

1. DESCRIPTION

1.1 Name(s) of society: The Western Mixe (1)

Name of language: Mixe (1)

Name of language family: Mixe-Zoque (1)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): mxp and mto (1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

--Located between 96° and 97° W and between 16° and 18° N. (1; see Languages of Mexico map)

--"The Mixe occupy an area of 5,829 square kilometers in the Sierra Madre of northeastern Oaxaca. Elevations range from 400 meters to more than 3,300 meters." (2)

1.4 Brief history:

--At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Mixe continuity on the Gulf Coast was disrupted by a series of Central Mexican (Pipil) and Maya invasions. They were also forced to cede the western isthmus region to the Huave, and Nexapa to the Zapotec. Under a succession of kings, the Mixe waged war against the Zapotec, the Mixtec, and their allies. Despite their numerical superiority, these groups, seeking tribute and territory, were unable to defeat the Mixe. By 1522, however, the Mixe had become tributary subjects of the Zapotec lord of Tehuantepec. Although the Spaniards were able to subdue a few settlements in 1531, by 1560 the Mixe had not been conquered. The final pacification of the Mixe nation was carried out by Dominican friars, who established parishes and centers of evangelization throughout the region. Cruel treatment and excessive tribute resulted in serious rebellions in 1570, 1660, and 1661. Following the initial expeditions of the Conquest, there were no large movements of Spanish settlers into the region. In 1660 a decree ordering the consolidation of the dispersed settlements into larger nucleated towns, in order to administer and missionize the Mixe more effectively, resulted in the decimation of the population from typhoid, smallpox, and influenza epidemics. Although forced labor drafts had been discontinued by 1650, tribute in goods was drawn from the Mixe region as late as 1789. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the Mixe region has undergone marked economic, political, and religious change brought about by the construction of roads, the advent of state development agencies, and renewed Catholic missionary activity. Contemporary Mixe culture is an amalgam of indigenous, Spanish-colonial, and regional Oaxaca traits. The retention of the Mixe language and territory was instrumental in preserving many native religious beliefs and practices. (2)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

--INFLUENCE OF THE SPANISH:

--"Spanish influence is most evident in village layout and housing construction, religion, livestock, and the use of metal tools. Slash-and-burn agriculture and digging-stick technology is complemented, in some villages, by European plow agriculture." (2)

--"The final pacification of the Mixe nation was carried out by [Spanish] Dominican friars, who established parishes and centers of evangelization throughout the region." (2)

--"In 1660 a decree ordering the consolidation of the dispersed settlements into larger nucleated towns, in order to administer and missionize the Mixe more effectively, resulted in the decimation of the population from typhoid, smallpox, and influenza epidemics." (2)

--REGIONAL INFLUENCE:

--"Regional influence, such as the presence of the dress and music of the Isthmus, is also a factor." (2)

--"The construction of roads in the region has greatly facilitated the introduction of new foods, industrial goods, and the replacement of thatched roofs with corrugated-metal ones." (2)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

--"Their habitat is characterized by pine-oak and tropical mountain forests, and open grasslands. Much of the area is under cultivation and in various states of reforestation by secondary vegetation. There are several lowland, riverine communities, situated in a wet, tropical-forest zone in the northeastern portion of the Mixe region. The average annual rainfall is from 150 to 250 centimeters, with the greatest portion occurring from June to October. The climate is a moderately warm, pluvial one with cold winters and hot summers." (2)

--The western Mixe area is generally a little higher and somewhat more rugged. The Mixe country is always green and almost everywhere forested except for farm clearings. Precipitation varies with area and altitude. It is estimated that the driest part of the Mixe country receives sixty inches of rainfall a year but in many places, the total is probably double that amount. March and April are regarded as dry months. Heaviest rain occurs from May to October, sometimes raining continuously for 15 days at a time. Streams are large and numerous. A large part of the Mixe country is covered with pine and oak forests. (3 page 6)

1.7 Population size:

--The population of the Mixe is about 76,000 as of 1991. (4)

Mean village size:

--Varies according to which village or "municipio" is being studied. Here are a few examples from 1991:

--There are 1,382 inhabitants of San Pablo Chiltepec. (4 page 2)

--There are 1,368 inhabitants of San Juan Ixcatlan. (4 page 2)

Home range size:

--This varies depending on where the home is located. Within municipios, families may own a house in the town proper, where houses are typically found very close together. Or they may live on individual ranches or clustered rancherías that are spread out on the surrounding agricultural land that encompasses each head town. (3 page 14)

Density:

--Only density statistics for certain municipios (or townships) within the Mixe region could be found:

--Density of San Pablo Chiltepec (a municipio or township of 1,382 people) is 12.45/square km. (4 pg 2)

--Density of San Juan Ixcatlan (a municipio of 1,368 people) is 13.6 people/square km. (4 page 2)

2. ECONOMY

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

--"Maize as well as beans, chilies, and squashes are grown by means of slash-and-burn agriculture. Bananas, potatoes, root crops, and a variety of tropical fruits are also cultivated to a certain extent." (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

--"Turkeys and chickens are kept around the household, and, in some villages, sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle are raised. Fishing and hunting constitute a significant, but not major, means of obtaining provisions." (2)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?

--HUNTING: Weapons are used to hunt and fish. "Young boys hunt small birds with slingshots. Fish are taken with hooks, nets, wicker-basket fish traps, weirs, and dynamite." (4 page 3) Though larger game is rarely hunted now, rifles are used when ammunition can be afforded. (3 page 108) Hafting of iron and steel tools occurs however these are usually used for agricultural purposes instead of violent weapons.

--Anciently the Mixe were warlike. Other than Spanish troops making raids in the area, military invasions have been extremely rare. Even bandits, neighboring Zapatistas, and others have kept strictly out of the Mixe territory. For this reason, little is discussed about warlike weapons other than Beals mentioning the "population that was easily angered by outside intrusion" possessed guns. (3 page 7)

--Beals also wrote, "Although I probably saw several hundred fights, I saw no weapon used, although nearly all men carried machetes and many carried rifles." (3 page 29)

2.4 Food storage:

--Crops such as maize are stored. "The unhusked ears are saved for the next planting and eaten last since they do not decompose as quickly as the smaller ears. The maize is dried in the sun for three days. The maize is then stored in the house and wooden granary. The unhusked ears are hung from rafters and stored on the bottom of the stack. The smallest ears are on top for easy access. Every fifteen or twenty days the ears are gone over and a powder, which penetrates them, beaten off. The putrid ears are separated every month and stored elsewhere. In this way, the maize will last for ten months." (4 page 23)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

--"Men do most of the agricultural work, but they are assisted by women in the weeding, harvesting, shelling, and storing of the maize. The two sexes also share in the harvesting and preparation of coffee beans and in attending to the pigs and poultry, gathering firewood, sewing, housekeeping, marketing, and carrying loads. Men are responsible for the pasturing of livestock, house building, hunting and fishing, distant marketing, and the repair of tools. Politics, government, and the administration of village feasts are also in the hands of the men. Women care for the children, prepare and cook the food, do laundry, and clean the house." (2)

2.6 Land tenure:

--"In villages that annually shift plots, cultivated fields are held in usufruct by a family for one season, after which it reverts back to the community. In villages with longer intervals between fallow (unplanted) periods and annual cultivation, the land is held by a family as long as it is worked continuously. Since the land is legally owned by the community, only usufruct rights and capital improvements made on the land may be transferred to another individual by cash payment. Only coffee trees can be sold, not the soil on which the trees are grown. Lands unsuitable for agriculture are used as a communal source of firewood and grazing." (2)

2.7 Ceramics:

--"Preoccupied with subsistence activities, the Mixe are perforce restricted in their concern for arts and crafts. A few communities engage in textile weaving, basketwork, and ceramics." (2)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

--PRESCRIBED: Following traditional marriage guidelines, the groom and his family are required to give gifts to the bride and her family. After the bride's family accepts the suitor as their daughter's future husband, the suitor's father may hand out a variety of gifts such as cigarettes, tobacco, snails, skunks, bread, or maize. The

girl's godfather then presents a turkey or bundle of sugar cakes to the suitor's household. During the period of suitor service, the suitor brings several small gifts to the girl and the suitor's father and grandfather give one large gift to the girl's household. This may be a large amount of meat, tamales, bread, mescal, soap, garlic, cakes, or other refreshments. And finally on the day of the wedding, the groom gives the bride's household a gift of maize, cigarettes, and a live pig or turkey. (4 pages 123-124)

2.9 Food taboos:

--"Interesting is the survival of a salt taboo for the mother following birth. Her first food, given about the second day, is atole or corn gruel prepared without salt. For two or three days she is fed only this. Then other ore solid food is gradually given to her in increasing quantities and salt is added to the food in the same way. This diet also excludes fats and meats for a time, a common Indian taboo. Normal diet is given in about ten days. There are no restrictions whatsoever on the husband." (3 page 52)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

--None. The Mixe travel by foot across the terrain whenever they must move to a new house or visit others. "In communities where good agricultural lands are distant from the village, families reside on small farms during the planting, weeding, and harvesting periods. Homestead families must carry heavy household goods and food back and forth over the mountains to and from the community center." (2) Many villages are inaccessible to motorized transport. "Supplies such as maize, sugar, salt, and beer are brought in by pack animals." (2)

3. ANTHROPOMETRY

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

--Beals did not distinguish between males and females in his ethnology. "The Mixe are short, with an average stature of 5 feet 2 inches. Rarely are there individuals who are greatly over the average." (3 page 12)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

--No specific weights were given but Beals described the physical characteristics of the Mixe. "Despite their short stature and the evident malnutrition of many individuals, the Mixe are a sturdy, stocky people. They are generally more heavily built with broad shoulders, deep chest, and short arms. Their features are usually broad and flat for Indians and the lips are somewhat thick. The Mixe are of rather pleasing appearance. The women are usually slight, even in old age, and girls often have faintly pink cheeks." (3 pages 12-13)

4. LIFE HISTORY, MATING, AND MARRIAGE

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

--Not found. It was not mentioned in Beal's ethnology or other sources because the Mixe does not stress puberty and rites of passage relating to adolescence. Childbirth, marriage, and death are the only rites of passage celebrated through rituals and ceremonies. (3 page 51, 4 pages 117-134)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

--Not specified but a man and woman are traditionally not allowed to sleep and live together until after the last marriage rite is completed. (4 page 125) The marriageable age for men and women is from ages sixteen to eighteen. (4 page 123) As a result, it would appear most women have their first child shortly after this age.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

--No specific data on the typical family size was found. However, it was stated that children are considered an important aspect to the household productivity. (4 page 117) Older children learn important gender-related domestic and economic tasks by observing and imitating their parents. (2) Because children can play such a big role in helping in the household, on the farm, and around the community, it can be assumed that the Mixe have larger families to increase productivity.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

--Not found.

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

--"The age of marriage has a wide range, from eighteen to thirty years. Weddings at Juquila [a district in Oaxaca] are more elaborate than anywhere else. The girl marries at fifteen to eighteen years, the man at twenty-one or twenty-two." (3 pages 42 and 45)

--The marriageable age for men and women is from ages sixteen to eighteen. (4 page 123)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

--"Divorce is rare and informal." (2)

--"There is a reasonable amount of faithfulness after marriage. There are postmarital relations of an irregular kind, but most husbands and wives seem to get along quite well. Should there be flagrant unfaithfulness by either, the marriage would ordinarily split up. This is to be avoided by both parties unless there is an

incompatibility of temperament which makes the union impossible. Both are apt to suffer in their reputations and to have difficulty in making a satisfactory remarriage if they separate without obvious reasons." (3 pg 49)
--"The purely ostentatious character of church marriage is indicated by the fact that separations occur as freely after a church marriage as before. Separations are usually caused by excessive drunkenness or mistreatment by the man, by inattention to household duties on the part of the woman, or by some variant of the triangle situation. After a separation, children are divided like chickens and the wife returns to her parents." (3 page 43)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

--"Although the nuclear family is the predominant type, limited polygamy occurs in several villages." (2)
--Some men maintain common-law wives in other villages and they live with them for part of the year. The children from the secondary union may live with the man in his initial household but with wishes of the primary wife precludes the establishment of a polygamous family household. However, in the western portion of the Mixe region, limited non-sororal polygyny is present in those villages in which women carry out a substantial part of the agricultural activities. This occurs when there is a need for increased labor productivity. Jealousy is prevented by rotating obligations and privileges equally among the wives. (4 page 7)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry:

--After a ritual has been carried out that signifies a particular "suitor" as the boyfriend and future husband of a girl, "an additional agreement is made that the suitor will work for the girl's father for a period of one or two years. The suitor now appears fairly regularly at the girl's house, occasionally bringing small gifts of food. At times, the boy's parents also bring fish, meat, and small sundry items. During the period of suitor service, one major gift of food is given to the girl's household by the suitor's father and godfather." (4 page 124)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

--"Property is ideally distributed to all children, irrespective of age or sex. In some cases, the father will give more to his sons and less to his daughters or, if there is insufficient land, all will go to the son. A woman retains the rights over her lands and other property after she becomes married. In case of divorce, she retains her property. Offspring who are faring poorly are given more consideration than siblings in a better economic position. The expenses for a son's marriage or education may be considered his inheritance, and the house lot and lands divided among the other siblings. Inheritance from husband to wife is rare." (2)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

--RAISING CHILDREN: "Obedience is stressed in late childhood but is seldom enforced. Older children learn gender-related domestic and economic tasks by observing and imitating their parents. Siblings and nonkin playmates obey each other on the basis of age. Children are scolded and restrained from displaying aggression toward siblings and playmates, and begin to perform public service at early adolescence." (2)

--ARRANGING MARRIAGES: Parents play a huge role in arranging their children's marriages. See 4.30

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

--Little is known. Beals discusses what he found in his ethnology: "Most of these sexual attitudes would appear to be very long standing. *The Confessionario* of Father Quintana, published in 1733, makes many references to homosexual and other abnormal sexual practices, which would suggest that they were very common. Probably, there is homosexuality present in a group of this size but I could learn absolutely nothing about it. However, the data on homosexual practices in non-Aztec Mexico indicate clearly that they were developed to an amazing degree both north and south of the Mixe. Consequently, they possibly existed aboriginally among the Mixe." (3 page 50)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

--"Marriages are village endogamous and prohibited with individuals whose ancestors are separated less than four generations from Ego." (2) Men make a request for the woman in their municipio (aka village) they wish to marry. The marriage is then arranged by the parents and kin of both families (see 4.30 for more details). The preliminary feasts and marriage ceremonies are also held within the village and are large gatherings of everyone who lives in the village. (4 page 123-125)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

--Males do not play a role in conception. "The dried tail of an opossum, scraped and taken with agave brandy, is believed to induce conception. The sex of the animal determines that of the child." (4 page 117) There is no evidence of other fathers recognized. Children have godfathers and coparents but these roles are only used in rituals and ceremonies. Only one man (the husband and/or sexual partner of the woman) is recognized as the biological father of a child. (3, 4)

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

--Very little is discussed about the Mixe's views regarding conception. However, it is known that only one man and one woman are recognized for having procreated a child. (No totems or multiple fathers are seen as responsible for conception). "The Mixe regard pregnancy and childbirth as a perfectly natural occurrence. I

never saw anything to indicate that there was the slightest distaste for pregnancy on the part of the woman; on the other hand, it does not seem to arouse great emotion and young children are treated rather casually but usually rather well." (3 page 51)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

--No. "The dried tail of an opossum, scraped and taken with agave brandy, is believed to induce conception. The sex of the animal determines that of the child." (4 page 117)

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape:

--Such occurrences are rare and are not socially acceptable. Any domestic mistreatment of women is a justified reason for a wife to separate from her husband without her reputation being negatively affected. (3 page 43) It appears sexual coercion is not very common as both sexes enjoy sexual freedoms. (See 4.18)

4.17 Preferential category for spouse:

--There is no specific preferential category for a spouse. There are only a few guidelines when selecting a spouse. It is important that the girl and boy are from the same village. Young people seek mates that have a good reputation within the community and a common set of economic interests. And a marriage will be in the best standing if they give proper preliminary feasts, if they boy and girl both voluntarily consent to marrying the other, and if the marriage is arranged with help of the parents. (4 pages 40-41)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

--Yes. "In general, the Mixe have a tolerant attitude toward all sexual relationships. Casual sex relations are evidently quite common before marriage and are not particularly frowned upon. Unmarried mothers are frequent and apparently still have a good chance of getting a fair husband. It is only when a girl or woman gets the reputation of making frequent changes in her lovers that she is really held in disrepute." (3 page 48)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring.

--None. A man only gives presents to his future wife after she agrees to marry him. See 4.8 for details.

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

--"Adoptions are quite common among close kin if a child becomes an orphan. If the father survives the mother, another couple may adopt the child as "nephew" since they are in a better position to maintain the child. In most cases, men do no process food or cook so if the mother dies, the child is adopted by an "aunt" and the father commonly lives separately with his sister. Although the child, if a son, will still work in his father's fields." (4 page 7)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

--Specific data could not be found. However, Lipp writes that polygynous marriages are often ascribed to a disproportionate male/female sex ratio. (4 page 7) Because limited polygyny occurs, it can be assumed that most areas have a fairly even adult sex ration since there are usually plenty of spouse options.

4.22 Evidence for couvade:

--No, couvade syndrome does not occur. In fact, once conception is known to have occurred, the mother goes to the sweat bath once and from this time on, the father no longer cohabits with his wife. He may not return to live with his wife until 5 of 6 months after the birth of their child. (3 pages 51 and 52)

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers:

--None. Only one man is recognized as the child's father. However, godparents play an essential role too. "Godparents take on parental roles in that they are responsible for the moral and educational development of their godchildren, in addition to providing some economic assistance when called upon." (4 page 7)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

--Strict respect for elder kin: "Reverence for the aged was formerly inculcated very strongly. An elderly person was always to be saluted respectfully, probably by hand kissing." (3 page 55)

4.24 Joking relationships? None found.

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:

--Descent and inheritance is bilateral among the Mixe. Descent is traced equally through both males and females. Land and possessions are distributed equally among siblings irrespective of age or sex. (4 page 3)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules:

--"Incest taboos are extended bilaterally to all consanguines including third-degree collaterals in an ascending or descending generation. Anyone who is not at least four generations distant from Ego is prohibited as a marital partner. However, marriage between second cousins is not unknown." (4 page 5)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

--Yes. 12 large tamales, two gourd cups of atole, money, and the wedding dress are carried to the bride's house on the morning of the wedding day. The groom presents the bride's household with a gift of maize, mescal, cigarettes, and a live pig or turkey. The church wedding follows. After the church wedding, a feast is held that lasts one day and one night. The two households and the groom's godfather pay it for. The feast is large and open to the entire village. The first phase takes place at the house of the groom's godfather. Here,

they eat tamales, drink coffee, and dance. Next, the wedding party invites everyone to the bride's house and then they move to the groom's house where they again eat and dance. Three days later, the marriage godfathers bring the couple to the church, give them jewelry, and wish them good luck in their new lives. Fifteen or twenty days later, another feast is held by the groom's parents in gratitude to their godfather. Only after this last wedding rite can the couple live and sleep together. (4 pages 124 and 125)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

--"Names were formerly given to the child by a shaman or native priest. Native names were in use up to very recent times, but I learned of none at present. Names used contemporaneously are saints' names, which for practical purposes are abbreviated into forms easier for the Mixe to pronounce. The surname of the father is only used by a small percentage of the Mixe. Instead, a second name which appeals to the parents or godparents is usually given." (3 page 53)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (M/F difference?)

--"Marriages are village endogamous." (2) Men make a request for the woman in their municipio (aka village) they wish to marry. The marriage is then arranged by the parents and kin of both families (see 4.30 for more details). The preliminary feasts and marriage ceremonies are also held within the village and are large gatherings of everyone who lives in the village. (4 page 123-125) No m/f difference.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges?

--"Marriage is regulated by the parents as an alliance between kin groups, formalized by gift exchange." When a boy is between ages 16 and 18, he begins looking for a girl to marry. The young man cannot directly ask the girl so he must send his father and godfather to petition to the girl's parents for her hand in marriage. The first time they go, the daughter is not present. The girl's parents won't give a reply right away; they set a time period of 15 to 30 days to consult with the girl and other family members. After this period, the parents of the boy return to hear the decision. If their pronouncement is favorable, another period of one to three months is set aside for the girl's parents to discuss it further with the girl and her godparents. Multiple people ask the girl if she wishes on her own free will to marry the boy. They want to ensure her decision is voluntary and based on love and affection. If the girl wishes to marry the boy, the boy is summoned and declares his determination to marry the girl. Next, the boy's parents visit the girl's parents three to six times before a final decision is made. During all these time periods, other suitors are allowed to petition for the girl's hand. Finally, once a favorable agreement has been reached, a ritual is performed that signifies that the suitor is the "boyfriend" of the girl. Next, bride service arrangements are made discussed in 4.8 (4 page 123)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

--Although the parents and kin of young boys and young girls are so heavily involved in arranging their marriages, there is surprisingly no mention of conflicting interests. Boys' parents only try to arrange marriages with girls that the boys' have selected as their future wife. And though the girl's parents must approve of her suitor, they discuss the idea of marriage with the girl for several days. They ensure that the girl voluntarily and freely wishes to marry the suitor with love and affection. Thus, though marriages are arranged and must be approved, families still take the children's desires and feelings into account when making their decision. This explains why there is little conflict seen. (4 pages 123-125)

WARFARE/HOMOCIDE

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

--Not found. Information about warfare can be found in 4.15 under out-group conflicts/violence.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

--IN-GROUP CONFLICTS/VIOLENCE:

--I could not find many references to in-group killing and death at all. This is probably because over the past several decades, the town government has punished crimes. "Grievances resulting from theft, inheritance, debts, and drunkenness are handled by town courts; major crimes, such as homicide, by the district court." (2) Because of this control, revenge killings and wider spread of violence is prevented. Furthermore, violent acts are also prevented by informal mechanisms of social control. "Informal mechanisms of social control include fear of gossip, threats of sorcery, and ostracism from social life. A strong deterrent is the belief that anger and aggression cause illness and death." (2)

--"The Mixe indulge in frequent fist fights, especially while drunk. Although I probably saw several hundred fights, I saw no weapon used, although nearly all men carried machetes and many carried rifles. Most fights start with a drunken quarrel. The men hold out their weapons to the onlookers, and then begin to fight with their fists, swinging wildly until one falls down. The victor helps his opponent to his feet and usually they embrace each other. Then they have a drink together. Sometimes, when one of the men is hurt by falling on a rock or the fight threatens to become too serious, both men are put in jail overnight." (4 page 29)

--OUT-GROUP CONFLICTS/VIOLENCE:

--Very little is mentioned about the occurrence of violence or killing between the Mixe and other groups. However, it is known that anciently, the Mixe were warlike people. The Mixe were such a feared group that it is doubtful Spanish troops even entered the country except for a few military raids. Since the Spanish conquest, independent military invasions have been even more rare. "Felix Diaz is said to have traversed the region during the French intervention; the Carranzistas entered Juquila Mizes over two decades ago—and were fortunate to get out alive. Federal troops entered Isquintepee for a short time in the latter 1920's to pacify a village quarrel—at the request of the political boss who could not settle the difficulty without losing prestige. With these exceptions, bandits, Zapatistas [their neighbors], and others have kept strictly out of Mixe territory. And small wonder! There is little or no loot or political advantage to be had for the pains of toiling across precipitous ridges and through dense woods inhabited by a population easily angered by any outside intrusion and possessing guns which it uses with disconcerting accuracy." (3 page 7)

--In addition to the fierce, deadly reputation of the Mixe, another reason that not much history of killings and warfare is found is due to their location. "The Mixe occupy the highest, most rugged and isolated region of the mountainous state of Oaxaca." (3 page 9) Their sites are largely inaccessible.

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

--See 4.15. The causes of any violence are listed there.

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

--As described in 4.15, the Mixe are a regionally isolated group and they occupy mountainous sites that are nearly inaccessible to outsiders. "It is a region of heavy forests, torrential rains, and clammy fogs [...] The Mixe have been left very much alone in their mountains. The main trails all shun the region to pass through the scarcely less high but more open, less abrupt, and drier Zapotec mountains." (3 page 9) As established in 4.15, the Mixe are known to be a dangerously aggressive group against any outside intrusion. Due to their deadly reputation and their isolated location, their Zapatista neighbors, bandits, and others all strictly keep out of their region. (3 page 7) Thus, very little interaction other than trade (see 5.12) occurs.

4.18 Cannibalism?

--None found.

5. SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND INTERACTION

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

--Varies according to which village or "municipio" is being studied. Here are a few examples from 1991:

--There are 1,382 inhabitants of San Pablo Chiltepec. (4 page 2)

--There are 1,368 inhabitants of San Juan Ixcatlan. (4 page 2)

--Within these municipios, families may own a house in the town proper, where houses are typically found very close together. Or they may live on individual ranches or clustered rancherías with their families that are spread out on the surrounding agricultural land that encompasses each head town. (3 page 14)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

--Mobility patterns are based on agriculture. People who live in villages often move to a coffee plantation to work there for a three-month period. In communities where good agricultural lands are distant from the village, families move to and reside on small farms during the planting, weeding, and harvesting periods. (2)

--Since community members are required to serve in the civil-religious organization and participate in annual communal labor, homestead families must carry heavy household goods and food back and forth over the mountains to and from the community center. The need to modify their settlement pattern, by moving to distant land better suited to agriculture, was checked by the cash cropping of coffee and by intervillage trade.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans, wealth or status classes):

--"The Mixe region is composed of territorial districts, divided into a number of *municipios* and an administrative head town. Each municipio administers its own affairs and those of smaller villages and farms within its territorial boundaries. Villages are divided typically into two landowning divisions or wards. Civil officials are chosen from each ward in alternating years; kin groups tend to be ward localized. Except for the secretary, elected town officials receive no salary and work as a community service. Refusal leads to banishment. Positions are ranked in a hierarchy and prestige is largely related to the kinds of positions a man has held in the political and religious organizations. A formal, corporate organization that owns land or cattle provides for the administration, upkeep, and religious services of the village church. In addition, there is a complex hierarchy of religious officials appointed by the civil officials and village elders. Each of these religious officials or "stewards" is required to provide work, goods, and funds for a village feast lasting from one to several days." (2)

5.4 Post marital residence:

The residence pattern is virilocal after marriage. This means they either live with or near the husband's father's group. This is followed by a subsequent shift to neolocal residence, once such a move is economically

feasible. A neolocal residence is located away from both the husband's and wife's relatives. (2)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

--"The Mixe region is composed of territorial districts, divided into a number of *municipios* and an administrative head town. Each municipio administers its own affairs and those of smaller villages and farms within its territorial boundaries. Villages are divided typically into two landowning divisions or wards." (2)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

--"Mixe age sets involve an array of roles and obligations related to the politico-religious organization. Kinship terms are used to address nonkin on the basis of age relative to the speaker. Except for that of the elders, Mixe age sets serve to emphasize the status of villagers as equals, juniors, and seniors." (2)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: None found.

5.8 Village and house organization:

--"Prior to the conquest, the Mixe lived in nucleated settlements and small farms dispersed along mountain crests and slopes, and concentrated in valleys. Contemporary settlements consist of nucleated, compact communities or single homesteads and hamlet clusters centripetally dispersed from the community center." 2

--"The Western Mixe present a wide variety of house types although a fundamental principal appears very quickly. All houses are rectangular, roughly twice as long as they are wide. The door is always on the side. Windows are almost unknown. The basic roof type is a high steeply pitched, hipped-gable, thatched roof often supported independently of the walls." (3 page 109)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

--"The sweathouse is an important part of many Mixe houses. It is resorted to for all sorts of minor ailments, colds, aching of the body, or any slight indisposition. It is used by women when they discover they are pregnant and after childbirth to hasten recovery." (3 page 113)

--Other specialized village structures include schools, churches, and municipal buildings. (3 page 111)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

--The Mixe sleep inside their homes described in 5.8 but house furnishings are meager. The only furniture mentioned by Beals was a table usually serving as a house altar, sometimes another table, two or three chairs, a chest, and a plank bench used for storage or sitting. Because Beal mentioned nothing about beds, cots, or hammocks, it can be inferred that the Western Mixe probably sleep on the earth floors. (3 page 112)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

--Families extend solidarity and economic exchange by establishing ritual-kinship ties (such as the naming of godparents and coparents) often at life-cycle celebrations. Ritual-kinship relations may be between two families or extended into highly elaborate, interwoven networks within the community and beyond it. (2)

--"Mixe age sets involve an array of roles and obligations related to the politico-religious organization. Except for that of the elders, Mixe age sets are noncorporate and serve to underscore the status of villagers as equals, juniors, and seniors." (2)

--Kinship organization is bilateral and based on the generation system; and kinship terms are used to address nonkin on the basis of age relative to the speaker. (2)

--"Dancers and musicians are organized into formal groupings. There are also communal work groups and informal groups for agricultural production and other daily activities. (2)

--"The construction of new roads linking the Mixe region with the national economy has led to incipient class formation in the form of large retail enterprises and a truck-owning elite." (2)

5.12 Trade:

--"The Mixe region has a number of village markets, where a wide variety of foodstuff products and merchandise, such as clothing, is sold. Village marketplaces operate on different weekdays to form a mutually interdependent regional market system. Itinerant (traveling) traders carrying fish, rope, sandals, hats, and other merchandise ply their wares (goods) from house to house. These items are usually exchanged for coffee, which serves as an all-purpose exchange medium. The traders bring the coffee to the lowlands to be sold, and return with more merchandise." (2)

--"The Mixe region participates in the national and world economy by exporting large amounts of coffee. The profit from the cash crop, coffee, and the price paid for commercial maize and other imported merchandise depend on how far a village is from motorized transport facilities." (2)

--"Store owners in larger villages sell dry goods to the local and surrounding population. Many store owners also sell maize and beer in large quantities to muleteers who then transport this merchandise to surrounding villages, where it is exchanged for coffee or cash." (2)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

--Civil officials' positions are ranked in a hierarchy and prestige is largely related to the kinds of positions a man has held in the political and religious organizations. In addition, there is a complex hierarchy of religious officials appointed by the civil officials and village elders. (2)

6. RITUAL/CEREMONY/RELIGION (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

The Mixe celebrate passage rites such as birth, marriage, and death; important Catholic events like Easter; agriculture rituals; sorcery rituals; astronomical rituals; and community festivals. (4 pages 92-135)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

--"Dispensaries and practitioners of cosmopolitan biomedicine are limited to towns accessible by motorized transport. Some illnesses are recognized as owing to natural agencies, such as sudden shifts in body temperature, anger, and overexertion. Diarrhea, skin infections, and many other illnesses are treated with medicinal plants and sweat baths. Superhuman causes of illness include nonfulfillment of ritual obligations, social conflict, soul loss, witchcraft, and sorcery. Shamanic curing rituals of sacrificial burned and blood offerings are carried out to expiate a moral offense, retrieve a soul, or remove an injury caused by malevolent human forces. There are also specialists for child birthing, setting broken bones, massaging body ailments, and healing snake bites." (2)

--"Curers obtain the knowledge to cure through dreams, plant-induced visions, apprenticeship, and by means of cash payments to other shamans or the exchange of information with them. Divination with maize and the interpretation of the pulse are the primary means of diagnosis; curing is done primarily by means of medicinal plants and ritual sacrifices." (2)

--"The propitious days for rituals or any major undertaking, the meaning of dreams and omens, and the causes of social disequilibrium and affliction are ascertained by a class of calendar priests." (2)

6.2 Stimulants:

--In older times, for the proper traditional wedding ceremony, the groom and his parents went to the neighbors with cigarettes and asked them to come and help grind corn. This asking with tobacco is an old form of almost compulsory request and is probably the only surviving aboriginal usage of tobacco." (3 pg 46)

--The bridal party and guests drink and smoke at wedding celebrations. (3 page 45)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

--"Mixe culture commands a large corpus of ceremonies, including rites of passage, rituals related to agriculture, hunting, and other economic pursuits, rituals for civil-religious authorities, and rituals for the well-being of the family and the community. These ceremonies include offerings of bundles of split wood, eggs, maize meal, agave brandy, candles, tobacco, and sacrificial offerings of fowl." (2)

--BIRTH RITUALS: "Three days after the birth of a child, a ritual is performed that symbolizes the child's birth in the family and expresses gratitude for the infant's full health. The rite is carried out so that the child will grow strong and healthy, able to withstand any illness, and his or her guardian spirit will be protected from demons, persons, and fright illness." Then, parents choose ritual coparents for the child and "the Catholic baptism is carried out when the priest arrives for the next feast." (4 pages 120 and 121)

--DEATH RITUALS: "Prior to the Spanish Conquest, the dead were buried in fields; the bones were later hung in baskets from trees or placed in temple charnel houses. Although burial within cemeteries was instituted by the Catholic missionaries, until the nineteenth century, the dead were also buried inside churches. Prior to interment, a wake and feast are held, and some communities have elaborate ceremonies to insure that the ghost does not harm or frighten its living relatives." (2)

6.4 Other Rituals:

--"Yacoche alone retains a hair-cutting ceremonial. The boy's hair is cut at the age of one year, and the godparents give a necklace which is worn through life. The same day all go to church. As the same age, a girl is also given a necklace, although the hair is not cut. The girl's necklace forms the beginning of the accumulation of bead strings, often many pounds in weight, which characterizes the women of Yacoche." (3 page 53)

--"In all Mixe villages, the yearly cycles of labor and rest and of planting and harvesting are marked by a series of community-wide religious fiestas. Although each township has its particular cycle of fiestas, all are held in honor of a Catholic saint or some important event in the Christian calendar, such as Easter." (7 page 134)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

--"Mixe origin mythology revolves around the sacred twins, a boy and girl, who after a series of episodic adventures, ascend to the sky to become the Sun and Moon." (2)

--Roman Catholicism heavily influences the religion. As a result, "the supreme being, the sole creator of heaven and earth and all other greater-than-human reality configurations, is Dios or "Our Father". (4 page 25)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

--"Preoccupied with subsistence activities, the Mixe are perforce restricted in their concern for arts and crafts. A few communities engage in textile weaving, basketwork, and ceramics. Women's blouses are woven for the tourist trade. Great artistic attention is given to music, dance, and costume, which are exhibited primarily during community feasts. Aesthetic sentiment is also expressed in festive household altars and in the elegant

arrangement of candles, pine needles, and other objects for nocturnal ceremonies." (2)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

--Only men serve as religious officials. "There is a complex hierarchy of religious officials appointed by the civil officials and village elders. Each of these religious officials or "stewards" is required to provide work, goods, and funds for a village feast lasting from one to several days." (2)

--Furthermore, under Roman Catholic law, only men can become priests.

6.8 Missionary effect:

--The Spanish conquest was primarily a conquest of souls. "It was begun by an intrepid Dominican missionary and carried on by others who had the patience and determination to learn the Mixe tongue. Christianity consequently became what it still is in the nonprogressive villages, an adjunct to the surviving native religion. The church is merely another shrine at which sacrifices are made and where, until very recent years, idols were often kept openly on the altar with the images of saints." (3 page 7)

--"The final pacification of the Mixe nation was carried out by Dominican friars, who established parishes and centers of evangelization throughout the region. In 1780, the Dominicans were replaced by Spanish secular priests, who were expelled after the War of Independence. Thereafter, the region was served by only one priest, who came to the villages for the annual religious feast." (2)

6.9 RCR revival:

--"In the latter part of the twentieth century, the Mixe region has undergone marked economic, political, and religious change brought about by the construction of roads, the advent of state development agencies, and renewed Catholic missionary activity. Devotion to God and the Catholic saints is expressed by the maintenance of household altars and a cycle of religious feasts." (2)

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

--"The spirits of the dead are believed to dwell in the vicinity in which they had previously lived. Another belief is that the errant soul is purified in an underworld flame prior to its journey to heaven. During a yearly feast for the dead, food is given to household visitors who are said to represent the ancestral spirits." (2)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

--None found.

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

--None. Refer to 4.28 for information about how individuals are named.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

--"Mixe religious belief consists of diverse elements of Spanish Catholic and indigenous origin. In some villages, Protestant groups have had significant success in converting the villagers. Devotion to God and the Catholic saints is expressed by the maintenance of household altars and a cycle of religious feasts. Native deities include Thunder, a rain and crop deity; Earth, a source of sustenance and the repository of wisdom; Great Lady Life, the deity of conception, childbirth, and medicine; and the Lord of the Underworld, a source of illness and wealth. There are also a number of lesser spirits, demonic beings, and supernatural serpents related to heavy rains and wealth. Along with body souls, an individual possesses one or more guardian spirits. Typically in animal form, these alter egos reside in forests and fields." (2)

7. ADORNMENT

7.1 Body paint:

--Not much evidence found but dancers who perform at rituals and celebrations may wear painted facemasks while they entertain the crowd. (3 page 80)

7.2 Piercings:

--None found.

7.3 Haircut:

--WOMEN: Women's hair is worn long and loose down their backs. The ends of the pieces of hair are often tied with strands of colored yarn that hang down below their hair. By color of yarn and manner of tying, one may distinguish what town a woman is from. (3 page 114)

--MEN: No references about hair on their heads, but photos reveal the majority of men have short hair. (3 Plate 4 and 8) "Men's faces are cleanshaven, the beard still being plucked. Two coins are customarily used in lieu of tweezers and the click of the coins is a regular accompaniment of an conversation." (3 page 116)

7.4 Scarification:

--None found.

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

--Certain women wear necklaces. They add more and more string beads to the necklace throughout their lives. (3 page 53) "Yacoche and Mixistlan women are also distinguished by enormous collars or necklaces of strings of beads. These often contain forty to sixty strands and weigh many pounds." (3 page 116)

--Some women (especially at Yacoche and Mixistlan) wear non-Spanish headdresses. It consists of a turban-like arrangement of many strands of loosely twisted yarn worn around the head. The hair is loose down the back but is tied at the base of the head with several strands of colored yarn, the ends of which hang down below the hair itself. Occasionally, narrow woven bands replace the yarn. (3 pages 113-114)

--Most of men's blouses are embroidered. The bottom of the shirt hangs outside their trousers and is usually decorated with embroidered zigzag lines in colored thread around the edges of the shirt. (3 page 114)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

--On the day of the wedding, the bride's godmother wears new special ribbons and shawls. (4 page 124)

--On the day of the wedding, the bride wears a wedding dress and her hair is braided. (4 page 124)

--Male dancers who perform at ceremonies and rituals have special outfits. They wear tight knee breeches and black velvet jackets that are embroidered with pearl buttons. Six varicolored bright ribbons hang from a band across the shoulders down to the center of the thigh. A black velvet hat with gold fringe and a visor is also worn. Stockings, sandals, and painted face masks complete the costume. (3 page 80)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

--WOMEN: Only women wear necklaces (or collars) and colorful headdresses. See 7.5 for details.

--MEN: Only men are known to have embroidered designs at the bottom of the daily blouses. See 7.5

7.8 Missionary effect:

--Mixe dress is a combination of pre-Conquest and Spanish elements. The pre-Conquest elements are entirely confined to women's clothing. However, men's clothing contains traces of the Spanish influence such as cotton pants with a very large waist causing the fly to lap over; the embroidered cotton blouses; and a white or red sash that wraps around the waist. Men's clothes are also becoming much more modern. "Belts are replacing sashes, regular shirts are replacing the blouse, the shirttail occasionally is placed inside the trousers, and the trousers themselves are becoming conventionally designed." (3 pages 114-115)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

--No evident revivals have occurred but clothing keeps becoming increasingly modern. (3 pages 114-115)

8. KINSHIP SYSTEMS

8.1 Sibling classification system:

--Classification was based on age: "Older children learn gender-related domestic and economic tasks by observing and imitating their parents. Siblings and nonkin playmates obey each other on the basis of age." (2)

--"Older brother and older sister appear to have been distinguished, but younger siblings were merged without even distinguishing sex." (3 page 38) Once again, older siblings are emphasized over the younger.

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

--None. "In the western portion of the Mixe region, limited *non-sororal* polygyny is present in those villages in which women carry out a substantial part of the agricultural activities. This occurs when there is a need for increased labor productivity. Since the cowives are in most cases not sisters, jealousy and discord is prevented by rotating obligations and privileges equally among the two or three cowives." (4 page 7)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology:

--"Mixe kin groups are comprised of nuclear and extended families in one household. They may also be comprised of nonlocalized, bilateral kin networks. Although kinship is reckoned bilaterally, virilocal residence and the predominant control of land and inheritance by males place emphasis on the patriline." (2)

--"The kinship system is definitely opposed to any suggestion of clan organization. It is substantially a generation system today. Grandparents of maternal and paternal lines are merged and are distinguished only by sex. Nephews and nieces are distinguished only by sex. Older brother and older sister appear to have been distinguished, but younger siblings were merged without even distinguishing sex. Both cross and parallel cousins are merged with the siblings. All of these facts are in agreement with the present importance of the bilateral family and the rather close and friendly attitudes toward relatives by marriage." (3 page 38)

9. OTHER INTERESTING CULTURAL FEATURES:

--PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Some albinism occurs, usually within the same family. Goiters are a fairly common ailment. Malaria is also quite common. Onchocercosis (a disease caused by flies that leads to blindness and death) is a great plague in some of the warmer towns. (3 page 13)

--ABORTION: Children are considered an important aspect to the household productivity. Abortions are sanctioned as homicide by the village authorities. If an abortion is carried out, it is done through pressure and blows; and the father must secretly bury the fetus in hills or in a cave. (4 page 117)

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