Opposition and Cooperation among the Tzotzil Cosmological Principles: A Myth and a Ritual from Southeastern Mexico

Kazuyasu Ochiai
Chubu University

The Chiapas central highlands, a massive plateau of rugged mountains with sporadic summit basins and deep valleys at its skirt, stand in the cool and humid air of the southeastern corner of Mexico, rising more than 2,000m above the sea (Figure 1). Most of the highland area, covered with oak and pine forests, is thickly inhabited by corn-farming Indians who speak either Tzotzil or Tzeltal, two of the thirty Mayan languages.

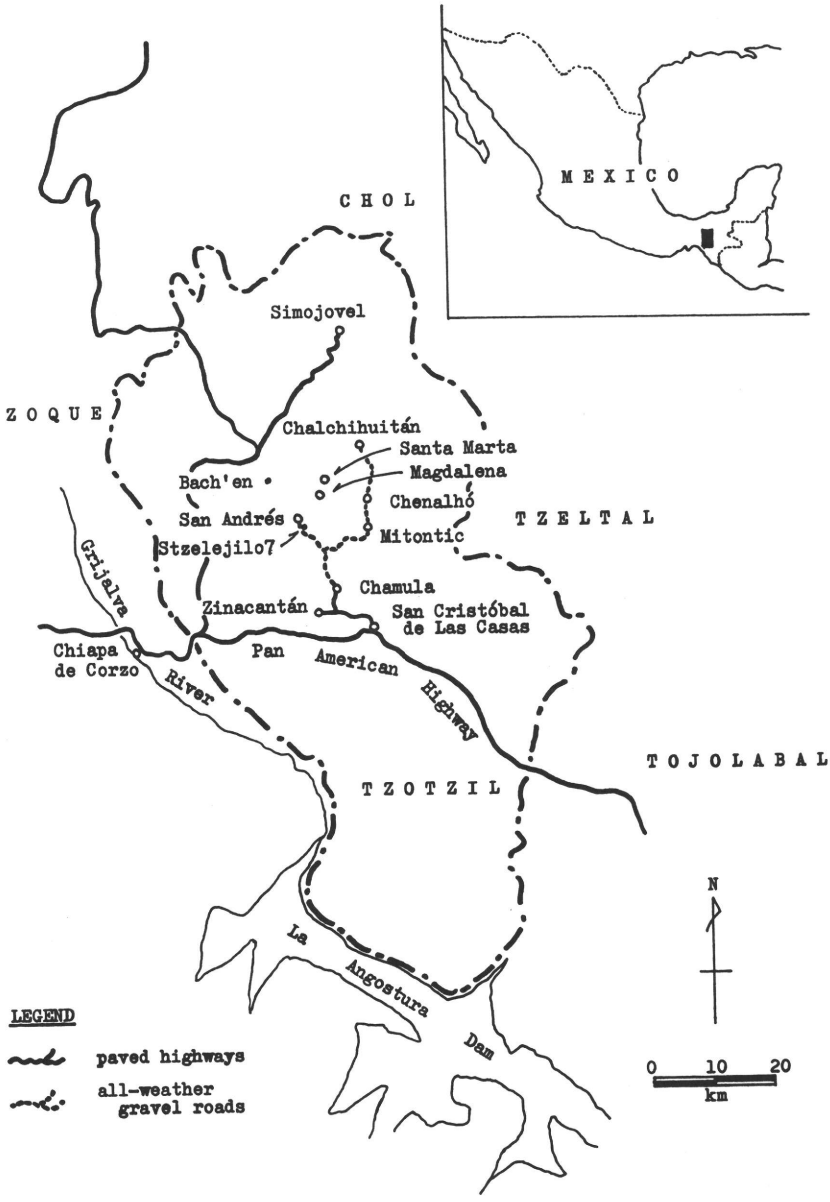
This paper aims to summarize a general view of the Tzotzil cosmology in which the Catholic saints, first introduced in the sixteenth-century by Spaniards, are integrated. In the first section, the Tzotzil supernatural categories will be briefly reviewed. In order to understand the dynamics of these categories, I will examine in the following sections how the various supernatural categories intertwine in the Tzotzil myths and rituals, keeping in mind Edmund Leach's assertion that myth regarded as a statement in words "says" the same thing as ritual regarded as a statement in action (Leach 1954:13–14). In the second section, a myth from San Andrés Larráinzar, a Tzotzil township, concerning how its patron saint established the town will be presented and analyzed. In the third section, I will discuss the ritual which is a crucible of the Tzotzil supernatural beings: the carnival. The motif which emerges repeatedly throughout this paper will be the combat between the supernatural categories.[1]

1. Tzotzil Cosmos

In this section, I shall review some natural and supernatural categories which hold their own spaces and meanings in the Tzotzil cosmos.

/balumil/[2](the earth) is the middle of three major horizontal layers of the

Figure 1: Trotzil-speaking area of the Chiapas central highlands (Adapted from Laughlin 1969:153, Figure 1)



universe. The earth is described as a square-shaped cube, like the Indian houses, supported by four corner pillars called /yoyal balumil/ ("pillars of the earth"; in Zinacantán, /yokol balamil/, "legs of the earth" [Vogt 1969:297]), like the posts of the houses, and is surrounded by the sea (Gossen 1974:18–22; Guiteras Holmes 1961:285; Holland 1963:69; Vogt 1969:297, 1976a:13). Daily activities of the Indians do not extend horizontally or vertically beyond the limit of "the earth surface", /sba balumil/. People of each village believe that their headtown is located at "the naval of the earth", /mixik balumil/, i.e., at the center of the earth surface. The openings on the earth surface such as caves and waterholes lead deep into the earth, where the Earth Owner, /yajual balumil/, dwells.

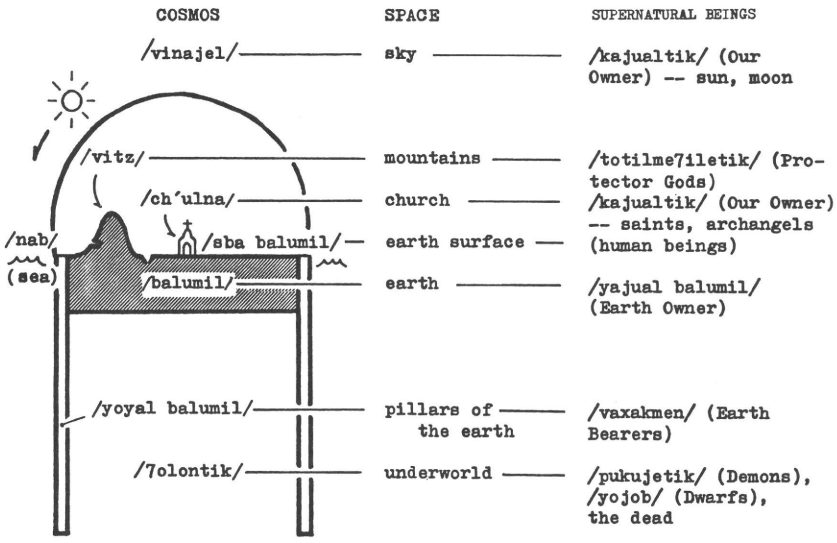
Above the earth surface is the layer of the sky or Heavens, /vinajel/, which is made up of a three-layered cube (in Zinacantán [Vogt 1969:297]) or a three-layered concentric dome (in Chamula [Gossen 1974:211]) with specific heavenly bodies in each layer.

Below the earth lies the other layer, the underworld called /7olontik/ (/7olon balamil/ in Zinacantan [Vogt 1969:298]) strongly associated with death and characterized by inversions of many kinds. As Gary H. Gossen puts it, when "it is dark on earth, it is light in the underworld, while the sun is traveling that part of his circular path around the earth. Conversely, night in the underworld occurs during the daytime on earth" (Gossen 1974:21). The dwellers of the underworld are the dead, the Demons (/pukujetik/) and the Dwarfs (/yojob/ in Chenalhó [Guiteras Holmes 1961:285], /konchavetik/ in Zinacantán [Vogt 1969:298]) who are left over from the early creation of people. The underworld is also the point from which the world is supported by the four corner pillars.

Each of these three layers which make up the Tzotzil universe is associated with its supernatural owners and inhabitants, as Figure 2 shows.[3]

Although opinion varies among the communities about the details of the characteristics and attributes of the supernatural beings, the following descrip-

Figure 2: Topology of the Tzotzil supernatural beings



tions are the commonly accepted ideas of the principal Tzotzil supernatural categories.

(1) Earth Bearers (/vaxakmen/, literal meaning unknown)

Earth Bearers are described as the deities at the four corners who carry the world on their shoulders. When one of them gets tired and shifts his burden to his other shoulder, we feel an earthquake which lasts until the burden is again secure (Gossen 1974:22; Holland 1963:92; Vogt 1969:303, 1976a:13). In Zinacantán, they are "also described as having created waterholes as they walked over the surface of the earth in the mythological past and pushed their walking sticks into the ground" (Vogt 1969:303). Sometimes the Earth Bearers are said to be the original creators of the world.

(2) Earth Owner (/yajual balumil/)

Earth Owner is "associated with a particular place: an opening into the earth, like a cave, a lime-stone sink, or a waterhole" (Vogt 1976a:16–17; cf. Holland 1963:93), the place generically called /ch'en/. Earth Owner controls all the things on and inside the earth such as waterholes, rivers, caves, limestones, mud, cornfields, house sites, and so forth, so that if the Indians use them, they must compensate Earth Owner with appropriate ceremonies and offerings. If the people fail in this, they may be punished by Earth Owner.

Earth Owner is associated with all forms of precipitation including clouds, lightning, and thunder, since they are believed to come forth from the caves in the mountains which are the doors to the Earth Owner's abode (Gossen 1974:21; Guiteras Holmes 1961:287; Vogt 1969:302).

Earth Owner has multiple manifestations. He can be pictured as "a unity being, or as many" (Vogt 1976a:17). He is described as a large fat Ladino, thunderbolts or serpent (Gossen 1974:86–87; Holland 1963:93–94; Vogt 1969:302, 1976a:17). /7anjel/, another transformation of Earth Owner, is said to climb to the sky bearing the order of the Earth Owner, and to make rain. In Zinacantán, /7anjel/ is a bolt of lightning that comes out of a cave, and the thunder is like the skyrockets of /7anjeletik/ (Vogt 1969:302). In Chenalhó, /7anjel/ is "the rain god" itself (Guiteras Holmes 1961:290).[4]

Since Earth Owner controls all the natural resources indispensable for Indian life, William R. Holland calls him "the deity of fertility" (Holland 1963:92–93). In Chenalhó, the daughter of /7anjel/ is Mother of Maize (/sob/) who multiplies maize and gives man the strength to eat it (Guiteras Holmes 1961:192, 291). The purpose of the Holy Cross ceremony on May 3 is to encourage the Earth Owner "to guarantee a dependable water supply and good crops" (Gossen 1974:12; cf. Holland 1963:95 and Vogt 1976a:111). Not only on that specific day, but also before seeding and harvest, people of San Andrés go to the caves to pray for success in those works (Holland 1963:95).

It is said that Earth Owner grudgingly tolerates man's living on his surface

and allows him to prey on his creatures. To provoke his wrath might produce drought, or might even cause him to steal man's soul to make him ill (Gossen 1974:86–87; Guiteras Holmes 1961:290; Vogt 1969:305).

Many illnesses are believed to be caused by the loss of the soul.[5] The soul may drop out by accident, by the will of the Earth Owner or through witchcraft (Holland 1963:94). If a witch gives sufficient offerings to the Earth Owner, he will give the witch a favor and will torture the animal soul companion of the victim, which induces some illness to the human counterpart (Holland 1963:124). The sick person will need to ask a healer (/j7ilvanej/ or /k'elvanej/, "seer"; /j7ilol/ in Chamula and Zinacantán) to perform a curing ceremony to recover the soul from the Earth Owner.

Since the forces of evil can be traced to the Earth Owner, it is a great risk to make him angry. The potential danger of the Earth Owner is his dark side, which people fear. As Gary H. Gossen puts it, "Only earthlords [Earth Owner], snakes (which are the familiars and alternate forms of the earthlords), and demons inhabit the internal cave networks of the earth. Hence they are associated with dampness, darkness and lowness" (Gossen 1974:21). The forest and the bush, the caves and the sinkholes are feared by man, since in them he lacks the protective light and warmth of the sun (Guiteras Holmes 1961:287).

Earth Owner is, therefore, an ambiguous being. He is benevolent in the sense that he supplies the Indians with daily necessities such as water, wood or stone; he is malevolent as well since he drags the people's souls into his recess to force them to work as slaves, and the "soul-less" people may die. Earth Owner, being the owner of the cosmic layer just above the underworld, has some continuity of character with the Demons of the underworld.

(3) Demons (/pukujetik/)

For the contemporary Tzotzil Indians, the underworld is the place of death. A generic term for the supernatural beings of death and evil is /pukujetik/, "Demons", whose presence dates back to the mythical past before human

culture in its correct form had appeared under the protection of the sky deities (Gossen 1974:24, 233; Guiteras Holmes 1961:57; cf. Holland 1963:71).

Demons are man eaters. In order to kill a man, Demons try to drag out his soul, thus changing man into "meat" so that he may be eaten easily (Guiteras Holmes 1961:220). Demons cause every unhappiness such as accidents, crimes, catastrophes and illness (Holland 1963:97).

They have a variety of anthropomorphic representations. The most common and frightful Demon is /j7ik'al/ ("Blackman") who is a small black-skinned man with curly hair, winged feet, and Ladino dress such as black pants, shirt, shoes and a big hat. At dusk, Blackmen soar out of the caves searching for food, i.e., human and animal flesh. Blackmen not only wander about the road and outskirts of the village, but also intrude into the village looking for food and female companions. Blackmen magically enter the house during the night and take out the woman who is sleeping with her husband. Blackmen go out to stroll and fly during the night and sleep in the cave during the day as bats. Male victims will be killed on the road and their corpse will be taken to the cave to be eaten. Female victims are also eaten but sometimes Blackmen take them as wives. Each Blackman possesses a two-meter long penis. So potent is their sexuality that their progeny are born three days after conception. The children are also black as their father is and shortly learn how to fly in the caves (Blaffer 1972; Guiteras Holmes 1961:189; Holland 1963:125–127; Vogt 1969:305).

Everything that is evil wanders in the night (Guiteras Holmes 1961:190). Demons prowl around when it is dark, when there is no light. During the day, man is observed and protected by the sun; Demons are confined to the underworld. In the night, conversely, the sun has set under the horizon, and Demons come out of the underworld, wander around the surface of the earth and attack the people. At dawn, they return to the underworld through the caves, and man is again protected by the sun. The sun, being the source of light and heat, protects the world and people. The world will be in danger during the

night and during the eclipse. In Chenalhó, it is said that Demons are attempting to eat the moon or the sun during an eclipse in the same manner that they carry the souls of the people away and eat them (Guiteras Holmes 1961:174, 246).

Calixta Guiteras Holmes concludes that Demons' aim is the destruction of mankind and his protectors, so that there is a constant struggle over people's souls between Demons and the sun god (Guiteras Holmes 1961:173, 292). Guiteras Holmes also says that Demons are related to the destructive aspect of Earth Owner (Guiteras Holmes 1961:293).

(4) Protector Gods (/totilme7iletik/, "fathers and mothers")

The meaning and importance of the Protector Gods are not uniform among the Tzotzil communities. For example, while the Protector Gods are not so frequently mentioned or celebrated in ritual occasions in Chamula where the sun god is omnipotent, the Protector Gods "figure most prominently among the deities in Zinacantán life, judging by the frequency with which they are referred to and prayed to and from the number of rituals performed on their behalf" (Vogt 1976a:16). Evon Z. Vogt, calling these deities "Ancestral Gods", continues that they

> are pictured as elderly Zinacantecos, who live eternally in their mountain homes, where they convene and deliberate, monitor the affairs of their descendants, and wait for the ritual offerings of black chickens, candles, incense, and liquor which sustain them. These ancestors are both repositories of social and cultural knowledge and the active and jealous guardians of the Zinacanteco way of life. Deviations by living Zinacantecos from social and cultural mores are noted by the ancestral gods, and punished [Vogt 1976a:16].

Since the primary role of the Protector Gods concerns the protection of people's souls, they are believed to be close to the sun god who is the life-giver; they are the sun god's peer (Guiteras Holmes 1961:177, 248). Sometimes they are identified with the Catholic saints (Holland 1963:110). Con-

versely, Demons are eager to eat the soul of the people (Guiteras Holmes 1961: 245).

In some Tzotzil communities, the meaning of /totilme7iletik/ is not confined to the supernatural beings who take care of the souls of their descendants; the concept is also applied to the living elders, meaning "men of wisdom". Guiteras Holmes's informant from Chenalhó says:

> It is he [/totilme7il/] who prays often, he who defends the soul against death. The soul of the old man lives close to God, and he talks with the saints. His soul speaks with the saints and with the God. He defends his fellows. He tells his dream, how he has dreamt; he explains it to his fellows and they are going to begin to respect him. The Totilme7il is a man but can also be a woman. He gives a good advice to all [Guiteras Holmes 1961:162–163].

In Zinacantán, /totilme7iletik/ is also the title of the ritual advisors (Vogt 1976a:30).

(5) Our Owner (/kajualtik/)

Our Owner is a category composed of two existences: /jtotik/ ("Our Father") or /jch'ul-totik/ ("Our Holy Father") and /jme7tik/ ("Our Mother") or /jch'ul-me7tik/ ("Our Holy Mother") who are the sun and the moon respectively. The sun and the moon are the central figures of the Tzotzil pantheon. Especially in Chamula, the sun gives "the first principle of order" (Gossen 1974:30–35). Gossen puts it:

> In the concept of the sun, most units of lineal, cyclical, and generational time are implied at once, as are the spatial limits and subdivisions of the universe, vertical and horizontal [Gossen 1974:30].

No less important is the fact that the sun and the moon, as a set of male and female principles, constitute a binary symbolic system which is observed in every sphere of the Tzotzil culture.

In the primordial time, there was no sun or moon. "They came into being long after the world existed" (Guiteras Holmes 1961:291). At first,

"the earth was completely flat; there was no sun, but just very dim light" (Holland 1963:71). Demons, monkeys and Jews lived in the primordial world, preceding and being hostile to the coming of order. "These forces killed the sun in the First Creation and forced him to ascend into the heavens, where he provided heat, light, life and order" (Gossen 1974:30–31).[6]

The power of Our Owner is infinite; it is the creator and conservator of plants, animals and human beings (Holland 1963:74; Gossen 1974:308, 316–317, 322–323, 328–329, 333). Although Our Owner may inflict punishment on people with illness in San Andrés (Holland 1963:123), in Chenalhó the sun is believed to be "invariably beneficient and is worshiped and aided by man. Never related to punishment or death, he is a time protector and life giver" (Guiteras Holmes 1961:291–292).

Our Owner, however, does not belong to the ageless, everlasting forces of the universe, for like man, Our Owner is liable to annihilation. So, through prayer and offerings, man unfailingly intervenes in order to prevent the annihilation of both sun and moon, which would entail the destruction of human existence (Guiteras Holmes 1961:287, 291). There is a constant conflict between Our Owner and Demons and Earth Owner. "One of Earth's ways of destroying mankind is to destroy the sun, for human life cannot exist in his absence" (Guiteras Holmes 1961:291–292). Solar and lunar eclipses mean the Demon's occasional victory over the forces of order, even in Our Owner's own territory (Gossen 1974:29–30).

(6) Topology of the Tzotzil Cosmological Beings

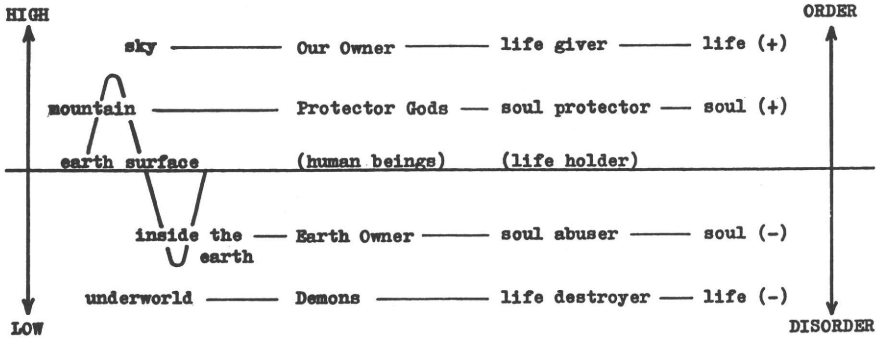
Having reviewed the Tzotzil cosmological categories, I believe some essential aspects of the Tzotzil Indians' concept of life have been clarified. For them, human life is composed of body and soul, over which the supernatural beings are in a constant struggle. Demons are those who seek chances to eat man's body (flesh) as well as his soul, both of which were shaped and determined by Our Owner at the latest creation after several attempts in vain. Many human souls are tortured and abused as slaves in the Earth Owner's cavern inside the

ground, which is the conceptual counterpart of the mountains where human souls are protected by the Protector Gods.

Based on these observations, I abstract Figure 3 which shows the symmetrically arranged spaces and meanings of the principal Tzotzil cosmological categories, with the earth surface being the axis of symmetry.

Our next question is where the Catholic saints have found their place in the Tzotzil cosmos.

Figure 3: Symmetrical arrangement of the Tzotzil supernatural beings



2. Catholic Saints in the Tzotzil Cosmos

In the Tzotzil cosmology, the Catholic supernatural beings in the churches and chapels on the earth's surface make their most frequent appearance as an earthly aspect of Our Owner. Christ and the Virgin Mary are conceptually equivalent to the sun and the moon respectively, the former being the son of the latter (Gossen 1974:21, 30, 337; Holland 1963:77–78). A contemporary Chamula myth about the origin of the sun reflects Christian ideas of both Christ's persecution by Pilate and Jews and the Ascension. The myth reveals that the Sun/Christ was killed in the First Creation by the Demons, monkeys and Jews and forced to ascend to the sky where he began to provide heat and

light (Gossen 1974:30–31).

The concept of /jtotik/ ("Our Father") includes male saints and archangels as well as Sun/Christ, and /jme7tik/ ("Our Mother") means female saints as well as Moon/Virgin Mary. Saint names are preceded by /jtotik/ or /jme7tik/ according to their gender. For example, *San Andrés*[7] is called /jtotik san-antrex/, and the *Virgen del Rosario* is referred to as /jme7tik rosaryo/.

While /jtotik/ and /jme7tik/ refer to concrete saints or saint images, /kajualtik/ ("Our Owner") is a more abstract concept used frequently in ritual language. This concept may not be connected with saint names in such a way as /kajualtik sanantrex/. In certain contexts, /kajual/ ("My Owner") is also used.

It is an important fact that although there are numerous saint images in the churches – for example, twenty-seven in the headtown of San Andrés, forty-one in Chamula (Gossen 1979:124) and fifty-five in Zinacantán (Vogt 1969:352) – /jtotik/, /jme7tik/ or /kajualtik/ are seldom pluralized as /jtotiketik/ ("Our Fathers"), /jme7tiketik/ ("Our Mothers") or /kajualtiketik/ ("Our Owners"). People say that there is no plural form since "they are all the same." In daily conversation, people usually do not specify which saint they are talking about except its gender. They say, for example, "I am in charge of taking care of /jme7tik/," or "a new /jtotik/ is going to be enshrined in the church." The only occasion I heard the expression /kajualtiketik/ was when a Mayordomo or church steward referred to all the saint statues in front of him in the church.

In sum, people, on one hand, distinguish each saint and call it by its individual name; on the other hand, they reduce all the saints to two basic categories based on gender: Christ/Our Father/Sun and Virgin Mary/Our Mother/Moon.

According to Holland (1963:79), Andreseros or the people of San Andrés believe that once upon a time the Indian population increased so much that the Christ/Sun divided the land into villages and assigned his brothers, the saints,

one to each village as its patron and protector. Saints are generally considered to be siblings, including Christ, Virgin Mary, and sometimes God in the Catholic sense. The sibling relationship is expressed by the Tzotzil kinship terminology. People's opinions are not necessarily uniform in terms of who is senior to the others. There are people who chaim, perhaps ethnocentrically, that the patron saint of their community is senior to all others. In Chamula, all the saints are regarded as junior to Christ/Sun (Gary H. Gossen, personal communication, September, 1982).

Though people have a clear idea of sibling relations among the saints, their knowledge tends to be restricted to sibling relations among the patron saints of the ecologically circumscribed group of neighboring villages. Andreseros say, for example, that the eldest is *San Juan Bautista* of Chamula, the second is *San Antonio* of Simojovel, followed by *San Andrés* and then *San Miguel* of Mitontic. They have no idea about *San Pedro* and *San Pablo,* who are the patron saints of Chenalhó and Chalchihuitán respectively, communities located in another valley than that of San Andrés.

An important saint in one community may not have much significance in another community. Images of *San Juan Bautista,* for instance, are found in San Andrés and Zinacantán as well as in Chamula, where he is the patron. This saint is not paid as much distinguished attention in the former communities as in the latter. I doubt that Andreseros regard *San Juan* in their church as identical to the patron saint in the adjacent township, Chamula.

The following Tzotzil text narrates how *San Andrés* established himself in San Andrés Larráinzar. I believe this myth contains some important clues for understanding the meaning of saints in the Tzotzil thought. The myth was told on July 30, 1978, by Mr. A. S. H., forty-nine years of age, who was born in the hamlet of Talonhuitz and then lived in the headtown of San Andrés. The narrative was recorded in his home and later transcribed by an expert in Tzotzil transcription. Since the transcriber was a native of Chamula, his transcription was done in the Chamula variation of Tzotzil which is slightly differ-

ent from the San Andrés variation in which this myth was originally told. So, I retranscribed the text according to the narrated form and added some words which the transcriber had missed. The free translation that follows the text is my own.

/1. veno, ti 7apoxtol 7oy ta to7ox vo7onee nakal ta ch'en, xi. 2. ja7 to jital yu7un la sa7 yav sna bu xnaki, 7ech' ta yolon tzimajobel. 3. te yav sna ta xnaki 7ox ta yolon tzimajobel, xi. 4. veno, mu xnaki 7ox yil, ja7 to jital xtok. 5. jital ta bach'en, te jul ta bach'en. 6. tzk'el lek balumil ta vitz ta jek mi 7oy lek xa jamal. 7. sk'eloj 7osil te tzk'an xnaki. 8. pero k'usi toj bik'it li balumile, toj bik'it li jolch'ene. 9. mu7yuk muk'. 10. parte tontik, parte yalebal, xi, ta 7olon. 11. ta jot puro yalebal, puro toyol li vitze. 12. mu xnaki 7o. 13. 7i 7ora toj k'ixin la jutuk li balumil cha7e. 14. 7oy la jo7ob vakib schijik. 15. ta 7ak'ubalutik 7asba 7ora tana, solel la chlaj ta ch'ikil ti schjie, xpok'lajet la schikin ta jmek tzpas. 16. "k'u cha7al li jchijtike, pero yu7un 7oy 7ep chon," xi la. 17. mu xnaki 7o, mu xnaki 7o ta jmek. 18. k'ixin jutuk cha7i. 19. "veno, ta jsa7tik yan bu xinaki, "xi la. 20. vi 7un lok'ik tal tok, jimuyik tal ju7un. 21. jijul ta stzelejilo7, te jul ta stzelejilo7. 22. 7oy jun yu7un kampanaik 7ech'el, schechojik la 7ech'el. 23. 7entonse jijul te ta stzelejilo7. 24. 7oy la te jun tulan k'ot la sjipan skampana jeche, te la stz'intz'un stz'intz'un skampana. 25. veno, te julik, veno, chnakiik 7o. 26. chilik ta smeltzan ti snae, ta slok'esbe stanal. 27. ta stzoban xa, yu7un xa tzlikes ti snae. 28. pero ta k'un to ta tz'akal ta chib 7oxib k'ak'al, mu stak, chil toj li balumil. 29. yalebal xi, yalebal xi, puro vitz, puro tontik. 30. veno, lik la snop. 31. "pero mu xinaki 7o li7i. 32. li7i mu xanavik 7o kalab jnich'inab, mu spasik 7o k'in." 33. "yu7un toj chukul," xi la, "yalebal 7i toj 7ep tontik," xi la. 34. "veno, bu van lek ti balumil ta jsatike, bu van lek xinaki ju7un," xi la ti 7apoxtol chlo7ilaj. 35. mu jna7 mi chlo7ilaj stuk, mi te no7ox ta xyal ta sjol. 36. mu jna7, ja7 muk' buch'u sna7 lek. 37. ja7 to jital ta paxyal li7, ta balumil li7i. 38. pero jabnaltik, montanyatik ta jek. 39. tal ta paxyal. 40. ja7 to yil mu7yuk ton, lek balumil, lumilal ta jek, mu7yuk ton, ch'abal. 41. "veno, pero ja7 lek xinaki," xi la. 42. ja7 to la jyil jun toal 7uk'um, te toal 7uk'um yo7 mero ch'ulnae, jun muk'ta toal 7uk'um yilel tzanal. 43. "7eee, pero ja7 lek li7i xinaki," xi la ju7un. 44. veno, lik la sk'oponbe yajual. 45. pero mu stak' k'oponel ti yajuale, mu stak' k'oponel porke jtzotzk'ob xi. 46. veno, ja7 to laj

xch'aybe yo7on, ja7 to vay xi. 47. vay la jech, vayal. 48. "veno, taval k'u chkutik, pero le7e xi chba kak'tike." 49. laj sch'ojbe sch'en la li7 ta pat-kavilto, te nopol linika. 50. la spas jun ch'en hech smuk'ul, la spas k'u smuk'ul, la sch'oj. 51. veno, ja7 to k'alal vayal ti jtzotzk'obe, jech vayale, ja7 to ba stzakik tal, spetik lok'el, ba schotanik ta jun ch'en chak k'u cha7al 7asba. 52. ja7 to vik' sate yu7un xa yalem ta ch'en 7asba sk'el. 53. "veno, te xa chakom le7e," xi ti 7apoxtol stuk. 54. veno, mu xa k'usi ya7el, te xa jikom 7o. 55. ja7 to k'alaluk la skomtzanik xa ju7un, ti 7uk'ume takij ta 7ora, jitakij. 56. jibat xchi7uk yuk'um ta 7ora. 57. lek xa balumil jikom. 58. "7aaa, mo7oj, jilok' xa, chijnaki xa," xie. 59. yochel ta 7abtel, yochel ta sa7el ston. 60. k'usitik la jyich' tal, tal la. 61. mu jna7 mi melel la jyalike, jital la stuk li tone. 62. makbil la tal stuk li7, smak ta be li7i. 63. ta 7ora la smeltzan snaik, veno, 7ochik ta 7abtel. 64. pero 7oy la jun yitz'in, ja jmikel sbi. 65. pero mu la sk'an x7abtej, ja no7ox vob vob, ta xvabaj ta xvabaj skotol k'ak'al. 66. "7abtejkutik," xi la. 67. "7abtejkutik, la jk'eltik li jnatike, ba kich'betik tal sp'isol k'u sba ti jnatik 7ono7ox buy jnatike," xi la. 68. sk'elik la mi ko7ol. 69. veno, pero mu la sk'an, ja7 no7ox vob vob. 70. "veno, teke7 mi mu xak'ane cha7a. veno k'elo me bu xanaki," xi la. 71. "7aaa," xi la. 72. veno, bat la ti jmikel. 73. bat sa7 bu xnaki, sk'el me bu xnakie. 74. 7iyil bu xnaki, jilok'ba ju7un. 75. te bu nakalik yo7 bu 7oy li sna tana mitontik. 76. ja7 te naki ja7 la yermano, ja yitz'in xi. 77. mu jna7 mi melel. 78. "chibat ta tz'ak," xi la, te la bat ta tz'ak. 79. ja7 yu7un taj 7oy lek vob sna7e, ja7 la yu7un ja7 maestro ju7une. 80. k'el 7avil buch'u sk'an ti viniketik tana li7i, mi tzk'an schanik vobe, ja7 chba sk'oponik. 81. chba sk'anbeik 7ak'o schanik lek vob, ja7 la chba sk'oponik. 82. ta la xyich' bal yak'il svobik, te la chba yak'be te la sk'ob. 83. 7i ta la schanik 7o li jchi7iltake xi. 84. jo7on muk' bu jpasoj preva mi jech. 85. pisil chak jchan li vobe, pero muk' bu xi7ay jk'opon. 86. ja7 yu7un mu jna7 vob tana, mu jna7 7arpa, mu jna7 kitara. 87. veno, ja7 la jech la spas ti vo7one. 88. veno, k'alaluk jibat ti ju7un, ja7 to la li chib yixileltak tok li malalena, santa marta. 89. ja7 to k'alaluk la ta xa stzutz li na, bat la sk'el yosilik je7uk, yav snaik bu xnakiik je7uk, jilok'ik la bal, batik. 90. mu jna7 mi vaxakib k'ak'al k'uxi 7ayik. 91. mu7yuk bu xjulik tal, ja7 to la talik k'alal tzutz xa 7ox snaik li 7apoxtole. 92. lek xa 7ox snaik. 93. tzpasik xa k'in, jital sjula7an la sbaik. 94. ja7 to skuchoj xa tal yu7un lima, 7oy yu7un 7alaxa, 7oy yu7un vale7, skuchoj la tal. 95. tal yak'be sbankil, 7i yak'ik xa. 96. ta spas k'in, yu7un tzutz xa snaik. 97.

"bu na7ay," xi la. 98. "li7 ni7ay jk'el yav jna te chijnaki 7ek," xi la. 99. "7aaa," xi la. 100. mu xa k'usi xalik, yu7un xa te jikom 7o. 101. ja7 yu7un te xa 7oy malalena, santa marta. 102. 7oy snaik xa jujot 7osil no7ox xyil sbaik. 103. veno, jech la spasik ti vo7one. 104. va7i la spasik k'in, jinakik ju7un. 105. 7avi yo7 kom 7o li 7apoxtol, yo7 tzjula7an 7o sbaik ta jujun sk'inik. 106. mi sta sk'in 7apoxtol chtal li jme7tik, mi sta sk'in jme7tike ta xbat li 7apoxtol, ko7ol ko7ol tzjula7an sbaik. 107. ja7 yu7un yixlel la sbaik to7ox. 108. ja7 bankilal li 7apoxtole, ja7 7ixlelal li jme7tike xi. 109. ja7 sba la spas ti vo7one xi ka7i./

[Translation]

1. Well, it is said that once upon a time the Apostle [*San Andrés*] lived in a cave. 2. One day, he left there looking for another place to live, and he happened to pass lower Simojovel. 3. It is said that he lived in lower Simojovel. 4. But he saw it difficult to live there, so he came back again. 5. He came to Bach'en, he returned to Bach'en. 6. From the mountain peak, the Apostle examined well if the land was sufficiently large. 7. After having examined it, he thought that it would be nice to live there. 8. But the land was too narrow, and the hilltop was not large. 9. It was not spacious enough. 10. One side was rocky, and the other was steep. 11. Bach'en was surrounded by cliff, and the hill was so high. 12. The Apostle did not live there at last. 13. Bach'en was a warm place. 14. The Apostle had five or six head of sheep. 15. In the evening like now, Apostle's sheep were bitten by gnats and shaked their ears incessantly. 16. "What happened to our sheep?" said the Apostle. "I think it is because of many insects." 17. So, after all, he did not live there. He did not stay there for a long time. 18. The Apostle felt that it was hot there. 19. "Well, let's seek another place," said the Apostle. 20. He left Bach'en and climbed the mountains. 21. He came to Stzelejilo7, he arrived at Stzelejilo7. 22. Since he had a bell, he came holding it in his arms. 23. Then he came back to Stzelejilo7. 24. There was an oak tree, so he hung the bell on it. Then the bell began to chime alone, "tzintzun, tzintzun." 25. Well, they came back there, they began to live there. 26. He decided to build a house and brought stones. 27. He gathered stones, since he had already begun the construction. 28. Two or three days after, however, the Apostle could not continue, since he saw that the land was too small. 29. One side was cliff, and the other was also

cliff. The place was totally hilly and entirely craggy. 30. Then the Apostle deliberated. 31. He said, "I will not live here at all." 32. "My children [Andreseros] would not walk here, they would not celebrate festivals," 33. "since it is so narrow," said the Apostle. "It is precipitous and full of stones." 34. "Well, I shall look for a better place, somewhere else I could live confortably," said the Apostle. 35. I do not know if he spoke it to himself or he just thought of it. 36. I do not know it; there is nobody who knows it well. 37. Then the Apostle happened to come here for a stroll. 38. This place was then a wood, quite a forest. 39. He came here for a stroll. 40. He found the place without stones, good, very flat and not rocky at all. 41. He said, "It would be confortable to live here."

42. The Apostle found a deep river where the church now stands. The river was so deep and wide that it seemed as if it had been a lake. 43. "Uuum, it would be nice to live here anyhow," said the Apostle. 44. Then, he spoke to the owner of the river. 45. The owner, however, could not speak. It is said that he could not talk since he was "Hairy Arm" [/tzotzk'ob/]. 46. After a while, the owner of the river became sleepy and fell asleep. 47. He was sleeping like this. 48. "What punishment shall I give him? I will inflict punishment on him," said the Apostle. 49. He dug a hole behind the present town hall building, near the present health service station. 50. He prepared a hole of this size; he dug such a big hole. 51. When Hairy Arm fell asleep, they went to fetch him and returned holding Hairy Arm in their arms. They made Hairy Arm sit down in the hole. 52. It was not until Hairy Arm awoke that he understood he had already been dropped in the hole. 53. "OK, stay there as you are now," said the Apostle. 54. That was all, there remained Hairy Arm. 55. When they left there, the river was already dried up. 56. Hairy Arms had left the place with his river. 57. There remained a good land. 58. "Oh, how glad I am! Hairy Arm left at last. Now I will live here," said the Apostle. 59. The Apostle began to work and look for stones. 60. He brought whatsoever he needed. 61. I am not sure if the legend is true, but it is said that the stone came of itself to the site. 62. It came of itself and remained on the road. 63. Now, the Apostle began to build the house, he set about work.

64. The Apostle had a younger brother whose name was Miguel [*San Miguel*]. 65. Miguel, however, did not want to work. He was just fond of music and played music every day. 66. "Let's work together," said the Apostle. 67. "Let's work together. And let's

take a measure of our house with a rule. Let's measure the house we are to live in and compare it to our former house," said the Apostle. 68. They took a measure of the houses to confirm if they were the same. 69. After all, however, Miguel did not like to work, but just to play music. 70. The Apostle said to him, "OK, if you do not like to work, it does not matter to me. Look for your house for yourself." 71. "That is all right," replied Miguel. 72. Miguel departed there. 73. He left to look for a place to live, seek where to stay. 74. He found a place, and he left. 75. He began to live where his house [church] now stands in the village of Mitontic. 76. The Apostle's brother still lives there. 76. It is said that he is younger brother of the Apostle. 77. I do not know if it is true. 78. He said to the Apostle, "I will go out of the village limit," and he left out of the village border. 79. Miguel was really good at music. He was the master of music. 80. Today, those of this town who wish to learn musical instruments go to pray to Miguel of Mitontic. 81. They go to ask him to make them learn music well. They go to pray to him so. 82. They take the strings of their instruments and leave them in the hand of Miguel. 83. It is said that my fellow villagers have learned music in this way. 84. I have never tried if it is so. 85. I have always wanted to learn music, but I have never been to Mitontic to pray to Miguel. 86. For this reason, I do not know to play music, harp or guitar. 87. Well, that was what happened a long time ago.

88. After Miguel left, there were two younger sisters of the Apostle, *Santa María Magdalena* and *Santa Marta.* 89. When the house of Apostle was almost done, the sisters went to see their land; they went to see the place to live. 90. I am not sure if they were away for eight days or so. 91. The sisters did not come back until the Apostle's house was completed. 92. The house was well done. 93. They celebrated a festival and visited each other. 94. The sister came shouldering limes, oranges, and sugar canes on her back. 95. She brought them to give her elder brother, and she presented them to him. 97. "Where have you been?" asked the Apostle. 98. The sister replied, "I went to see where to live." 99. "Oh, I see," said the Apostle. 100. There was nothing else to say, since the sister remained there. 101. So, nowadays, there are villages of Magdalenas and Santa Marta. 102. They have houses near enough to be able to see each other. 103. A long time ago, they did things in this way. 104. They celebrated festivals and lived there. 105. The Apostle has been living here. They have visited each other on the occasion of festivals.

106. On the festival of the Apostle, Our Mother visits him, and on the day of Our Mother's festival, the Apostle goes to see her. They visit to each other, mutually and equally. 107. They are brother and sister. 108. The apostle is elder and Our Mother is younger. 109. I have heard that these things happened a long time ago.

This tale is composed of four sections: (1) the wanderings of *San Andrés* (lines 1-41); (2) the expulsion of /tzotzk'ob/ (42–63); (3) *San Miguel,* the great musician (64–87); and (4) the origin of the saint exchange among the neighboring communities (88–109).[8]

There is a good example of the Tzotzil concept of Our Owner in the last section. At first, *Santa María Magdalena* and *Santa Marta* are said to be two younger sisters of *San Andrés,* and plural suffix and verb declensions are applied to them (lines 88–90). In the last part, however, they are called "the sister" of "Our Mother" in a singular term (lines 94–98, 100, 104–108). It indicates that the saints are recognized as different beings, and, at the same time, they are reduced to a singular existence if the gender is the same.

According to Mr. A.S.H. the teller of the myth, /tzotzk'ob/ ("Hairy Arm") who appears in the second part has been expelled to the northern mountains out of San Andrés, and he lives in a lagoon there even today. Mr. A.S.H. says that this is the reason that the rain cloud always surges over San Andrés from the north. Also, it is said that it rains frequently on the day of the festival in honor of *San Andrés,* because /tzotzk'ob/ comes to see his former home on that day. Mr. Santis says that /tzotzk'ob/ is /7anjel/ as well. These accounts suggest the intimate relation of /tzotzk'ob/ and Earth Owner, who is believed to control rain.

The main theme of the second part of our Tzotzil text is the confrontation of *San Andrés* (i.e., Our Owner) and /tzotzk'ob/ (viz., Earth Owner) and the victory of the former over the latter. The fact that /tzotzk'ob/ did not know how to speak suggests hig pre-cultural character related to nature and old-ness, in contrast to the civilized character of the saint associated with order and new-ness.

San Andrés expelled /tzotzk'ob/ by wit and founded the town of San Andrés; but, at the same time, he committed an "original sin" against /tzotzk'ob/, i.e., against Earth Owner. Andreseros say that since /tzotzk'ob/ has been expelled from home by *San Andrés,* he has a /bik'it yonton/ ("small heart"), which means that he is resentful and envious, and, by extension, is a witch. This explains one of the reasons that Andreseros never can escape the potential danger of Earth Owner, who has an ambiguous character of fertility and death. It is important to note that Earth Owner shares some malevolent characteristics with Demons (/pukujetik/). In this text, too, /tzotzk'ob/ has attributes of pre-orderness, old-ness and nature which are all characteristics of Demons according to the Tzotzil classification of supernatural beings.

The collection of tales from Zinacantán compiled by Robert M. Laughlin includes two texts in which the people of Chiapa de Corzo, a lowland town (Figure 1), are called /tzotzk'ob/ and are said to have stolen a bell from the church of Zinacantán (Laughlin 1977:100–101, 132–135). Although /tzotzk'ob/ in these tales are not directly characterized as Earth Owner or Demons, they bear strong marks of peripherality such as lowland origin, disorder (thieves), and nature ("Hairy Arm"), all of which are attributes of Demons, as opposed to the marks of centrality such as highland origin, order (church), and culture (cargo system[9]), in which the Zinacantecos are protected by Our Owner. This fact suggests that the /tzotzk'ob/ tales essentially contain the theme of the combat or contest between Demons and and Our Owner/ Sun/Christ.

It may safely be concluded that the Tzotzil thought is based on this cosmological conflict between the underworld beings and heavenly beings whose earthly representatives are the Catholic saints in the church. It is during the carnival when this mythological theme is best translated into ritual actions, as we will examine in the next section.

3. Tzotzil Carnival: A Cosmological Reading

(1) Problems

In the last forty years, the carnival, because of its exclusive and spectacular characteristics, has been paid no little attention by anthropologists who work in the Chiapas highlands. For example, Guiteras Holmes, one of the first anthropologists who carried out a long-term intensive field research among the Tzotzil Indians in the 1940's, recorded the details of the carnival in Chenalhó in her field notes (Guiteras Holmes 1946: 138–175). Ricardo Pozas Arciniega reserved a section of his classic ethnography of Chamula for the description of this special festival (Pozas 1959:174–184). A considerable attention was paid to the linguistic aspect of the same festival by Gossen (1974: 138–139, 178–182). Recently, Priscilla R. Linn (1982) summarized the Chamula carnival as representing the two opposing natures, protecting and endangering forces, of a human soul. The festival of *San Sebastián* of Zinacantán, which contains numerous carnivalesque elements, has been described in detail and analyzed by Vogt (1969: 536–551, 1976a: 159–178). Major contributions to the understanding of the distinctive features of the Tzotzil carnivals, however, have been made by Victoria R. Bricker (1973, 1981). As a starting point of this section, I find it appropriate to first summarize her principal arguments.

In her first book, *Ritual Humor in Highland Chiapas* (1973), Bricker interprets the humorous atmosphere and laughter of the Tzotzil carnivals as the expression of social criticism and moral reinforcement by the community. Bricker extracts a series of binary oppositions of Tzotzil symbolism and indicates that while the elements of the column "good", such as "human", "reason", "Indian" and "highland", represent the normative daily life of the community, the elements of the column "bad", such as "animal", "impulse", "Ladino" and "lowland", appear during the carnivals (Bricker 1973:166). She concludes that the Tzotzil carnivals emphasize the superiority of the normative behavior and morality of the community contrasting them with the deviated behavior introduced during the carnivals (Bricker 1973:157, 224). Bricker's

theory may explain some aspects of the Tzotzil carnivals. It seems to me, however, that she still underestimates the potential of the carnivalesque laughter. According to my field observation, the Tzotzil not only laugh at the deviated in the carnivalesque settings; but more strongly, they ridicule the normative value itself. In other words, the normative value cannot remain so absolute during the carnival as Bricker infers; rather, it becomes relative (cf. Bakhtin 1967).

In her second book, *The Indian Christ, the Indian King* (1981), Bricker makes great strides in her study of Tzotzil carnivals, especially with regard to their historical aspects. She points out that the central message of the Tzotzil carnivals is ethnic conflict which is ritualized as historical drama during the festival. The historical drama is performed in a determined pattern by male Indian impersonators, such as Blackmen, Monkeys (/maxetik/) with the costume of the nineteenth-century French soldiers, Lacandon Indians of northeastern Chiapas lowlands, Guatemalans, and so on, whose images originate in different historical events (Bricker 1981:130).

Bricker begins with a minute iconography of the impersonators; she concludes that in the carnival of Chamula, seven historically distinct ethnic conflicts are dramatized: (1) the conquest of Mexico (including Chiapas) by Spaniards during the sixteenth-century, (2) the Cancuc revolt of 1712, (3) the French intervention of 1862–1867, (4) the Chamula uprising of 1867–1870, (5) the nineteenth-century boundary dispute with Guatemala, (6) the Pineda revolt of 1920, and (7) the Passion of Christ (Bricker 1981:135). Bricker also distinguishes seven historical ethnic conflicts in the carnival of Chenalhó (Bricker 1981: 135–136) and five in the carnival of Zinacantán (Bricker 1981:138).

These ethnic conflicts are treated as one in the ritual of carnival (Bricker 1981:135). The same principle is found in the oral tradition. Bricker points out that one oral tradition (Bricker 1981: 286–317, Text C-7) "treats the leaders of several ethnic conflicts as equivalent and interchangeable" (Bricker

1981:149). She attributes this "confusion" to "the telescoping of time." She says that "time is telescoped in the myth and ritual of ethnic conflict in Chamula, Zinacantán, and Chenalhó, thereby making it possible to symbolize many events at the same time" (Bricker 1981: 150). Bricker observes that:

> temporal distortion produces similar structure in the myth and ritual of ethnic conflict. In the timelessness of oral tradition and ritual there is no place for individuality. The hero of one conflict is the hero of all conflicts. He may be referred to by the names of all heroes or any one of them. The villain who opposes him can be called by the name of any villain from any time period [Bricker 1981: 150].

Bricker's argument can be summarized in two points. First, the *dramatis personae* of the Tzotzil carnivals have historical background. And secondly, people understand the historical events as a repetition of a sole theme, the ethnic conflict, since they have a "cyclical view of time." I appreciate her first discovery; I do not find myself convinced, however, by the second point.

First, I do not agree that the conflicts played during the carnival are really regarded by the Indians as ethnic. Since today ethnicity makes sense for the Indians only as the Indian-Ladino relationships, the Passion of Christ or the boundary disputes between Mexico and Guatemala may not be considered as ethnic conflicts by the Indians.

Secondly, I have difficulty in accepting Bricker's arguments about the cyclical view of time of the Tzotzil which enables them to see history as repetitive. She says that the ancient Maya of Yucatan had the idea of a 256 year cycle, or the *katun* cycle, which gave them a fatalistic vision of historical repetition, and that the modern Tzotzil Indians have "conserved" the idea of cyclical time on the scale of the annual cycle (Bricker 1981: 7–8). Bricker, however, fails to connect logically the idea of the annual cycle and the concept of historical repetition, which have nothing to do with each other except for the basic notion of cyclical time. In other words, she fails to explain the reason that the Tzotzil perform the drama of conflicts (1) annually and (2) during

the carnival.

My hypothesis is that the conflicts dramatized during the carnival, either historical or mythical, are viewed by the people as cosmological conflicts between the two principles, Sky/Order vs. Underworld/Disorder, whose domination over each other symbolizes the annual change of seasons. In order to prove this hypothesis, I will begin with an analysis of the *dramatis personae* of the carnival following the example of Bricker. While she notes the differences among them, however, I will pay attention to the common characters among them. While Bricker anatomizes them from the historical point of view, I intend to understand them from the cosmological perspective based on the analysis done in the previous sections of this paper.

(2) The Powerful Strangers

Strictly speaking, the underworld beings who appear in the Tzotzil carnivals are only Blackmen (/j7ik'aletik/). However, the cosmological principle of disorder which the underworld beings symbolize is so strong a magnetic field that it pulls together other pre-cultural, disorderly or chaotic figures, either mythical or historical, and transforms them into the same species of the underworld beings. The *dramatis personae* whom Bricker proves to have historical origin, such as the Lacandons, Mexican and French Soldiers, Guatemalans, and so forth, are transformed in this way into the associates of Blackmen. Hereinafter, I will call these underworld beings and their metamorphoses generically "the powerful strangers."

The principle of disorder is so powerful (as the opposite principle of order is) that it activates people's imagination. The costume of the Monkeys, for example, has been changing recently; new elements such as tinted eye-glasses, metal bar for construction cut and bent into a saber, and deer skin short pants, have been recently added. I think that they have been incorporated, since these items, in the imagination of the people, reinforce the image of Monkeys as powerful strangers with pre-cultural characters.

The powerful strangers are considered to be the beings of the pre-orderly

days before the sun came into existence in the universe. Not only temporarily but also spatially, they are supposed to come from distant places which symbolize their peripheral character. During the carnival of San Andrés, for example, Blackmen and Horsemen (/kapitanetik/) gather in one night and exclaim one by one where they come from, emphasizing the remoteness of the place of their origin: "I came from Mexico City!", "I came from the United States!", etc. In 1979, one of the Blackman impersonators noticed that I was in that scene and exclaimed, "I came from Japan!" regarding Japan to be remote enough a country to be categorized as a part of /7olontik/, the underworld.

I observed the following elements during the carnivals of Chenalhó in 1978 and San Andrés in 1979 and 1981 and during the festival of *San Sebastián* of Zinacantán in 1979 and 1981:

(1) Imposition and confirmation of the order through the cargo system.

(2) Introduction of violent and unusual elements: horse racing, pseudo-fights, running of the cargo-holders in and around the headtown, procession in clockwise direction (which is contrary to the normal ritual movement), obscenities such as abnormal sexual capacity, theft in the market, indifference to the church, verbal performance in Spanish (which is regarded as having preceded Tzotzil and thus represents a pre-cultural language [Gossen 1974: 181, 306; cf. Holland 1963:72]), and certain drums played solely during these festivals (/t'ent'en/ in Zinacantán, /bin/ in Chamula and Chenalhó).[10]

(3) Change of identity and parodization of the daily order: praody of curing ceremony, persecution of the people by Blackmen, parodization of sacred objects such as the church banner, and mimicking of the town authorities.

(4) Introduction of the scapegoats to be punished and executed for their behavioral deviation and for being the town authorities.

As this observation shows, the carnival is a chaotic period in which daily order ceases. The powerful strangers, symbolizing the opposite principle of

Our Owner/Sun, invade the community during the carnival and nullify the daily order based on the Our Owner/Sun principle. Daily hierarchy is turned upside-down.

(3) Carnival as an Annual Rite of Passage

Carnival is called in Tzotzil /k'in tajimol/ ("Festival of Game"). The Tzotzil word for festival is /k'in/, which has several cognates related to the orderly aspect of the society, such as sun and heat. Gossen points out that "the Tzotzil words for day (*k'ak'al*) and fiesta (*k'in*) [...] are directly related, respectively, to the Tzotzil word for fire (*k'ok'*) and to the Proto-Maya word for time, sun and deity (*kinh*)" (Gossen 1974:31).

Tzotzil carnivals take place during the five-day period called /ch'ay k'in/, according to the Tzotzil annual calendar. These days are considered unlucky; people prefer to stay home in order to avoid accidents and encounters with underworld beings (Villa Rojas 1968:149). It is considered very bad to be born on one of the five /ch'ay k'in/ days (Guiteras Holmes 1961:194).

Since /ch'ay/ means "lost" or "absent", /ch'ay k'in/ has been conventionally translated as "lost days." In my opinion, however, it will be better translated as "the period without sun," since it is no other than the period when the normal order and social hierarchy based on the Our Owner/Sun/Christ principle ceases because of its temporary absence. Chamula Indians say that during the carnival /ch'abal k'in, pere puro pleitu/ ("there is no 'sun', but only disputes") (Thor Anderson, personal communication, July 18, 1982). The sun temporarily disappears, and the /ch'ay k'in/ period is considered to be a prolonged night, in which Demons dominate the world as they did in the mythological past before the apparition of the sun. It is the period to return to the Tzotzil primordial time in which there was no sun, no moon, no saints, no order, but only Demons, Monkeys and Jews prowling around in the darkness.

What, then, do the destruction of the existing system and the return to the primordial state during the carnival mean? I think it is important to note that

by introducing this situation theatrically, the significance of the end of the chaos and the coming of the new order is logically emphasized. The following oral tradition from Chamula shows nothing other than the essence of the structure of the carnival: introduction of chaos and destruction for the sake of a new creation.

> A long time ago the sun disappeared for five days and the people thought they were going to die. [...] When it was dark, out came the demons, lions, snakes, jaguars; many people died and were eaten by demons. [...] When it became light again, there were no people – only birds. Then Our Father came to make a different people out of clay [...] [Gossen 1974:322].

Tzotzil carnivals are rituals of combat between order and disorder, cosmos and chaos, and rule and misrule. Since they last only five days, Demons are logically defeated on the last day, and Our Owner resumes his reign. Though the Demons quit the scene, they are not slain by the revitalized Sun/Christ principle. Demons retain their peripheral potential in the Tzotzil cosmology and emerge from the underworld every year during the carnival as the opposite principle to Our Owner.

What Kenneth Burke thinks about the recurrence of combat between the opposite principles in the myths seems to me to shed light on our understanding of the structure of the Tzotzil carnival. Burke deems that:

> whereas the mythic translation of opposition into terms of a contest allows ideas like order and disorder, cosmos and chaos to be represented by personified contestants that can triumph over each other or succeed each other, there still remains the fact that any system of order implies corresponding kinds of disorder. This persistence of the logical opposites despite the possibilities of mythic victory can be best handled in these two ways: (1) By a myth according to which, though one of the contestants has been vanquished (or, in the most thorough terms, "slain"), he still somehow survives [...], with the constant threat that he may again rise in revolt. (2) By a myth according to which the vanquished principle does periodically take over, to reign for a season, and to be periodically replaced again by the opposing

principle [Burke 1968:395].

Burke says that in the dialectics of the combat myth, "such *opposition* can be translated into terms more like *cooperation,* with both powers or principles being necessary to make a world, whereby the principle of 'disorder' becomes in its way a species of order, too" (Burke 1968:395).

The first of the two versions occur when one side conquers but can never remain wholly sure of his victory. Meanwhile, "the periodicality of the seasons provides the basic image for the second version, which translates the principle of opposition into terms of cyclical succession" (Burke 1968:395). In other words, in order to ritualize the seasonal transitions most effectively, "combat" myths and rituals give the most effectual model to organize the symbols involved (Yamaguchi 1975:46).

The second version of Burke primarily concerns us here, since the seasonal change is most readily associated with the Tzotzil carnival, which is essentially a time-renewal ceremony. Ritual of *uayeb,* the Yucatec version of /ch'ay k'in/, was a new year ceremony in the sixteenth-century (Coe 1965: 99–103; Tozzer 1941: 138–139). Although *uayeb* was celebrated in July in 1553 when Diego de Landa knew about it (Tozzer 1941:150), Bricker has recently calculated that *uayeb* formerly corresponded with the winter solstice (Bricker 1982), which makes sense as the period of a new solar year ceremony.

According to Landa, the *uayeb* rites had the following features: (1) men ran bare-footed through live coal; (2) five days of *uayeb* were regarded as unlucky and bad; and (3) after the *uayeb* rites came the New Year. If we remember that the ritual of running over burning thatch takes place during the carnival in Chamula today (Bricker 1973:125), these features of the *uayeb* rites look parallel to the contemporary Tzotzil carnivals. The same idea took a literary form in the *Popol Vuh* from the sixteenth-century Guatemalan highlands, in which the conquest of the underworld (by Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué) is narrated in the following way: (1) heroes leap over the bonfire; (2) they die and for five days the underworld beings celebrate their death; but (3) the

heroes are reborn as beautiful young men and finally defeat the underworld (Recinos 1947: 162–173). It may safely be conclude that the temporal death of the heroes in the *Popol Vuh,* the *uayeb* rites and the contemporary Tzotzil carnivals share the same structure of the rite of passage: through a temporal invasion of chaos, time, which has been contaminated and debilitated through its lapse, is renewed and revitalized.

During the Tzotzil carnivals, some scapegoats are observed: turkeys and roosters are sacrificed and the township authorities are publicly ridiculed, both by Demons. By doing so, Demons, embodying the disorder, punish and revitalize the social order, which has also been debilitated through the lapse of time. In this way, the season to be expelled leaves the confines of the community bearing all the accumulated impurity of the society (Yamaguchi 1975: 46). The once dead Our Owner/Sun principle and the social system are now rejuvenated, and Demons disappear deep into the night, the underworld and the periphery of the value system of the society.

In this way, Demons, which we called in Figure 3 "the life destroyers" play the role of "the life renovators" during the carnival; and Our Owner who is in daily life "the life giver" becomes "the resuscitated to life." This inversion is the essential nature of the Tzotzil carnival.[11]

Octavio Paz says that "the fiesta is a revolution [revuelta] in the most literal sense of the word" (Paz 1961:51). The Tzotzil carnival proves this statement, since it is a ritual of return ("revolver") to the mythical primordial state in order to be reborn and start afresh. If the primary function of a festival is to activate the daily life, it is the carnival which fundamentally revitalizes the life, sense and time. To close this section, let me quote another phrase from Paz' *The Labyrinth of Solitude,* in which the word "fiesta" could be paraphrased with "carnival":

> The fiesta is a cosmic experiment, an experiment in disorder, reuniting contradictory elements and principles in order to bring about a renascence of life. Ritual death promotes a rebirth [...]. The fiesta is a return to a remote and undifferentiated state, prenatal or pre-

social. It is a return that is also beginning, in accordance with the dialectics that is inherent in social process [Paz 1961: 51–52].

4. Conclusion

Ronald L. Grimes says:

> Celebrations transpire in the ambiance of varying kinds of ritual strategies. Two such strategies are the "superstructuring" and the "deconstructing" of ordinary interaction ritual (Goffman, 1967). Deconstruction is a mode of negation, of symbolic stripping. Superstructuring, on the other hand, is a form of symbolic amplification. If we take as a baseline the gestures, postures, rhythms, dress, and other symbols of everyday living, ritual deconstruction drops below the line of habitual decorum before it rises in dialectical fashion to the immediacy of celebration. Superstructuring, on the other hand, ascends positively by augumenting everyday life to produce a ritual hyperbole.
>
> [...] Superstructuring a celebration means magnifying and turning a culture's good, virtuous, proper side to public view. Deconstructing a celebration means turning the public view toward the under, down, dark, unstructured, or emergent side of culture [Grimes 1982: 273–274].

Reflecting the cosmological model based on the opposite and cooperative relation between the principles of Sky/Order and Underworld/Disorder, Tzotzil public festivities fully adopt these two ritual modes, superstructuring and deconstruction, the former in the Catholic festivities and the latter in the carnival:

Catholic Festivals	:	Carnival
: : /k'in/	:	/ch'ay k'in/
: : Sun	:	Without Sun
: : Day	:	Night
: : Sky	:	Underworld
: : Order	:	Disorder
: : Saints	:	Powerful Strangers

: : New : Old

: : Superstructuring Ritual : Deconstructing Ritual

The Tzotzil public rituals are composed of these two kinds of festivities, which as a whole punctuate, articulate and dramatize the annual ceremonial calendar of the community. While Tzotzil carnival is no other than a deconstructing ritual, many Tzotzil communities observe exchange of visiting saints on the occasions of large /k'in/, the superstructuring rituals, in which the saints, in contrast to the "powerful strangers" of the carnival, strongly represent the orderly aspect of the Tzotzil cosmology, i.e., Our Owner/Sun/Christ principle (Ochiai 1983).

NOTES:

1. The fieldwork upon which this paper is based was undertaken in thirty months between 1978 and 1982 mainly in San Andrés Larráinzar with the aid of a Cultural Pact Scholarship from Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores of Mexican government (1977–1979), grants from Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, Mexico (1978), and Centro de Investigaciones Superiores of Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico (1978–1979), a Presidential Fellowship from the State University of New York at Albany (1979–1982), and a Christopher DeCormier Scholarship from the Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, the State University of New York at Albany (1980). I am deeply grateful to these supporters. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to my teachers, Robert M. Carmack, Gary H. Gossen, Shozo Masuda, and Evon Z. Vogt for having supervised my studies at various stages. I owe the theoretical orientation of this paper to Professor Masao Yamaguchi. My thanks to him.
2. All Tzotzil words in this paper are placed between / / except toponyms. /ch/, /j/, /tz/ and /x/ are pronounced respectively as "č", "h", "ȼ" and "š". Tzotzil makes use of glottalized stops (indicated by a /'/) paralleling unvoiced stops (indicated by a /7/). /b/ followed by a consonant and /b/

in the final position of a word are pronounced as /7m/. The accent is placed on the last syllable of the word unless otherwise indicated. The plural in Tzotzil is indicated by suffixing /-etik/ to a noun, e.g., the plural of /j7ik'al/ (Blackman) is /j7ik'aletik/. Tzotzil used in this paper is the San Andrés variation unless otherwise indicated.

3. The Tzotzil cosmography shown in Figure 2 is visually expressed as the ceremonial platform called /moch/ in San Andrés and /xmoch/ in Chamula on certain occasions (Ochiai & Sanmiguel 1981).
4. Apparently, the Tzotzil concept of /7anjel/ has nothing to do with the Catholic angel despite the phonetic resemblance between /7anjel/ and "ángel" in Spanish. People of San Andrés distinguish /7anjel/, the metamorphosis of Earth Owner, from /7anxel/, a Christian angel, whose impersonators appear during the ceremony of Holy Week (cf. Vogt 1969: 523–526).
5. About the Tzotzil soul concept, see Gossen 1975, Guiteras Holmes 1961: 296–303, Holland 1963: 99–105, Vogt 1969: 369–374, Vogt 1970, and Vogt 1976a: 18–19.
6. Chamula Indians believe that this world is the fourth world ever created by the gods (Gossen 1974: 22, 24). Holland reports that in San Andrés it is believed that this is the third world which is preceded by two earlier worlds destroyed by flood and boiling rain respectively (Holland 1963: 71–72). This idea is comparable with the Aztec myth about the successive creations and destructions of the world which was reported by various early colonial writers (León Portilla 1956: 106–121).
7. In order to avoid confusions, names of the Catholic saints as worship objects are italicized in the text of this paper; otherwise they are toponyms. For example, *San Andrés* is the patron saint of the township of San Andrés.
8. I have already discussed the mythical wanderings of *San Andrés* narrated in the first section of the text on other occasions (Ochiai 1980, 1981).

I have pointed out that the route of the wanderings is paradigmatically and syntagmatically the same as the wanderings of the four mythical ancestors of the Quiché of Guatemala narrated in the *Popol Vuh,* a corpus of mythical and historical accounts of the Quiché transcribed in the sixteenth-century (Edmonson 1971; Recinos 1947).

Apparently, there were deities of music in the prehispanic Maya highlands. In the *Popol Vuh,* Hunchouén and Hunbatz, stepbrothers of the twin heroes, Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué, are depicted as being skillful in music and in art and were venerated by musicians and craftsmen (Recinos 1947: 137–138). *San Miguel,* whose musical mastership is narrated in the Tzotzil oral tradition, seems to have inherited that quality. Though *San Miguel* has no twin counterpart, the contemporary Tzotzil narrative has the following similar structure to the myth of Hunchouén and Hunbatz: (1) Brother(s) of the protagonist(s) was (were) good at music; (2) but, because the musician(s) did not treat his (their) brother(s) well; (3) the protagonist(s) kept him (them) at a distance, i.e., Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué changed their brothers into monkeys, and *San Andrés* ordered *San Miguel* to leave for another place (cf. Ochiai 1981).

About the saint exchange or visiting saints among the Tzotzil communities, see Ochiai 1983.

All the gifts brought by Our Mother, limes (*Citrus limetta* [Laughlin 1975: 213]), oranges (*Citrus aurantium* [Laughlin 1975: 43]) and sugar canes (*Saccharum officinarum* [Laughlin 1975: 363]), are of the Old World origin (line 94). If we attempt to trace back the origin of the narrative, we may have to consider this fact. I would only point out here, however, that these products have already become permanent fixtures within the daily life of the highland Andreseros as lowland products.

9. Cargo system or the civil-religious hierarchy is the characteristic politico-religious institution in Mesoamerican Indian communities. It is the core of a communitywide social structure (cf. Cancian 1967; Rus & Wasserstrom

1980).

10. Vogt, referring to Rodney Needham (1967), discusses that the sound of /t'ent'en/, a small wooden slit drum of the type of Aztec *teponaztli,* induces a transitional atmosphere to the festival of *San Sebastián* which is a New Year ceremony in Zinacantán (Vogt 1977:239). The hypothesis of Needham is, however, about the relationship between the rites of passage and the catalytic quality of the strong percussive sounds which /t'ent'en/ does not produce. /t'ent'en/ as well as /bin/ (kettle drum) of Chamula and Chenalhó are played very softly, and their sound is not loud or keen. Although the festival of *San Sebastián* is, as Vogt points out, a time renewal ceremony of Zinacantán, /t'ent'en/ seems to me to play an integrative role in the festival not for the quality of the sound but for the fact that the drum is heard only once a year on this occasion. In this sense, /t'ent'en/ and /bin/ are semiotically well marked instruments, if not strongly percussive.
11. Vogt finds in the festival of *San Sebastián* of Zinacantán a number of rituals of reversal or inversion of the symbolic oppositions such as husbands: wives, senior: junior, men: women, Indians: Ladinos, and culture: nature (Vogt 1976b). Vogt, however, fails to discuss the context of these inversions from the Zinacanteco cosmological point of view.

REFERENCES:

Bakhtin, Mikhail

1967 Rabelais and his world. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Blaffer, Sarah C.

1972 The black-man of Zinacantan: a Central American legend. University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

Bricker, Victoria R.

1973 Ritual humor in highland Chiapas. University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

1981 The Indian Christ, the Indian king: the historical substrate of Maya myth and ritual. University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

1982 The origin of the Maya solar calendar. Current Anthropology 23:1:101–103.

Burke, Kenneth

1968 Myth, poetry, and philosophy. Language as symbolic action: essays on life, literature, and method. pp. 380–409, University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, California.

Cancian, Frank

1967 Political and religious organizations. Manning Nash, vol. ed., Handbook of Middle American Indians 6: social anthropology. pp. 283–298, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

Coe, Michael D.

1965 A model of ancient community structure in the Maya lowlands. Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 21:2:97–114.

Edmonson, Munro S.

1971 The book of counsel: the *Popol Vuh* of the Quiche Maya of Guatemala. Publication 35, Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Goffman, Erving

1967 Interaction ritual: essays on face-to-face behavior. Doubleday, Garden City, New Jersey.

Gossen, Gary H.

1974 Chamulas in the world of the sun: time and space in a Maya oral tradition. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1975 Animal souls and human destiny in Chamula. Man 10: 448–461.

Grimes, Ronald L.

1982 The lifeblood of public ritual: Fiestas and Public Exploration Projects. Victor Turner, ed., Celebrations: studies in festivity and ritual. pp. 272–283, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington,

D.C.

Guiteras Holmes, Calixta

1946 Informe de San Pedro Chenalhó. Microfilm collection of manuscripts on Middle-American cultural anthropology, first series No.14, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

1961 Perils of the soul: the world view of a Tzotzil Indian. The Free Press of Glencoe, New York City, New York.

Holland, William R.

1963 Medicina maya en los altos de Chiapas: un estudio del cambio socio-cultural. Colección de antropología social No.2, Instituto Nacional Indigenista, México, D.F.

Laughlin, Robert M.

1969 The Tzotzil. Evon Z. Vogt, vol. ed., Handbook of Middle American Indians 8: ethnology I. pp. 152–194, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

1975 The great Tzotzil dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán. Smithsonian contributions to anthropology 19, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

1977 Of cabbages and kings: tales from Zinacantán. Smithsonian contribution to anthropology 23, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Leach, Edmund

1954 Political systems of highland Burma: a study of Kachin social structure. London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London.

León Portilla, Miguel

1956 La filosofía náhuatl: estudios en sus fuentes. Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, México, D.F.

Linn, Priscilla R.

1982 Chamula carnival: the "soul" of celebration. Victor Turner, ed.,

Celebration: studies in festivity and ritual. pp. 190–198, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Needham, Rodney

1967 Percussion and transition. Man 2:606–614.

Ochiai, Kazuyasu

1980 Viaje invernal de los antepasados: una comparación entre el *Popol Vuh* y la tradición oral de los Tzotzil modernos en torno a la fundación del pueblo. Francis Polo Sifontes, *et al.*, La antropología americanista en la actualidad: homenaje a Rafael Girard. Tomo 2, pp. 247–259, Editorial Mexicanos Unidos, México, D.F.

1981 Mekishiko nanbu Tzotzil-goken no koto-densho ni okeru katorikku-seijin no iso. (Sphere of the Catholic saints in a Tzotzil oral tradition of southern Mexico.) Nobukiyo Nomura, ed., Nanbu mekishiko sonraku ni okeru katorikku-kei bunka no kenkyu. (Studies of the Catholic culture in southern Mexican villages.) pp. 261–287, Kyushu University, Fukuoka.

1983 When the saints come marching in: inter-community public rituals among the Tzotzil Indians of southeastern Mexico. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, the State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York.

Ochiai, Kazuyasu, & Inés Sanmiguel

1981 *Moch:* el espacio simbólico de la arquitectura ceremonial entre los Tzotzil de los altos de Chiapas. Paper read at the XVII Mesa Redonda de la Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, June 19–26, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas.

Paz, Octavio

1961 The labyrinth of solitude: life and thought in Mexico. Grove Press, New York City, New York.

Pozas Arciniega, Ricardo

1959 Chamula: un pueblo indio de los altos de Chiapas. Memorias 8,

Instituto Nacional Indigenista, México, D.F.

Recinos, Adrián

1947 *Popol Vuh:* las antiguas historias del Quiché. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, D.F.

Rus, Jan, & Robert F. Wasserstrom

1980 Civil religious hierarchy in central Chiapas: a critical perspective. American Ethnologist 7:3:466–478.

Tozzer, Alfred M.

1941 Landa's Relación de las cosas de Yucatán. Paper of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology 18, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Villa Rojas, Alfonso

1968 Los conceptos de espacio y tiempo entre los grupos mayences contemporáneos. Appendix to Miguel León Portilla's Tiempo y realidad en el pensamiento maya: ensayo de acercamiento. pp. 119–167, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, D.F.

Vogt, Evon Z.

1969 Zinacantan: a Maya community in the highlands of Chiapas. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1970 Human souls and animal spirits in Zinacantan. Jean & Pierre Maranda, eds., Échanges et communications: mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss à l'occasion de son 60ème anniversaire. pp. 1148–1167, Mouton, the Hague.

1976a Tortillas for the gods: a symbolic analysis of Zinacanteco rituals. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1976b Rituals of reversal as a means of rewiring social structure. Agehananda Bharati, ed., The realm of the extra-human: ideas and actions, pp. 201–212, Mouton Publishers, The Hague.

1977 On the symbolic meaning of percussion in Zinacanteco ritual. Journal of Anthropological Research 33:3:231–244.

Yamaguchi, Masao

1975 Bunka to ryogisei. (Culture and ambiguity.) Iwanami-Shoten, Publishers, Tokyo.