Gulf coasts. Although some inter-marriage did occur between the blacks and indigenous peoples, it was relatively little, perhaps in part a legacy of the Spanish who thought even less of them than they did of the indigenous peoples (at least the latter had souls to save). In addition, skilled African slaves could eventually purchase their freedom while indigenous peoples remained social, economic and political 'prisoners', so naturally there would have been tension between the two groups (Klein, 1988).

Historically, the origin of the Mixtecs has been traced back to approximately A.D. 1000 with occupation of the *Mixteca Alta* (the central valleys and mountainous region which were the core area for the development of Mixtec culture) beginning sometime before 1350 B.C. (Spores, 1984). They were associated with, and were possibly partially subjugated by, a group of Toltecs who were led into the mountains of the Southern highlands inhabited by Mixtec-speaking peoples by *Mixcoatl* (a mythical figure and also a leader of the Toltecs from 1122-50) (Davies, 1977). The Mixtec 'Empire', consisting of "regional groupings of hereditary", survived until 1448 (Davies, 1985) when it was gradually absorbed into the Aztec Empire. Due to this contact with Aztecs, the name of the

Figure 2.2. Mountain Ranges and Natural Geographical Regions of Oaxáca.



MOUNTAIN RANGES

Sierra Madre del Sur - Southern Sierra Madre Mountain Range

Sierra Madre Occidental - Western Sierra Madre Mountain Range

Sierra Madre Atrevesada - Constitutes Continental Divide and connects to the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec*.

(Alvarez, 1981: 33).

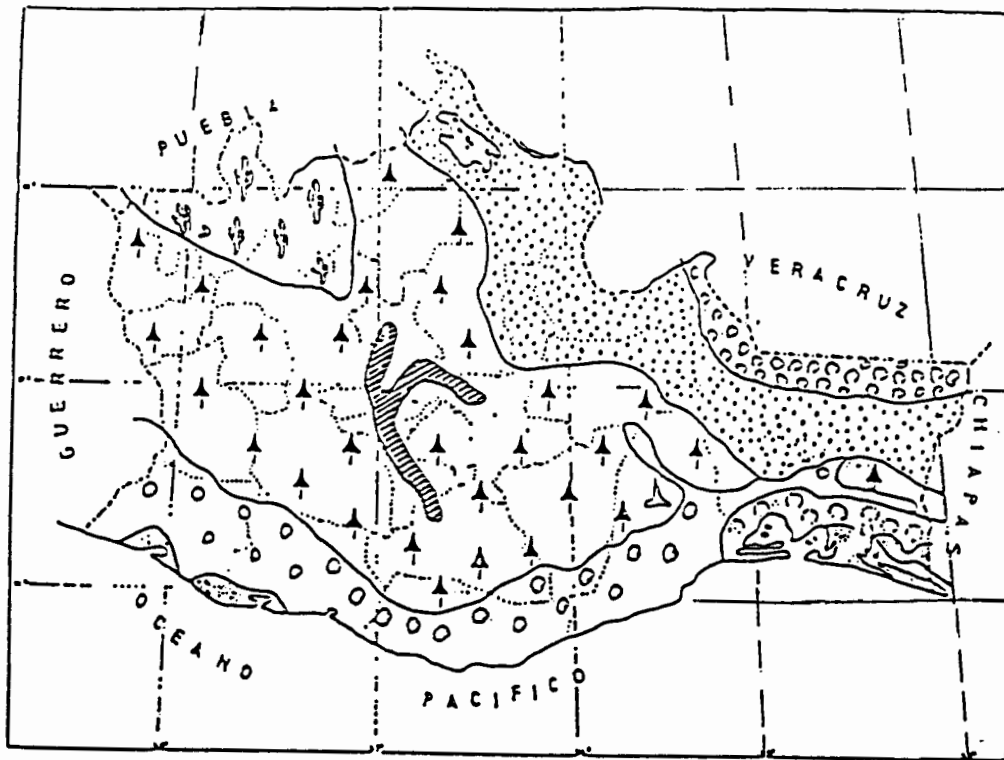
NATURAL GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS









- Tropical Lowlands

- Tropical Highlands

(ibid.:22).

Figure 2.3 Natural Vegetation of Oaxáca.



- | | |
|---|--|
|  - Rainforest (tropical). |  - Savannah with Swamp/Marsh in Summer. |
|  - Rainforest (subtropical). |  - Semi-Arid. |
|  - Moderate Forest. |  - Mangrove Swamp. |
|  - Forest of Conifers. | |
|  - Savannah. | |
- (Alvarez, 1981: 107).

Mixtec is derived from a Nahuatl word meaning "Cloud People." However, the Mixtecs referred to themselves as *Nusabi* or the *Nudzahui* meaning "People of the Rain" (Dahlgren, 1990; Spores, 1984).

Both Oaxáca and Guerrero are two of the poorest states in the country (Barry, 1992) as a result of a combination of the following factors: difficult terrain including mountainous regions, simple technology, a low level of agricultural production, an underdeveloped infrastructure in terms of transportation and communications, and the emphasis on tourism by both local governments. However, the process creating the conditions for the impoverishment, and subsequent marginalization of the indigenous population began early on in the Colonial Period through the gradual expropriation of Indian lands via various institutions; a process that was to prove devastating to people whose whole way of life, as well as their sense of identity was, and still is, tied closely to the land. What facilitated the implementation of such institutions was their degree of compatibility with existing forms of land distribution and the corporate nature of indigenous land distribution.

Among the Nahuatl the *altepetl* (village) and *calpulli* (district) authorities divided the most fertile land into uniform plots and allocated them to the population. The allotment varied according to social rank, and *calpulli* leaders and/or important leaders received many times more than an ordinary commoner's allotment. In addition, the land owned by the nobility was worked by commoners who did not own land as a kind of tribute. Although families and individuals held specific plots in perpetuity on the basis of rights of usufruct, they were regarded as overseers who were responsible to society for the care of the land. In essence, the basis of land distribution was for the beneficial use of the collective community (Bartra, 1993; Lockhart, 1992).

The system of land distribution among the pre-conquest Mixtecs was similar. The royal class and nobility held the most productive lands which were often worked by the landless class in a system resembling Europe's feudal system. Property was generally held in estates and transmitted from generation to generation along with titles. Communities

also held land which functioned as a collective land holding for the use of the community as a whole (Spores, 1984). The Nahua and Mixtec approach was completely the opposite of the Spaniards who emphasized the notion of individual possession and private property with the use of land entirely for individual benefit and consumption.

A key institution introduced by the Spanish in the early sixteenth century was the *encomienda*, essentially the allocation of a group of indigenous people to privileged Spanish colonists, in the name of the Crown. The colonists were entitled to keep the tribute and tax which otherwise would have gone to the Crown in return for the spiritual salvation of the indigenous people. Although it was presented as a benevolent institution concerned with the welfare, protection and Christianization of indigenous peoples, the *encomienda* was an instrument for labour exploitation and the gradual removal of indigenous lands (Berdan, 1982; Gibson, 1964; Miller, 1985). The *corregimiento* (a system of government and tribute collection from Indians) and *estancias* (grants of land for use as ranches or agricultural farm land) appeared soon after. This marked a shift in indigenous people's conception of labour from one of social, moral and spiritual value towards labour as an economic commodity and a form of drudgery (Gibson, 1964). Other institutions followed similar patterns, although they varied in definition and content.

The most significant, enduring, and insidious of these were the *haciendas* and the *ejidos*. The *hacienda* was essentially a large estate operated by workers who lived on the estate and had severed their ties with their agrarian communities. The *hacienda* engaged in agricultural production, cattle-raising, mining and the manufacture of a variety of products. It was fairly flexible incorporating various forms of labour and could adapt to market forces sustaining a more commercial character when the market expanded and becoming self-sufficient when the market contracted (Bartra, 1993; Semo, 1993). Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the *haciendas* acquired more and more land, under false pretenses. The clergy and *caciques* (indigenous leaders and nobility who were recognized as such by the Spaniards) also claimed large portions of Indian land.

Communal (Indian) village lands were often seized illegally or the title to them usurped forcing indigenous peoples to abandon their communities and relocate on less fertile and productive land. While the Spanish Crown did occasionally attempt, albeit half-heartedly and with a bias in favour of the Spanish, to intervene on behalf of the indigenous peoples, the combined powers of the different landowners and the church were firmly entrenched thwarting any attempts to reduce their amount of land.

The war for independence from Spain in 1810 did not alleviate the situation, but only strengthened the unity of the landlords and left the indigenous peoples even more vulnerable. The constitution of 1857, created under a liberal regime led a year later by Benito Juárez (originally a Zapotec Indian from a village in Oaxaca), was initially promising and imposed severe restrictions on the landholdings of the clergy by limiting their rights to title, nationalizing church property and suppressing monastic orders (Berry, 1981; Simpson, 1965). However, liberal reforms also included dividing land into parcels and the selling of communal lands, as well as the distribution of abandoned property. Unable to provide the capital for purchasing back their lands, indigenous groups lost large portions of their lands which were absorbed by large estates and foreign speculators (Bartra, 1993). Furthermore, factionalism and internal conflict among the liberals undermined any of their efforts at reform. There was growing unrest and frequent rebellions in protest. The power of the *haciendas*, unable to sustain advanced forms of labour, were dissolving leading to the emergence of the *ejido* (Bartra, 1993). The *ejido* may be defined as: "a form of peasant usufruct land tenure combining communal title vested in the state with rights to land worked collectively" (Gates, 1993: 257). Although they were intended for the benefit of the indigenous peoples, rigorous rules prohibiting the sale or leasing of the *ejidos* by indigenous communities left them again with no control over their lands.

The Porfirio dictatorship (1876-1910) provided the last ounce of fuel needed to ignite the revolution of 1910. Not only was the seizure of land and the level of corruption of enormous proportions, but villages were prohibited from holding any land thus

rendering all communal property of villages illegal. Furthermore, indigenous villages had to produce proof of the legal title to land to prevent the *ejidos* from being auctioned off. In addition, taxes were increased and, water rights were being manipulated. While this was a period of major industrialization for Mexico, as before there was little benefit to indigenous peasant communities who did not get new schools, better roads, improved health care or decent housing (Bartra, 1993; Miller, 1985). And, although a proposal was made under the Plan of Ayala in 1911 for returning the *ejidos* to the indigenous peoples and their communities, most of the recommendations were never implemented and those who did receive land got less than five hectares each (Esteva, 1993). According to Esteva (1983), this was essentially a political maneuver calculated to seduce the peasants into trading their guns for plows.

Armed revolts ensued setting the stage for the 1910 Revolution which lasted for seven bloody years. The most famous revolutionary leaders were *Emiliano Zapata*, of Indian origin, who led the Revolt in the south and under whose slogan "tierra y libertad" (land and liberty) echoed throughout Mexico, and *Pancho Villa* who led the Revolt from the state of *Chihuahua* in the north (Miller, 1985). Eventually, in 1917, a new Constitution was born influenced by the ideals of justice and equality which had been inspired to a large degree by the fervour of the French Revolution earlier. The main objectives of the new Constitution were a more equitable distribution of land and water, the restoration of indigenous lands, the improvement of working environments in the cities, and raising the wages of agricultural labourers (Simpson, 1965). Between 1917 and 1934, approximately eleven million hectares were divided into six thousand *ejidos* among nearly a million peasants giving them about ten hectares each. There were also incentives to develop *ejidal* banks and increase rural education (Esteva, 1983). However, the *ejido* system remained firmly in place, and the large landowners and industrialists managed to retain much of their land.

This was rectified to a degree by President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) whose redistribution of lands to the indigenous peasants was unprecedented, and finally gave them some social and economic autonomy (Barry, 1992; Esteva, 1983). The 1940's and 1950's saw intensive industrialization, modernization and a tremendous growth in population which quadrupled. The following years were marked by an endless cycle of 'boom and bust'; a prosperous economy, then periods of economic depression characterized by an extremely high inflation rate, very low wages, problems with the national debt, food shortages, and increasing political corruption. Land distribution continued, but did not change the structure of land tenure. In addition, lands redistributed were of poorer quality and less extensive (Esteva, 1983).

Recently, under President Carlos Salinas de Gotari (1988-1994), *ejidos* were privatized. This meant that "an *ejido* would be able to grant individual titles only if the majority of the members agreed, and the new owners would be free to do as they pleased with their parcels", thus opening the *ejido* to capitalism (Gates, 1993: 14). Since the indigenous peasant population does not have the resources or capital to purchase *ejidos* or participate in any other meaningful way in this opening of the *ejidos*, privatization of the *ejidos* disadvantages them even further.

Guerrero had always been, and continues to be, a stronghold of rebellion against the corrupt federal governments. Following independence from Spain, there was internal strife and intermittent periods of civil war as opposing conservative and liberal forces dominated different areas of Guerrero. During the period of French intervention (1863-1867) under the Emperor Maximilian, parts of Guerrero were attacked and occupied by the French army for brief periods of time, including the port of *Acapulco* and the town of *Chilapa de Álvarez*. Later, during the Revolution of 1910, Guerrero supported the *Zapatistas* led by *Emiliano Zapata* against the Porfirio government (Jacobs, 1982; SEP, 1987). Currently there is Guerrilla activity in protest against the difficult socio-economic conditions caused by lack of running water, infrequent or no electricity, a poor diet and the

like. In addition to the political and social injustices they have suffered, the continual appropriation of their lands by the federal government has been the primary contributor to the marginalization of the peasant population (Barry, 1992).

Although Oaxáca shares the same fate as that of Guerrero, it differs in several respects. Scholars have described the Conquest of Oaxáca as a more peaceful transition and as more spiritual in nature as was amply demonstrated by the power of the Church which remained the largest landowner in the state keeping their property intact for fifty years after Independence, although they were not legally entitled to do so. In addition, the priests preferred the city, leaving the indigenous rural communities to fend for themselves and contributing to the formation of distinct, but isolated, indigenous communities with their own traditions and identity who became separated from mainstream society. The *Caciques* (local native rulers) also retained large landholdings adding to this pattern of fragmentation (Berry, 1981; Taylor, 1972).

The inhabitants of impoverished Indian communities such as these are sometimes forced to migrate in search of employment elsewhere. Regional statistics indicate that the rate of internal migration has been rising from the 1960's onwards to reach totals of 46.8 percent (men) and 50.9 percent (women) in 1980 (Méndez and Mercado, 1985). The mountainous areas are most affected because of their inaccessibility, erosion of topsoil (washed away by the rains), and inefficient communication/transportation systems. *Zitlala* is located in the central valleys of Guerrero on the periphery of a mountainous region, and thus is vulnerable to the ebb and flow of migration. The young men if *Zitlala* migrate to work as wage labourers in towns, cities or farms outside the community, but return home for important ritual *fiestas* such as the *Tiger Fight* risking their jobs without hesitation.

This trend of outward migration is even more pronounced in the region of the *Mixteca Alta* (the mountainous region) and the *Mixteca Baja* (low-lying areas of Oaxáca). The Mixtecs live in a demanding physical environment and strenuous living conditions as a result of increasing population pressure on small plots of land (an average of over use of

land by over intensive cultivation, soil erosion, deforestation, rudimentary technology, very poor living conditions consisting of inadequate housing, contamination, scarcity of water, a diet low in vitamins and protein, a high incidence of illness, a high level of illiteracy) (Méndez and Mercado, 1985). This is also true of the Nahuas living in the more remote regions of Guerrero where *Zitlala* is located. The cumulative effects of these factors has led to an intensive outward migration during the last thirty years (Hernández, 1987). Migration is also a direct result of industrial development in the 1940's and the 1950's, population growth, and the presence of the *ejido* system which has continually reduced the amount of land owned by Indians until there is not enough land for crop cultivation to sustain even one generation (Ortíz, 1986). Although collectivization of the *ejido* has been an issue in modern times, most of the *ejidos* continue to operate individually with separate plots generating income at subsistence level, and perpetuating the dependency and marginality of indigenous peasants (Bartra, 1993; Gates, 1993).

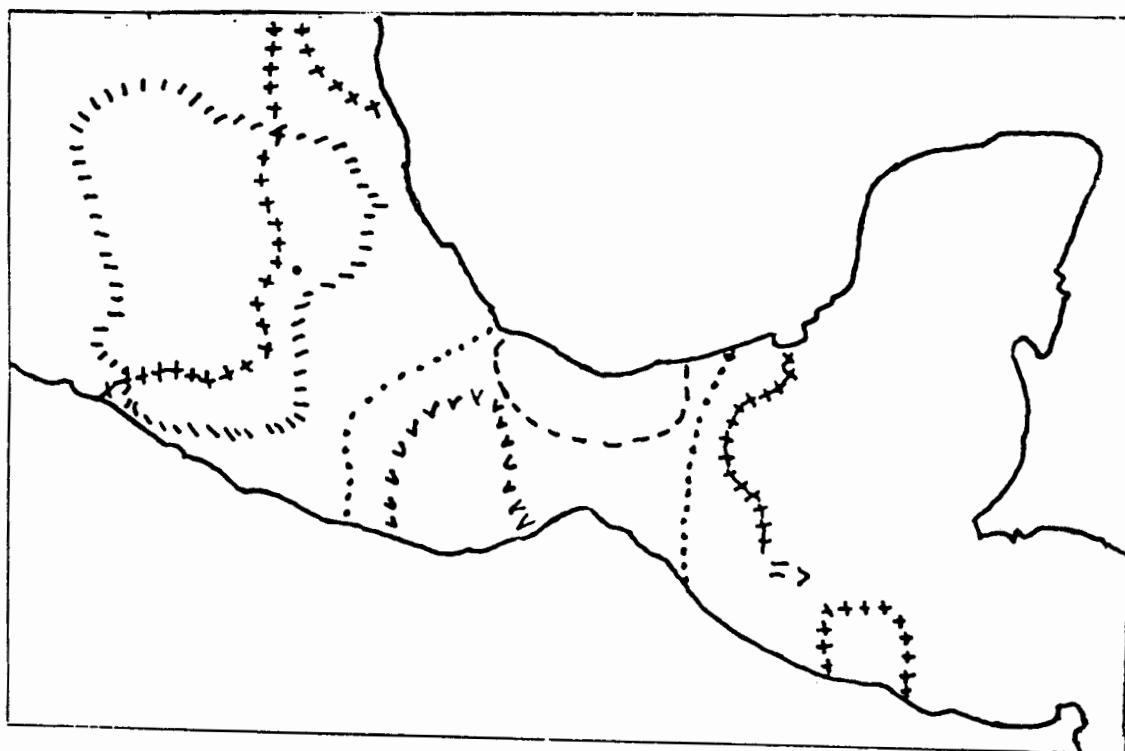
Over half the Mixtec population migrates in search of permanent or seasonal employment in other Mexican states. The earnings of the migrants are essential to the survival of the community and constitute the main source of revenue assuring the socio-economic, political and cultural reproduction of the domestic unit and of the community (Méndez and Mercado, 1985). Migrants will come from as far away as the United States to attend an important religious event. Migration is family oriented, although sometimes a young man will go alone and family members will join him later when, and if, funds are available. Migration patterns are defined according to the religious and agricultural calendar, and occur on a rotational basis. Civil authorities and a small percentage of other community members take turns to stay behind so that there is always someone in the community to safeguard its interests. In *Zitlala*, migration is limited to young men, usually single, ranging in age from about eighteen to thirty-five who get temporary or seasonal jobs elsewhere, but maintain close spiritual and emotional ties to their community.

MEETING AT THE MARKETPLACE

The market systems of the coast of Oaxáca and the hills of Guerrero form the basis of the economic structure of the peasant community to which *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala* belong providing "a compressed display of an area's economy, technology and society" (Eder, 1976: 67). The marketplace itself is an arena not only for the unfolding of economic processes, but also for consolidating political alliances and reinforcing the social relationships which facilitate the material exchange taking place (Bromley and Symanski, 1974; Miller, 1985).

The market systems in Guerrero and Oaxáca have always been an essential part of the economy and have evolved over a long period of time beginning with the Olmecs (refer to map, Figure 2.4) whose civilization dates approximately from 1100 to 200 B.C. (Davies, 1985). The presence of Olmec-style items made from raw materials native to other regions some distance away, indicates that long-distance trading among the Olmecs and neighbouring groups took place (Davies, 1987). Miller (1985) also postulates that the rise of the Olmec civilization may be attributed directly to the extensive trade network which existed among the various indigenous groups populating pre-Aztec Mexico. Long-distance trading was instrumental in increasing the distribution and circulation of goods, as well as being an important factor in augmenting the prosperity of a group. Furthermore, long-distance trading and the presence of marketplaces provided the opportunity for cultural exchanges as those involved in these activities introduced each other to new ideas, as well as a variety of different merchandise. In addition to long-distance trading, barter defined by Polanyi (1977:42) as "the behaviour of persons who exchanged goods on the assumption that each person makes the most of it", was a common form of economic exchange among pre-Aztec cultures. Prices were reached through haggling and the emphasis was on the exchange of essentials, e.g. food staples such as salt and sugar (Beals, 1975; Berdan, 1982; Eder, 1976).

Figure 2.4. Pre-Columbian Indian Cultures in the Central Valley of Mexico.



COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- Olmec Civilization - A.D. 1300 - 300 B.C. (Davies, 1985).
- Teotihuacan - A.D. 200 - 800 (ibid.).
- ||| Toltec Civilization: A.D. 800 - 1200 (ibid.).
- ... Zapotec Civilization: A.D. 1200 - 400 B.C. - Present (Whitecotton, 1977).
- v v v v Mixtec Civilization: A.D. 1100 - 1500 - Present (Spoes, 1984).
- + + + + Aztec Empire: A.D. 1325 - 1521 (Davies, 1985).

These forms of exchange continued throughout the time of Aztec occupation (from the A.D. 1325 to 1521) (Berdan, 1982) which at its height included most of the central valleys of Mexico (refer to map, Figure 2.4). However, there were pockets of resistance from among the Tarascans in the West, the Tlaxcalans, the Toltecs, the Mixtecs and Zapotecs which eventually undermined the Empire. In addition, their grip on the main trade route to Guatemala remained tenuous (Davies, 1985; Wolf, 1969). As the Empire expanded, the market assumed higher levels of complexity in order to accommodate and integrate specialized and surplus production on regional and state levels. The two primary mechanisms, tribute and taxes, used for ensuring the flow of goods into the market involved coercion. Both tribute and taxes were collected from the subjugated provinces and then redirected to the capital city of *Tenochtitlán*. Later, smaller portions of tribute and taxes were distributed to *Tlaxcala* and *Tenochtitlán*, partners in the Triple Alliance formed in 1428 (Berdan, 1982; Conrad and Demarest, 1984; Davies, 1987; Gibson, 1964; Hassig, 1985). Failure to pay taxes or tribute (either in goods or services) was tantamount to a declaration of war (Hassig, 1985).

The frequency of markets was influenced by the high rate of demand for and consumption of market goods. Daily markets, which provided provisions to the urban centres took place everyday of the week and periodic markets took place in cycles of "one-five-eight-nine-thirteen-twenty-day" intervals generally following the ritual cycles of the Aztec calendar (Bromley and Symanski, 1974; Cook and Diskin, 1976; Hassig, 1985). This is indicative of the importance and emphasis on ritual in the daily life of the Aztecs. The numbers nine-thirteen-twenty are related to the two hundred and sixty day ritual calendar which consists of thirteen named days (possibly associated with patron gods) multiplied by twenty day signs (i.e. omens). The nine day cycle is associated with the nine Lords of the Night¹ and the five day sequence is related to the last five day segment of the

1. Nine Lords corresponded to nine layers of Aztec Underworld referred to as *Mictlan* ("Place of the Dead") (Berdan, 1982).

twenty day month (from the two hundred and sixty day calendar). The number one simply refers to the first day of market. The eight day sequence has no ritual context for the Aztecs and may have derived from a misinterpretation of Aztec time in early Spanish accounts. According to Spanish custom, a week includes the day the count begins as well as the day it ends which results in a week of eight, rather than seven, days (Hassig, 1985).

The larger, periodic markets were located in urban centers while the small-scale, local markets were situated mostly in rural areas. The location of the periodic markets was sometimes shifted for political reasons such as a particular town increasing in importance and size (ibid.). These markets offered a large variety of goods, including raw materials; practical goods such as tools; slaves; textiles; exotic foodstuffs; luxury goods such as gold jewelry, quetzal feathers, and jaguar skins all arranged by type. The services of barbers, porters, artisans, and so on were also available for hire (Berdan, 1982). The smaller, local markets focused on agricultural products (perishable goods) and crafts sold privately by individuals. A type of currency existed in the forms of cocoa beans, fine cloaks, cotton, quills filled with gold-dust and small copper axes. Trading outside market boundaries was banned. Merchants filling the positions of market judges acted as arbitrators in matters of dispute and could pass sentence when necessary. Market supervisors served as tax collectors and inspectors of the merchandise to be sold (Berdan, 1982; Bromley and Symanski, 1974; Davies, 1985, 1987; Gibson, 1964; Hassig, 1985).

Luxury items were greatly sought after by the Aztec nobility: accumulated wealth, elaborate adornments and fine clothing were a means of affirming their high social status. In this respect, the elite considered luxury items a necessity (Davies, 1987). Luxury items were created mainly by artisans² who resided outside of the court (Berdan, 1982; Davies, 1985). Long-distance trade of such items was conducted mainly by a group of professional merchants known as *pochtecas*, hereditary merchants, organized in the manner

2. The Aztecs admired the Toltecs for their exceptional achievements in the arts and attempted to emulate them. In addition, the court of Tenochtitlán utilized the skills of artisans from other cultures, including the Mixtecs (Berdan, 1982).

of guilds and occupying separate *barrios* (districts) of the city - probably pre-Aztec in origin (Hassig, 1985). They often traded raw materials to artisans in exchange for the finished product. The *pochtecas* held high social status enjoying some of the privileges granted only to the elite such as the ability to own land, to sacrifice slaves, and to wear clothing symbolizing high rank for special events. They also served as tax-collectors and ambassadors for the King, and when trading as 'disguised merchants' acted as spies specializing in military operations (Chapman, 1957; Clendinnen, 1992; Davies, 1985; Hassig, 1985; León-Portilla, 1992).

Despite their power, the *pochtecas* and the merchants generally found themselves in a difficult position. Because their wealth was acquired quietly and sometimes secretly, rather than through the glory of warfare, they incurred the resentment of the Mexica warriors. In addition, the *pochtecas* maintained their sense of separateness as they engaged in covert comings and goings, enjoyed some privileges usually granted only to the elite and lived in separate *calpullis* (districts). Being the ones with access to the luxuries most sought after by the elite, they had the means to rival the elite in terms of their ability to accumulate individual wealth. As accumulated wealth, especially the possession of exotic items, was a key to power, the *pochtecas* and other merchants posed a threat. To dispel any possible antagonism from the elite, they adopted modest behaviour and refrained from any ostentatious displays of wealth. Consequently, they tended to be self-effacing, wore the clothes of commoners and cultivated an address of conscientious humility. However, to align their activities with the warrior ideal of physical strength and endurance, the *pochtecas* and other merchants boasted of their courage and stamina in facing the hardships encountered during their buying trips, including intensive fatigue induced by long journeys in unfamiliar terrain, the threat of wild animals or the possibility of attack by hostile groups (Clendinnen, 1993). During feasts when accumulated wealth was dispersed and a slave was sometimes sacrificed, merchants were careful to select guests of a high social status to

foster alliances of a political nature with the elite and enhance their prestige within the merchant hierarchy.

The *intermediarios* of today are similar in many respects to the *pochtecas*. Although the *intermediarios* do not serve the state directly, except when they act as representatives for government organizations dedicated to the promotion of crafts, they have the facility to travel long distances to purchase merchandise, are secretive about their business dealings and are viewed with a mixture of suspicion, resentment and envy by the mask-makers. In addition, *intermediarios* compete with each other just as the *pochtecas* had done earlier, giving rise to a high level of friction between them. The *intermediarios* of today include women in their ranks, although they are generally limited to young, married women working with their husbands or older women who are widowed with grown-up children and no longer have the responsibility of running a household. The *pochtecas* however, did not include women whose primary duties lay within the domain of the household, although they assume the role of vendor in the marketplace selling primarily agricultural produce.

By the sixteenth century, a well-developed market system existed in the Valley of Mexico. The expansion of the market system under the Aztec Empire was instrumental in unifying the diverse groups in the valley of Mexico and surrounding areas, albeit through the use and threat of force. It was also part of the process by which rural areas became economic hinterlands, through the concentration of a larger number of goods and services in the urban, regional markets. The Spanish continued to focus on developing urban centres, although they still depended on rural areas to produce the necessary foodstuffs. The Spanish used Indian markets extensively, which they referred to as *tianguiz/tianguéz* (derived from Nahuatl *tianquiztli*) meaning "market, place of commerce"), and became increasingly dependent on them for their daily needs (i.e. items of food, clothing and so on) (Lockhart, 1992).

But the market ethos of the two groups was fundamentally different. For the Aztec merchants and other indigenous groups, all forms of market exchange were imbued with

elements of ritual, and the objective of the exchange was related to social status and prestige both through the accumulation and dispensation of wealth. By contrast, the Spanish who perceived all forms of market exchange as purely material and as the means to accumulate material wealth for the sake of individual gain. This shift in priorities is reflected by the lack of emphasis on luxury goods, such as feathers, skins and other ceremonial regalia symbolic of social status and prestige, in the sixteenth century and the gradual disappearance of the *pochtecas* by the eighteenth century (ibid.).

Under the Spanish, *ferías* (trade fairs) were organized, markets became centralized and new periodic markets were founded based on a seven day sequence according to the Christian calendar (Beals, 1975; Gibson, 1964; Hassig, 1985). *Ferías* (trade fairs) are differentiated from *mercados* (markets) by the focus of their activities, their size and their organization. They are smaller, and were developed especially for the buying and selling of cattle. The *ferías* are not housed in any permanent structures and include an assortment of general merchandise. They are frequented by itinerant traders who travel from one fair to another in search of willing customers (Foster, 1960). In Mexican villages, such *ferías* are often present during the time of a *fiesta*. The Spanish also brought in the use of money as currency and the standard medium of exchange. Cacao beans continued to be used as a medium of exchange throughout the Colonial Period as well. They were ordinarily used for small transactions and functioned as change for Spanish coins implying that the conceptual distance between the two systems was not as great as it appeared. The Spanish began the practices of pawn-brokering and money-lending, among others, between Spanish and indigenous nobles (Lockhart, 1992).

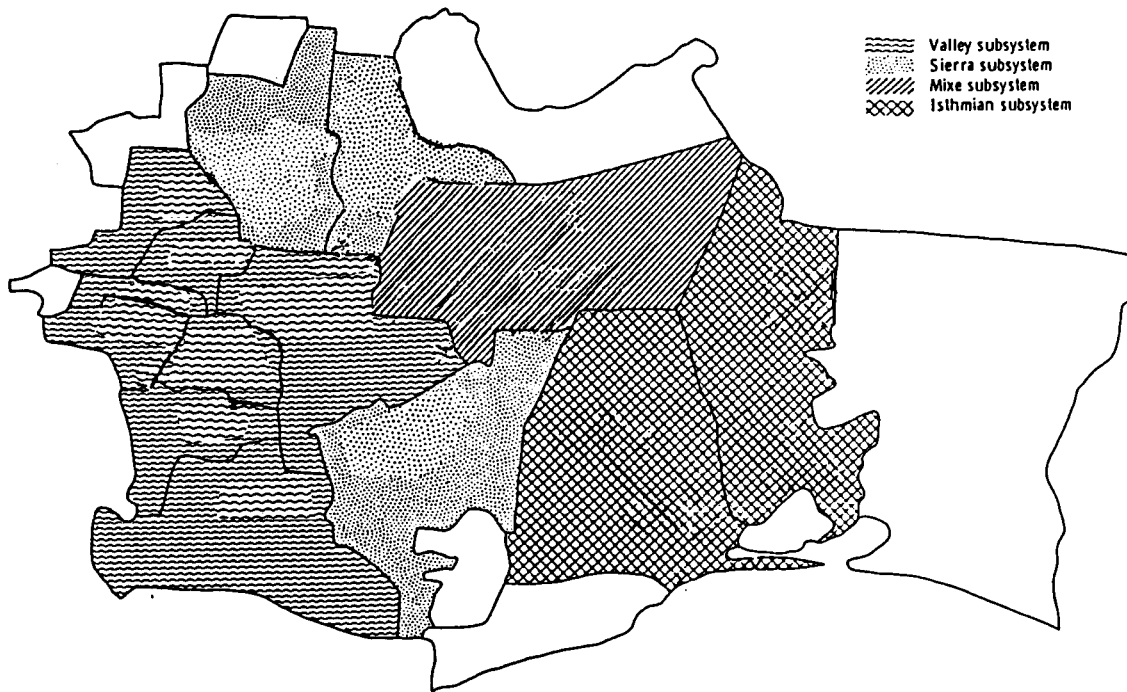
The introduction of new technologies such as the plow and the cart, as well as European crops and livestock facilitated the cultivation of produce and the transportation of goods to market. However, the Spanish continued to use indigenous porters to spare the cost of improving the road system. Spanish administrators developed cumbersome regulations in an effort to control market activity, but were soon pinned down by the

weight of these regulations which led to corruption and over-bureaucratization weakening the organization of the market. This was further compounded by the incorporation of non-indigenous people, including blacks (brought over from Africa), *mestizos* (those of mixed Spanish-Indian heritage) as active participants in the marketplace. In addition, Spanish merchants, traders and entrepreneurs infiltrated interregional trade, previously the domain of the *pochtecas* (Berdan, 1982; Bromley and Symanski, 1974; Hassig, 1985). Changes occurring in the market system, combined with the commodification of indigenous land through a succession of different institutions, eventually led to a restructuring of Mexico's economic hinterland (rural areas which supply the larger metropolis with goods and labour). However, taxation, the presence of supervisors and aspects of organizing merchandise were retained by the Spanish. Supervision in the market was by market constables appointed annually and members of the town council on a rotational basis. Generally, specialty goods continued to be organized by type in a designated area of the market.

The market system in Oaxáca was, and still is distinctive, largely due to the variation of its physical environment consisting of extremely difficult terrain with marked differences in elevation, temperatures, rainfall, soil characteristics, vegetation and native fauna (Beals, 1975). These factors have resulted in a high degree of specialization in marketing activities and production depending on the availability of and access to natural resources. This has also led to the presence of many types of exchange, including intra-village exchange (between producers and consumers of the same village), village-to-village transactions, village-to-plaza (open air markets) and vice versa, and inter-regional exchange. In addition, a wide range of occupations related to the market were created, including different kinds of buyers and sellers whose activities sometimes overlap. The combination of all these elements has been the basis for the development of a market system which is traditionally not a uniform system, but rather a network of subsystems defined by Ralph Beals (1975) as: the Valley, Sierra Mixe and Isthmian subsystems.

Furthermore, the subsystems themselves encompass areas which are geographically and culturally diverse causing some variation within the different systems and adding to the complexity of Oaxáca's marketing system.

Figure 2.5. Network of Market Subsystems, Oaxáca
(Beals, 1975:41)



The valley subsystem is the predominant one and provides the basis for the other subsystems. Essentially, these subsystems are variations of the traditional market system and have been formed according to the skills, abilities and needs of individual communities in the different areas. The functional versatility of the subsystem's organization and its compatibility with Oaxáca's different ecological and cultural regions have been crucial to the preservation of Oaxáca's traditional marketing system (Beals, 1975; Cook and Diskin, 1976).

The traditional market system is characterized as a solar marketing system meaning that each large market centre is surrounded by a number of smaller ones in different communities which operate on a rotating basis on separate days of the week (Cook and Diskin, 1976; Nash 1966). Primarily, agricultural products are exchanged, as well as an assortment of craft products with the marketplace as the main centre of exchange (Beals, 1975; Cook and Diskin, 1976). *Ferías* operate in conjunction with the annual *fiesta* cycle and still do, as is demonstrated by the presence of the *ferías* springing up around different communities of Oaxáca's coastal region during the time the *Dance of the Tejorones* is performed. The *fería* in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* consisted of *puestos* (stands) set up around the *zócalo* and on the *Calle Principal* (main road), and offered a wide range of goods; cassettes of popular music, clothing, plastic kitchen articles and food items such as *tacos*, *tamales*³ and *nieves* (crushed ice with flavoured liquid resembling the North American slurpy).

Oaxáca City, formerly known as Antequera, constitutes the nucleus of this intricate marketing system which was used extensively by the Aztecs, and later by the Spanish, who both depended heavily on the trading posts established on the Gulf and Pacific coasts to supply many of the raw materials needed for production. During the Colonial Period, Oaxáca became an important center of commerce and trade. Its strategic location between the main trade route to Southern Mexico, Guatemala and Central America, its possession of cochineal (a dye achieved through the interaction of a parasite insect and a species of cactus) which was much sought after by the Europeans of which Oaxáca was the largest producer and its influence as a major center of silk industry contributed to its importance (Beals, 1975; Cook and Diskin, 1976). Although Spanish colonial authorities intervened in marketing urban markets, but they generally left pre-Hispanic indigenous marketplaces along. This allowed some marketplaces to retain much of their autonomy and

3. Type of empanada made from corn flour, wrapped in banana leaves or the ears of the corn which is steamed or baked in the oven.

independence. In addition, the presence of hereditary Mixtec ruling families often allied with other groups via intermarriage, may have been another reason for the high degree of economic local autonomy.

Santa María Huazolotitlán's location in the coastal region of Oaxáca signifies that it operates under the system of coastal marketplaces characterized as a solar market system. However, although the area maintains close trading ties with the valley, the coastal markets function somewhat differently. Coastal markets are noncyclical: the markets take place on a daily basis rather than a specific day of a recurring cycle. Goods are not arranged by type, reflecting the mixture of goods and lack of specialized goods offered by the coastal markets and one can buy the same goods on any given day depending on supply and seasonality. Tropical fruit, chilies, and a variety of lagoonal and marine products, (particularly from areas around *Puerto Escondido* and *Puerto Ángel*), are harvested and trucked to highland markets. Chilies are shipped on to Oaxáca City and to locations further north. Furthermore, this coastal region was, and still is, an important producer of salt which is collected from lagoon margins including those near *Pinatepa Nacional*. Inter-regional exchange and the activities of *intermediarios* (middlemen, often *mestizos* from local middle-class families) expanded rapidly as a result of tourism and increased accessibility stemming from the growth of the transportation network, especially air transportation which connected with urban centres in the south as early as the 1930's (Eder, 1976). This is especially true of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* where *intermediarios* are significant, and form an integral part of the market system. *Santa María Huazolotitlán's* proximity to the tourist resorts of *Puerto Escondido*, *Puerto Ángel* and *Santa Cruz Huatulco* contributed to the expansion of inter-regional exchange. These factors have been instrumental in "the increased flow of individual and other goods from outside the region, the increase in wholesale activities and the expansion of stores" (Beals, 1975, 222).

In both *Zitlala* and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* involvement in the capitalistic market economy has increased the accessibility of industrially manufactured goods which are

durable (e.g. plastic), the consumption of processed foods and bottled drinks, the substitution of local goods for manufactured goods (candles, flour, etc.), the variety of foods available throughout the year, and the production of and the diversity of local handicrafts to fulfill tourist demand. However, this has not eradicated the traditional daily markets which still emphasize agricultural products, an assortment of crafts and now incorporate industrially manufactured goods, especially those related to some kind of household activity (e.g. plastic bowls or kitchen dishes, and penknives used for crafting masks) (Beals, 1975; Cook and Diskin, 1976; Waterbury, 1970). Market systems as a whole may be seen as having a dual function. As stabilizing agents they "make it possible for the continuance of economic diversity at the village level" (Beals, 1975, 278) and allow the village to persist as a close-knit cultural entity. As agents of change they become carriers of new products and technologies making it possible for villagers to participate more fully in village life" (ibid, 280) A level of economic homogeneity is achieved through leveling mechanisms, such as ritual expenditures.

The specialized production of tiger masks in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* is not only to meet the demands of the market, but to fulfill ritual obligations by creating masks for the *Dance of the Tejorones* which may or may not be sold afterwards. *Zitlala* is more isolated geographically and less accessible to tourists. Consequently, tiger mask production is not for commercial, but only ritual, purposes. Participation in the capitalistic market system is achieved through wage labour, as well as a high level of the consumption of industrially manufactured goods. Both communities have used new technologies to their advantage in order to facilitate tiger mask production, but have retained methods of crafting tiger masks handed down from previous generations. In essence, both communities have preserved the integrity of their traditional market economy while searching for ways of participating more fully in the larger capitalist market economy.

PAWPRINTS IN THE MUD OF TIME

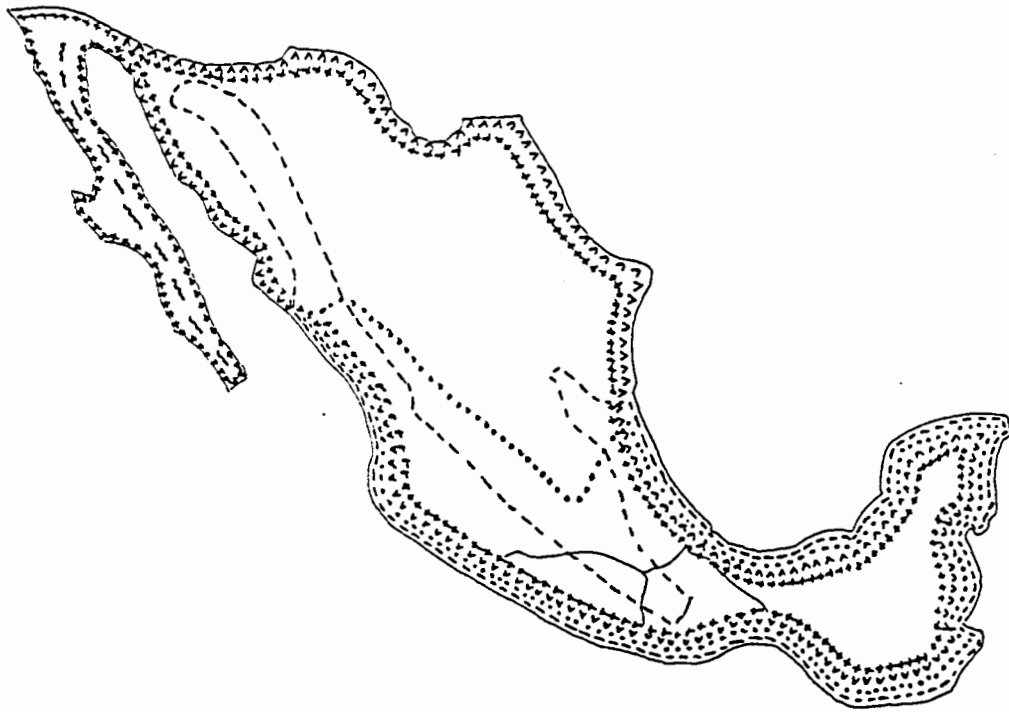
The *tigre* (tiger) referred to by the Mixtecs of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and by the Nahuatl of *Zitlala* actually refers to the jaguar. Some confusion about the term was created by early Spanish explorers who, unfamiliar with this large cat, called all large wildcats *tigre* (tiger) (Jackson, 1990; Perry, 1970). Apart from jaguars, Mexico has jaguarundi, ocelots, pumas and bobcats (see Figure 2.7), but none of them has stirred the imagination of indigenous groups as much as the jaguar. The word "jaguar" in Tupi-Guarani means "wild beast that overcomes its prey at a bound" (Guggisberg, 1975, 247); a creature symbolic of the power of nature. The word was derived from the word *yaguara* stemming from one of the Tupi-Guarani languages of the Amazon. The jaguar is striking in appearance with its coat of yellow/gold patterned with black rosettes. The jaguar's beautiful coat combined with certain features of its biological make-up and particular patterns of behaviour have

Figure 2.6. Portrait of a Jaguar



(Badino, 1975:92)

Figure 2.7. Distribution of the Best-Known Wildcats in Mexico.



Jaguar ----
Jaguarundi
Ocelot ▼▼▼▼
Puma ▲▲▲▲
Bobcat ~~~~~

(Badino, 1975: 58)

created an aura of mystery around it which is reflected in the mythology of most Mesoamerican indigenous peoples.

Jaguars have a tendency to hunt alone at dawn, dusk and during moonlit nights (Badino, 1975; Guggisberg, 1975; Markman and Markman, 1989; Watt, 1989). In terms of its biological make-up, adaptations to the jaguar's vocal chords, eyes, jaws, hearing and paws have contributed to their ability as effective hunters. A large mass of fibre-elastic tissue located at the top of very large, undivided vocal folds in a flexible larynx act something like a slide trombone and radiate a large volume of sound, accounting for their impressive roar (Jackson, 1990). In addition, cones and rods in the cellular structure of the retina reflect light back through it doubling the intensity of dim light which enables the jaguar to see particularly well at night and causes their eyes to shine. Jaguars possess binocular vision very effective for judging distance and direction. They also have a short, rounded jaw with strong canine teeth excellent for biting and acute hearing. Flexible forelegs and paws with claws retracted while walking, as well as two pads consisting of one smaller one within a larger one at the base of each toe (one of the front toes is slightly above ground-level) facilitates swift, graceful movement and a light step (Badino, 1975; Jackson, 1990; Kitchner, 1991).

Jaguars are excellent swimmers, as well as hunters. Although they can adapt to a variety of environments, they prefer to be near a source of water (Badino, 1975; Guggisberg, 1975; Markman and Markman, 1989; Watt, 1989). This may have contributed to their association with fertility and the rain god. Due to the pressure of civilized agriculture and poaching, jaguars have become greatly reduced in number. Although neither cattle nor any other such livestock are part of the jaguars traditional diet which consists of tapirs, monkeys, fish, reptiles, and the like, they have often been blamed for the killing of livestock when they were not actually responsible. Jaguars eat livestock if there is nothing else, or they are too old, sick, or tired to find other game. Attacks on human beings were reported to be infrequent (Badino, 1975; Guggisberg, 1975; Perry,

1970; Watt, 1989). But, with continued encroachment on their traditional hunting grounds, some kind of clash was inevitable. Efforts to protect the jaguar have been slow in coming. Although there are a number of animal reserves, it was only in 1989 that the first wildlife reserve dedicated exclusively to protecting the jaguar was opened in the Cockscomb Basin of Belize (Watt, 1989).

The early Olmecs (refer to map, Figure 2.4) were obsessed with the jaguar, the most venerated of all felines. Scholars have also suggested that the jaguar was the creator and totem for the Olmec, associating it with the emblem of ruler. (Davies, 1985). The form of the were-jaguar, characterized by the feline mouth turned downward beneath a pug nose and a v-shaped cleft on the upper part of the head, was associated with the Rain God who was considered a source of life and fertility. Pictographs found at Olmec sites dedicated to fertility are indicative of a sexual connotation to the v-shape as a graphic representation of the female vulva (Markman and Markman, 1989). Other depictions of the were-jaguar mouth as a cave, often associated with the womb of the earth or the entrance to the underworld, are also suggestive of the jaguar's connection to fertility. Among the early Olmecs the ocelot is also related to the jaguar. The ocelot was thought to be a creature from the underworld who appeared at night and brought rain for the sun to rise in the morning (Burland, 1967).

Many Olmec figurines combine human countenances with feline features and the teeth, spots and claws of the jaguar and the ocelot are depicted on pottery, ear plugs and masks crafted out of stone, jade, obsidian, amber, amethyst, serpentine and clay (Bernal, 1969; Wolf, 1969). The ocelot was thought to be a creature from the underworld who appeared at night and caused the sun to rise in the morning (Burland, 1967), and who was also associated with the Rain God. Although there is some debate as to the extent of the Olmec's obsession with the jaguar (Davies, 1987; Markman and Markman, 1989), scholars agree on the importance of the jaguar as a "god", and as a symbol of fertility and sexuality.

The development of the religious center of *Teotihuacán* which flourished from circa AD 400 to between A.D. 750 and 850 dominated the period following the decline of Olmec culture (Davies, 1985) (refer to map, Figure 2.4). The relationships of *Teotihuacán* with other areas of Mesoamerica were fundamentally bound up with the elaboration of the mask of the rain god as a cultural symbol and moved over trade routes to appear throughout Mesoamerica as the symbol of *Teotihuacán*, known as "the city of *Tláloc*" (Markman and Markman, 1989: 34). *Tláloc* (meaning "he who makes plants spring up" in Nahuatl, Wolf, 1969: 72) was regarded as more than a rain god; in *Teotihuacán* he became the King of the Gods and, as such, the benevolent, generous creator and source of all fertility (Davies, 1985: 83). Not surprisingly then, the predominant theme in *Teotihuacán* imagery is water. The jaguar, as well as forms and shapes of various animals, was also abundant in architecture. Furthermore, jaguar masks were considered 'symbols of divinity' and were worn exclusively by priests (Wolf, 1969).

It is believed by some scholars that the Toltecs, semi-nomads from the North-West were responsible for the destruction of *Teotihuacán* around A.D. 900 by sacking and burning it (Peterson, 1962). However, some accounts of the Toltec capital (*Tula or Tollan*) described as a marvellous city, full of palaces and temples made out of pure gold and turquoise, adorned with precious stones (Davies, 1985), correspond to accounts of *Teotihuacán's* magnificence suggesting that *Tula* and *Teotihuacán* were one and the same. This debate probably resulted from the tendency of Mesoamerican peoples to use several different names and vice-versa.

Further confusion is generated by the appearance of the name "Toltec" in connection to other places and groups. The word itself has its roots in Nahuatl and is related to the word "*Tollan*." Etymologically, *Tollan* derives from the Nahua word *Tollin*, or *Tullin* meaning "place of rushes." Ideally, a city located near or in rushes would be endowed with useful assets having access to the rushes necessary to make *petates* (mats), carrying cases and the roofs of temples, as well as offering possibilities of irrigation and a

variety of fish, fowl and other such animals for consumption. Therefore, *Tollan* comes to represent a kind of paradise. Eventually, the name "toltec" came to possess three definite meanings. Essentially "Toltec" means the inhabitants of *Tollan* and denotes the sense of "metropolitan", leading to the specific reference of metropolis. In addition, "Toltec" has come to have an independent meaning associated with mechanical skills, such as being an artisan or artistic technician, as well as a high degree of culture (Davies, 1977).

The establishment of the Toltec Empire (circa A.D. 950 to 1179) (Davies, 1977) (refer to Map, Figure 2.4) marked the beginnings of military force "as a means of social cohesion rather than trade and religious loyalty" (Wolf, 1969, 117). The Toltecs ruled a large part of the Valley of Mexico and were constantly harassing the peoples of the coast (Peterson, 1962), including those affiliated with the Olmecs and the Mixtecs. As the Mexica tribes were driven away from each place they tried to settle in, they were driven into the swampy inlet in Lake Texcaco. There, as *Aztlán* had also been, was a place surrounded by water and thick rushes or reeds. And there the Mexica found an eagle sitting on a cactus carrying the *nopal* fruit (of the cactus) whose flesh is as red as blood and whose shape resembles the human heart (Clendinnen, 1992). This became the site of *Tenochtitlán*, the capital city and the heart of the Aztec Empire. *Tenochtitlán* has also been referred to as *Tollan*, and the Mexica themselves sometimes called *Tenochtitlán Tula*, indicating a tie to the Toltecs (Davies, 1977). Furthermore, the composition of *Tenochtitlán* supports the meanings attributed to the name "toltec"; it was a large city constituting a metropolis surrounded by rushes from the swamp and had a large artisan population. The Aztecs attributed a kind of universal empire to the Toltecs which they themselves sought and did achieve. Eventually, inter-marriage for political reasons between the Aztecs and groups affiliated with, or descended from, the Toltecs provided the foundation for future generations of Aztec rulers with a claim to Toltec heritage.

Warfare and military expansion were the hallmarks of this new period. Society was highly stratified, which included priests, who were ranked equally with warriors, nobles,

and a large class of artisans and farmers who served as soldiers when necessary. It was also during this time that the figure of the jaguar became associated more closely with warfare. Stone reliefs and friezes often depicted "processions of predatory jaguars, coyotes, dogs and eagles, symbolic of war" (Davies, 1985: 116). Common motifs in Toltec architecture included *Tláloc*, *Quetzal* (bird) and jaguars, as well as walking tigers (Peterson, 1962). The other most important gods among their pantheon of gods were *Quetzalcoatl* (meaning "plumed green-feathered serpent") who was worshipped as the Creator and patron god of Toltec society and often depicted as a warrior dressed in jaguar skins; *Tezcatlipoca* (meaning "great smoking mirror"-a sky god) who originated from the Toltecs and who was also identified as a jaguar; and *Huitzlipochtli* who was regarded as a great War God.

Huitzlipochtli was partly derived from *Opochtli*, an older deity who was a patron god of the fishermen and was associated with the little *tlálocs* living on the lagoon where *Tenochtitlán* stood (Davies, 1985) and developed into a rather blood-thirsty deity demanding lots of human sacrifice to sustain him. *Quetzalcoatl* was the most versatile God, assuming many different guises as the Morning or Evening Star, or *Ehécatl*, the Wind (Davies, 1977). *Quetzalcoatl* was also associated with the origin of maize, the arts and learning. In addition, a Toltec leader named *Ce Acatl-Topiltzin-Quetzalcoatl* is credited, by some scholars, as the founder of Tula. There are multiple references to the name of *Quetzalcoatl* both as leader and legend. In one of the myths of *Quetzalcoatl*, *Tezcatlipoca* gives him a gift consisting of a mirror in cotton. On seeing his image with human features, got drunk, committed incest and headed East promising to return in the future (ibid.). Unexpectedly, the belief in the return of *Quetzalcoatl* facilitated the initial stages of the conquest as the indigenous peoples first thought *Cortés* could be the returning *Quetzalcoatl*.

The Aztecs, or Mexica as they called themselves filled the vacuum left by the collapse of the Toltec Empire (refer to Map, Figure 2.4). They migrated to the central valleys of Mexico around AD 1300 from a mythical place in the South called "*Aztlán*"

(meaning "place of the herons or cranes" - Berdan, 1982: 3). Some scholars suggest that the Mexica were composed of a group of seven tribes descended from seven lineages who separated at different points of the migration to fulfill the prophecy of their patron God of War, *Huitzilipochtli*. *Huitzilipochtli* was also a ruler of the Aztec people who governed successfully from 1391-1415 (León-Portilla, 1992) who sent the Mexica in search of the *tenochtli* cactus (cactus with a blood red flower on it) with the eagle sitting on it (Clendinnen, 1992; Davies, 1985) and there to establish a prosperous and powerful new city.

The Aztecs were an extremely militaristic and highly organized society with a sophisticated class structure where mobility was linked almost exclusively to achievement on the battle field. This militaristic ethos is clearly reflected in the myth of the patron God, *Huitzilipochtli* who emerges from his mother's (*Coatlicue*, the moon goddess) womb fully armed and ready for battle. He kills his sister (*Coyolxauhqui*, representing the moon) as she and his other siblings *Centzoniuhtzaua* (the stars) angered by their mother's impropriety at becoming pregnant, are conspiring to kill her. *Coatlicue* was impregnated by a ball of feathers she put in her bosom as she was sweeping (Berdan, 1982).

The highest ranking military orders were the Knights of the Jaguar and the Knights of the Eagle. The most prestigious achievement was the capture of slaves, preferably of high rank, to present as a sacrifice to the *Huitzilipochtli* primarily to ensure the continuation of the universe, and prevent the death of the Sun and the end of the world. The Fifth World or Sun constitutes the present cosmic order following the collapse of the Fourth Sun which had ended in darkness. To bring light into the Universe, the gods gathered at *Teotihuacán* to create the Sun and the Moon. A big fire was lit and an important deity offered the opportunity to be the first to leap into the sacred fire. However, after trying four times, he could not brave the flames. A second lesser deity, who had also been permitted to prepare for the leap into the sacred fire, seized his chance and leapt into the sacred fire rising as the Sun. The first deity also leapt into the sacred fire and rose up as the Moon as brightly as the Sun, suggesting they had become equal. This was considered

unacceptable by the Aztec. To dim the Moon, the Moon was struck in the face. But the newborn Sun still did not move, so the gods sacrificed themselves feeding the Sun with their own flesh and blood (Berdan, 1982).

Blood, called the most precious water by the Aztecs, represented to human life what water represented to the earth. Each of the two elements is necessary for human beings and plant-life to survive. Blood became a metaphor for rain and flowing water. Blood flows through veins of human beings, just as water needs to flow through the 'veins' of the earth. Human sacrifices to *Huitzilipochtli* were necessary to give him sustenance. Water is necessary for the earth to yield a fertile soil. The act of sacrifice was essentially regarded by the Aztecs as feeding the power of the earth and the Sun (Berdan, 1982; Clendinnen, 1992; Davies, 1987; Markman and Markman, 1989). Rain from the sky meant growth for the earth and the spilling of blood ensured continuity for the Aztecs. However, an excess of rain could lead to drought and famine. A lack of ritual blood offerings resulted in a drain of energy and posed a threat to the preservation of Aztec society. Human sacrifice ceased sometime after the arrival of the Spaniards, but animal sacrifice continues to day, although to a lesser degree. The sacrifice of chickens on the third day of the *Tiger Fight* in *Zitlala* is an important component of the *Tiger Fight* ritual and still has a connection to the preservation of (Nahua) society. It is noteworthy that this sacrifice takes place on a mountain top close to the sky from which, it is believed, fall the tears of God.

The religion of the Aztecs was an assimilating rather than a proselytizing one and they incorporated or adapted many of the gods of the people they accepted or conquered. Therefore, *Tezcatlipoca* (originally Toltec) who was associated with the night, the jaguar, sorcery and warfare (Berdan, 1982), *Quetzalcoatl* (originally Toltec) whose name consists of a combination of the *Quetzal* bird and the serpent, and *Tláloc* (originally Olmec) continued to be important deities, as well as *Xipe Totec* (meaning "Our Lord, the Flayed One") who was linked to the process of rebirth and renewal (ibid: 127). Each god was associated with a different cardinal direction, colour, tree and animal. In addition, the

Gods were connected to each other through *Tezcatlipoca* in Aztec mythology. According to the Aztecs, there were four *Tezcatlipocas*, all sons of the Creator Gods (the Lord and Lady of Duality, *Ometecutli* and *Omecihuatl*) each associated with a different colour, cardinal direction, and the Gods discussed above (Berdan, 1982). The sun god, *Tonatiuh* was also a major deity in Aztec culture and considered the "Supreme Giver of Life" (León-Portilla, 1982: 11).

The Mixtecs occupied the Valley of Oaxaca about AD 1280 (see map., Figure 2.4) where they established themselves as the dominant group. They are closely linked to the Zapotecs, already residing in the Valley (see map, Figure 2.4). Although there was some inter-marriage between the two groups, their alliances were unstable and they were often engaged in warfare. The Zapotecs refer to themselves as the Cloud people, a name also applied to the Mixtecs. In addition, there are a number of creation myths and legends regarding Mixtec and Zapotec origins, including some in which they migrate from the Seven Caves (as did the Aztecs) led by *Mixcoatl*, probably derived from the influence of the Aztecs (Whitecotton, 1977). *Mixcoatl* himself may have been derived from the Zapotec Rain God *Cocijo* who was associated with the Zapotec's chief god, a jaguar god (Helfritz, 1970; Markman and Markman, 1989). Masks of *Cocijo* had the facial configuration of the Olmec were-jaguar, but the tongue of a serpent, creating a link between the jaguar-rain god-serpent. The serpent's undulating motion may be connected to the movement of water and the quick movement of its tongue darting out of its mouth are suggestive of lightening (Markman and Markman, 1989). Among the Mixtecs, the rain god was the patron god of the (field) workers. The Mixtecs, like the Zapotecs, tended to have various deities associated with sacred places such as caves, and gods as patrons of different occupation (Dahlgren, 1990). The Mixtecs were talented artists, as well as skilled metalurgists and innovators (Whitecotton, 1977).

There is little evidence of a supreme god, rather of a pair of creator gods (Dahlgren, 1990). According to the Mixtec creation myth, the world began in darkness and existed in

a state of chaos and confusion. The appearance of a god; One Deer (also Lion Serpent) and a goddess One Deer (also Jaguar Serpent) was the advent of earth as an environment fit for plant and human life. There was a great deluge and many gods drowned. But one pair of creator gods⁴ remained and began the creation of human beings (Markman and Markman, 1992). The link to the jaguar as a symbol of fertility is somewhat more tenuous than that of the Aztecs, although the female goddess mentioned in the creation myth is a jaguar (serpent), not the lion (serpent) and the serpent as a symbol is associated with water and rain. While no other reference is made to the jaguar per se, the importance of the role of the *tiger* in the *Dance of the Tejorones* is indicative of the pervasiveness of the presence of the jaguar in Mixtec culture. The Mixtecs worshipped other deities corresponding closely to *Tláloc*, *Quetzalcoatl*, *Xipe Totec*, but utilized Mixtec names (Spores, 1984). The Sun God, *taandoc* or *taadoc*, was also an important deity. *Taandoc* was dedicated to the Mixtec warriors who made him sacrifices in a manner similar to the Aztecs (Dahlgren, 1990).

In conclusion, the jaguar is perpetuated in the production of tiger masks today. Although the wearing of a jaguar mask is no longer restricted to priests and warriors, it is still an act which opens the doors to the ephemeral and mysterious world of the sacred. The importance of the role of the tiger in both *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala* supports the continuity of this relationship of the ancient jaguar to water and blood, hence fertility. The meanings behind the tiger of this century have become fragmented over time and generations, and the struggle to survive as distinct cultural communities has become more complex. The Mixtecs and the Nahuas have to deal with a political and economic reality which has left them in the background, in addition to the unpredictability of the forces of nature. The tradition of indigenous ritual is a way of manipulating some of these elements and retaining a sense of self.

4. There is no indication in the literature as to whether this pair of gods is also One Deer and One Deer.

REBELLION AND RESPONSIBILITY AT THE FIESTA

The *fiesta* may be defined as a religious holiday believed to benefit all members of the community (Reina, 1975: 317). The *Fiesta Complex* consists of a system of indigenous ceremonies which incorporates the religious hierarchy of the community. It is part of a larger ideological order which supports the ecosystem and social organization of the community (Crumrine, 1983; Wolf, 1969). Through these ceremonies and festivities, the codes for acceptable moral behaviour and social values are expressed (Wolf, 1969). Usually the whole community is involved and participates at some level. In pre-Conquest times, the activities of everyday life were infused with religious symbolism. But, eventually, as a result of the pressures of acculturation, the links between work and religious ceremonies weakened. *Fiestas* in some indigenous communities have become entertainment for a brief period of time and lost their sense of continuity (Reina, 1975).

The *Fiesta Complex* includes a set of social relationships based on *cargos*. The word means "burden", but refers in this context to the responsibility of carrying out particular tasks primarily of a religious nature. The manner in which these relationships operate depends on the 'openness' or 'closedness' of the communities involved. The closed corporate community is distinguished from the open corporate community by the following features. Closed corporate communities are territorial and membership in the community is demonstrated by participation in the religious ritual maintained by the community. Members of the community are encouraged to expend surpluses in support of a prestige economy operating largely in support of the communal religious cult which is tied to religious activities. Strong attitudes prevail against the accumulation of wealth. In addition, there is a tendency for these communities to exclude outsiders. By contrast, membership in open communities is unrestricted and wealth is not redistributed (Wolf, 1957). Participation in terms of carrying out religious duties is largely voluntary (Cancian, 1975), but there are strong pressures to volunteer.

The social relationships of the *Fiesta Complex* are derived from a civil-religious hierarchy of individual offices called *cargos* which are based on age and experience. The lowest ranking *cargo* is that of an *alguacil*. The *alguacil* is a young man in his early twenties whose duties include janitorial work, policing, and running errands for higher officials. The next in rank is the *mayordomo*, a *cargo* which is focused on religious rather than civil duties. The *mayordomo* (also called *cofrade* in some communities) is married and an established member of the community. His expenditure at *fiestas* involves mostly food and drink and can be considerable. Following in rank are the *regidores*. These *cargos* are filled by mature men who have already served as *mayordomos*. Their duties combine the civil and religious concerns. Both the *regidores* and the *mayordomos* have the right to appoint new *cargos*. The family of the *mayordomo* assist him in tasks such as preparing food and alcohol for the *fiesta*. The *alcaldes* are the chief executives of the hierarchy. The *principal*, also referred to as the *anciano* (the old one) are elders respected for the wisdom acquired in the course of time. Finally, there are *sacristanes* who play the role of ritual specialists. *Cargos* are usually held for one year and may be applied for voluntarily. Acceptance is subject to the approval of the *alcaldes* and *regidores*. Any male who does not fulfill his obligations by participating in some level of the civil-religious hierarchy during his lifetime could risk a loss of respect from members of the community who may reduce their interaction with him as a result.

The functions of the hierarchy are varied and include: "caring for the administrative structure of the community; caring for the church and the saints; providing police protection and dispensing justice; discharging the community's responsibilities to the supernatural and providing a body of elders" (Cancian, 1975: 289). In essence, the hierarchy brings people together through the celebration of common rituals and re-affirms the strength of the community structure. In Mexico, the structure began to break down about fifty years ago since the imposition of a new state system of political offices consisting of *presidente*, *sindico* (syndicate) and *regidores* instead of the *alcaldes* and *regidores* though the traditional

cargo system continues to run in tandem (ibid., 1975). Fulfilling the *cargos* constitutes a form of community service with a high level of investment from those of higher rank and can cost an individual the amount of several years wages. In *Zitlala*, as well as the *Mixteca Alta* and *Baja* of Oaxáca, the flow of out-migration is a major factor in maintaining and strengthening this socio-political hierarchy and thus maintaining the *Fiesta Complex* (Tax, 1963).

In effect, the *cargos* may be regarded as a leveling mechanism. Leveling mechanisms depend on the following inter-related elements: "low-level technology, limited land, poor resources, forced expenditure of time and resources in communal office, and forced expenditure by the wealthy in ritual" (Nash, 1966: 78-79). The leveling mechanisms serve to minimize the accumulation of individual wealth and foster the belief that the solidarity of the community as a unit. Paradoxically, however, in order for a man to have the resources to fulfill the *cargo* entrusted to him, he must be wealthier than another member of the community. This is likely to arouse feelings of jealousy and bitterness, and other social control mechanisms, like gossip and witchcraft.

An important feature of the *Fiesta Complex* is ritual drinking. Ritual drinking, sometimes to the point of total inebriation, is an integral part of every *fiesta*. Among the Aztecs drinking was a blessed activity and a proper tribute to the gods, so it was considered appropriate (Mandelbaum, 1979). Ritual drinking has been defined by Madsen and Madsen as "the ritual essence for social cohesion within the community" (1979: 41). It is structured by a cultural definition of identity and community, as well as prestige (ibid). In addition, ritual drinking provides an acceptable means for the release of potentially disruptive emotions and tensions. Ritual drinking in a public setting was generally regarded as an activity fit only for males, but that is starting to change slowly now as the role of women is being redefined. The drunk is treated as if he were a child, uninhibited and freed from oppressive social norms. Interaction with other members of the community is friendly, but sometimes mutual aggression results from the pressure to drink excessively

(Dennis, 1979). Generally, however, displays of aggression are not tolerated and are considered insulting to the occasion of consuming a sacred beverage (Madsen and Madsen, 1979). Ritual drinking has also become a way for indigenous groups to separate themselves from those who are not indigenous, thus asserting their own identities.

Another important feature of the *Fiesta Complex* is masking. The mask is an important ritual symbol within the *Fiesta Complex*. Crumrine and Halpin define masks as "power-generating - concentrating - transforming - and exchanging" objects (1983: 2). In the relationship between the mask, the mask-wearer (includes mask-maker) and the audience or observers, there is an exchange and transformation of power mediated by the mask. This exchange is made all the more potent by the religious meanings and sacred nature of the tiger masks. A degree of emotion that is not part of everyday life reality or experience creates the sacredness of the masks. The emotion is achieved through being in the states of *liminitas* and *communitas*, heightened through ritual drinking. In addition, masking provides a bridge from the ordinary existence of everyday life to the sacred and supernatural.

In sum, the *Fiesta Complex* incorporates a specific set of social relationships which are embodied in the civil-religious hierarchy. These relationships are manipulated by leveling mechanisms which may result in high amounts of expenditure for a particular individual. Ritual drinking solidifies ties between various members of the community. Inebriation as a result of ritual drinking is not unusual and is acceptable as long as it does not lead to aggression. Ritual drinking and masking are devices used to cross over into the sacred, and free individuals temporarily from restrictive social norms.

CONCLUSION

Zitlala is more representative of the closed corporate community as it is defined by Wolf (1957), but as the flow of spectators attending the *Tiger Fight* continues to increase, *Zitlala* is opening itself to ideas and influences from outside. The emigration of the young

men who have the opportunity to absorb external influences and their increasing desire for goods from outside the community are also factors in this process. *Santa María Huazolotitlán* is better defined as an open community. Two features of the closed corporate community structure are still in evidence, however. These are participation in religious ritual and a strong attitude against the accumulation of individual wealth. Participation in the *Dance of the Tejorones* is expected. Mask-makers who accumulate individual wealth are described as "selfish" and "egotistical", as was demonstrated by the description of an older mask-maker (a master craftsman) with a regular client from Los Angeles as "uncaring" and "untrustworthy" because he did not introduce his client to any other mask-makers in the community so that they too could sell the client masks. The other mask-makers tended to minimize their interaction with this particular mask-maker as a result.

In *Zitlala*, participation in religious ceremonies continues to be extremely important and falls under the supervision of the *regidor* who is also a civil servant with administrative duties. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the civil-religious hierarchy is a fusion of traditional forms and forms derived from the time of Spanish colonization. The *mayordomo* retains control of religious activities while the *presidente municipal* (equivalent to mayor) primarily discharges administrative duties. In both communities, the expenditure incurred by *cargos* tends to be expensive. The *regidor* and *mayordomo* are expected to provide food and drink during the ritual which is prepared by the immediate family and other kin. The prevalence of *cargos* attests to the existence of leveling mechanisms.

Both communities engage in a high level of alcohol consumption during the rituals. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, *tepache* (an alcoholic beverage made from fermented maize, water and brown sugar) is consumed and in *Zitlala*, *mezcal* (an alcoholic beverage made from fermenting the agave plant - a species of aloe vera plant - in water) is consumed. The drinking incidence of ritual drinking is much higher in *Zitlala* and continues throughout the five days of the ritual without interruption. Apart from *mezcal*, beer is also consumed in large quantities beginning at breakfast. There is a tendency for those performing in the

rituals (i.e. the male members of the communities) to do most of the drinking, especially in public places. Women are kept very busy with food preparation and have very little time for anything else.

The mask is crucial to ensure transformation into a *tiger*, *tejoron*, *chaniuela*, *macho*, *tlacolodero*, and various animals. Several informants stressed an increase in the intensity of their emotions during the rituals. This was emphasized more strongly in *Zitlala*, and was also more noticeable during the *Fight* where the behaviour of the tiger is very aggressive. The removal of the masks at the end of the rituals marks the transition back to ordinary time. Using the mask as a symbol to mediate the path between two realities, the performers were able to enter into the state of *liminitas* and *comunitas*, thereby entering sacred space.

III COMBAT AND CONFLICT IN ZITLALA, GUERRERRO

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the social organization, economic structure and cultural context within which tiger mask production takes place in *Zitlala*, Guerrero, with particular emphasis on the *Tiger Fight*. The material is organized into the following four sections: "Introduction, "Socio-Economic Organization", "Preparing for Battle", and "Tigers in Combat". The *Tiger Fight*, an annual ritual, reflects the ideology, values and concerns of the community and is inextricably linked to Nahua cosmology. As tiger mask production revolves around this ritual, the *Tiger Fight* is the focal point of my analysis.

"Socio-Economic Organization" defines the social and economic structure of the community with a brief discussion of household organization and production, and the marketing process in relation to tiger mask-making. In "Preparing for Battle", the crafting of tiger masks, costuming, and other pre-fight preparations, including the festivities of the three days prior to the *battle*, are analyzed. "Tigers in Combat" focuses on the battle which takes place on the last day of this complex ritual and examines the role of the tiger mask. "Summary and Conclusions" gives a brief summary of the data presented, and explores the implications of the tiger mask production in *Zitlala* and the consequences of the changes that have taken place in recent years as the *Tiger Fight* attracts national and international spectators ranging from students and researchers to curious tourists.

Zitlala (population approximately 4,555)¹ is located in the hills of Guerrero and is itself perched on the top of a hill. The Nahua are the predominant ethnic group. The name *Zitlala* is derived from Nahuatl and means "place of the stars" (Andraka, 1983: 143), perhaps because of the hilly terrain and surrounding mountains.

1. No population census of the community was available. There was no information in books either. This figure is based on a rough estimate given by researchers of the INI branch office in Chilapa.

Figure 3.1. View of Zitlala



Zitlala is divided into three barrios (districts): *San Francisco* (in reference to Saint Francis), *San Mateo* (in reference to Saint Mathew) and *Cabecera* (meaning chief town or head district). The term *barrio* is a Spanish term for a territorial division of a town or a city, but has its roots in the Aztec term *capulli* which referred to the "territorial and land-holding unit in a town or city" (Berdan, 1982: 187). Taking into consideration the pre-Conquest division of *barrios* by class, it would be natural for those in the *calpulli* to bond together as a measure of strength and protection against the upper classes such as the nobility.

At the foot of the hill flows a small river, a tributary of the Balsas river, and close by *milpa* (fields where maize, often interplanted with beans and squash, are cultivated) surrounded by hills and mountains. Despite the presence of the river, water is scarce and the Nahuatlans anxiously await the rains which are expected June and last until December every year. Annual precipitation is calculated at 1,172 millimeters. The climate is moderate and averages a temperature of twenty-five degrees celsius (Secretaría de Educación Pública,

1987). The *Tiger Fight* is often referred to as the rite for the "petition for rain", and is closely connected to the cycle of rebirth and renewal. It takes place in Spring from May 2nd to May 5th, an important time of the year when crops are sown and a blessing from the appropriate deities is considered crucial to a successful harvest.

Zitlala falls under the jurisdiction of *Chilapa de Álvarez* (the *cabecera municipal*) located about one hundred kilometers away, about forty minutes by 'bus' from *Zitlala*. *Cabeceras* originated under the Spanish who established them as "head-towns" of particular regions which usually had a number of "tribute-paying dependent settlements under its jurisdiction" (Berdan, 1982: 181). There is only one 'bus' going to *Zitlala*; a micro-bus with enough seating for approximately twenty-five passengers. *Chilapa de Álvarez*, (population 30,000) (Promexa 1991), is an important commercial and communications center for the community. The Saturday market, and the many retail and service outlets, make the purchase of household goods and services such as a telephone accessible to the inhabitants of *Zitlala*. In addition, the local bus terminal offers regular bus service to all parts of Mexico. The market gives the inhabitants of *Zitlala* an opportunity to sell small amounts of their produce as occasional surplus.

Zitlala is well protected from any encroachment by outsiders, due in large part to its geographical isolation, difficult terrain and the community's unwillingness to admit outsiders. The closest tourist resort of *Acapulco de Juárez* (population approximately two million, Jarolim, 1996: 396) is located thirteen hours away by bus and there is no direct route to *Zitlala* to or from it (refer to map, Figure 1.1). It was only recently, about ten years ago, that outsiders began to visit *Zitlala*. Many were and still are drawn to the community to witness the *Tiger Fight*, a tapestry of many different conceptual designs woven together. The ritual tapestry retains much of Nahua design, but has incorporated elements from other indigenous cultures and Spanish culture. The Nahua of *Zitlala* are proud of their traditions and insist on maintaining their cultural integrity. Although the *Tiger Fight*, especially the day of the *battle*, is witnessed by many spectators who are

outsiders, the *Fight* has not become a commercial enterprise geared towards profit or a performance given to satisfy the demands and curiosity of others.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

The household is the primary unit of production. Family members of two, sometimes three generations usually reside together sharing what would best be described as a compound consisting of a house, an outhouse and a well. Often a small stone or wood structure to house animals such as pigs or chickens is built near the front or side of the house. This arrangement of separate buildings on a plot of land was a common practice among the Nahua during the sixteenth century and still is today (Lockhart, 1992). Generally, the houses are made of *adobe* with tile or sheet metal roofs. Family members are interdependent, sharing in the many responsibilities of the household production process. Production centres mainly on agriculture, particularly *milpa* subsistence. Subsistence involves producing enough to ensure the reproduction of the household unit, and to reconstitute the labour power of the family (Bartra, 1987). The family unit sustain the community, providing a sense of community members with continuity and identity. Leveling mechanisms exist in the form of *cargos* (ritual obligations) to bear the material costs of any religious event by providing food and drink for the participants of events such as the *Tiger Fight*. In the case of *Zitlala* this obligation involves all the families, particularly the female members of the households. The purpose of the leveling mechanisms is to prevent the accumulation of individual wealth and to minimize the risk of possible tension and conflict resulting from disparities in individual wealth when this occurs in a situation where resources are scarce, and the level of agricultural production is low.

Every member of the family is involved in some aspect of planting, cultivating, weeding and harvesting which encompasses field preparation. Although women help with the harvesting, their primary responsibilities are to attend to the household and to care for the children. Cooking is sometimes done over a small fire outside, or in front of the house

(in an area like a patio with a roof), or indoors. During the *Tiger Fight*, women from different households collaborate and cook together preparing food for the consumption of all those who participate in the ritual. Although the role of the women centres on the household, they are instrumental in maintaining the relationship of the household to the sacred (Arnold, 1978). It is the women who bake the bread, made from maize and symbolizing fertility, which is hung on the crosses adorning the altar. It is also the women who tend the household where images of the patron Saint, Saint Nicolás, presides. Saint Nicolás is associated with the birth of Christ, and is important to household identity and continuity.

The main source of cash income is derived from the sale of the *milpa* surplus. Other income is generated by the remittances from the wage labour of the young men in the community who are forced to emigrate in search for employment. They take up occupations, primarily teaching, agricultural labour (harvesting someone else's ranch), and serving in the army. The remittances sent home are used, in part, to support the expenses incurred by *fiestas* and other religious events. Thus the income generated by emigration is vital to the continuation and preservation of *Zitlala*. The predominant theme of fertility manifested in the *Tiger Fight* emphasizes the importance of the Nahuas' ties to the land. The income derived from the remittance makes it possible for families to survive on their plots of land. Paradoxically, it also facilitates a cycle of dependency and poverty by tying the Nahuas to plots of land which are too small with terrain which is too harsh to feed the Nahua families and led, in large part, to out-migration in the first place. Household artisan production in *Zitlala* is generally limited to tiger masks and depends on individual effort. However, some women use their skills to make the long, black, beautifully embroidered skirts referred to as '*Nahuas*' worn (with white blouses) as ceremonial dress during the *Tiger Fight*, but do not sell them. One exception, a seamstress, produced the *Nahuas* at a cost of approximately \$300,000 pesos² (\$35.22 U.S.). One sale alone could augment the household income significantly.

2. Exchange rate calculated at .163 for pesos to Canadian and 1.3653 Canadian to \$U.S.--Royal Bank rate, 1995.

The craft of making tiger masks is learned from the older male members of the family, usually the father, as well as master craftsman (often veteran *tigers*). The prestige and respect of a veteran *tiger* is achieved by the number of *Fights* he has participated in. Having won or lost the *Fights* does not seem to affect his social standing; it is the extent of his sacrifice in enduring many blows in various *Fights* which matters. Due to the lengthy absences of the younger tigers, this tradition of apprenticeship under a master craftsman is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. Occasionally, if neither an older male relative or master craftsman is available, close friends of the same age will lend assistance. Also, *Zitlala* is a small community and does not have an abundance of mastercraftsmen. I knew of only one master craftsman - a man in his late fifties, also a musician, who was often engaged in activities outside the community and so was not often available. Yet, as a master craftsman, he held a special place of high social standing in the community. This status was awarded to him by the community in recognition of his skill and experience as a mask-maker, as well as his ability to fight successfully as a *tiger*.

Zitlala has a small local market located in the *zócalo*, with the municipal hall on one side and the church on the other side. It is in an enclosed space rather like a small warehouse indicating that the market is a permanent one which takes place on a daily basis. The market sells mainly produce and a few household items. There are also two small stores selling some 'junk food' items such as pop, chiclets (chewing gum) and small cakes equivalent to North American twinkies, other food items such as eggs, a sparse selection of canned goods, *tortillas*, some household items such as soap and matches, and ceremonial items such as candles. The Saturday market in *Chilapa de Álvarez* is cyclical in nature reoccurring every seven days and resembles a solar market in that it is surrounded by smaller markets operating in the villages nearby. It is an outside market consisting of separate *puestos* (stands) consisting of four wooden or metal poles holding up a 'roof' (usually a piece of tarpaulin in different colours). It offers a wide assortment of items for

sale including plastic containers, utensils, produce, clothing, straw hats and baskets, gadgets (e.g. penknives), and handicrafts.

In *Chilapa's* market, the handicrafts offered for sale consist of masks in assorted sizes from different parts of Mexico, shell and coloured stone jewelry, wooden sculptures, straw and clay figurines, and other articles woven out of straw. They are displayed side by side with industrially manufactured products (e.g. plastic containers) and produce. Their presence in the marketplace indicates the extent to which handicrafts in most parts of Mexico have been commercialized on a national scale and the degree of inter-village specialization. But the tiger masks of *Zitlala* are not among the items on display. They are not for sale yet. Some of the younger mask-makers expressed the desire to sell the tiger masks but they have been deterred by the costs and awkwardness of transportation (the masks are cumbersome and heavy) and the time factor (time away from their jobs to make tiger masks and sell them), and a certain reluctance to share the tiger masks with strangers.

Figure 3.2. View of Market in *Chilapa*



Figure 3.3. Stand Displaying Items for Sale, *Chilapa*



The exchange of tiger masks is part of gift exchange and it is considered a great honour to be the receiver of a tiger mask, particularly one that has been worn in battle. Gift exchange is a way of forging alliances and creating a set of obligations based on reciprocity. It is a moral transaction which creates and maintains human personal relationships between individuals and groups (Mauss, 1967). In feasting, it may also be regarded as a means of identifying with a particular deity, which is referred to as the communion theory (Leach, 1972). This connection of exchange bonds people and their gods, and is closely tied to the idea of sacrifice (Mauss, 1967). Since the recipient of the gift is anyone whom the inhabitants of *Zitlala* hold in high esteem, gift exchange in this

case supports the first explanation. It is also possible that the recipient of the gift might identify on a spiritual and conceptual level with the tiger as do the people of *Zitlala*, but it is unlikely since the life experience and cultural background of the recipient of the gift will probably not be the same as that of the gift giver.

Preventing the tiger masks from becoming a sale item at the marketplace has kept them from being commercialized. Furthermore, the masks are crafted for the *Fight*, not for profit. Participation in the capitalist economy is limited to wage labour and the consumption of industrially manufactured goods. With the crowds of spectators, the *Fight* now draws, it will depend on the members of the community to resist the demands of outsiders for the tiger masks which outsiders would consider merely another exotic souvenir.

Religion is a fundamental part of life in *Zitlala*. The population is divided between Catholics (approx. 80%) and Protestants (approx. 20%). The Catholic church plays a central role in community life and is incorporated into the ritual activities of the *Tiger Fight*. Although the essence of the *Fight* is based on Nahua spiritual concepts, there is evidence of syncretism in elements of the *Fight*. The cross, which is one of the dominant symbols of the *Fight*, holds meaning for both the Nahua and the Christians. To the Nahua, it represents the four cardinal points (north, south, east and west) and the four theological points important to creation; rain, the growth of maize and the Tree of life whose branches are a manifestation of heaven and the roots of the underworld (Gyles and Sayer, 1980). To the Christians, it symbolizes the death and rebirth of Christ, son of God. Eventually, the crucifixion came to be associated with a new kind of sacrifice by indigenous peoples (Madsen, 1975). In addition, the time of the *Fight* coincides with the date attributed to the "invention" of the (Christian) Cross (May 3rd) although it was really the rediscovery of the cross found in 326 by the Empress Elena (mother of Constantine) on her pilgrimage to Jerusalem to search for the cross on which Christ was crucified. She discovered three and put them to the test by touching a woman who was dying. When the touch of the third cross cured the dying woman, that was regarded as the True Cross (Foster, 1960).

According to Markman and Markman (1989), the last day of the *Fight* had been referred to as *el día de Santa Cruz* (the day of Santa Cruz), but the dates he cites for the *Fight* do not correspond exactly to mine and my informants did not refer to the day of *combat* as such.

There are other elements, such as the emphasis on images, the idea of immaculate conception, and the cosmic struggle between the forces of light and darkness, present in both religions. Nahua religious beliefs are a fusion of two traditions: indigenous and Christian (primarily Catholic) which has been adjusted and elaborated with local innovations. A fundamental difference between the two religious traditions is the polytheistic nature of Nahua religion and the monotheistic nature of Catholic religion. The Nahua adopted aspects of Catholicism, specifically the Saints and Christ, which they have integrated into their polytheistic pattern of worship. The presence of a pantheon of specialized Gods in Nahua religion facilitated the adoption of Christian Saints with specialized powers and their own attributes each associated with a particular region, town, social group, or subdistrict. Nahua Gods share similar characteristics, being linked to various occupations (i.e. social groups) and different places. The importance of Saint Nicolás is clearly demonstrated by his position at the front of the church, the presence of his image in the forms of small shrines or painting in most of *Zitlala's* homes, and the placing of offerings at the feet of the figure of Saint Nicolás at the end of the *Fight* as part of mass. The church priest was only in evidence at the service and briefly at the altar on the river bank (on the first day of the *Fight*). Historically, Christian, non-indigenous priests concentrated their activities in and around the church and kept themselves apart from the local population. This still seems to be the case as is demonstrated by the low level of the local priest's involvement.

Although the *Tiger Fight* is directed towards *Tláloc* (the Rain God), the figure of the tiger is also related to *Tezcatlipoca* (the Aztec Sky God) who often appeared in the guise of a jaguar. This illustrates the composite nature of all Mesoamerican deities and is indicative of polytheism and Nahua ideology. The Nahua have been successful in managing

to maintain a sense of continuity between their traditional religion and Catholicism without sacrificing the integrity of their own religion by using Nahua terms reflective of their own ideology to express basic Catholic concepts. Also, indigenous priests did not challenge Catholic beliefs directly, but argued for the preservation of deities who had, from time immemorial, provided the spiritual and material means for the survival of their people. The first missionaries, who arrived in Mexico during the 1530's, reinforced this process by referring to Nahua ideas as metaphors for the principles of their Christian teachings to facilitate explication of Christian concepts (Berdan, 1982; Burkhart, 1989; Madsen, 1975).

PREPARING FOR BATTLE

The *Fight* is supervised by the *regidor* (town councilman) whose duties are a combination of civil and religious duties. *Regidores* are usually in their middle age who have had prior experience as a *mayordomo* (ritual steward). Their tasks tend to be largely administrative and consist of "collecting taxes, supervising communal work, and settling conflicts between members of the community" (Cancian, 1975: 286). Originally, Spanish *regidores* were noblemen, or had pretensions thereto, who formed the backbone the *cabildo* (town council). They served for long terms, sometimes for life. Although the Nahua officials were similar in that they were also of high rank, usually from the class of the nobility, and acted as administrators and mediators in matters of dispute. Above all, they represented geographically and jurisdictionally separate subunits of the whole council, thus lacking the cohesiveness of the Spanish *cabildo* (Lockhart, 1992). Among the contemporary Nahua, the *regidor* acts in conjunction with other officials in the civil-religious hierarchy and because everyone in the community has the obligation to look after each other, does not need to bear the cost of the *Fight* alone. Those who wish to take photographs must approach the *regidor* for permission.

All young males are eligible to participate as tigers. They begin to prepare for *battle* on the third day of the *Fight* after the pilgrimage to the mountain top. The process of

preparation is both mental and physical. The *battle* is a test of stamina and strength, and they must be ready for it. While the masks and costumes are ready to wear on the first day, there is still time set aside for final touches to be done. Every *tiger* makes his own mask; previously masks were not lent as it could bring bad luck as well as posing practical problems since each mask is measured to fit a particular person's head. However, in the last ten years, it has become acceptable to borrow or lend a tiger mask, but only from and to a close friend or relative.

Each district has a *head tiger* elected by popular vote based in part on past performance in battle and also on his abilities of leadership. The homes of the *head tigers* serve as bases of operations where the *tigers* may share in the task of crafting their masks and meet to plan strategies for the *battle*. In previous years, the tiger masks were made in the secrecy of a nearby mountain cave with no one else present other than the mask-makers in order to protect the identity of the wearers. Although secrecy is still observed during the phase of the ritual which takes place in a cave on the mountainside on the second day of the *Fight*, perhaps for the same reasons, tiger masks are no longer made in the caves. Tiger masks are made of a single piece of pig or deer hide folded at the top with the sides laced together. The eyes derived from mirror bits (a recent practice) and whiskers/facial hair formed from the bristles of a wild boar. The hide is first cured, then dried having been cut into the masks basic shape. When it is dry, the mask is placed in water to soften the leather with corn husks stuffed inside in order to avoid shrinkage. Once the mask has soaked for a couple of days, it is set down to dry again.

When it is dry, facial features are added. Protruding sockets for the eyes are sewn on and pieces of mirror inserted. A long piece of rolled leather, which rests between the eyes and represents the nose, is pulled from the front over to the back and sewn on. A large oval opening with protruding lips, filled with leather teeth and showing a long, red leather tongue forms the mouth. Long leather ears are sewn on each corner at the top of the head. Small holes are drilled or punctured wherever the *tiger* wishes to thread the boar's hair

through as whiskers and other facial hair. These are also needed to increase the capacity of the mask-wearers to breathe since the only other aperture is the mouth which, although large, is reduced by the long tongue and teeth on both the upper and lower edges of the mouth. As the masks are usually double-lined in order to withstand blows to the head and avoid serious injury, they are very heavy. As an added measure, kerchiefs or something like a ski mask are worn underneath the mask. The open mouth acts as the eyes of the tiger allowing him to see. These features bear some resemblance to the jaguar-derived pre-conquest rain gods, especially the Aztec *Tláloc* (Markman and Markman, 1989).

The final step in the crafting of the masks is painting them, using commercial oil-based paints. First the background, which is generally yellow, red, green, brown, or black is painted (or left natural); then a hollow bamboo reed is used to imprint a design of little circles of a different colour (often white) or alternatively a pattern of black stripes like those of the animal's coat (or a combination thereof), is painted on the background and finally the facial features are painted. White is used for the teeth, red for the tongue, any colour for the nose and usually the same colour as the background is used for the ears. The corn husks are removed once the mask is finished and a piece of cloth glued to the bottom to protect the neck. The result is an impressive, dramatic and fierce-looking mask. A wide range of combinations and colours are used in the designs of the masks.

Figure 3.4. Tiger Mask



The rest of the costume is by individual discretion and varies. Some *tigers* may paint an old shirt and pants (or just a shirt) in colours and patterns corresponding to the design of their masks. Others wear everyday civilian clothes including anything from shorts and a shirt to pants (often two pairs at the same time) and a thick, padded jacket; or army type outfits, and so forth. It is important for them to pad their bodies well to avoid serious injury as they will sustain heavy blows during the *battle*. Footwear consists of sandals, runners or a combat type of boot. The last element of the costume is the whip; a length of rope about sixty centimeters long stiffened repeatedly with *mezcal* (an alcoholic beverage made from fermenting agave, a species of aloe vera plant, in water) to make it as hard as possible. Part of this length of rope is wrapped around the *tiger's* waists and stomachs to protect the areas from injury leaving about thirty-five centimeters to serve as a whip. These whips are made by a man who is known for his skill and regarded as a specialist in this area. The whips are reminiscent of the *macuahuitl* sword-club weapon used previously by the Aztecs (Markman and Markman, 1989).

On the first day, May 2nd, each district fashions a cross out of wood and carries it in a procession down to the river banks where they are placed next to the altar. Incense derived from *copal* (tree resin) is burned, slim, white candles are lit and prayers, presided over initially by the priest, are said in a mixture of Spanish, possibly Latin and Nahuatl. Offerings of flowers, fruit and bread decorate the altar. Some *tigers* appear briefly running alongside the procession, emitting loud screams and brandishing their whips in a show of ferocity and strength. The human *tigers* begin their ritual journey through the passage of *liminitas*, acquiring the persona of the animal tiger with the act of wearing the mask. It is an act which fuses the two souls; animal and human. It is believed that every human being has a *tono*, literally "tone, pitch", but actually refers to everyone's animal soul. It is this soul which lurks in the shadow of everyone's human soul, and from which one can never be completely separated. When donning the masks, the *tigers* really become tigers; they act and feel fierce, and are absorbed into the persona of the animal tiger. Until about ten years

ago, fighting between the *tigers* also took place on the river banks, but due to the level of violence and several resulting deaths, it is now banned.

Other distinctive personae are the *machos* and *tlacololeros* (derived from the word *tlacolol* meaning "small plot of land") who arrive cracking their whips to scare away forest animals such as tigers who are a threat to crop growth (Berdan, 1982). The whips, because of the explosive noise they make when they strike the ground and the speed with which they move, represent thunder and lightning. The *machos* wear black masks and may be associated with the god, the black *Tezcatlipoca*. The black colour represents power, mystery, sorcery and was once linked to ostentatious wealth. The African slaves brought over to Mexico at the time of Conquest were associated with the rich *hacienda* owners for whom they worked and indigenous peoples thought that the Africans had access to the same wealth by association (Esser, 1984; Lechuga, 1991). The group of *machos* is led by a pair; a man and a "woman", that is a man dressed as a woman to represent the female element. Cross-dressing allows male participants to interface with the female 'other' and protects the female's modesty by preventing her from performing in public (Bullough and Bullough, 1993).

The focal point of the activities taking place on the second day, beginning early (6 or 7 p.m.) in the morning, is the pilgrimage to the summit of a nearby mountain called *Zitlatepec* ("hill of the Stars") (Andraka, 1983: 143), an average of two to three hours climb which deters the majority of the spectators who wait for the day of the *battle* to appear. The climb is strenuous, particularly if one is unaccustomed to it, as the mountain is steep, the terrain is rocky and uneven, and there are many *sangcudos*³ (resemble black flies) who accompany one along the way. The mountain is also referred to as *cerro cruzco* ("mountain of the cross"). This location is significant because of its proximity to the clouds, the 'eyes' of water whose teardrops are equivalent to rain (Markman and Markman, 1989). Small groups from each district carry the crosses and donkeys are used by some to carry food and

3. I could not find an exact translation, but they are tiny insects with a vicious bite and resemble black flies in appearance and type of bite.

supplies. The majority also bring a healthy supply of *mezcal*. The *tigers* start their pilgrimage earlier to a cave near the summit joining the others on the summit around noon. The cave, as the heart of the mountain and a source of water provided by the deities is considered a sacred place. None of the tigers would give me any details about their activities, so I cannot provide more information as to what went on there.

Figure 3.5. Lone Tiger on Mountain Summit



Meanwhile, the three crosses have been erected on the summit and joined together by an arch of white maguey flowers indicating the alliance between the three *barrios*. The number three is significant in Catholic and Nahua religion. In Catholicism it refers to the Holy Trinity consisting of the Father (e.g. God), the Son (e.g. Jesus Christ), and the Holy Ghost. The latter is a curious figure and may be regarded as a personification of the female gender; a female counterpart to the Father figure. Among the Nahua, three is related to the miracle of creation: two elements combine to produce a new life.

Figure 3.6. Three Arches Forming a Cross on Mountain Summit



Again, incense is burned, candles are lit and prayers are said. The sacrifice of a few chickens also takes place and their intestines and hearts are hung across the arch. As a domesticated bird, the chicken is representative of the opposition between nature and culture (Vogt, 1976). As a 'wild' creature it is part of nature, but because it is domesticated it becomes part of culture. Hanging its intestines and heart on the cross is symbolic of an offering made to the Gods. Human and animal sacrifice was common to most of Mexico's early cultures as a way of communicating with the spirit world (Markman and Markman, 1989). The union of animal sacrifice involving the flowing of blood, the cave and the presence of the tiger is significant recalling "the Pre-Columbian rain gods and their ritual precipitation at the time of the rains" (Markman and Markman, 1989: 167), a connection made clear by the central position of the tiger (ibid.). Water is a fundamental element throughout the *Tiger Fight*, reaffirming the early ties to the ancient god *Tláloc*. Food, primarily chicken is cooked, and offered with *tortillas* by the women of the community who have set up makeshift stalls with a roof of thatched leaves supported by a circle of trees.

Generally, the third day is dedicated to rest, recuperation and more drinking. Group drinking is a part of the ritual and represents a structured process of peaceful interaction among individuals who regard themselves as a unit operating in a homogeneous and familiar social environment (Madsen and Madsen, 1979). As group members drink together, they are also bonding with each other. A state of inebriation caused by ritual drinking is considered an acceptable tribute to the gods. Although they are busy adding last minute touches of paint to their masks, tightening stitches as needed, giving their whips one final coat of *mezcal* and ensuring their clothing is ready, the *tigers* drink almost continuously. Although peaceful interaction is stressed in keeping with the sacred nature of ritual drinking, it contributes to the *tiger's* aggressiveness in *battle*, but does not usually result in any disruptive behaviour afterwards. To protect their identities, the *tigers* exchange their clothing with friends or relatives, so they cannot be recognized. The use of western clothing is symbolic of the community's interaction with capitalist market and the *tigers* preference for industrially manufactured goods. Although a few articles used in the different phases of the ritual (such as the candles), are purchased, none of them are sold as part of the activities.

TIGERS IN COMBAT

This is the day the *tigers* have been waiting for, and after four days of anticipation, they are at their most aggressive. Some *tigers* from each district gather at the homes of their *head tigers*; the rest are collected on the way to the *zócalo*. Meanwhile, the crowded *zócalo* is enveloped in an atmosphere of mounting excitement as everyone scrambles to get a place with a good view. Photographers jostle their way through the crowds clutching their equipment close to them. In the spirit of free enterprise, on the second storey balcony of the municipal hall, standing room is available at \$15,000 pesos (\$1.79 U.S.) per space. When I arrived, the balcony was already packed, so I contented myself with elbowing my

way to the front of the 'ring' and dodging the whip. The 'ring' refers to the middle of the *zócalo*, the area designated as the area for the *battle*.

The *battle* is presided over by the local municipal authorities and the police who act as referees. They may stop the battle and separate two fighting *tigers* at any time, should they feel it is warranted if *tigers* get too rough, or to push back the spectators out of harm's way. They form a kind of human barrier between the invisible confines of the 'ring' and the crowd of spectators. This method is not foolproof and spectators have been hit accidentally, but it does provide a certain measure of security preventing serious injuries from occurring and ensuring that the rules are followed as closely as possible. The rules consist of: no hitting below the knees or blows to the face with the whip. A popular strategy is to hit one's opponent in the arms to weaken his hold on his whip or to exhaust the opponent as quickly as possible and then deliver the final, victorious blow.

The crowd is silenced by the sounds of pounding feet running towards the *zócalo* as the *tigers* come running, jumping, roaring down the *calle principal* leading to the *zócalo*. The *barrio* of *San Francisco's* tigers, as last year's champions, line up on one side of the 'ring', while *San Mateo* and *Cabecera* are on the other. Silence falls over the packed square and spectators crane their necks in an effort to catch every movement. As last year's winners, the *tigers* of the *San Francisco barrio* have the right to start the *battle* by selecting a particular opponent. A *tiger* from *San Francisco* initiates the battle by stepping out into the center of the 'ring' and extending a hand as a gesture offering an opponent the challenge to fight. If a *tiger* wishes to challenge a particular *tiger* from among his opponents, he may do so by pointing at him. There is no form of oral communication to indicate choice of opponent. Screams, yells, cheers from supporting *tigers*, are common, but the *tigers* do not address each verbally in a direct manner. There is a sense of *spontaneous communitas* as all those present share in the feelings of excitement and exhilaration caught up by the momentum of the ritual.

As I watched, my principal informant, whom I recognized by the markings on his mask, stepped out into the square and extended a hand. A moment later, this young man whom I had known as a shy, quiet, reserved person, turned into a fierce, savage 'beast' cracking his whip mercilessly at his opponent and hitting him wherever he could. His mirror eyes gleamed in the sunlight and intermittently he gave triumphant shouts. His skill and strength were evident in the cunning and frequency with which he managed to dodge his opponent's whips, as well as the stamina he displayed in offering and accepting challenge after challenge, and the physical force manifested in each blow delivered with the hard whip. He was undoubtedly a *tiger*. When I later asked him how he felt, he said he felt "different...stronger...fierce...braver", sentiments which were echoed by other *tigers*.

Figure 3.7. *Tigers Fighting in the Zócalo*



During the *battle*, a status reversal takes place as the responsibilities and obligations due to age and social position are removed. Younger *tigers* hit those who are their elders and usually command respect. At this time, all are considered equal, although one *tiger* may be admired as the better fighter. In the *battle*, those qualities most admired - and feared in the tiger- are exhibited: ferocity, grace, strength, agility and cunning. It is also understood by the *tigers* as a sacrifice they must make to invoke rain for the survival of their community: the higher their level of endurance, the greater their sacrifice. And although, power and prestige are won by individual effort, it reflects on the whole district. Despite the viciousness and aggressiveness displayed in the *battle*, it is a means for the *tigers* to honour their commitment to their districts and the community at large and to communicate the earnestness of their petition for rain. It also serves as a mechanism to release tension caused by negative elements such as the build-up of aggression which could threaten the cohesion of the community. Thus the tiger, as a ritual symbol, unifies and condenses all the contradictions of human life.

The *battle* lasts an average of four to five hours beginning about noon that day. In a contradictory gesture, considering the trouble the *tigers* went to to conceal their identity, some *tigers* unmasked after the *battle*. However, their unmasking does not mean that they become more accessible to outsiders. They do not allow themselves to be photographed and will not discuss their experience on a spiritual or emotional level. I was only permitted to take photographs because of my association with a *head tiger*. In fact, many activities, such as being in the *tiger's* dressing room so to speak as they put the final touches to their costumes, were open to me by order of the *head tiger* and no-one contradicted him. Much responsibility rests on the shoulders of the *head tiger* as leader of his district. He must ensure that the group is prepared and is under the greatest pressure to demonstrate his courage *in battle*.

After a final procession through the village and a church service where offerings are made to Saint Nicolás, the *battle* ends with a community dance later in the evening; a device

intended to restore harmony and erase any sense of conflict or bitterness left over from the *battle*. It happened that one vanquished *tiger* came to find the *tiger* who had defeated him. He was still very angry and tried to start a fight again, that he might prove himself the victor. The conduct of one individual affects the whole community. Negative actions and behaviour are considered unseemly, inappropriate and disruptive, and could endanger the social fabric of the community. The troubled *tiger* was reprimanded and ushered from the grounds. The community re-enters the social structure with its prescribed roles and statuses feeling rejuvenated and revitalized.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In essence, the *Tiger Fight* is both an agricultural and divinatory ritual. It takes place at the beginning of Spring, a time of rebirth and rejuvenation, when the sowing of the seeds for future crops is done. The voices of the ancient rain and fertility gods are still audible in the articulation of the themes and symbols present in the *Fight*. And although some aspects of the ritual have changed over time, as is inevitable, the roots have been preserved. The ritual continues to play a central role in the life of the community.

Zitlala's remoteness and inaccessibility has made it less vulnerable to outside interference than other communities located closer to tourist sites and/or big cities. Also, penetration of the community by outsiders is only recent. Previously, outsiders were viewed with hostility and suspicion. Juan Andraka, author, describes his first visit to *Zitlala* in 1983 where, upon arrival, he was closely questioned about the reasons for his visit and then asked to present his papers from the government. However, it should also be noted that once he had allayed their suspicions, he found the Nahua very hospitable. (Andraka, 1983). Now, the *Tiger Fight* in *Zitlala* is well known all over Mexico, having reached the ears and eyes of North America as well. Present while I was there were photographers from National Geographic, from France, from Mexico City, as well as a few Mexican students, and an assortment of tourists. However, only the American

National Geographic team observed and filmed the whole ritual, including the festivities on the mountain summit to which they drove in a rented car by a very roundabout and tedious route.

Their presence has had an effect on the *Tiger Fight* generally in terms of structure. There is a fee for photographers of \$6,000 pesos (50¢ U.S.) and a fee to acquire one of the spaces in the balcony of the municipal hall which offers a better view than from down below. There are restrictions on taking photographs, some imposed by both the *tigers* themselves and by the local authorities. The fees paid to the municipal authorities for permission to take photographs and to 'rent' a space on the balcony are perhaps to defray administrative costs. Tiger masks are not for sale, and it is a rare occasion and a great honour to receive one as a gift, particularly if it has been worn *in battle*. Although, the younger *tigers* have expressed an interest in producing the masks for sale, there are a number of factors to consider: transportation costs, time needed for production and marketing, increased cost of materials, and the availability of labour.

The primary materials used in mask-making consist of: hide (pig or deer), wild boar hairs, and sometimes goat's teeth, as well as commercially manufactured paint, glue and thick thread. The basic tools used are: knives, small bamboo reeds, electric drills and paint brushes. The design of these tiger masks doesn't seem to have changed greatly; it is more the materials used and the techniques with the introduction of such electrical devices such as the hand drill and commercially made products such as mirror glass. Design is not dictated by formula, but largely by tradition. However, the use of some western clothing is indicative of changes which have occurred over time through contact with other cultures, as is the presence of media, like video-cameras, in the community to film the *Fight*.

The *tigers* are in a *liminal* state during the *Fight*, in an ambiguous position: still part of the community, yet their 'animal nature' sets them apart from it. Furthermore, although the *tigers* are bound by custom, their aggressive behaviour falls outside of acceptable social norms. As symbols, they convey both the sensory through the communication of violence

and aggression on an emotional level, and the ideological by being motivated by concepts of cosmology and religion. The *Fight*, as ritual, is the cohesive element identifying and linking these. The whole community experiences a sense of *spontaneous communitas* (e.g. a sense of exhilaration and freedom from regimented norms) during the ritual. Social order is re-established following a dance which constitutes the final event of the *Fight* as a totality.

The meaning behind the tiger mask is still deeply rooted in Nahua ideology and tradition, and the importance of the *Tiger Fight* for the community has not diminished. The commitment of the *tigers* and other participants (from the community) remains strong. It is not only a commitment, but the *tigers* perceive it as a promise they make to the community as they sacrifice their bodies enduring many heavy and painful blows in their attempt for victory so the rains may fall and also to their districts since winning will enhance its prestige. In addition, as a matter of personal pride and honour. The survival of the *Tiger Fight* is a testimonial to the Nahua's persistence and ingenuity as the community has resisted interference from external sources adding only those elements which are compatible with their own culture. The influx of a high volume of spectators over the last ten years has not damaged the ritual; perhaps because most 'outsiders' only watch the *battle* on the last day and take a few photos, and do not yet make demands for changes in the composition of the tiger mask or the *Fight*.

IV. TEJORONES, TIGERS AND TRADE IN SANTA MARÍA HUAZOLOTITLÁN, OAXACA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the process of household artisan production, including marketing strategies, and the ideological conceptualization of tiger masks in *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, Oaxaca as it is expressed in the *Dance of the Tejorones*. The *Dance* is performed all over the state of Oaxaca. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, it is performed every year in the month of February. The tiger is the central figure in the *Dance*, representing both positive and negative forces in the world-view of the Mixtecs. The chapter is divided into six sections, as follows: "Introduction"; "Socio-Economic Organization"; "Ingenuity and Innovation: Crafting the Masks"; "*Dance of the Tejorones*"; "Selling the Magic: Marketing the Tiger Mask"; and "Summary and Conclusions".

"Socio-Economic Organization" focuses on the social and economic fabric of the community, providing an overview of social structure, household organization and artisan production in relation to the tiger mask. "Ingenuity and Innovation: Crafting the Masks" examines the steps involved in the making of the tiger masks and the ingenuity with which the mask-makers have fused the ideas of others with their own ideological concepts, as well as mask-making technologies to accommodate influences from other cultures and modern technology. In the section, "*Dance of the Tejorones*", the form and significance of the *Dance* is discussed with particular attention being given to the role of the tiger. "Selling the Magic: Marketing the Masks" explores the social and symbolic implications of producing the tiger mask for sale and identifies the marketing strategies utilized. In "Summary and Conclusions" the results of the field data are synthesized and analyzed.

Santa María Huazolotitlán, population 4,514 (INEGI, 1990: 158) is situated in the *Costa Chica* ("little coast" - stretch of coastline running from *Acapulco de Juárez* to the beginning of the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec*) region of Oaxaca, about forty minutes drive (100

kilometers) from the town of *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* (population 37,800) (INEGI, 1990) (refer to map, Figure 1.1). It is also close to three fishing villages which have been turned into major tourist resorts; *Puerto Escondido* (population 25,000) (Promexa, 1991), about two hundred kilometers away, a two hour drive, *Puerto Ángel* (population 8,500) (Promexa, 1991) eighty-two kilometers further down the coast (Foster and Foster, 1995) and *Santa Cruz Huatulco* (population 12,645) (INEGI, 1990) one hundred and ten kilometers from *Puerto Escondido* (Foster and Foster, 1995) (refer to map, Figure 1.1) which was upgraded in 1991 to the status of a luxury resort through the efforts of FONATUR (*Fondo Nacional de Turismo* - National Tourism Fund) (Chant, 1992). The terrain consists of low-lying sandy coastal plains of irregular width and lush vegetation. The climate is tropical, with a wet and hot and dry season. Heavy rainfall occurs from mid-to-late May until mid-September. Annual precipitation ranges from 1500 to 2000 millimeters (Álvarez, 1981: 53) and the mean temperature is eighteen degrees celsius (Gufa Rojí, 1982: 3).

Figure 4.1. View of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* with Municipal Hall in the Forefront



The population is composed of a mixture of *Mestizos* (those of mixed Spanish/Indian blood), Mixtecs and those of African ancestry. The Spanish 'imported' blacks from Africa to work for them in various capacities, and an active slave trade ensued throughout the Colonial Period in the areas dominated by the Mixtecs, especially in the coastal regions where they were involved in sugar production. The majority worked as domestic servants for wealthy Spaniards or for Mixtecs belonging to the aristocracy. Some Africans were also employed by priests, merchants, owners of large estates and officials to work their land, attend to their livestock, carry merchandise and so on. Mixtec aristocracy consisted of two groups: the "hereditary ruling class" and the "hereditary nobles" (Spores, 1984 :64). Membership in the hereditary ruling class was by birth only and was achieved through direct descent from parents or an ancestor of the royal class who held a title. Both classes of the aristocracy were very powerful. They controlled production, and the distribution of resources, including black slaves. Thus, classes among the Mixtecs developed as a result of differences in material wealth and access to production resources, not differences in occupation (Spores, 1984).

The Africans slaves suffered many abuses and were often mistreated. In Royal decrees throughout the sixteenth century, they replaced indigenous labour in the sugar processing, and cloth production and mining industries. Although they were more 'expensive' in terms of the cost of shipping them over to Mexico, they were needed. The indigenous population had been greatly reduced, largely through disease and the African slaves provided an alternate source of labour (Davidson, 1973; Klein, 1988). Eventually, during the mid-eighteenth century as the need for slave labour diminished, some slaves were given their freedom by their owners and absorbed into mainstream society forming separate neighbourhoods or communities, particularly along the coastal region of Oaxáca, or they were conscripted into the Spanish provincial militia. Many also migrated to the state of Veracruz and the area of Acapulco (Guerrero). Some inter-marriage did occur between Africans and indigenous peoples, but it was relatively little (Spores, 1984). This

may have been due to the segregation of the labour force as African slaves and indigenous peoples in Mexico rarely worked together. In addition, it is quite likely that the indigenous African slaves with particular skills (e.g. metal working) could hire themselves out and save their wages to eventually purchase their freedom, and indigenous peoples had no such options (Klein, 1988). They remained physically (not only legally, but also through poverty) and spiritually enslaved throughout the Colonial Period.

The Mixtecs themselves were linked to the Toltecs and closely associated with whom they forged alliances, primarily through inter-marriage. In addition, they were influenced by the Aztecs by whom they were eventually subjugated when they were absorbed into the Empire in 1448 (Davies, 1985).

The characters of the *Dance of the Tejorones*, as symbols, represent these historical roots. The *Tejorones* are loosely defined by the community as "young men". In the Dance, they interact with the tiger and a number of other animals. All have their part in the Dance, necessary to make the story complete. The themes expressed in the Dance are part of the agricultural cycle which dominates Mixtec life, and reflect the world-view of the Mixtecs which is a fusion of different cultural elements.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

Santa María Huazolotitlán is administered by a hierarchy of municipal local officials headed by the *presidente municipal* (equivalent to the mayor) who is an elected official. His staff are members of the city council, the treasurer, secretaries, the chief of police and other police officers. Their functions are to enforce federal, provincial and municipal laws, to ensure the safety of the community, to find ways of improving the quality of life through whatever means possible and to oversee cultural events such as the *Dance of the Tejorones*. They are also empowered to pass municipal by-laws on local issues and to issue penalties, such as the collection of fines, when any federal, provincial or municipal laws are broken.

The community is divided into three districts: *barrio Nucaya*, *barrio Grande*, and *barrio Zapatillo*. They originated as a result of variations in the natural or social environment of each district. *Barrio grande*, meaning "large" or "great" district, is the most densely populated and features dense vegetation. The terrain in *Barrio Zapatillo* curves upward, and is derived from the word *zapatillo* meaning "pump" (shoe) or "slipper". Separating communities into districts was a common practice in early Mixtec villages (Spores, 1984) and provided a means to identify the area where a person lived in the village since there were no street names. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the *Calle Principal* is the main road leading to and from the community. The heart of the community is identified by the *zócalo* where the municipal hall, local jail, and police headquarters are located.

The backbone of the community is the family unit. Single, nuclear families live in their own homes, which are owned either by themselves or by their parents. In the case of two of my informants, their elderly parents lived with them. The parents of the others had their own houses or were deceased. The number of children varies per family, and averages between two and five. Only two informants and their families reported having more; one six and one seven children. While no more than two generations share a single dwelling, the community as a whole may be regarded as an extended family. Members of the community are related through blood and marriage ties, and thus all have a vested interest in the community.

Houses are made of cement or sun-dried brick referred to as *adobe*; a clay and mud mixture is formed into a brick and dried in the sun. Sometimes straw is also added to the mixture. The houses have shingle and wood roofs, cement or dirt floors and metal doors. The floor is extended to create a patio at the front of the house which features a bench made from a raised block of cement running the length of the front of the house. This patio is sometimes protected by a roof made from thatched palm leaves and supported by wooden beams. Additional structures, usually a small space covered with a thatched palm leaf or sheet metal roof held up by four wooden poles are constructed to house hens and/or

roosters, and/or to provide the artisans with a private workspace outdoors. Water is available from a well near the house. There is also a communal well and four cement 'sinks' located near the *zócalo* where the local women often meet to wash clothes and socialize. Most homes do not have indoor plumbing yet; families use an outhouse for going to the toilet and build a structure close to the well, usually pieces of plastic supported on two or four wooden poles for bathing.

Household production revolves around the seasons and the agricultural cycle. Land is cleared in the month of April, planting is done in June, pruning and weeding is done in July and August, and harvesting takes place in December. January to March are dedicated primarily to mask-making. Every member of the family, except babies and small children under the age of eight, participate in both activities. While the tasks of female family members center mainly around the home, they also assist in all stages of field preparation, and some stages of mask production.

Each family owns a small plot of land ranging from one to three hectares. The crops are maize, chili and beans. Once harvested, the crops are prepared for consumption. The maize is ground with a *metate*, a flat stone used for grinding (similar to the European concept of a pestle and mortar), and combined with water to make the paste needed for *tortillas*. Chilies are chopped up or crushed, and used in sauces or as a spice in other foods. Beans are cooked with onions in water until they are soft, then they are ground as well. This, as well as eggs, chicken and rice form the staple diet of the Mixtecs. Cash income is generated from the sale of surplus crops and the sale of handicrafts. Annual income varies depending on how much surplus *milpa* is available to be sold. Tiger mask production provides a viable option for augmenting the families' incomes as the surplus is unreliable and the earnings from the sale of crops is much lower than that gained from the sale of handicrafts.

Figure 4.2. Distribution of Earnings from Tiger Mask Production

No. of Families	Mexican Peso	US Dollar
3	500,000.00 - 1 million	58.70 - 117.41
1	500,000.00 - 1 1/2 million	58.70 - 166.18
4	400,000.00 - 1 million	46.96 - 117.41
1	300,000.00 - 1 million	35.22 - 117.41
1	1 million	117.41
1	250,000.00 - 800,000.00	29.35 - 93.93

*Exchange rate calculated at .163 for pesos to Canadian and 1.3653 Canadian to U.S. -
Royal Bank, 1995

The market place in *Pinotepa Nacional* is the center for commercial activity and communication. While material transactions take place, community members get news from the surrounding areas. *Pinotepa Nacional* is situated on the route of one of Mexico's main paved highways, the Coastal or Pacific Highway 200, coming from *Guaymas* (Sonora) as Highway 15, converting to Highway 200 at *Ixtlán del Rio* (Nayarit) and continuing down the coast through *Acapulco* (Guerrero) and passing eastward along the coast of Oaxaca until it reaches the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec*. To reach *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, drivers must detour up a windy, bumpy, narrow, unpaved road covered with gravel and stones. Transportation is available in the forms of mini-buses seating up to twenty-five passengers, pick-up trucks of varying sizes, some with wooden benches on each side, and local taxis. Mini-buses and pick-up trucks run regularly, every half hour or so from 7 A.M. until 6 P.M.; one or the other is always accessible. Taxis are also available and may run longer hours if the driver or owner (not all drivers own their own vehicles) permit; often several people share one taxi and the taxi does not leave until it is full. Fares are then charged on an individual basis.

The market in *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* operates on a daily basis and offers an assortment of agricultural produce (various fruits and vegetables), industrially manufactured items such as plastic containers and vinyl tablecloths, tools, music cassettes of Mexican pop and folk artists, articles of clothing, and different handicrafts. Integration into the capitalist global market of the twentieth century has increased the availability of industrially manufactured goods which are durable and have contributed to an increase in the substitution of local goods for manufactured goods such as the consumption of flour instead of corn *tortillas*, as well as a higher level of consumption of processed foods and bottled drinks, especially pop.

Santa María Huazolotitlán has a small market open on weekends and during special events selling much the same items as the market in *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional*, but on a smaller scale. The market consists of *puestos* (stands) which are operated by local vendors. There are four retail outlets selling processed foods such as canned goods, paper products such as toilet paper, comics, packing paper used to wrap masks and sculptures, candy, staples such as flour and beans, produce, eggs, candles, and 'junk food' equivalent to Mae West cakes in North America.

Perched on a hill overlooking the community is the Catholic church. The church is led by a Catholic priest whose domain is restricted to the church. While he does officiate in religious matters such as leading in prayer, presenting a sermon and so on, his participation in traditional ceremonies such as the *Dance of the Tejorones* is limited. Despite this, the community is staunchly Catholic and only one informant interviewed referred to himself as a "believer" in a divine spiritual power which is inherent and manifest in all living organisms. The rest of my informants gave a number of reasons for their adherence to Catholicism: it provides a moral basis (i.e. moral guidance) for the family; provides a sense of continuity; offers preparation for and marks important stages of life (birth, marriage, death) through rituals such as baptism. Thus, Catholicism retains a functional value for the community giving it a sense of unity and purpose.

The success of Catholicism is due largely to the ingenuity of the Mixtecs who manipulated the Catholic concepts to fit in with their own ideas. Priests of both traditions directed religious activities, including marriages and funerals. Ancient Mixtec priests were also responsible for "prognostications, postfunerary observances, fertility rites in fields, leading and performing dances, singing, giving recitations, going into trances, receiving and presenting offerings, performing animal and human sacrifice and autosacrifice" (Spores, 1984:92-93). Each tradition operates within a hierarchy; in the Catholic tradition, the Pope is the highest priest and in ancient Mixtec religion, priests were ranked into orders of higher and lower priests all of whom were "under the direct control and custody of native rulers" (ibid.).

However, there are also some fundamental differences separating the two traditions. In indigenous Mixtec religion, the personification and spirituality of the features and forces of nature persists from Pre-Hispanic times. Natural features, such as mountains, caves, rivers, and so on are still regarded by the Mixtecs (and the Nahuas) as sacred places. Formal Catholicism has no relationship to nature, and religious activities are restricted exclusively to the institution of the church. For the Mixtecs, the earliest center of religious activity was the home "with its altars and many distinctive ritually expressive figurines, offering vessels, sacrificial implements and burial places" (Spores, 1984,93). Altars still preside in private homes on important ritual and ceremonial occasions. By contrast, in Catholic religion, altars tend to be limited to the institution of the church. Indigenous Mixtec religion focuses on explaining and maintaining the cosmos and emphasizes interaction with elements from the natural world. Thus, the spiritual and the mundane are interwoven. In addition, indigenous Mixtec religion is polytheistic, while Catholicism is monotheistic, but also plural saints. As with Nahua religion, the saints were easily accommodated into Mixtec religion which had patron Gods for specialized occupations and for each community.

Indigenous Mixtec religion of today has absorbed elements from Catholicism, but the social and spiritual values of the Mixtec remain intact. A reciprocal relationship to the natural world and the forces of nature which retain qualities of 'sacredness' persists. Although indigenous Mixtec society was also concerned with morality, "conduct was guided by social custom rather than religious precept" (ibid.: 92). With the influence of Catholicism, moral behaviour was redefined as 'good' or 'sinful'. The concept of sin related mainly to vices condemned by Catholics (e.g. witchcraft, dealings with the supernatural), as well as those actions disapproved of by the Mixtecs (e.g. failure to look after one's family, being selfish in the accumulation of private wealth) (Madsen, 1975). In general the concept of sin in Catholic religion is oppressive, intimidating and disempowering and was used by the friars during the Colonial Period as an effective means of quelling opposition and controlling indigenous people through guilt. The church was especially powerful in Oaxáca, although the Mixtecs were particularly stubborn in resisting the Spanish, and the conquest of Oaxáca has been described by various scholars as primarily a spiritual conquest (Beals, 1975; Berry, 1981; Taylor, 1972). Mixtec indigenous religion was very concerned with the afterlife, but it was not a question of going to hell and serving the devil, or going to heaven and turning into an angel; instead it was a matter of beginning another phase of one's journey through life.

The similarities between the two religions facilitated penetration into indigenous communities by the Catholic church, circa 1547 (Spores, 1984). Village *fiestas* became instruments of indoctrination and included story-dramas in which stories emphasizing religious concepts were told through acting and dance (Madsen, 1975). Village religion was supervised by friars who organized the indigenous people of their parishes into *cofradías* (brotherhoods). Holding a post in the *cofradía* led to honour and prestige (Madsen, 1975). This emphasis on the principle of brotherhood and the assurance that God loves all his children equally. This may have appealed to the Mixtecs providing them with a way to deal with inter-ethnic conflicts and reducing tensions caused by the high level of

stratification present in their society (Spores, 1984). Once established, the institution of the church was instrumental in integrating Mixtec society across geographical, social and ethnic boundaries. The blending of elements from both religions is indicative of the adaptability and astuteness of the Mixtec people, who retained those elements of Catholicism which held meaning for them and modified them to fit in with their own system of beliefs.

INGENUITY AND INNOVATION: CRAFTING THE MASKS

Early Mixtec society (A.D. 750) included an artisan class which consisted of gifted painters, stone masons, potterers, gold and silver smiths (Dahlgren, 1990). However, since they were also involved in subsistence farming, they were not considered as specialists. This pattern continues today when time is devoted to both agricultural and artistic pursuits, both because they are necessary to the livelihood of the people and the latter also for pleasure. Both activities are an integral part of household production. Most of my informants over the age of thirty had, in previous years, worked as labourers, bricklayers, construction workers, and other similar jobs primarily in factories for a period of seven to eight years, the majority in locations other than *Santa María Huazolotitlán*.

Santa María Huazolotitlán's artisans produce a wide assortment of animal masks, sculptures, and figurines in different positions (crouching, lying down, standing, etc.) and sizes ranging from five (for miniatures) to sixty centimeters in width. While the artisans also make *tejorones*, *chaniuelas* (mother of the *tejorones*), devil, and people masks, they craft primarily animals and are well known locally and nationally for the variety of animals they make. The animals include tigers, lions, black panthers, rabbits, sheep, rams, bulls, dogs, donkeys, armadillos, crocodiles, and monkeys. Most of them appear in the different ceremonies and many of them participate in the *Dance of the Tejorones*. Tiger masks/sculptures/figurines are produced in two types: the *tigre bengali* (bengal tiger) whose pelt has the stripes of the bengal tiger found in India, and the *tigre costeño* ("tiger of the

coast") whose pelt resembles a jaguar's pelt with its design of black rosettes on an orange-yellow background.

Figure 4.3. Tigre Costeño - Mask



The *tigre bengali* is not indigenous to Mexico; some of my informants told me of a mask-maker who had gone to Mexico City about ten years previously and seen a *tigre bengali* at the zoo and had returned to the community with pictures of this tiger; others told me that they had seen pictures of this tiger in books. The mask-makers found the *tigre bengali* attractive and began to produce masks/sculptures/figurines of this tiger as well as the *tigre costeño*. The *tigre bengali* masks are sometimes used in ritual dances according to personal preference of the one playing the role of the tiger, although the *tigre costeño* mask is considered the traditional tiger mask.

Traditionally, the crafting of tiger masks was taught to sons by their fathers, who may also have been master craftsmen, or by another master craftsman. This continues to

be largely the case, but it also happens that young men learn from a friend close to their own age or learn by themselves through trial and error. Of my informants, ten learned from their fathers, two learned on their own, three learned from friends around their own age, and one from a master craftsman. The time of apprenticeship is not set, and varies from one to six months depending on the natural ability of the apprentice and amount of work dedicated to the task. The age of apprenticeship is not fixed either, but it is acceptable for young men to begin at the age of sixteen and they may continue to make masks for as long as they wish to do so.

The status of master craftsman is only attainable after many years of mask-making to establishing a reputation for a high level of skill and excellence in quality. The quality of a mask is defined by the smoothness of the wood after carving, especially inside the mask; the precision of the painted design; the lustre of the paint; and the clarity of facial features such as eyes, mouth, teeth. Strong emphasis is laid on the fact that the masks are made by hand, not machine. To distinguish their work from that of their colleagues, many mask-makers use subtle differences in the carving, painting or design of facial features such as the eyes and ears, or some variation in the pattern of the animals 'fur'.

The motivation for crafting tiger masks are fourfold: a) economic necessity; b) pleasure because one is accountable only to oneself and can work outdoors; c) aesthetic to be creating a work of art and beauty; and d) a sense of obligation to carry on the work of one's father. Twelve informants gave both b) and c) as the reasons for their motivation; one informant gave a), b) and c) as their reasons, and two informants gave all four reasons. While a) was not cited specifically as a reason, except by one informant perhaps my informants felt that it was not necessary for this to be explicitly stated given the meagre income (about \$250.000. equivalent to \$35.71 US) earned from the sale of cash crops.

The process of mask-making entails the following steps: cutting the shape of the head from a block of wood, hollowing out the mask carving the facial features and refining the overall shape of the head, sanding the completed mask, and painting the background

first in white, then in yellow. After the background has dried, the pattern of the 'fur' and the details of the face are painted on. Finally, varnish is applied to add lustre and smoothness to the mask. The tools used for this process are: a machete, a small knife (usually a penknife), chisels (one - five of different sizes) including a special chisel with a bent, semi-circular cutting edge used by carpenters to carve curved or irregular surfaces, an axe, a scalpel, a set of paintbrushes of assorted sizes, and sometimes a small hand-drill. The expenses incurred for tiger mask production can be quite high, and when the labour involved is included, considerable. The cost of tools varies (refer to table, Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.4. Mask-Maker (Master Craftsman) Using 'Hammer' and Chisel to Hollow Out Tiger Mask



Figure 4.5. Mask-Maker Carving Features on Tiger Mask With a Penknife



Figure 4.6. Mask-Maker (Apprentice) Painting Tiger Mask

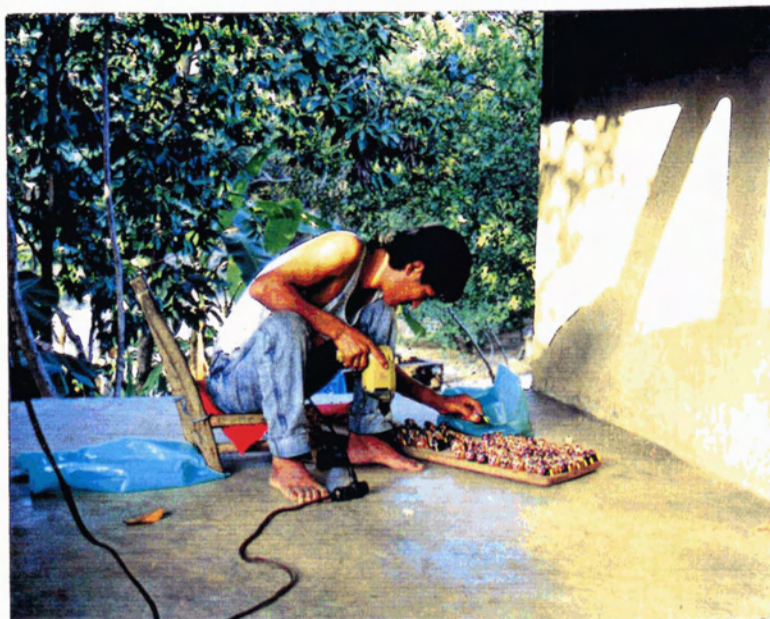


Figure 4.7. Material Costs of Tiger Production

Tools	Mexican Peso	US Equivalent	Wear of Tools
Hardware Store, (Santiago Pinotepa Nacional)			
Machete	18,000.00	2.57	2 - 3 years
Penknife	14,000.00	2.00	1 - 5 years
Chisels	9,000 - 20,000	1.29 - 2.86	1 - 5 years
Carpenter's Chisel	20,000 - 50,000	2.86 - 7.14	1 - 5 years
Axe	55,000.00	7.85	1 - 5 years
Sandpaper	0.800 a sheet	0.11	5 masks (15x20cm)
Paint (water) 1 liter	12,000.00	1.71	25-30 masks (15x20cm)
Paint brushes	800.00 - 4,000.00	0.11	3 months - 1 year
Varnish (1 liter)	12,000.00	1.71	25-30 masks (15x20 cm)
Hand-drill	314,000.00	44.86	
Wood	15,000 a meter	2.14	
Hardware Store (Oaxáca City)			
Machete	18,000.00	2.57	
Penknife	20,000 - 35,000	2.86 - 5.00	
Chisel	8,000 - 25,000	1.14	
Charpenter's Chisel	20,000.00	2.86	
Axe	50,000.00	7.41	
Sandpaper	1,300.00 a sheet	0.19	
Paint (water) 1 liter)	18,000.00	2.57	
Paint brushes	1,000 - 4,000	0.07 - 0.57	
Varnish (1 liter)	12,000.00	1.71	
Hand-drill	114,000.00	16.29	
Wood	10,000 - 15,000 a meter	1.43 - 2.14	
*Exchange rate is calculated at .163 peso to Canadian and 1.3653 Canadian to U.S. as quoted by the Royal Bank, 1995.			

If a particular tool is not available or too expensive to buy, the artisans make one out of the resources available to them. Most mask-makers create a type of hammer made from *guyava* or *guapinol* wood (Latin name, *Hymanaea*: species of tree commonly known as locust) (Record and Hess, 1977) and a piece of black rubber cut from an old tire. The hand-drill is used to drill small holes either on each side of the head. In the case of miniatures, the hole is made at the top of the head in the middle to facilitate the insertion of a small metal key chain for keyrings. Holes are also drilled at the top of larger masks to pull through string/cord so that the mask may be hung on a nail on the wall. The materials used are *parota* (Latin name, *parrotia*: species of tree which looks like walnut) (Record and Hess, 1977), *roble* sometimes called *macuil* (Latin name, *tabebuia*: species of tree), *roble* is the Spanish term for oak which this wood resembles (ibid.: 1977; Standley, 1926), or *cedro blanco* (white cedar) wood. Oil paint purchased in cans and sanding paper are also used.

Figure 4.8. Young Apprentice Mask-Maker (Sixteen Years Old) Using Hand-drill on Miniature Tiger Masks



Every member of the family over the age of six is involved in one or more stages of the process. The wives and daughters of all my informants sanded and in two cases, also painted backgrounds. The young boys do the same until the age of twelve or so when they may begin carving with a penknife. The use of the machete is generally forbidden to the wives, daughters, and little boys for safety reasons. Boys begin to use machetes in mask-making at the age of fifteen or sixteen. Each mask, averaging between fifteen and twenty centimeters (this is the standard size of the masks made to be worn and/or sold), takes two to three days to complete. However, masks are crafted simultaneously: while one is drying in the sun, the mask-maker begins another one, or he carves four to five in one day and devotes each day to a different step of the process.

Figure 4.9. Boy (Seven Years Old) Sanding Unpainted Tiger Mask



Due to deforestation and the erosion of the topsoil from slash-and-burn agriculture, over-working the land, and population pressures caused by large families using small plots of land, the *parota* wood is becoming scarce and the mask-makers are increasing their use of *cedro blanco* and *roble* (or *macuil*), and turning to *zompantle* (Latin name, *erthrina*: species of tree commonly known as coral bean) (Record and Hess, 1977; Standley, 1926). In an effort to counteract deforestation, the provincial government passed a law in early 1993 prohibiting the cutting of young, healthy trees. This information is from informal interview with former informants when I revisited the community in June, 1993. I was told that this had made it difficult for them to continue producing the same volume of masks as before. Also, with local authorities being strict in their enforcement of this law, it was not worth the risk of getting caught as the fines are very expensive at \$400.00 pesos (\$133.00 US) per offense.

These setbacks, however, have not dissuaded mask-makers from continuing their work or from pursuing new ideas. Innovation is defined by the mask-makers as changes of form and design, particularly differences in their own styles from that of their teachers and the depiction of characters which fall outside their own cultural traditions and their sphere of personal experience. For example, one informant had made a mask of a female face looking like a cross between Wonder Woman and the Statue of Liberty at the request of an American client who had described what he wanted; another informant sculpted large figurines of mermaids which he had seen in picture books and which appealed to him. Innovation is a matter of changing styles and designs, and/or trying out a new idea. A mask-makers work can often be distinguished from that of his colleagues by subtle differences in the carving or painting of facial features such as the eyes and ears, or variations in the pattern of the animals 'fur'.

Figure 4.10. Wonder Woman



Figure 4.11. Female Head Created Through the Process of Innovation



Innovation in terms of technique involves modifying the skills learned from the teacher and developing one's own technique; holding the penknife at a slightly different angle while carving the eyes, for instance, so that they vary somewhat from those of the teacher, perhaps having a more slanted look. Although the tools used are generally

industrially produced and purchased at a store, the mask-makers use their ingenuity to create tools if the need arises as been demonstrated by the making of the hammer. None of my informants could remember a time when tools were not acquired in this manner. Since my informants span two generations and all of them reported their teachers buying their tools at commercial outlets, it seems likely that the same kind of tools have been used for a long time, at least over three generations.

The mask-makers of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* are proud of their craftsmanship and are concerned with the quality of their work, whether it is a tiger mask created for ritual, ceremonial purposes or for sale to a tourist. Producing tiger masks, sculptures, and/or figurines provides a much-needed supplement to the income of the household, as well as an opportunity for the mask-makers to release their creative energies. All my informants stated that they enjoyed making tiger masks and found the activity relaxing, regardless of their motivation for crafting the masks. They consider the quality of their craftsmanship extremely important and expressed their disapproval of any mask-makers known to do sloppy work.

DANCE OF THE TEJORONES

The Dance of the Tejorones as it is performed in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* has gained a reputation nationally and locally for being especially colourful and interesting because of the variety of animals portrayed in the *Dance*. There is no limit to the number of animals which can be portrayed in the *Dance* as long as there is a way in which they can interact with the tiger who is the main character in the *Dance*. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the following characters, apart from the tiger, appear in the *Dance*: the *Tejorones*, the *Chaniuela*, a dog, a bull, a donkey, a rabbit, and a sheep. Turkeys, roosters, deer, goats have also been known to be depicted in the *Dance*, but did not appear at the time I observed the *Dance*.

Figure 4.12. *Tejorones* with Dog, Bull, Donkey and Tiger (*Barrio Chico*)



All the dancers are males ranging in age from sixteen years and up. As long as they are physically able and have the desire to do so, they may participate in the *Dance*. The *tejorones* represent the young men who participate in the hunt to catch the tiger. However, the colour and some aspects of the design of the mask worn by the *tejorones* lead to another interpretation. The masks of the *tejorones* are black with thick red lips. The noses are flat and have wide nostrils. The eyes are large, round, sometimes protruding and are often rimmed in white over high cheek bones. Folds of the skin on the head like those found on the head of the tiger are also part of the facial features and are sometimes painted in white. The African features expressed in the mask indicate an association with the black slaves imported earlier by the Spaniards, especially as they are also referred to as "los negros" ("the blacks"). An elder, also a respected teacher from *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional*, stated that the *Dance* was very old (of Pre-Conquest origin) and was later used as a form of protesting the presence of the Spaniards and later the African slaves, hence the exaggerated features and black colour of the *tejorone's* masks.

The rest of their costume generally consists of long pants of a dark colour, sometimes rolled up to just above the ankle or the knee (including jeans as well); white or dark socks, a white shirt, sometimes a vest of a dark colour, a jacket, usually something similar to a sports blazer complemented by white sneakers or dark shoes of assorted types, including boots and straw hats with a narrow brim. One dancer chose to wear a helmet in bright red resembling that of a fireman's helmet. The dark colours used are navy blue, black, or dark brown. Perhaps the emphasis on dark clothing is a reflection of the association to the black slaves mentioned earlier; or it could just be a matter of style matching dark clothing to a black mask. Given the different interpretations of who the *tejorones* are said to represent, it seems the latter is the stronger and more logical possibility.

The mother of the *tejorones* is the *chaniuela*, also known by the names of *María Chaniuela* or *María Candelaria*, the only female character participating in the *Dance*. However, the *chaniuela* is played by a man wearing a dress, usually something in gaudy colours, sometimes stockings are worn, and shoes range in type from sneakers to a type of loafer. 'She' speaks in a falsetto voice and 'her' behaviour is an exaggerated performance of the behaviour generally attributed to the female gender. She deliberately wiggles her hips as she dances with mincing steps and flirtatious movements. The mask worn by the *chaniuela* is pink with red lips, black eyelashes and eyebrows. Sometimes there are also cheeks painted on of a darker pink. In addition, some *chaniuela* masks also have a mustache painted on in black, perhaps in an effort to preserve the masculinity of the wearer. Each *chaniuela* mask is decorated with tassles made of red and/or blue wool which are attached to either side.

Cross-dressing is also a necessary device for men to play a female role, particularly one as essentially feminine as that of the *chaniuela*, a mother figure. It is in order to counteract the femininity of this role and to avoid losing face (i.e. losing respect) that the *chaniuela's* gestures are exaggerated and a simpering, flirtatious attitude is adopted

"burlesquing women's conduct rather than seriously enacting it" (Bullough and Bullough, 1993, ix). In a society dominated by the ideal of *machismo*, similar to the concept of patriarchy where the man is the head of the family and ruler of the economic and political structure in society, this is not surprising. The position of Mexican women is an awkward one: they are expected to remain sexually pure, especially as young, unmarried women and to retain that purity as childbearers when they are married. As married women, their highest achievement and level of development is reached through the act of childbirth (Arnold, 1978). Married women who have not had children by choice have a lower status than those who do. The *chaniuela* retains a higher status as a mother figure than as a woman in her own right. The *Dance of the Tejorones* requires a certain cast of characters and traditionally men have played the roles. The *chaniuela*, the only female role, still requires a man to play the part who cannot help in these circumstances but to act contrary to his temperament as an individual male in a *macho* society.

The reasons given by the dancers for participating in the *Dance* are a combination of the following: a) for the experience, to see "what it feels like"; b) for the fun of engaging in conduct otherwise socially inappropriate; and c) a sense of community pride. Those who chose to be a particular animal do so because they find that animal especially attractive and/or admire its abilities. Although, it has become acceptable for young women in the last four years to participate in the *Dance*, my informants did not know of any woman who had. Their rationale is that it is too difficult for women, especially the role of the tiger, and that the women are not interested. This supposition was supported by the few women I spoke to, none of whom expressed any interest in participating in the *Dance* and commented on how demanding performing in the *Dance* would be, especially the role of the tiger.

Any young male over the age of sixteen who wishes to participate as a dog, bull, donkey, rabbit, sheep, the *chaniuela* or as *tejorones* may do so. Those who would like to be the tiger must ask the *mayordomo* for permission who grants it on the basis of physical

fitness, status in the community and to some degree, age as the role of the tiger demands a great deal of stamina and strength. Each district has its own group of *tejorones*. Between three and four weeks prior to the *Dance*, the *tejorones* must go to a rehearsal daily to learn and practice their steps. Meanwhile, the *tiger* must keep fit and on the day of the *Dance* eat very little so his performance is not impeded by a heavy belly.

The *Dance* reflects the concerns of those who depend on their agricultural output for survival. The *tiger* represents a threat to the community's livestock, yet he is also a symbol of fertility. In the *Dance*, the *tejorones* hunt the *tiger* who is a threat to their livestock and other animals, which the *tiger* hunts in turn. On the morning of the *Dance*, the *tejorones*, *tiger* and other animals walk in procession to the house of the *mayordomo* and the home of the *presidente municipal* where they give a private performance of the *Dance*. If another high ranking member of the community wishes to have the *Dance* performed for him, he may request it. In return, the dancers are given large quantities to eat and supplied with an endless flow of *tepache*. *Tepache* is a strong beverage made from maize which ferments for three days in water with a bar of brown sugar called *panela*.

The supervision of ceremonial activities is the responsibility of the *cofradía*, essentially a religious brotherhood, introduced to the Mixtecs by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, which continued to function until the end of the colonial period (Spores, 1984). *Cofradías* were associated with a particular church or monastery, and consisted of "adult males of males of both large and small communities" (ibid.: 153) led by a priest. Their functions were: "to accumulate, sell and rent property; to keep herds; to maintain reserves; to negotiate and litigate, and to maintain religious structures" (ibid.). Any costs incurred, whether material or financial, were covered by the *cofradías*. Funds acquired by the *cofradías* were derived from various sources, including "*cajas de comunidad* (community treasuries), land rents and sales, property and monies assigned through wills and donations, the sale of livestock, *encomenderos*, *diezmos* (tithes), offerings and ceremonial fees" (ibid.: 154).

The *mayordomo* (or *cofrade*) was an elected official whose duties were composed of: "supervising community property, public works, mandatory government labour", and assisting the governor and council in administering the *caja de comunidad* and in dealing with certain cooperative activities involving the community and the church" (ibid.: 172). The *mayordomo* is still an elected official, but he is now concerned primarily with overseeing ritual ceremonies. He holds his office for one year and during that year must supervise all aspects of the ceremonial activities, including the provision of food and drink for the dancers.

Once they have paid their respects to the *presidente municipal* and the *mayordomo*, the groups of *tejorones* with their *chaniuela*, tiger and other *animals* are free to wind their way downwards to the *zócalo* where each group dances in a circle to the music of two or three fiddlers.

Figure 4.13. *Dance of the Tejorones (Barrio Nucaya)*



The circular movement reflects the interconnectedness of all things and the cyclical nature of life's rhythms; each year seasons return bringing with them their hardships and rewards. The *tiger* cavorts around the *zócalo* jumping in the air, climbing whatever is near (including trees, low buildings, etc. - at the end of the *zócalo* is a low stone wall and the *tiger* often jumped up onto it and then back onto the ground), chasing his prey and landing in a flying leap on his prey to symbolize killing it. To facilitate his movements, the *tiger* wears running shoes or rubber-soled sandals and a yellow bodysuit with rosettes or stripes in black and painted on. A long tail made from a roll of stuffed material is attached in the back. Under the mask, the *tiger* wears a kerchief, preferably in yellow and black to match his 'fur'. The others also wear kerchiefs in colours complementing their costumes to protect their faces from the hardness of the wood, to keep hair out of the way and disguise their human identity.

As the *Dance* continues, the *tiger* also attacks the *tejorones* and may endeavour to scare the spectators.

Figure 4.14. *Tiger Attacking a Tejoron (Barrio Nucaya)*



In an attempt to intimidate the *tiger* and frighten him away, the *tejorones* carry wooden sticks and rattles made from calabashes and filled with seeds or little stones which produce lots of noise. To defend themselves against the *tiger*, they also carry wooden swords.

Figure 4.15. *Tejorones* and the *Tiger* in the *Zócalo* (*Barrio Grande*)



In an effort to insult and ridicule spectators, they try provoke them using rude and obscene gestures. This type of behaviour clearly indicates status reversal and a flaunting of authority as spectators include local officials. It may also have been a way to vent their anger against the Spanish authorities earlier. In addition, it brings an element of the Carnival into the *Dance*. It is noteworthy that the excesses of the Carnival resulted against

a series of prohibitions against masking in 1731 and 1745, under penalty of a heavy fine, a lashing or even imprisonment (Rubio, 1990). Although it is not clear why, a combination of the following deserves consideration: the church feared it would undermine their efforts at expunging indigenous ritual; revulsion of the indigenous mask's sometimes anthropomorphic design; contempt for what the masks represented, and a strong sense of insecurity and discomfort at the ability of the masks to hide the identity of the wearer, thus preventing recognition. This puts the *tejorones* in a state of *liminitas*; they are set apart from society and still a part of it. This is true of the other characters in the *Dance* as well. Those depicting animals have become part of nature, rather than culture. When the *tiger* is not preoccupied with hunting, fighting or assaulting his would-be killers, he focuses on his sexuality by putting his tail between his legs and using it as a phallic symbol. The plastic dolls (a version of a baby doll or a modern Barbie Doll) which are carried by or sitting in the pocket of the *tejorones* represent child-birth which is indicative of fertility as well. The *Dance* ends with the symbolic death of the *tiger*.

The interpretations of the story enacted through the *Dance* differ slightly according to my informants. However, the main version is as follows:

Señor Calistro (sometimes slight variations of this name are used) goes out with a group of young men (the *tejorones*) to hunt and kill the *tiger* who has just attacked the *livestock*. Some accounts specify that the *tiger* ate a *goat*. The *tiger* takes another *animal* and hides it to eat later. To prevent the *tiger* from further destroying the *livestock* he must be killed. *Señor Calistro*, with the help of his *dog(s)*, takes his rifle and kills the *tiger* whom he brings back as an offering to the *chaniuela* (his wife—perhaps the *tejorones* represented her sons).

Señor Calistro could be represented by a *tejoron* who sometimes dances next to the *chaniuela*, although he does not stay at her side at all times and no reference is made to a *head tejoron*. The different *animals* participating in the *Dance* act as the *livestock*, even though an animal such as a rabbit would not normally fall into this

category, but could still be regarded as tiger's prey. Giving the dead tiger to the *chaniuela* as an offering is suggestive of the tiger as a sacrifice. From this perspective, it is logical that the *chaniuela* as a mother figure representing the Virgin, whom the Mixtecs perceived as a mother goddess, receive an offering in recognition of her elevated status and her achievement of birth by immaculate conception. Acceptance of the Catholic Virgin Mary was facilitated by the miraculous appearance of the first image of the Virgin of *Guadalupe* in 1531 to *Juan Diego*, an indigenous peasant. She appeared on the hill of *Tepeyac* where the Aztec Goddess, *Tonantzín* (Earth Goddess, Mother Goddess) appeared earlier, as a dark-skinned Virgin. Thus it was natural for the Aztecs to associate *Guadalupe* to *Tonantzín* since both were Virgin mothers of Gods and appeared at the same place. This was an important event and marked a turning point in the greatly facilitating conversion of indigenous peoples as a whole. The Virgin of *Guadalupe* has generally a more gentle and benevolent nature, and broader functions than her predecessor, *Tonantzín* (Madsen, 1975).

Another two interpretations given which have strong Biblical overtones and are probably derived in part from syncretized fragments of Catholic religious teachings are:

a) The Kings (i.e. the *tejorones*) come to marry the Virgin Mary (the *chaniuela*), but they are rejected and told to wait for a humble carpenter, *José* (Joseph), who is the right husband for the Virgin Mary. When *José* arrives, he brings with him a beautiful flower. When the Kings touch the flower it explodes causing the *tejorones* to erase the Virgin Mary from their hearts and enabling her to remain a virgin. The Kings dance around the happy couple.

b) The Spaniards (the *tejorones*), condemned to hell, dance around the rim of the inferno and their faces get black with soot. Their faces are also black as an indication of their 'badness' and the darkness in their hearts. In the center of the inferno, but untouched by the flames stands the Virgin Mary (the *chaniuela*). Her face is illuminated by the light from the fire which brings a rosy glow to her cheeks.

There are a couple of discrepancies in version a): the number of kings far exceeds the three mentioned in the Bible and the tiger as a predatory animal has no place among the farmyard animals described to be present in the manger according to the Bible. The *chaniuela* as the Virgin Mary is a logical choice since she is also called *María Candelaria* or *María Chaniuela*. In version a), the *chaniuela* in the role of temptress resembles Eve who tempts Man to eat the forbidden fruit. Considering the presence of an association and a somewhat tenuous relationship with the Spaniards in the second version, there could be a connection to *Malinche*. She was the interpreter for and mistress of Cortés. The literature on *Malinche* is alternately sympathetic and harsh (Brandt, 1979). The former portrays her as a woman in love torn between two conflicting loyalties who was ultimately a victim of circumstances. The latter view depicts her as a calculating, callous woman who only wanted to protect her own interests and betrayed her own people to do so. In version a) the *chaniuela* appears to be innocent and modest waiting for the right husband, but there is also a hint of the seductress tempting a string of yearning suitors. Being unharmed by the fire however, is indicative of her purity and is more closely related to her role as the Virgin Mary. Contrary to the other interpretations, version b) offers an explanation for the colour of the masks. It is also an expression of the Mixtec's dislike and resentment towards the Spanish who had treated them so harshly in previous years.

All interpretations are accepted, but it is the story related to agricultural themes, an integral part of Mixtec life, which has endured and according to which the *Dance* is still performed. The scope of the *tiger*, *tejorones* and *chaniuela* and the wide range of *animals* portrayed in the *Dance* is indicative of the flexibility and complexity of Mixtec culture. The possibility of more than one interpretation of the *Dance* demonstrates the ability of the Mixtecs to adapt to change and the resiliency of their culture. In addition, it reflects a changing social and political reality which confronted the Mixtecs with arrival of the Spaniards. Although there is room for new ideas, these are fitted in if and where the

Mixtecs want them to be, so it is the first interpretation which predominates and forms the basis for the *Dance of the Tejorones* today.

SELLING THE MAGIC: MARKETING THE MASKS

Santa María Huazolotitlán's proximity to the tourist resorts of *Puerto Escondido*, *Puerto Ángel* and *Santa Cruz Huatulco* and its accessibility from Highway 200 has facilitated integration into the global market. Accessibility is increased by the presence of an airstrip for small aircraft such as Cessnas and the like in *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional*, as well as a small airport offering daily flights to *Oaxaca City* and regular international flight service in *Puerto Escondido*. Originally a small fishing village, *Puerto Escondido* acquired electricity, postal, telegraph and telephone services in 1969 (Guía Roja, 1982: 82). The population began a steady increase in the late 1960's growing from 400 in 1965 to what it is today. In 1982, it had fifteen hotels ranging from bungalows and guest houses to luxury hotels, and has more now as a consequence of a jet airport opening in 1987 (Foster and Foster, 1995). The development of *Puerto Ángel* and *Santa Cruz Huatulco* was similar. The population of *Puerto Ángel* rose to its present population from 600 in 1970 (ibid.: 76), but they have fewer hotels due to limitations of space as a result of the steep terrain in the area. The expansion of the transportation network and the expansion of tourism are key factors affecting the process of production and consumption, including an increase in the diversification and intensity of handicraft production.

Although the opportunity to sell the masks in the market of *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional* exists, it is more of a business center and the mask-makers prefer the small artisan's markets to be found in the tourist resorts. They generally consist of a few stalls situated in a strategic location. For example, the artisans market in *Puerto Escondido* is situated on a side street off the *Calle Principal* which runs parallel to the beach. It is only one and a half blocks from the only bank in *Puerto Escondido*, is easily accessible from the beach and is close to tourist accommodations and restaurants. There are also individual

artisans who approach tourists on the beach, or station themselves near the entrance of large hotels. One of my informants also told me of an American buyer who spent several months every year in *Puerto Escondido* and used one of the large hotels as a base from which to travel around purchasing handicrafts, and as an office from which to negotiate purchases.

This buyer falls into the category of an *intermediario*. The *intermediarios* range from those re-selling the masks privately, store owners, market vendors, and representatives of co-operatives or government agencies promoting the work of a certain group of artisans. Selling their masks to *intermediarios* for mask-makers to indirectly promote and expand the distribution of their product. Although the *intermediarios* make a profit by buying the masks cheaply and selling them more expensively at a mark-up of twenty to one hundred percent, their access to a larger market means the mask-makers work becomes more well known and increases the demand for the masks. It is through these means that the demand for tiger masks from *Santa María Huazolotitlán* has reached as far as Los Angeles, USA.; one of my informants has a buyer from Los Angeles who owns an import/export business there. Tiger masks from *Santa María Huazolotitlán* are also sold all over Mexico, mostly in artisans markets.

The amount of time and the distances *intermediarios* travel depends on the time of the year, i.e whether it is the 'high' or 'low' tourist season; the volume sold and the stock needed; their financial resources; and their personal and other commitments. Female *intermediarios* tend to be widowed and engage in buying/selling activities to supplement their income. Married female *intermediarios* usually work together with their spouses. The 'high' tourist season takes place during the months of June, July, August, December and February. The need for the mask-makers themselves to leave the community in order to sell their masks is reduced by the presence of the *intermediarios* who come to them directly. Also, most of the mask-makers are not in a position financially to support the cost of selling trips.

Figure 4.16. Activities of the *Intermediarios*

Frequency of Burying Trips	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Where Sold
According to supply & demand	M	59	married	Own store, located in market (Los Lagunillas, Mexico City)
1 or 2 times month	M	?	married	To private individuals
1 or 2 times month	F	48	widowed	Stores (Oaxáca), private individuals, market (20 de noviembre, Oaxáca City)
Varies re: Tourist Season between 1 x 1 1/2 months to 1 x month	F	25	married	Markets (Chilapa, Acapulco-Guerrero; Oaxáca City, Puerto Escondido-Oaxaco), own store (Zihuatanejo, Guerrero)
	M	38	married	
1 x month	M	44	married	To private individuals
2 x month	F	64	widowed	To the stores run by FONANT & ARIPO (Oaxáca City)
5 x month	M	26	married(?)	Own store (Oaxáca City)
1 x month	M	40	married	Own store (Mexico City)
Every 3 months	F	45	married	To private individuals, market (La Ciudadela, Mexico City)
Every 2 or 3 months	M	?	married	Acts as representative of FONART - sells in stores run by FONART
Varies	M	51	married	In own store (Mexico City)

*Generally, the high season is November to April, and the low season is from May to October in terms of tourism.

All the mask-makers sell tiger masks privately to both national and international buyers, most of whom come to them to buy directly from them. Individuals may buy individual masks, but FONART (*Fondo Nacional Del Arte* - National Funds for the Arts), ARIPO (*Artesanías Industriales y Populares de Oaxáca* - Popular Arts of Oaxáca) and store owners buy in bulk. FONART and ARIPO often send their representatives to do the buying for them; otherwise a group of mask-makers go to FONART and ARIPO in Oaxáca City to deliver the masks. Eight of my informants sell tiger masks to FONART and

ARIPO. In addition five travel to the small artisans market in *Puerto Escondido*; three sell their masks at the artisans market in *Santa Cruz Huatulco*; two sell masks at *EL Veinte de Noviembre* (20th of November market) in Oaxáca City; one sells his masks in various markets and stores in *Zihuatanejo*; and one sells his masks in various markets and craft shops in Oaxáca City. The demand for tiger masks is high. They are very attractive, are associated with the jaguar admired for its strength, agility, grace and independence, and also because of a certain mystique associated with all large cats.

FONART began as a cooperative dedicated to supporting the production of handicrafts from all over Mexico, and evolved into FONART in 1974 (Chant, 1992). Its aim is to preserve and promote Mexican indigenous culture of which the handicrafts are symbolic. They buy exclusively from the artisans themselves and now deal with fifty-six groups in different parts of Mexico. Tiger masks are treated as aesthetic objects whose significance is derived from the ceremonial context in which they are used. They are very decorative as a luxury item and are prestigious to own. The criteria for all handicrafts purchased by FONART, tiger masks and otherwise, is that the items have traditional characteristics in the sense of being representative of the cultural group who produce them. The process of production may be industrial or manual, but there must be a link to traditional techniques (FONART, 1992). ARIPO operates in the same way as FONART, but focuses on artisans in the state of Oaxáca with its mandate being the preservation and fostering of artistic talent in the local communities.

The result of the demand for tiger masks has created an atmosphere of competition and led to friction among the mask-makers in the community. Two groups were born: *El Grupo de Solidaridad Social El "Cocoa"* ("Joint Sodility, the Cocoa Bean") with fifteen members and prior to that *La Sociedad de Artesanos de Santa María Huazolotitlán* (The Society of Artisans of *Santa María Huazolotitlán*) with twenty members. The latter was organized first, about ten years ago and the former followed suit shortly after. Both groups make tiger masks for the *Dance of the Tejorones* and produce them for sale. The prices at

which the *Sociedad "El Cacao"* sells tiger masks is slightly lower because it is newer and competes in the struggle for clients against the larger, more firmly established *Sociedad de Artesanos de Santa María Huazolotitlán*. However, ultimately the purpose of these two groups is to work together supporting each other in their endeavours to sell their masks/sculptures/figurines. Both groups stated that they had approached the INI to provide a workspace for each group to use on a regular basis, but INI did not respond. INI expressed some reluctance to get involved in the tension between the two groups fearing that it would jeopardize their own relationship with the community which was already uneasy due to what community members interpreted as INI's lack of cooperation in procuring the workspace and generally a lack of genuine interest on the part of INI. Part of the community's perspective was also a result of past incidents concerning individual members of INI who had offered assistance of some sort and then could or would not follow through. A good example of such an incident is when a member of the organization *Sociedad de las Costas Unidas* promised to deliver a copy of the video to the *Sociedad de Artesanos de Santa María Huazolotitlán* whose artisans participated in it. A copy of the video had not yet been delivered or sent to the artisans in the summer of 1993 when I revisited briefly after attending the 13th International Congress of Ethnological and Anthropological Sciences Conference in Mexico City.

The tiger masks are exchanged through an extensive network of markets that span major tourist resorts in Oaxáca and Gurrererro, and reach appreciative buyers in the United States, including Atlanta, Dallas and parts of California. The success of marketing these tiger masks is due to the efforts of the mask-makers as they attract buyers and tourists with their excellent craftsmanship, as well as also through the efforts of *intermediarios*, store owners, representatives of FONART and ARIPO, and the various cooperatives. Although the mask-makers do not profit as much as the latter, the sale of the tiger masks is still an important economic and social activity in the community linking families together and giving them the opportunity to make some money.

Figure 4.17. Price List of Tiger Masks *Sociedad "El Cacao"*

Size	Unpainted		Painted	
	U.S. Dollar	Mexican Peso	U.S. Dollar	Mexican Peso
5 x 6	.86	6,000.00	1.14	8,000.00
8 x 10	12.86	9,000.00	1.71	12,000.00
10 x 13/15	1.57	11,000.00	2.00	14,000.00
15 x 18/20	2.43	17,000.00	2.86	20,000.00
20 x 23/25	3.29	23,000.00	4.00	28,000.00
25 x 28/30	3.86	27,000.00	4.29	30,000.00
30 x 35	4.57	32,000.00	5.00	35,000.00
35 x 40	5.43	38,000.00	6.43	45,000.00
40 x 45	6.71	47,000.00	7.14	50,000.00
45 x 50	7.14	50,000.00	7.86	55,000.00

Figure 4.18. Price List of Tiger Masks
Sociedad de Artesanos de Santa María Huazolotitlán

Size	Unpainted		Painted	
	U.S. Dollar	Mexican Peso	U.S. Dollar	Mexican Peso
10 x 13	1.71	12,000.00	2.86	20,000.00
12 x 15	2.14	15,000.00	3.14	22,000.00
15 x 18	2.57	18,000.00	3.57	25,000.00
18 x 21	3.14	22,000.00	3.86	27,000.00
20 x 24	3.57	25,000.00	4.29	30,000.00
22 x 26	4.00	28,000.00	5.00	35,000.00
24/25 x 30	4.29	30,000.00	5.71	40,000.00
30 x 36	5.00	35,000.00	7.86	55,000.00
28 x 32	6.43	45,000.00	6.43	45,000.00
32 x 39	7.86	55,000.00	9.29	65,000.00
35 x 39	8.57	60,000.00	10.00	70,000.00
40 x 45	9.28	65,000.00	10.71	75,000.00
45 x 50	10.00	70,000.00	11.43	80,000.00

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The process of mask production is a family activity which centers around the home; not only does the process take place in or outside of the household and an additional structure (something like a tent or a shack with three walls and a roof) is built outside around the house for the mask-maker to work in, but every member of the family over the age of seven participates. Wives, daughters and sons under the age of twelve concentrate on the lighter tasks of sanding and/or putting a coat of varnish on the finished tiger mask, and occasionally applying the first coat of paint before the design of the 'fur' and facial features are added. Boys over the age of twelve may begin carving with a penknife and may start a full apprenticeship at the age of sixteen under tutelage of their fathers or another male relative either of whom may or may not be a mastercraftsman, essentially a veteran mask-maker well known for the excellence of his workmanship. If their apprenticeship begins at later age, they may be taught by a friend.

The tools used for making the tiger masks are few: a machete, an axe, a penknife, a scalpel, an assortment of chisels and paintbrushes, sandpaper and sometimes a hand-drill. If a tool is not available, the mask-makers use their ingenuity to create what they need. The oil paint and varnish used are purchased in cans from hardware stores in neighbouring *Santiago Pinotepa Nacional*. The different woods used for making the masks are *parota*, *roble*, and *cedro blanco* with an increase in the use of the latter and *zompante* wood due to problems of deforestation. The 'heart' (trunk) and roots of these trees are used because of their thickness and durability. To counteract the problem of deforestation, in 1993 the government of the state of Oaxaca instated a law fining those who cut down young trees \$400 pesos (\$57.14 US), a fine no mask-maker can afford.

The mask-makers of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* make two types of tiger masks: the *tigre costeno* inspired by the jaguar, and the *tigre bengali* inspired by pictures from books and stories of those who had seen the bengal tiger in zoos. The masks range in size from miniatures (usually made into key rings) of five centimeters to very large masks of sixty

centimeters; the standard sizes are fifteen, twenty and thirty centimeters. Both *tigres* also appear as sculptures in a variety of poses. In addition to the *tigres* the mask-makers craft other animals such as rabbits, bulls, sheep, dogs, goats as masks, sculptures or figurines. Innovation is based primarily on changes in style: the design of the 'fur', the shape of the eyes, ears and teeth, the colours and method of painting the design and/or facial features of the masks. It is possible to recognize an individual mask-makers work by subtleties of this nature in the style of his mask.

The income generated by the production of tiger masks supplements the level of subsistence existence achieved by the cultivation of the staple crops of maize, beans, rice, chilies and tomatoes respectively and the earnings are considerably higher. Mask-making takes place mostly during the post-harvest months of January through to March. For the most part, the tiger masks are sold to *intermediarios* and shop owners who distribute them to markets in *Oaxáca City*, and *Mexico City*, and the tourist resorts of *Puerto Escondido*, *Puerto Ángel*, *Santa Cruz Huatulco*, and *Acapulco*. Few mask-makers have the means to go on trips to sell their masks, but those who do go to *Puerto Escondido* or *Santa Cruz Huatulco* which are close by, with the exception of one who travels to Mexico City.

Representatives from FONART and ARIPO are important buyers, and sometimes mask-makers will go in a group to deliver the masks to their offices in Oaxáca City. Buyers from parts of the USA and from all over Mexico also frequent *Santa María Huazolotitlán* in order to purchase masks. The high demand for tiger masks has led to rivalry, friction and feelings of jealousy between the mask-makers. Access to the community is facilitated by its strategic location: being close to major tourist resorts and Coastal Highway 200, a main highway running along the coast.

The extensive distribution of the tiger mask and its production as an object for sale has not reduced it to a mere commodity. As an object for sale, the mask-makers regard it as a luxury item, something like an *object d'art*. Although the mask-makers are willing to make it to order adjusting their work to the taste of the buyer, they still maintain its basic

form and take a great deal of pride in their ability to offer a high level of quality and an object that is hand, not machine-made. However, in the *Dance*, the tiger mask is a ceremonial symbol belonging to the realm of the sacred. The wearer is transformed into a noble, powerful, fearful yet admirable being whose capabilities extend beyond that of its human counterpart. Although the actions of the Mixtec *tigre* is their sexual byplay and violence, as well as the lewd and often bawdy joking of the *Tejorones*, seem more consistent with the inversion of values expressed in carnival, there is clearly the implication of fertility. This demonstrates that the *tigre* as a symbol is essentially linked to agricultural fertility. The tiger mask as a symbol reflects the duality and interconnectedness of Mixtec society: it is a symbol of destruction linked to death and a symbol of creation associated with fertility.

In the *Dance of the Tejorones*, the story revolves around the actions of the *tiger* who interacts with the *tejorones*, *chaniuela* and a host of *animals*. Although all the roles are played by men, including the *chaniuela* who deliberately exaggerates her movements and speech to avoid being labelled as too feminine, an insult in a *macho*-oriented society. Cross-dressing is a useful device giving to play female roles; to become temporarily part of the female 'other', without seriously endangering their masculinity. The *chaniuela* retains status as a mother figure and is also closely related to the biblical persona of the Virgin Mary. Her relationship to the *tejorones* is crucial to defining who she is. Depending on how the *Dance* is interpreted, the *tejorones* represent young men going on a hunt, the Spanish, or the Kings who went to Joseph and Mary.

The scope and flexibility of the persona and the different *animals* portrayed in the *Dance* are a reflection of the complexity of Mixtec society and the intricacy of daily life among the Mixtec. It has recently become acceptable for women to participate in the *Dance*, but the roles are demanding requiring much physical effort and stamina, so they seem satisfied to work quietly in the background assisting in the process of mask production. The wife of the *mayordomo* (ritual steward; high-ranking official of the civil-

religious hierarchy) bears the responsibility for providing food. Agricultural, social, religious, political and historical themes and concepts are revealed in the performance and interpretations of the *Dance*. Those predominately expressed relate to agricultural themes and in the *Dance* are indigenous to Mixtec culture which is a unique blend of influences from other indigenous groups, the Spaniards and Africans.

V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In sum, tiger mask production in *Zitlala* (Guerrero) and *Santa María Huazolotitlán* (Oaxaca) has both symbolic and economic meanings which are inter-connected. It is through the symbolic that spiritual and material concerns are manifested. The symbolic meanings are derived from Nahuatl and Mixtec cosmological concepts which reflect their world-view and their cultural heritage, consisting of elements from other indigenous groups, as well as Spanish and African influences from the time of the Conquest. The economic meanings have developed from the struggle to provide the basic necessities of life, to ensure the reproduction of the family unit and from participation in the capitalist market.

Zitlala is located in central hills of Guerrero and is not easily accessible due to the hilly, often mountainous, and rugged terrain resulting in a low level of agricultural production and a high level of out-migration by the young males of the community. There are no roads leading directly to it *Zitlala*, keeping it isolated. Infiltration by tourists or other outsiders is recent and started only about ten years ago. Tiger mask production is not a commercial enterprise and has remained part of gift exchange, a system based on a moral transaction which brings about social or political relationships between individuals and groups. The exchanges are informal and occur solely through the desire of each individual mask-maker. The market system revolves around *ferias* characterized by a random assortment of merchandise which operates on a rotational basis, and the smaller local, agricultural markets. Interaction with the capitalist market is achieved by the consumption of a large quantity of industrially manufactured products and the wage labour of the young males of the community who must leave to find employment in other urban or rural areas due to a lack of employment opportunities in *Zitlala*. The remittances they send home are crucial to the survival of the family and the perpetuation of the *Fiesta Complex* to which the *Tiger Fight* belongs. The young migrants leave their jobs at a moment's notice to return to *Zitlala* for the *Fight*, often risking dismissal by their employers.

By contrast, the population of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* is relatively stable experiencing almost no out-migration. This may be due to the fact that artisan production is a viable option and offers the possibility of higher earnings than agricultural production brings. In addition, *Santa María Huazolotitlán* is situated on the coast of Oaxáca in close proximity to the tourist resorts of *Puerto Escondido*, *Puerto Ángel*, and *Santa Cruz Huatulco*, and is easily accessible by airplane, bus and car. In addition, it lies along the route of the Pacific Highway, a major paved highway beginning as Highway 15 in *Nogales* (Sonora) and converting to Highway 200 at *Ixtlán del Rio* (Nayarit) and running along the coastline all the way down to *Hiuxtla* (Chiapas) in the South. *Santa María Huazolotitlán's* participation in the capitalist market is more intensive due primarily to the extensive activity of the *intermediarios*, but there is also a high level of the consumption of industrially manufactured goods and continued involvement with the smaller, local markets as well as interaction with various artisan markets including those in *Puerto Escondido*, *Santa Cruz Huatulco* and *Oaxáca City*. The market system which operates in *Oaxáca* is defined as the solar marketing system where many smaller markets operate around one larger market. These markets are non-cyclical in that they do not reoccur during a specific time.

Santa María Huazolotitlán's proximity to tourist resorts and a major highway has rendered it more vulnerable to external pressures from tourists and *intermediarios*. The *intermediarios* are essentially exploitative agents, including boutique owners, market vendors, and representatives of organizations like FONART and ARIPO, who buy the tiger masks at a considerably lower price than they re-sell them using mark-ups ranging anywhere from twenty to one hundred percent. However, the *intermediarios* also provide a link to a wide range of artisan and other commercial markets from *Puerto Escondido* to *Acapulco* to *Mexico City* that are too far away for the mask-makers to travel to. Furthermore, they act as promoters for the mask-makers as is demonstrated by the popularity of and demand for tiger masks throughout Mexico and in parts of the United States. The high demand for tiger masks from tourists has led to the creation of two rival

groups of mask-makers, *El Grupo de Solidaridad El 'Cocoa'* and *La Sociedad de Artesanos de Santa María Huazolotitlán*, who share an uneasy co-existence as they compete to sell masks. This competitiveness, although expressed discretely according to the community's sense of propriety which does not tolerate open displays of bragging or boasting, has resulted in some friction within the community and dented the cohesiveness of the community giving rise to negative comments about mask-makers known to have higher earnings from selling tiger masks.

In both communities, the primary unit of tiger production is the household. Households engage in agricultural production and artisan production with the division of labour according to gender. In *Zitlala*, tiger mask production is carried out exclusively by the male members of the family. In some respects, this exclusivity is surprising since many of the migrants are exposed to environments in which females may perform the same tasks as males if they wish to do so. However, the domination of males over tiger mask production may be indicative of the closed corporate nature of the community where gender roles are strictly defined. Because the majority of the mask-makers migrate to work outside the community, tiger mask production is limited to ceremonial use. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, the household constitutes a mixed peasant artisan household. All members of the family over the age of six are involved in the process of tiger mask production. Beginning at the age of seven young children of both genders may begin sanding the masks. At the age of twelve, boys may begin carving with a penknife, but young girls and their mothers continue with sanding, painting and varnishing. The restrictions applied to young children (especially girls) and their mothers are primarily for their protection against possible injury from using the machete rather than a social norm preventing women from becoming mask-makers in their own right. As a more open community, gender roles in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* are more flexible, although women still seem to prefer traditional roles.

Young mask-makers in both communities may enter an apprenticeship around the age of sixteen under the direction of a master mask-maker, usually their fathers or another, older male member of the family (although this is not always the case). The status of master craftsman is attained through experience and a high level of skill in craftsmanship. Master craftsmen hold an elevated status in the communities and are respected for their knowledge and their skill. Due to the fact that there is only one master craftsman in *Zitlala*, it may happen that friends of the same age help each other.

In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, tiger masks are made from various types of wood found in the area: *parota* (a wood that resembles walnut) (Record and Hess, 1972), *roble* sometimes also called *macuil* (a Spanish name for oak whose wood bears a resemblance to it) (ibid.), and *cedro blanco* (white cedar). However, due to problems of deforestation and soil erosion, more masks are being made from *roble*, and also of *zompante* (a type of sapwood) (ibid.). The tools used include an axe to chop the wood into pieces, a machete, chisels of assorted sizes, a special type of chisel usually used by carpenters, and a penknife. To fashion holes in miniature masks for the insertion of key-rings, a small hand-drill is used. Apart from wood, the materials used are water paint, varnish and sanding paper. Any tools that are not available or are too expensive to buy, mask-makers make themselves out of the resources around them.

Tiger masks in *Zitlala* are made of leather (pig or deer) with eyes from mirror bits and 'whiskers' from the bristles of a wild boar. These masks are heavy and small holes are drilled into the masks in order to make breathing easier since the aperture provided by the mouth is narrowed by the long tongue and many teeth protruding from it as well as to enable the mask-maker to add more 'whiskers'/facial hair. Seeing is done through the open mouth. Tigers also wear a thick rope measuring approximately sixty centimeters which is wrapped around the abdomen to prevent injury during the *battle* as the blows inflicted with whips and which has been hardened in *mezcal*. About half the rope (circa thirty-five centimeters) is left free to serve as a whip.

Masking is crucial to both communities: it enables the wearer to transform into another being. In the process of transformation, the wearer enters into sacred time and can bridge the distance between the world regulated by ordinary time stepping into a world regulated by sacred time which is rooted in a mythical past. These roots of the past are to be found in the mythologies of the indigenous cultures, such as the Aztec, which influenced the Nahua and the Mixtecs. In Aztec mythology the jaguar was an important figure, linked to their Patron God of War *Huitzilipochtli*, who was responsible for the birth of the Sun into the present cosmic order and whose prophecies guided the Mexica (also known as the Aztecs) to Tenochtitlán. The act of covering the face is particularly important as both the Nahua and the Mixtecs relate the face to the soul. The counterpart of the human soul is the *tono*, or animal soul, and the aggressive, sometimes violent behaviour of tiger is representative of this less refined and beastly (i.e. uncultured) side of the human soul. The two sides of the soul sustain each other: one belongs to culture and the other to nature, but they are also part of each other.

The tiger is the central figure in both the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones*, and has been linked to the Olmec and Aztec Rain God *Tláloc*. The tiger really refers to the jaguar who was mistakenly identified as *tigre* by early Spanish explorers. The tiger inspires fear and admiration because of its natural abilities as a hunter and its ferocity, as well as its grace, agility and beautiful coat. As a symbol, the tiger embodies the principle of duality on a sensory and ideological level. On a sensory level, it is associated with two opposing emotions as described above. In terms of ideology, the tiger is associated with sources of water which are representative of fertility and creation, perhaps as a result of the jaguar's capacity as an excellent swimmer and preference for a swampy, wet habitat. In addition, the tiger is connected to phenomena associated with water and rain including thunder and lightning, maybe due to the tiger's method of hunting which consists of stalking, silently creeping up on prey and striking swiftly and effectively.

The concept of fertility is manifested differently by the tiger of *Santa María Huazolotitlán*. The tiger in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* focuses on his sexuality and flaunts it by using his tail as a phallic symbol. Women in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* may perform the role of the tiger if they wished to, but none of them were inclined to do so. The primary reason is the strain of undertaking such a strenuous role. The role of the tiger requires a great deal of physical stamina as they are expected to climb trees and walls and are constantly running around, fighting and 'attacking' the *tejorones*, the *chaniuela*, and other animals which include dogs, bulls, rabbits and donkeys. The tiger is hunted by the *tejorones* and the *Dance* ends with symbolic killing of the tiger. The *tejorones* are led by the *chaniuela* and a *tejoron*. The *chaniuela* is also called *María Chaniuela* or *María Candelaria*, and is sometimes associated with the Virgin in terms of being symbolic of motherhood and, through this, purity.

In the *Tiger Fight*, other important characters who interact with the *tiger* are the *tlacololeros* who brandish whips in an effort to scare away the tigers and the *machos* wearing black masks. The *machos* are associated with sorcery because of their black masks and also with the black population brought to Mexico during the Conquest. Blacks were often employed as domestic servants by the wealthy. Indigenous people linked them together and thought they had access to the same sources of wealth as their employers. This, combined with the fact that they could eventually break free of their bondage likely incurred the resentment of indigenous people who had no such opportunities. The *machos* are led by a female figure who is played by a male member of the community. The *chaniuela* is also played by a male member of the community who exaggerates her speech and her movements in order to avoid becoming overly feminine. This is a form of cross-dressing which, like masking, also constitutes symbolic inversionism. Cross-dressing was not unusual. It allowed the male members of the community to transcend gender boundaries and become part of the 'other'. Female participation in ritual in both communities generally consists of food preparation.

Both rituals consist of several phases, each one a continuation of the other. In the *Tiger Fight* these phases are spread out over four days culminating in the *battle* on the final day and ending with mass at the church. In the *Dance of the Tejorones*, the phases are less marked, but may be divided roughly into morning, noon and night beginning with a private performance of the *Dance* at the house of the *mayordomo* and sometimes the *presidente municipal* before mid-day and ending also with a church service. The places where the different phases of the rituals are carried out are significant and indicate what aspects of daily life, such as religion, are important, to community members. The *Zócalos* and the churches of each community are focal locations in each ritual. The *Fight* involves many other sacred locations besides the church including the riverbank, the cave in the mountain and the mountain summit which all have a definite connection to the Rain God, *Tláloc*. The *zócalo* constitutes the heart of the communities and contains important buildings such as the municipal hall and, in *Zitlala*, the church. Furthermore, it is the social centre where people meet to exchange the latest news and friends gather, and also the place where local markets and small stores are found nearby.

In the *Tiger Fight*, the nucleus of symbols dominant symbols are the cross, water and the mountain. These are linked to an array of dependent symbols such as the river, the cave, bread and the whips. Apart from the main theme of fertility, these dependent symbols express many inter-connected themes: agriculture, prosperity, rebirth, growth, rain. Each symbol is three dimensional. There is the explanation given by the participants themselves as to how the symbol is manipulated and how they relate to each other in the process, as well as the relationship of symbols to each other. The symbols appearing in the *Dance of the Tejorones* are also three dimensional. They include the Barbie-type doll, the rattles and the swords carried by the *tejorones*, as well as the cross used in the church service and the candles lit during the service. The *Dance* contains many elements of the Carnival, primarily the lewd joking and bawdiness expressed by the *tejorones* and by the Mixtec *tiger*. However, the theme of fertility is also manifested in the movement of dancers

who begin by moving upwards (associated to the sky from which the rain falls) to the *mayordomo*'s house, downwards (representing earth) to the *zócalo* and upwards to the church located up on a hill. In addition, the *tejorones* and *chaniuela* dance in a circle reflecting the cyclical nature of life.

All the participants in both rituals are involved in the process of *liminitas* and *communitas*. In a state of *liminitas* the participants are novices on the brink of entering a specific social cosmos which is rooted in the sacred, mythical past. At the same time, the participants are in a state of *communitas* when the restrictions of prescribed roles are removed and they are bonded by a state of exhilaration and joy, feeling a sense of attachment which is freer, more open and rooted in an emotional state rather than by conventional ties dictated by rigid social norms. This allows for behaviour otherwise considered disrespectful and inappropriate, as *tejorones* ridicule municipal authorities and their elders, and the *tigers* of *Zitlala* engage in *battle* on equal terms with some of those who are their elders. During the ritual, the participants experience all three types of *communitas*, *spontaneous*, *normative*, and *ideological*, simultaneously. The behaviour experienced in the state of *communitas* is more open, and is regimented by sacred time and space. The *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of the Tejorones* may be defined as "happenings" where the participants are free to act in a spontaneous manner. However, the rituals also follow an order and are born out of traditions which are based on the moral ideals and spiritual values inherent in the cultural codes of the communities.

Although the encroachment of tourism in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and the presence of *intermediarios* has increased the demand for tiger masks and thus the level of production, the process of tiger mask production has remained in the hands of the mask-makers. Even when tiger masks are produced in quantities to be sold in bulk, the mask-makers continue to use their own techniques and design, and are also employing their creative talents towards innovation and artistic growth. This implies that a relationship

with capitalism and its features (e.g. tourism) does not need to interfere with the Mixtec's expression of who they are.

Zitlala does not yet sell tiger masks and only engages in ritual tiger mask production for ritual purposes and gift exchange. But it is very likely that will change in the next five to ten years as the influx of curious spectators continues to grow. The members of the community are not actively encouraging spectators. On the other hand, I did not find them discouraging spectators either. The younger mask-makers expressed the desire to commercialize tiger masks, but are hampered by a lack of resources in terms of time, cost and a stable labour force since they must work outside the community. Furthermore, *Zitlala's* geographical location and the absence of an adequate transportation network in the area makes it difficult to access. However, if these were improved and the mask-makers had the opportunity to work more within the community, tiger masks production could be commercialized as has happened in *Santa María Huazolotitlán*. However, it does not mean that it would no longer be possible for them to hold a particular symbolic meaning unique to Nahua culture.

TIGERS IN TRANSITION?

The involvement of tourists and *intermediarios* in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and the presence of the many tourists who come to observe the *Tiger Fight* in *Zitlala* has had an effect on tiger mask production in different ways. In *Santa María Huazolotitlán*, there is the commercialization and the extensive export of tiger masks throughout Mexico and to parts of the United States under the umbrella of capitalism and the spirit of free enterprise. However, the interest generated in the tiger masks by the tourists and *intermediarios* combined with the creative talents of the mask-makers forms the heartbeat for innovation in design. This process takes place in terms of elaborating the design by subtly enhancing the pattern of the 'coat', using brighter shades of colour and making the eyes more dramatic to

make the mask more aesthetically pleasing. As well, new styles of masks, such as Wonder Woman are born.

However, the basis of production is traditional; the tiger masks are still produced in and by the household and follow a design developed by the mask-makers themselves. Although the *tigre costeño* was inspired not only by personal sightings but also accounts of the jaguar, and the *tigre bengali* from picture books and/or accounts of the bengal tiger from those who had been to the zoo, the symbolic elaboration of the tiger mask in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* is still Mixtec. In addition, the mask-makers continue to use their own techniques fabricating tools when necessary, and adopting only those modern and specialized tools they need and can afford, including one small electrical hand-drill and one carpenter's chisel. This is a logical choice dictated by common sense as these tools are required for tiger mask production, and in the case of the hand-drill, save time.

In *Zitlala*, the presence of tourists during the *Tiger Fight* has had an impact on the structure of the *Fight* rather than on tiger mask production itself. The opening up of the community about ten years ago coincided with a decrease in the fighting between the tigers and the level of violence displayed and endured by *tigers* as a form of sacrifice. Since then, the *tigers* only fight on the last day and it is no longer to the death. Today, the fighting is monitored by municipal authorities who intercede as they see fit. In reality, because the blows endured during the *Fight* are symbolic of sacrifice, this element of control during the *Fight* may have been imposed much earlier when the Spanish tried to extinguish the practice of sacrifice, especially human sacrifice, which they considered so barbaric (Durán, 1964). On the other hand, this control of the fighting has not diminished the zeal, enthusiasm or commitment of the *tigers*. Can it not be said then that the roar of *Zitlala's* *tigers* echoes the battle cry of the Aztec jaguar-knights and the shouts of the early Toltec warriors?

The tiger (i.e. the jaguar) has fascinated the Nahuatl and the Mixtecs for centuries. The mystique surrounding the beautiful, elusive and solitary jaguar resulted in the birth of

mythologies in which the tiger/jaguar figures prominently. The tiger is associated with the sun and the creation of the cosmos, as well as the night and death--in other words: the cycle of life. The perception and definition of the tiger as a symbol is manifested through the mask, thus the sacred, spiritual qualities are inherent in the mask and are preserved through it. As in earlier times when those who wore jaguar masks or headdresses held the responsibility to sustain the Gods, the mask-makers who are generally also the mask-wearers, still have the responsibility to 'feed' the Gods during the rituals in an effort to maintain the prosperity of the community. Although the *Dance of the Tejorones* has incorporated some aspects of the Carnival and may be described in some respects as being somewhat lighthearted, this sense of responsibility towards the community is still present.

The fertility theme of the rituals emerges through the symbolic elaboration of the tiger masks and is indicative of a sense of identity tied closely to the land. Is this then, a means of reaffirming these ties? My research has demonstrated that the *Dance of the Tejorones* and the *Tiger Fight* involve more than that. They are complex rituals crucial to the spiritual and material well-being of the community involving a sense of commitment between family and community members. They also include the element of risk; by perpetuating the *Fiesta Complex* to which the rituals belong, and ensuring the continuation of the rituals according to their own traditions, the Nahua and Mixtecs reduce the risk of disruption and separation within their communities. In fact, the persistence of the *Dance of the Tejorones* and the *Tiger Fight*, and the spiritual and material nature of tiger mask production in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala* may be seen as a form of resistance to assimilation by foreign influences. This may be extended to the act of masking itself which continues and is an important part of Nahua and Mixtla rituals today, despite the prohibitions against it in the eighteenth century.

Tiger mask production in *Santa María Huazolotitlán* will continue as long as the mask-makers find value (social and economic) in making them, and the popularity of tiger masks will remain as long as tourists continue to seek the 'holy grail', i.e. exotic items

produced by the 'other'. Furthermore, the mystique surrounding all large cats and the aesthetic qualities of the masks (and the animals) attracts public attention. In *Zitlala*, the *Tiger Fight* continues to draw an increasing number of tourists who may eventually create a demand for *Zitlala's* tiger masks. But does all this have to lead to a loss of cultural integrity? Not as long as the Mixtecs and Nahua follow internal standards based on their own spiritual and material interpretation of the tiger mask as a symbol, and remember who they are--and they are the ones who know that best.

Perhaps, in the face of the globalization of culture engendered by capitalism which often isolates and separates elements of culture and the pervasiveness of external influences, it does not seem possible for the tiger masks produced by Nahua and Mixtecs to retain their uniqueness. However, they have already done so for centuries and could probably go on doing so if the process of tiger mask production adheres to their own traditions and the meanings of tiger masks are determined by their own belief systems and by the reality they live in. Shifts in the meanings of the tiger masks have been caused by the changing socio-economic and political context in which the Nahuas and Mixtecs must live, as well as by the passing of time.¹ Although it is true that the younger mask-makers (and sometimes even their fathers) do not speak of the Zapotec, Mixtec or Aztec Rain Gods specifically in reference to the tiger, they still speak of it with awe and reverence, and the fertility theme is very much present in the *Dance*. Furthermore, the *Tiger Fight* is sometimes referred to as a rite to "appeal for rain".

The process of syncretism reflected in the meanings of the tiger mask among both the Nahua and the Mixtecs is indicative of growth and the ability to resist complete assimilation, and to innovate in the face of new and different elements. The Nahua and the Mixtecs have been extremely successful in preserving their traditions and sense of self through this process. This demonstrates the vitality and strength of Nahua and Mixtec culture, as well as the mask-maker's ingenuity and creative spirit. This does not alter the fact the Nahua and the Mixtecs are not politically, socially and economically disadvantaged

- for change to take place in these respects on a national scale, beyond the outskirts of *Santa María Huazolotitlán* and *Zitlala*, will still take a while - but in the meantime the mask-makers continue to create and together with the other members of the community continue to develop strategies for survival. The rituals of the *Tiger Fight* and the *Dance of Tejorones*, in which everyone participates, offer them some relief and reduce tension in the communities through these rituals. The Nahuas and Mixtecs raise their voices collectively in protest and in affirmation.

1. This is more the case in *Santa María Huazolotitlán*.

ACRONYMS

ARIPO: *Artesanías Industriales and Populares de Oaxáca* (Industrial and Popular Arts of Oaxaca)

CONACYT: *Consejo Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnología* (National Council of Science and Technology)

FONART: *Fondo Nacional Del Arte* (National Fund for the Arts)

FONATUR: *Fondo Nacional de Turismo* (National Tourism Fund)

INEGI: *Instituto Nacional de Geografía y Estadística* (National Institute of Geography and Statistics)

INI: *Instituto Nacional Indígenista* (National Institute of Native Affairs)

SEP: *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (Ministry of Public Education)

GLOSSARY

- Adobe*: Spanish term for sun-dried brick used for constructing houses.
- Aguacíl*: Spanish term for the lowest rank in civil-religious hierarchy.
- Alcalde*: Spanish term for chief executives in civil-religious hierarchy.
- Alteptl*: Nahuatl term for town land.
- Anciano*: Spanish term for elder who is respected for the services he has rendered the community, for his knowledge and experience.
- Aztecs*: General term for indigenous group who occupied Central Mexico from AD 1300-1521.
- Barrio*: Spanish term for the division of a town or city into districts.
- Cabecera*: Spanish term for chief town or head district.
- Cacique*: Spanish term for indigenous ruler.
- Caja de Comunidad*: Spanish term for community treasury.
- Calle Principal*: Spanish term for the main street in a village or a town.
- Calpulli*: Aztec term referring to a territorial and land-holding unit in a town or city.
- Cargo*: Spanish term for ritual obligation of a religious nature.
- Cedro Blanco*: Spanish term for white cedar wood which is used for mask-making.
- Centzoriuitznaua*: Aztec term for the stars, siblings of *Huitzilipochtli*.
- Chaniuela*: Spanish term for the female figure in the *Dance of the Tejorones*. She represents the mother of the *Tejorones*, and is also associated with the Virgin Mary.
- Coatlicue*: Aztec term for Moon Goddess; also mother of *Huitzilipochtli*.
- Cocíjo*: Zapotec term for the God of Rain. Often appears in the guise of a jaguar.
- Cofradía*: Spanish term for Christian brotherhood introduced to Mexico by the Spanish in the sixteenth century.
- Comunitas*: Victor Turner's theoretical concept relating to the process of bonding together to reach an ecstatic state of being which occurs during sacred time.
- Copal*: Spanish term for tree resin used as incense during rituals.

Corregimiento: Spanish term for a system for the collection of tribute and taxes under the Spanish Crown.

Coyolxauhqui: Aztec term for star goddess; also sisters of *Huitzilipochtli*.

Ejido: Spanish term for a communal or village landholding; a cooperative farm which was introduced by the Spaniards in the late sixteenth century.

Encomendero: Spanish term for the owner of the *encomienda*.

Encomienda: Spanish term for the institution introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century which consisted of an allotment by the Spanish Crown of Indian tribute in the form of indigenous labour to a Spanish colonist.

Estancia: Spanish term for a grant of land used as a ranch or a farm, introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century.

Fiesta: Spanish term for a religious holiday.

Fería System: Spanish term for a marketing system consisting of trade fairs introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century.

Guapinol: Spanish term for a type of wood commonly known as locust which is used for mask-making.

Huichol: General term for indigenous group who occupies the Northern part of Jalisco in North-Central Mexico. A few *Huichol* communities are also present in the South of the states of Durango and Zacatecas.

Huitzilipochtli: Aztec term for the Aztec Patron God and God of War, also associated with the Sun. In addition, *Huitzilipochtli* was a ruler of the Aztecs from 1391-1415.

Intermediario: Spanish term for buyers who act as middlemen.

La Malinche: The indigenous princess who became the interpreter for and the mistress of Hernan Cortes.

Liminitas: Turner's theoretical concept which refers to the betwixt/between stage of rites of passage.

Macho: Spanish term for one of the male figures from the *Tiger Fight* who is associated with the black population at the time of the Conquest. *Macho* is also a colloquial term referring to a Mexican male in terms of his masculinity.

Machismo: Spanish term for an exaggerated sense of masculinity and virility.

Macuahuitl: Aztec term for sword-club weapon.

Maquil: Spanish term for a type of wood resembling oak which is used for mask-making.

Marianismo: Spanish term for the cult of the Virgin which is the basis for defining women's moral identity in Mexico.

Mayordomo: Spanish term for high-ranking official of the civil-religious hierarchy.

Mexica: Spanish term also used to refer to the Aztecs.

Mezcal: Spanish term for alcoholic beverage made from fermenting the agave plant - a type of aloe vera plant.

Milpa: Spanish term for maizefield (i.e. a small plot of agricultural land) where a variety of crops are cultivated.

Mixcoatl: Mixtec term meaning "the Cloud Serpent" for God associated with the rain. Also refers to a leader of the Toltecs.

Mixteca Alta: Spanish term for the central valleys and mountainous region which was the core area for the development of Mixtec culture.

Mixteca: Spanish term for the geographical and indigenous regions of Oaxaca, including the *Sierra Madre* Mountains, the central valleys and the coast which are occupied by different branches of the Mixtec people.

Mixtecs: General term for indigenous group who occupied the *Mixteca Alta* from approximately A.D. 1000 to the present day.

Nahua: General term for indigenous group previously referred to as the Aztecs.

Nahuatl: Spanish term for the language spoken by the Nahuas; stems from the Uto-Aztecan languages and by the fifteenth and sixteenth century was spoken by a majority of people living in the core regions of central Mexico.

Nu Nudzahui: Mixtec term for themselves meaning "People of the Rain".

Olmecs: General term for the oldest known culture in Mexico dating from approximately B.C. 1100 - 200.

Ometecutli: Aztec term for Creator God, Lord of Duality.

Omecihuatl: Aztec term for Creator Goddess, Lady of Duality.

Paskola: Spanish term for masked dancer participating in the *Paskola* Dance of the Yaqui Indians who represents a clown.

Panela: Spanish term for brown sugar which is compressed and sold in the form of a small bar.

Pariserom: A Spanish term for a sodality of ranked officers who appear in the ritual ceremonies of Lent of the Mayo Indians from North-Central Mexico.

Parota: Spanish term for a type of wood resembling walnut and looking like the Siris tree in India.

Pilato: Spanish term for a character who represents a masked soldier from the sodality of the *Pariserom* and appears in ritual ceremonies of Lent (i.e. Easter) of the Mayo Indians from North-Central Mexico.

Pochteca: Aztec term for merchants of high rank who specialized in long-distance trading and sometimes acted as ambassadors or spies for the King.

Presidente Municipal: Spanish term for a civil official equivalent to a mayor.

Puesto: Spanish term for a stand in the marketplace.

Quetzalcoatl: Aztec term meaning "green-feathered serpent" for the Creator and Patron God of the Toltecs. Also an important God among the Aztec and the Mixtecs in relation to the wind, the rain and the stars.

Roble: See term *maquil*.

Sacristán: Spanish term for a ritual specialist.

Taadoc: Mixtec term for the Sun God.

Tejoron: Mixtec term for main character in the *Dance of the Tejorones* who represents a young man playing the role of a hunter.

Tepache: Spanish term for alcoholic beverage made from maize which ferments for three days in water with a bar of brown sugar.

Tezcatlipoca: Aztec term meaning "Great Smoking Mirror" for the Sky God who was also associated with the night, sorcery and warfare, and identified with a jaguar.

Tigre: Spanish term for tiger which was mistakenly applied to all wildcats, including the jaguar, by early Spanish explorers.

Tigre Bengali: Spanish term used by the Mixtecs for the mask of the bengal tiger whose creation was inspired by images from picture books and descriptions of mask-makers who had seen the bengal tigers in zoos in the Mexico City.

Tigre Costeno: Spanish term used by the Mixtecs for the jaguar.

Tumal: Spanish term for tamale: a type of empanada, baked in the oven or steamed, and served wrapped in banana leaves or the leaf of the corn cob.

Tlacololero: Nahuatl term for male character in the *Tiger Fight* associated who is associated with fertility and in essence represents maize.

Tlacolol: Aztec term meaning "plot of land".

Tláloc: Aztec term for the God of Rain.

Toltecs: General term used for group of semi-nomads who migrated South from the North and established themselves in central Mexico from AD 950 to 1150.

Tonatihuh: Aztec term for the Sun God.

Tortilla: Spanish term for a food item looking something like a flat pancake and made from ground corn (i.e. maize) and water; as of recently white flour is being also used. The *tortilla* is one of the staples consumed in Mexico.

Xipe Totec: Aztec term meaning "Our Lord, the Flayed One" for the God of Rebirth and Renewal.

Wirikuta: Spanish term for the high desert close to where the Huichols live which is regarded by the Huichol as a paradise linked to a mythical past; it is also a place of pilgrimage.

Yaguara: Term derived from the Tupi-Guarani languages of the Amazon meaning "wild beast which overcomes its prey at a bound" and which refers to the jaguar.

Zapatillo: Spanish term for a shoe with a heel like that resembling a ladies pump.

Zapotec: General term for indigenous group who occupied the central valleys of Oaxaca and were eventually subjugated by the Mixtecs at approximately A.D.1350.

Zócalo: Spanish term for central plaza.

Zompante: Spanish term for a type of wood commonly known as coral bean and used for mask-making.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Mask-Makers: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Age

Marital Status

Name and Ethnicity of Community

Formal Schooling

Spoken Languages/Written Languages

Questions

1. How did the production of tiger masks begin?
2. When did you begin to produce tiger masks here, and who initiated this activity?
3. What does the tiger mask symbolize?
4. What does the Dance of the Tejorones Tiger Fight mean?
5. Who taught you to make tiger masks?
- 5a. How long was your apprenticeship?
- 5b. How long does it take you to make a standard size (20 X 23 Centimeters) tiger mask?
6. Why do you make tiger masks? a. Necessity b. For Pleasure c. Sense of Obligation to Family Member d. Other reason
7. Do family members help you to make tiger masks? If so, what age and what gender are they? What do they do?
8. What techniques are used today?
- 8a. What techniques were used before?
9. What materials are used today?
- 9a. What materials were used before?

10. What is the function of the tiger mask? a. Ceremonial/Ritual b. Commercial
c. Other Reason
11. What is the meaning of the tiger mask for you when it is a sale item?
12. What qualities does the tiger mask need to have: a. for the ritual ceremony?
b. to be sold?
13. To whom do you sell the tiger masks? a. People from other villages b. People
from this village c. Foreigners from abroad d. People from urban areas of
Mexico
14. How do you transport the tiger masks? a. By Bus b. By Micro-Bus c. By
Pick-up Truck d. Own Vehicle e. Other
15. Do you sell to *intermediarios*? a. Very Often b. Regularly c. Sometimes
d. Rarely e. Not At All
16. Is the demand for tiger masks: a. Low b. Moderate c. High d. Very High
17. Do you make any other masks or handicrafts? If so, which ones?
18. What is your religion? Of your Parents? Of your Grandparents?
19. What connection does the tiger mask have to your religion?
20. What are the preparations you make for the Dance of the Tejorones/Tiger Fight?
- 20a. How long do they take?
21. In what way is religion important to you and your family.

Living Conditions

1. Is your house: a. Rented b. Owned c. Belonging to a Relative
2. How many rooms does it have?
3. What materials is it made out of (i.e. roof, floor, walls)?
4. Does your home have: a. a Radio b. a Television c. Electricity d. Plumbing
5. Do you own any land? If so, how many hectares?
6. Do you own any domesticated animals? If so, which ones are they and how many?

Buyers

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Age

Marital Status.....

Community of Origin.....

Formal Schooling.....

Languages Spoken? Written?.....

Questions

1. When did you become a buyer?
2. Are you involved in any other activities (i.e. other occupation)?
3. Why do you buy tiger masks?
4. Do you buy/sell any other handicrafts?
5. How many times a month do you buy tiger masks?
6. Do you buy tiger masks directly from the artisans?
7. Do you pay your own expenses?
8. How do you buy tiger masks? a. In Bulk b. Individually c. Painted
d. Unpainted
9. Where do you sell your merchandise? a. In Markets b. In Shops c. Privately
d. Organizations
10. To Whom do you sell the masks? a. Mexicans b. People from this village
c. Foreigners from abroad
11. What qualities do you look for in a tiger mask before you buy it?
12. What qualities do your clients look for in a tiger mask?

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