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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

HUICHOL TERRITORIALITY: LAND CLAIMS AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN WESTERN MEXICO

VOLUME ONE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

BY
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FOREWORD

My anthropological career has been equally committed to theoretically informed research on ritual and power among indigenous people in Latin America and to NGO-based legal work aimed at restoring the territorial base such cultural practices are founded on. As a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology from the University of Chicago, I lived and worked in the west Mexican state capital of Tepic, Nayarit, in Huichol indigenous communities in the southern Sierra Madre Occidental that passes near Tepic, and in Guadalajara, Jalisco from August 1990 through July 1996 (and have returned for brief periods in 1997, 1999 and 2001). I was engaged in three major projects:

- 1) multi-sited fieldwork on ceremony, economy and conflict, with a focus on the ceremonial constitution of the *ranchería* as a social unit, the representation of ceremony in ethnic art, and the commodification of art and other forms of work in regional and global contexts where Huichols are exploited as labor power and objectified as exotic;
- 2) research and writing of expert testimony on the historical and ceremonial basis of Huichol land tenure for the Huichol *comunidad indígena* of San Andrés Cohamiata, Jalisco to present in court (the *tribunales agrarios*) as evidence in territorial disputes with non-indigenous communities, in collaboration with the Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas (AJAGI), a Guadalajarabased non-governmental organization that focuses on Huichol land claims and sustainable development; and

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3) publishing articles, writing field reports and presenting my work informally as a guest researcher at the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS) in Guadalajara, where politically engaged social anthropologists broadened my perspective on emergent social movements like the one I collaborated with.

My work on Huichol legal claims was part of the *comunidad's* long-term effort to address inequitable access to land and other cultural resources vis-a-vis the state and its non-indigenous neighbors. The *comunidad* was now doing this in a new historical context created by the Salinas de Gortari government's paradoxical NAFTA-era policies regarding rural land tenure: it terminated the Mexican Revolution's legacy of agrarian reform (Article 27) at the same time that it endorsed the international indigenous rights protocol (Convention 169 of the ILO) and amended the Constitution (Article 4) to open the possibility for unprecedented recognition of indigenous peoples and their *usos y costumbres* (usages and customs), including "traditional" land use patterns.

Invoking these statutes, Huichol authorities sought to reclaim access rights if not outright possession of lands that have been encroached upon since long before the Spanish crown titled a fraction of their prehispanic territory to them in the 18th century. Their efforts were strengthened by the legal and organizational support of AJAGI, an emergent class of Huichol regional political leaders in the Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes (UCIH), the example of the EZLN uprising in Chiapas, and by contact with other indigenous autonomy movements.

I was invited to work in this new historical and institutional context to help address an old inter-ethnic conflict over thousands of hectares of rugged mountain slopes west and north of San Andrés Cohamiata's officially recognized boundary. The unprecedented alliance of communal authorities and civil society mobilized many previously quiescent Huichols who still inhabit that conflicted region despite decades of state-abetted displacement and marginalization. I learned that this land struggle motivated them to articulate a novel, hybrid political ideology based on the otherwise covert logic of their ceremonial exchange patterns within the region.

The core of this dissertation describes this ideology as I saw it emerge in interviews, AJAGI-sponsored workshops, meetings of Huichol *comuneros* and in confrontations with the non-indigenous *vecinos*. It foregrounds the fact that ceremonial practices inscribe changing *ranchería* settlement patterns on either side of San Andrés's officially recognized boundaries into an embracing, hierarchical system of social connectedness, which encompasses sacred places throughout a far vaster historical territory. I saw similarly compelling ideological forms emerge in other, broader types of territorial claims elsewhere in the *comunidad* and region. My combined interests in ritual, cultural landscapes, Mexican history and minority rights made it possible for me to collaborate with this new alliance at such a pivotal historical moment.

While there are many more people who supported me in this longterm research than I can name, here is a general approximation in rough geographical and chronological order. Some people transcend boundaries. These include my

parents, Leo (*olov hashalom*) and Berti Liffman, to whom I am forever grateful for their unselfish guidance, my partner throughout the time of my exams and fieldwork, Lisa Miotto, who was almost always there to help me keep my bearings, and to Carol Kazmer, who has seen me through much since then. To my *compas* Osman Ahmad, Bill Horsthemke and Karen Lattimer for creative arguments, extreme hospitality and for keeping a fire going, to Eric Miller and Kim Castronovo, for life-sustaining jazz tapes and moral support, to Norbert and Martha Scott and their burgeoning extended family household, for a dry roof and nourishment in many forms.

The research for this dissertation was underwritten by major grants from the Wenner-Gren Anthropological Foundation, the Department of Education Fulbright-Hayes program and the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, with supplemental funding from the Mellon Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Lichtstern Fund of the University of Chicago Anthropology Department, all of which I have deeply appreciated.

In Chicago, that greatest of lacustrine resources, I am grateful to my professors at the University of Chicago Departments of Anthropology and History, in particular my advisor in several senses, Dr. Paul Friedrich, for his insight, intuition and broad perspective, and to my other committee members Dr. Claudio Lomnitz, who has been invaluable in providing me with tools for broadening the focus of this work, and Dr. Friedrich Katz, whose fundamental grasp of Mexican historical forces has long been my standard for clear thinking about indigenous land, labor and struggle. I thank them for their support and enthusiasm. I hope that these teachers and several others such as Marshall

Sahlins, Nancy Munn, Terry Turner and the late Valerio Valeri and David Schneider, who informed my perspective early on, are as fairly represented in this text as they have been influential to me. I would also like to acknowledge John Coatsworth for his long discussions with me on both US and Latin American political history while I worked as his research assistant —an influence I hope is broadly reflected in this work. For more recent support and encouragement, I thank Dr. Alan Kolata for what has evolved into the first section of this dissertation; to the wonderful Anne Ch'ien at the Department of Anthropology and the generous friends at the Center for Latin American Studies; to my many student colleagues in the Anthropology Department who one way or another have helped me grow intellectually and personally. To the many excellent readers who gave me perspective and valuable critiques, my acknowledgements come at the foot of each chapter's opening page.

In Tepic, during the early period of my fieldwork, my thanks to Luis and Marta Zavala Maldonado and their friends for their many favors at the Restaurant Quetzalcoatl and the house of their grandparents, where I first lived with Tateikietari; to Luis's youngest brother, Dr. Roberto Zavala, for his subsequent introduction to the Náyari and for his excellent irony, to don Pedro Castillo and his family for their early enthusiasm for my project, and to the Camarena family for their kind hospitality. My first fieldwork in the lowland communities near the Río Grande de Santiago in the 1980s owes much to a chance encounter with the great Californian Glen Bear and to the Atonalisco mara'akame doña Andrea Ríos, her agrarista cousin Rufino and his brothers in the

ejido Salvador Allende, as well as Rufino's courageous and hospitable daughter Mtra. Ignacia Ríos and her family in Tepic.

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land tenure and interethnic land struggle. *Pamipariyutsi, 'iki xapayari kiekari piyiraritia*.

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Chicago, 2002

ABSTRACT

Based on fieldwork that included writing for Mexican political audiences and collaborating with a land rights NGO, this dissertation discusses 1) Mexican indigenous territoriality on four scales of analysis (place, region, nation and global); 2) Huichol (Wixarika) people's ceremonially-based practices and theories of territoriality; 3) the political claims they base on their ceremonial relationships and practices; and 4) how Mexican and US print media represent both Huichol and other indigenous autonomy claims in the context of presumed violence by Huichols.

Throughout the 5,000 square kilometers where Huichols live and plant maize in the Sierra Madre Occidental, their bilateral kinship relations, temple (tuki) organization, territorial narratives, and the entailed metaphors of "rootedness" (nanayari) integrate their dispersed rancherías into temple cargo hierarchies (jicareros). In turn, jicareros trek to sacred places throughout a 90,000 square kilometer prehispanic territory (kiekari) to ritually inscribe the rancherías' historically shifting positions within it. In doing so, they 1) appropriate metaphors of governance like "registration" (registro) from the Mexican state; 2) deem themselves necessary to planetary survival as ceremonial brokers with the ancestral controllers of nature; and 3) temporarily reconcile oppositions between hierarchy and proliferation within their own society and between symbolic potency as quintessential "prehispanic survivals" and exploited peasants within the national space.

Under the global indigenous rights discourses inscribed in Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization and Mexican Constitutional Article 4, Huichol leaders allied with non-governmental organizations have invoked their ceremonial territoriality in regional political forums and an educationally-based revitalization movement. This new discursive space enables them to 1) expand longstanding agrarian claims to colonial title lands as *comuneros* in the Sierra; 2) formulate broader demands as a *pueblo indio* with rights of access, hunting and gathering throughout the prehispanic *kiekari*; and 3) consolidate ethnic identities in terms of that territoriality.

More controversially, individual actors have invoked these same discourses of territorial defense to justify the recent death of a US writer in the community of study. This generated an international scandal that challenged the limits of Huichol communal authorities' discursive authority and indeed the legitimacy of indigenous autonomy in the Mexican public sphere.

INTRODUCTION

"What does it mean, at the end of the twentieth century, to speak of a 'native land'?" –James Clifford, quoted in Gupta and Ferguson 1992.

The meaning of a "native land" in an increasingly deterritorialized world has been central to anthropological thought ever since it became entwined with the defense of communality in the 19th century (cf. Roseberry 1989). This concern is especially pertinent to *indigenous* land, often the most threatened and by definition the most "native" land of all. Amid accelerated globalization, indigenous territoriality is of growing political and theoretical concern as emergent ethnic regions demand more autonomy and states devolve more power. All over the planet, multiple indigenous territorialit*ies* challenge the conception of the state as a legitimated order of domination (*Herrschaft*) within a national territorial space (Weber 1925).¹

The current interest in territoriality is hardly unprecedented. Indigenous land struggle has long been a central theme in Mexican history and anthropology (e.g., Wolf 1969; Womack 1968; Friedrich 1977; Warman 1980; De la Peña 1981; Katz 1988; Greenberg 1989). Since the EZLN revolt of the 1990s, the notion of territorialidad (territoriality) as a link between cultural identity and land has complemented earlier notions of tierra (land) as an ideological touchstone and is now central to ideologies of indigenous autonomy (Ce-Acatl 1996, LeBot 1997, Díaz Polanco 1998; De la Peña 1999). Based on six years of fieldwork that included writing for Mexican political audiences and collaborating with a land rights organization, this dissertation on Huichol (Wixarika) land claims and cultural representation in western Mexico is a sustained examination of indigenous territoriality.

¹ Much of Weber's vast oeuvre analyzes *non-legitimated* forms of domination like class-based economic power relations. These are more salient in the expanding lacunae and peripheries of state power. Such domination has often resulted in landlessness, and access to productive land remains at the heart of territorial ideologies for even the most globally deterritorialized peoples.

Perhaps nowhere has state territoriality been more tenuous than in regions like the Gran Nayar of western Mexico, the scene for this dissertation. The Gran Nayar, which includes much of Nayarit and parts of Jalisco, Durango and Zacatecas, is the native land of several Uto-Nahuan speaking peoples –Coras, Huichols, Southern Tepehuanos, Tepecanos and Mexicanero Nahuas—as well as a roughly equal number of mestizos, who have entered the area in great numbers since the 19th century. This warlike enclave remained semi-autonomous for 200 years after the fall of Tenochtitlan, was the seat of an indigenous confederacy that fought the expansionist haciendas and their Liberal backers for most of the mid-19th century, saw bitter fighting between mestizo ranchers and indigenous allies of the government in the Cristero period of the Revolution, and had an armed Huichol land rights movement in the 1950s. As part of this history of contestation, the peoples of the Gran Nayar have eclectically incorporated sociocultural forms and relationships from the dominant society.

Despite this legacy of autonomy, indigenous territoriality has always been about more than just land as a material resource. It has also been defined by flows of people, goods and discourses within and between regions and countries as well as by culturally specific practices and experiences rooted in that land. These in turn shape subjective identity, ideology and discourse. While indigenous people have often defined themselves against the discourses and boundaries of the state, their territoriality is still largely defined by their "vertical" ties to those states.³ These vertical ties in turn continue to be interwoven with communities' "horizontal" struggles over land and power with other rural people –including other Indians. All these factors –transregional exchange, cultural perspective, ties to the state and horizontal intergroup struggles— are fundamental to understanding the Gran Nayar region. There

² Census figures are disputed because it can be both easy and convenient to undercount dispersed, frequently undocumented Indian populations.

³ See Chapter 1, Section 6 on the legacy of Mexican government *indigenismo* in the development of autonomous territories.

indigenous cultural distinctiveness and violent intergroup competition for land backed by competing lines of patronage have in different respects resembled the Yaqui region to the north, the heavily Indian rural south and the neighboring state of Michoacán much more than the more ethnically homogenous, less agrarian regions of the north.

In this dissertation, I focus on one of the peoples of the Gran Nayar —the Huichol (Wixarika) Indians.⁴ Now as in preceding centuries, their most pressing political concern is to (re-)claim land and related rights expressed in terms of their collective cultural relationship to land. Through this struggle, they have forged a unique relationship between ceremonial practice, historical memory, political discourse and the neoliberal legal framework.

During the 1990s when I did fieldwork in the Huichol *comunidad indígena* of San Andrés Cohamiata, Jalisco, the other land-based issues included debates between different factions of the community over the rights of missionaries, their local converts, mestizo ranchers, and others with respect to visiting or living in the *comunidad*, using its resources and seeing its *costumbre* (rituals). In these debates a number of competing voices claimed to represent the indigenous people, land and culture originally recognized in a royal *cédula* issued in 1725 for some 2,000 square kilometers of mesas, upland valleys and canyonlands in the Sierra Madre Occidental.⁵

⁴ A NOTE ON PHONOLOGY: Wixarika is a central Uto-Nahuan language. Its closest relative is Náyari (Cora) and it is the closest surviving language to Nahuatl. Following the original classification of Joseph Grimes and the orthographic system of José Luis Iturrioz's team of linguists, there are five vowels (a,e,i,i,u) and 13 consonants (the stops p,t,k,kw,'; the aspirate h; the liquid r; the trill x; the nasals m,n; the affricate ts; and the glides w,y). In particular, /i/ is halfway between /i/ and /u/ and unrounded like /i/; /h/ is breathy and /r/ is retroflexed as in "hark" in Chicago English; /x/ is a trilled alveolar fricative like the /r/ in Czech "Dvorak" which ranges from voiced in San Andrés to unvoiced in Santa Catarina and San Sebastián; /w/ before /i/ or /e/ is pronounced like the /v/ in "weaver" and otherwise it is like the /w/; /y/ is unpalatalized like in English. The rest can be pronounced as in Spanish. Vowel length and stress are phonemic at times but not indicated here. All Wixarika syllables have the shape CV or CVV, so contrary to some orthographies, no word begins with a vowel.

⁵ The other two Huichol *comunidades*, Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán and San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán received title to about another 3,000 square kilometers of

These conflicts raised fundamental questions about what the territory is, how far it extends now, and who is to define the rights to residence, property, ceremonial participation (in both *costumbre* and institutional Christianity), and the kinds of knowledge that others should reproduce in films, photographs and books. In short, the conflicts problematized the legitimate limits of Huichol land, cultural practice and identity.⁶

All this led me to understand territoriality in terms that went beyond land use or administrative control to bilateral kinship, ritual relationships and the representation of these practices before increasingly broad audiences. I call this process of defining the rights to land tenure and the representation of the practices that constitute relationships to land both within and beyond the physical limits of the community "cultural territoriality" (Liffman 1995).

"Cultural territoriality" is the central concern of this dissertation for three reasons. First, as I have just indicated there is a logical reason: it is a heuristic device that encompasses interrelated forms of land-based struggle. Second, there was a practical and moral reason: the cultural basis for territorial claims was the area in which the indigenous people I wanted to study most wanted me to work. Third, there was an intellectual-historical reason: assisting Huichols in their territorial struggle turned out to be the way to explore my longstanding fascination with the relationship between cosmology, ritual and politics.

The conceptual breadth of cultural territoriality demonstrates that beyond the influence of the state and the constraints imposed by ethnic struggle, indigenous peoples have established distinctive albeit contingent and variable hegemony over geographical space. Or as Section 2 of Chapter 1 would have it, Huichols have developed "senses of place" centered on *rancherías* dedicated to

similar lands.

⁶ I like to use the more common, hispanized term "Huichol" as Wixarika-speaking people do —to refer to their national or regional identity in multilingual contexts. In partial contrast, the older identity marker "Wixarika" (pl. Wixaritari) usually indexes more locally-oriented people, perspectives, activities and meanings rather than national ethnic identity. Indeed, the most basic self-refential noun is neither "Huichol" nor "Wixarika", but tewi (pl. teiteri)—"person". Tewi is not usually used to refer to outsiders and connotes Wixarika identity in an essential or substantial sense.

maize agriculture and on the ceremonial exchange patterns that link those rancherías to each other and to a far vaster region (Casey 1996:20).

To be more specific, Huichol territoriality results first of all from how they claim lands as their patrimony, identify with and use existing land resources, and redistribute production (particularly through ritual). In particular, Huichols create and reproduce their identifications with territory by transporting ceremonial objects infused with sacrificial blood -intense metonyms of ritually constituted social groups—to ancestral places and then exchange these objects for divine substances acquired there. Hence social bonds among sacrificers, the sacrifice and its consumers –both supernatural and human— are (re-)constituted through ritual drama and the redistribution of meat, maize beer and other foods (cf. Hubert & Mauss 1967). These bonds then are "rooted" in a spatialized, historically fluid system of hierarchy and gerontocratic control. Huichol Territoriality focuses more on this political and ceremonial constitution of place and territory than on maize-based production and redistribution per se, but the accumulation of surpluses by those who mediate hierarchical transactions -especially the officiants of blood sacrifices to the sun, rain and other Wixarika ancestors who control the natural forces of production—remains inseparable from the constitution of territory and political authority.

My approach combines concern about the indigenous politics of land with a broad movement in anthropology that questions deterministic structural models of space, time and social hierarchy and instead examines local productions of meaning in place (e.g., Feld & Basso 1996). This dissertation also demonstrates how indigenous peoples' place-based production of meaning can be the basis for equally encompassing models of space, time and social hierarchy in regional contexts.

Huichols may seem an unusual choice for a multi-level, regional approach to territoriality since they are widely viewed (even by themselves) as among the most isolated, traditional indigenous people in the New World. At least in the comunidades indígenas on which this study focuses and in which the majority of

Huichols live,⁷ they are primarily slash and burn maize agriculturalists who usually speak a Uto-Aztecan language and whose religion revolves around blood sacrifices to the sun and rain. In fact, the classical Uto-Aztecan elements of their ceremonial practice, which I discuss throughout this dissertation, were what initially appealed to me about studying Huichols.

However, it immediately became evident from reading more of the historical literature and from my first visits to the region in the 1980s that Wixarika cultural identity has persevered because sacrificial discourses and practices encompass state power, capitalist value, social change and ethnic difference. A key concern of mine has been to contextualize Huichols' rich ritual symbolism and unusually extensive forms of territorial identity in terms of their long history of regional trade, tribute and land struggle. How else was I to understand the display of the eagle-and-serpent side of Mexican coins in their votive gourd bowls (xukurite) as symbols of solar productivity and the fact that two of their five major sacred places just happened to be near the colonial era economic and administrative centers of Real de Catorce, San Luis Potosí, and San Blas, Nayarit?⁸

In this regard, I agree with James Greenberg (1995:68) that it is important to analyze "how elements of capitalist and noncapitalist modes of production are culturally integrated to define a syncretic social formation". Greenberg argues that in the Mixe community of Tamazulapam, Oaxaca, people filter capitalist

⁷ Perhaps a quarter of all Huichols live in urban *barrios* throughout the region and in *ejidos*, particularly in the state of Nayarit. Their land tenure as recipients of *dotaciones* ("grants") of new lands rather than *restituciones* of old ones and consequently their relationship to the state as well as to the market economy are considerably closer and more dependent. In the larger scheme of things, prehispanic or colonial era *comunidades* represent perhaps five percent of peasant land in Mexico (Whetten 1948). The vast majority are *ejidos* –government "grants" of land to peasants. Nevertheless *ejidatarios* may also have historical memories of connection to the places they live that date back as far as those of *comuneros* (members of the *comunidad indigena*), particularly in a case like this one where the *ejidos* have been set up within the boundaries of a wider prehispanic territory.

⁸ Indeed, the whole Gran Tunal region of which Real de Catorce is part was a major subsistence and exchange zone for prehispanic and colonial era Chichimeca peoples.

relationships through a local nexus of moral categories and ritual acts. He identifies this local context as the modern version of Eric Wolf's "tributary mode of production" (1982). Huichols were in tributary relations of subordination to dominant indigenous polities before the conquest of 1722, and Wixarika ceremonial organization remains complexly hierarchical. For centuries now they have combined ritualized elements of the "tributary" mode in a capitalist context and *vice-versa* (Greenberg *op. cit.:* 72,75).

Specifically, contemporary sacrifice embodies traces of the prehispanic tributary practices common throughout the Gran Nayar in which people brought offerings of textiles, arrows and gourd bowls to the temples of paramount lineages identified with the sun (Meyer 1989b). This legitimized the shamanistically based Cora military chiefdom called Tonatí ("Resplendence") until near the end of the colonial period. In this sense, I would add economics to Lomnitz's (1992) observation that political syncretism is at least as significant as the more frequently studied religious form. Economic and political syncretism is inscribed into the very definition of territory and the sociocultural processes of reproducing it. Hence the need for a regional approach to illuminate that logic.

The dissertation is also neo-Wolfian in that brokerage is a central issue, particularly in Chapter 3. That is where I deal with the increasingly orthodox Huichol "articulatory intellectuals" who –as formerly heterodox schoolteachers linked to the rural bourgeoisie— mediate between local cultural practice and regional political institutions (Lomnitz 1992). Brokerage is also important in terms of the syncretism I just described because shamans and traditional communal authorities act as intermediaries with the ancestors who in Huichol thinking control the natural forces of production. As under the Tonatí chiefdom of the colonial period, such brokers still collect ritual objects and massive amounts of agricultural production for their services as supernatural mediators. Indeed, in Chapter 2 we will see how ceremonial authorities in effect administer an ancestral solar state that for Huichols far outshines official political institutions in its legitimacy and power to order the material world. Although I only touch on it at points here, to an impressive extent the Mexican state has also

depended on the aura of indigenous authenticity represented by the Huichols for its own legitimation.

So then, precisely because Huichols represent the most traditional sector of the peasantry, the articulations with their region, the state and global indigenous discourses are of special importance. These articulations span the greatest range of cultural difference in Mexico, a country noted for its long history of ethnic dynamism and *mestizaje*. Huichols' relatively autonomous form of appropriating the dominant culture is an important type of hybridity not often looked at by anthropologists. Instead, many people focus on the Huichols' separateness and incommensurability, thus undercutting them politically. Moreover, nowadays Huichols' culturally specific appropriation of new legal measures and symbols of state power makes it possible for them to more fully claim and inhabit their ancestral territory and to recover the ritually based senses of place on which that territoriality is based.

Another word about territoriality: most theorists use the term to build on Foucault's notion of space-based control of subjects by administrative apparatuses (1979). For instance, Robert David Sack defines territoriality as the "attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area" (1986:19, quoted in Vandergeest and Peluso 1995:388-389). And as Vandergeest and Peluso spell it out,

territorialization is about excluding or including people within particular geographic boundaries, ...controlling what people do and their access to natural resources...[It] involves classification by area ...[and] the communication of both the territorial boundaries and the restrictions on activities within the territory (1995:388).

In this dissertation my central concern is to understand how a historically subjected people rather than a state does this. Above all I examine Huichol "territorial boundaries" and contiguities. However, these are not fixed as the quote would seem to suggest, so I pay more attention to how Huichols claim and reproduce those boundaries and contiguities in the first place. By turns, people

exercise or represent this indigenous territoriality in terms of, independently of, and in opposition to the state's notions.

Or to return to Vandergeest and Peluso's terms, I address how Huichols "assert control" as well as the limits to which they can do that as a subject indigenous people. More exactly, in their way of thinking, Wixaritari avert potential chaos through reciprocal, sacrificially based exchanges with their ancestors, who are identified with the natural forces of production. They bound off other people from Wixarika senses of place by restricting these ancestral exchanges to ritual experts, particularly shamans (mara'akate) and cargo hierarchies (Weigand 1978; Cancian 1965). They thus produce an intimacy with their territory and the forces in control of its wealth. This is a practice-based, place-centered, micro-political version of territorialization on which ethnic and spatial classification along with other kinds of social and resource control are based.

In short, the rest of this dissertation considers how Huichols have combined the current post-revolutionary legal framework for indigenous rights with colonial definitions of their territory and an even older, more encompassing scheme of economic and religious practices to fashion an emergent contemporary ideology of land and cultural claims. I also consider the limits that both conflicts between Huichols and with non-indigenous interlocutors including the state place on such a project. As Chapter 2 discusses in detail, tying together indigenous territoriality in the Gran Nayar depends on everyday people who have been carrying out ritual practices far beyond the limits of their *comunidades* and *ejidos* for centuries. Chapter 3 shows how they are now tying those practices into novel political demands as well, and Chapter 4 explores a mass-mediated scandal that tested the plausibility of Huichol territoriality and the broader national proposals for indigenous autonomy as discursive categories.

More specifically, the central ethnographic data presented in Chapter 2 points to how Huichols integrate their territory through a ceremonially "rooted" social organization and cosmological hierarchy that synthesizes prehispanic

practices with colonial legal forms. Moving from ceremonial performance and social structure to regional contexts of political performance that invoke such practices, Chapter 3 describes three iconic episodes in which Huichols have developed an emergent ideology on an interethnic, regional level: 1) an agrarian claim to colonial title lands that invokes their ceremonial organization; 2) a general cultural claim to ceremonial access to a ancestral place far outside the bounds of their colonial title lands, and 3) a broader, still emerging set of claims on "territoriality" as a bundle of concepts for renewal within Huichol society. In Chapter 4, I examine a charged, possibly criminal ethnographic episode in which non-indigenous interlocutors reappropriated and challenged Huichols' and other Mexican Indians' emergent formation on the regional and international levels.

Huichol territoriality presents a cyclical regional model of cultural communication in which traditional Huichol intellectuals have appropriated the symbolism of the state to enhance their own system of hierarchical exchange and shamanistic control over nature. They together with articulatory intellectuals then re-represent this system to the state in order to make territorial claims based on statutes that now tentatively recognize such appropriations. This work contributes to an enhanced sense of Wixarika culture's historical and political importance, the multiple perspectives from which such claims are viewed and contradicted, and how much is at stake in the notion of territoriality at a moment when at least one regional struggle over land threatens to become part of a world war.

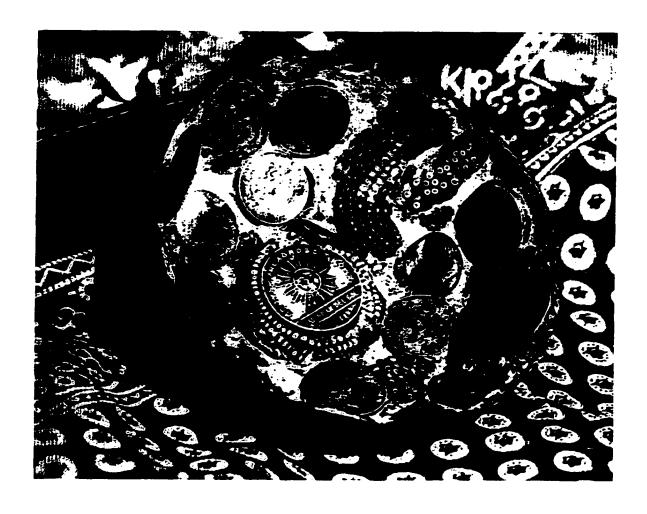


FIGURE 1. Xukuri (ceremonial gourd bowl) with coins representing the sun (from Coyle and Liffman 2000).

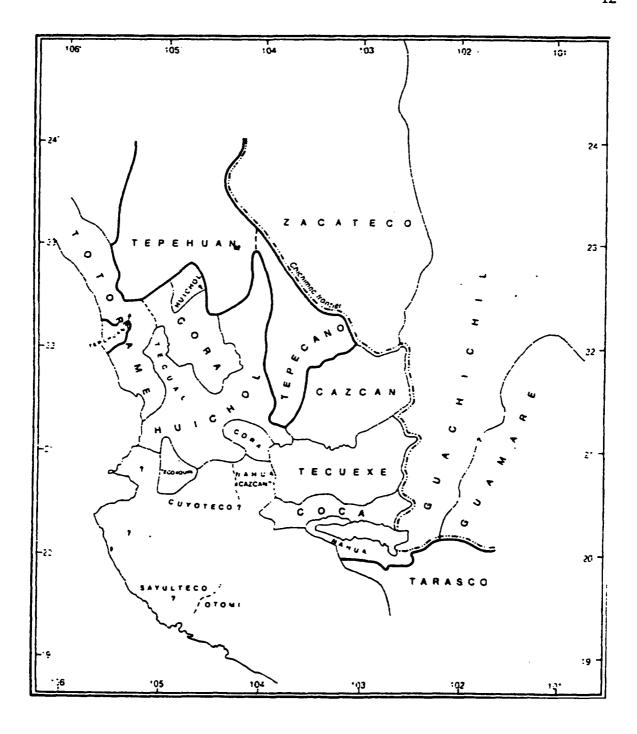


FIGURE 2. 16th-17th century language distribution in Western Mexico (from Gerhard 1982).

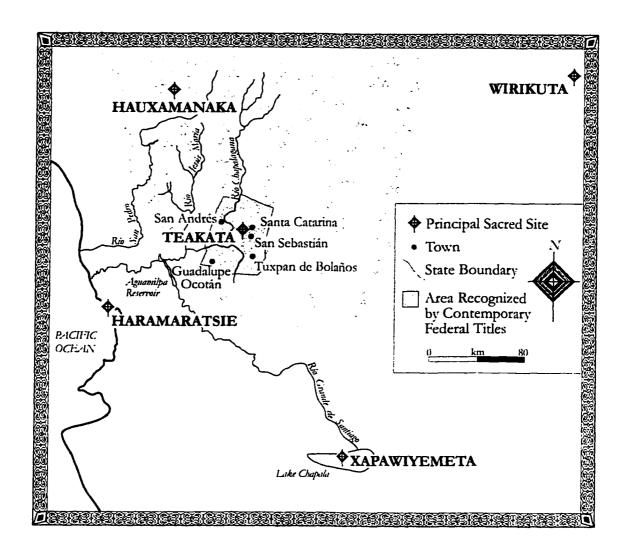


FIGURE 3. Contemporary Huichol ceremonial territory (from Coyle and Liffman 2000).

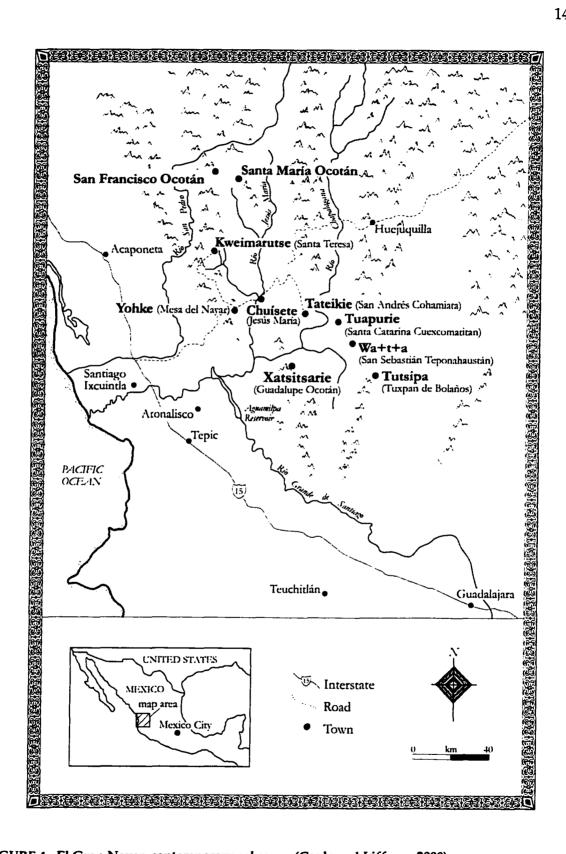


FIGURE 4. El Gran Nayar, contemporary cabeceras (Coyle and Liffman 2000).

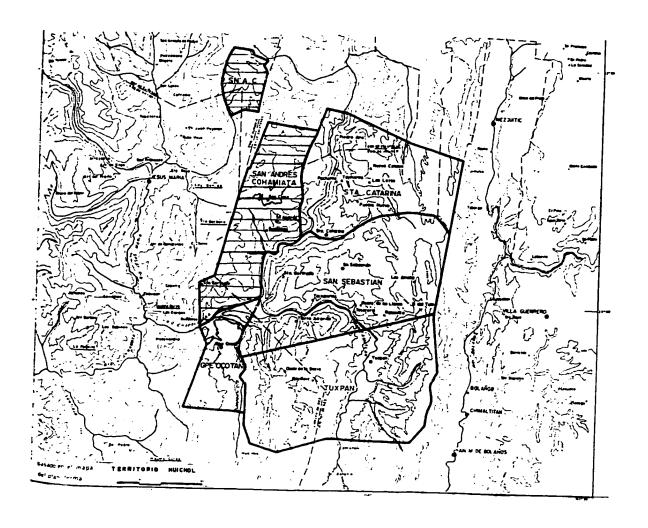


FIGURE 5. Current Huichol *comunidad* boundaries and outlier settlements in Durango (Plan Lerma-HUICOT).

CHAPTER ONE

INDIGENOUS TERRITORIALITIES IN MEXICO1

0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets the stage for the ethnography in the subsequent chapters by exploring and tentatively linking some of that ethnography's salient points with a number of theoretical approaches to indigenous territoriality in Mexico.

Territoriality has become an exceedingly diffused term in the expanding discussions about indigenous regions of the western hemisphere and about globalization in general. The main territorial regimes discussed in this chapter and throughout the dissertation are the *comunidades indígenas* and *ejidos* of Mexico. I seek, however schematically, to connect some of these regimes' diverse elements and articulations with specific reference to the Huichols: their historical struggles for existence, senses of place, land tenure, land use (including ritual) and political claims in the context of legal frameworks, government assimilation programs, deterritorialization and autonomy movements.

The many studies I discuss in the following eight sections cannot be easily classified according to a single parameter; instead, several sets of contrasts distinguish the many approaches: state vs. indigenous power, global vs. regional vs. local scales of analysis, objective geographical vs. subject-centered methodologies, political vs. economic vs. cultural theoretical orientations, practice-based vs. discursive data.

¹ I am grateful to the Ford Foundation Regional Worlds project, the University of Chicago Center for Latin American Studies and Alan Kolata for their extensive support for the original version of this chapter (Liffman 2001a) and to Emiliano Corral, Philip Coyle, Paja Faudree, Paul Friedrich, Carol Kazmer, Claudio Lomnitz, Jeffrey Martin, Nancy Munn, Tamara Neumann and Daniel Wolk for their creative comments.

Section 1 introduces the history and social structure of the Gran Nayar region. In Section 2 I explore some phenomenologically-rooted approaches to "place" as the basis for a locally grounded theory of territoriality. Then, in order to provide a comparative framework for the Huichol case, I point to basic issues in peasant territoriality (Section 3), general legal issues in comparative perspective (Section 4), local territoriality in regional and national contexts (Section 5), administrative and anthropological approaches to indigenous people in 20th century Mexico (Section 6), the growing crisis of deterritorialization (Section 7) and finally the indigenous rejoinder to *indigenista* and neoliberal alienation: the territoriality and autonomy proposals from Mexico's most Indian rural states, Oaxaca and Chiapas (Section 8).

These eight sections alternate between odd-numbered sections with different perspectives on the more ethnographic particulars of Huichols' and other indigenous people's relationship to land "on the ground" in increasingly global contexts (Huichol territorial history –1, land tenure –3, regional integration –5, and deterritorialization –7) and even numbered sections with more general foci (the phenomenology of "place" –2, constitutional frameworks –4, intellectual and institutional history –6, and the formal demands for indigenous autonomy –8). I do this with the goal of assembling a more encompassing comparative theoretical framework that will put Huichols' unusually extensive and historically deep sense of place in sharper relief against other forms of indigenous territoriality in Latin America.

Ultimately, the various contexts for territorialization described through Section 6 must be understood in juxtaposition to the increasingly pervasive deterritorialization discussed in Section 7. Deterritorialization entails the displacement of peoples from historical "neighborhoods" into radically new "localities" (Appadurai 1996). This particular modern condition can give rise to more marked, albeit generic ethnic identities and more encompassing ideologies of indigenous identity (Section 8).

As the whole world has known since the EZLN rebellion of January 1994, Chiapas and Oaxaca have contributed some of the most advanced indigenous political proposals for autonomy. Although these territorial schemes are still largely discursive, they reflect the influence of a wide range of agrarista (landbased), productivista (production-oriented), campesinista (peasant economic) and indianista (indigenous cultural) movements, thus providing a final theoretical context for the ethnography of Huichol territorial claims that follows (Van Cott 1996: http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/macnair/mcnair53/m53c3.html).

In the next section, then, I introduce the history of indigenous territoriality in the thinly populated but culturally distinctive Gran Nayar region of western Mexico –home to mestizos, Huichols, Coras, Tepehuanes and Nahuas (or Mexicaneros as they are locally known). Although I have drawn a general parallel between the Gran Nayar and southern Mexico in terms of indigenous culture and land struggle, this region also contrasts with the South because places like Chiapas and Oaxaca are more densely populated and politically critical for the national government. At the same time, like elsewhere in Mexico, in the Gran Nayar new indigenous leaders allied with traditional authorities and non-governmental organizations are increasingly tying *comunidades* and *ejidos*

together on a regional basis in order to claim territory and redefine "development".

1. ANCESTRALITY AND EXCHANGE IN EL GRAN NAYAR

Before entering into a comparative theoretical discussion in the subsequent sections of this chapter, the first half of this section is a cursory historical sketch focused on the issue of territoriality. It is drawn from a number of sources including the ethnohistorian and archaeologist Phil C Weigand (esp. 1981, 1985), the historians Beatriz Rojas (1992, 1993) and Jean Meyer (esp. 1989b, 1990), and primary sources such as Arias de Saavedra (1673), Ortega (1754) and others collected by Meyer in his series of ethnohistorical anthologies for the Centre d'Etudes Mexicaines et Centraméricaines in Mexico City. A more detailed introduction to contemporary political and social organization follows in the second half.

During the prehispanic period, the proto-Huichol peoples engaged in seasonal ceremonialism and trade across a vast area of western and north-central Mexico. There is evidence to suggest warfare against Mesoamerican tributary cities in the area of Zacatecas as well as a role for Huichols in the integration of the US Southwest and northern Mexican desert to the Mesoamerican core through the trade in elite goods such as peyote from the desert East, tropical feathers from the coastal West and turquoise from the North (Weigand 1975, 1992, 1993).

Key cultural influences were the sophisticated Chalchihuites culture of the northern desert, socially complex sedentary Mesoamerican polities south of the Río Grande de Santiago, ritually important Tepecano sites to the east and the politically paramount Náyari (Cora) peoples to the west (cf. Hers 1993). This

accounts for the Huichol synthesis of architectural forms, cultural practices and mythemes from throughout the central Uto-Aztecan area (Cora-Huichol, Yaqui-Mayo and Tarahumara-Varohío) with central Mexican urban influences. This regional exchange sphere has been reproduced as the contemporary Wixarika territorial system of *kiekari* described in Chapter 2 through the cosmologically ranked *rancherías* (*kiete*), temples (*tukite*) and primordial ancestral places (*kakaiyarita*). The other major legacy of straddling the Mesoamerican/desert frontier was the integration of extensive swidden maize-beans-squash horticulture with dry season hunting and gathering over a region measuring at least 90,000 square kilometers.

The Spanish invasion of the region began with the terroristic, genocidal entrada of Nuño de Guzmán in 1530, and the loss of land and indigenous identity was institutionalized with the missions and encomiendas of the 16th century (González Navarro 1953). However the Spaniards did not consistently control the inaccessible and rather poor sierra uplands, so a shifting combination of commercial exchanges, reciprocal raids and mercenary services (often against neighboring Indians within the Gran Nayar) characterized indigenous relations with the colonial society surrounding them.

The uneasy peace and constant encroachment of Spanish mining and hacienda interests into formerly Huichol, Cora, Tecual, Tepecano and Tepehuan territory was unable to overcome a warlike autonomous polity governed by Coras (Náyarite) centered in Mesa del Nayar. This chiefdom known as the Tonatí (from the Nahuatl epithet for solar resplendence) based its legitimacy on

military prowess, shamanistic access to ancestral knowledge and power (as embodied in the mummified bodies of the chiefly line), and tribute from neighboring peoples, including the Wixaritari.

Unlike the more heavily colonized areas of central Mexico, in the Gran Nayar this multilingual indigenous society remained semi-autonomous under lineages of tribute-taking ceremonial chiefs through nearly 200 years by resisting, accomodating and appropriating colonial Spanish institutions. This polity was involved in seasonal ceremonial, regional trade and political movements over the entire *kiekari* (cosmological territory) in western and north-central New Spain, eastward into the central desert plateau and west to the Pacific coast (Gerhard 1982 linguistic map). There is evidence of labor migration as far as the mines of Parral, Chihuahua (West 1949), which would have been consistent with earlier trading practices.

Destruction of the Tonatí regime in 1722 was marked by a great auto-da-fe of the desiccated ancestors and their ritual appurtenances in Mexico City but the military triumph did not eradicate regional intergroup tributary practices centered around ancestor cults. However, it did entail the imposition of Jesuit missions and Spanish *comunidad* organization in the Cora area and with it the suppression of public human sacrifice and oracular ceremonies with desiccated ancestors. The official imposition of Spanish institutions in the colonial period divided the Sierra into various *repúblicas de indios* amd alienated most of the best lands for haciendas and mining (Rojas 1993). This was a process already underway in the Huichol area (under Franciscan missionaries) since the late 17th century.



FIGURE 6. Tuki (major temple) at Santa Catarina, ca. 1890 (Carl Lumholtz, American Museum of Natural History).

Still, the Huichols' *tuki* temple hierarchy remained basic to ceremonial and kin-based organization of space. This in turn was directly tied to the timing and allocation of subsistence agriculture and collective hunting-sacrificial expeditions throughout the prehispanic *kiekari*. In the newly established Huichol *comunidades* the syncretism of Christian eschatology with the solar ceremonial cycle centered on the holy days of San Francisco (4 October), Our Mother Guadalupe (12 December), Epiphany (6 January), Carnival and Easter.

This comunidad system centers on the Spanish-style village plaza with the church building on the east, the state building on the west and the apex of tuki organization in ceremonial houses along the north and south. By implication the comunidad nominally incorporates ranchería-level territoriality. The first three festivals -San Francisco, Guadalupe and Epiphany—legitimize the communal authorities who are overseen by a cabildo (ergo the loan word kawiteru for "senior ritual specialist" or "counselor" -a traditional expert attached to a tuki or temple group or more commonly in Mesoamerican ethnography, a principal). The Carnival procession and the Holy Week via crucis became markers of comunidad limits, and Jesucristo –whose apotheosis happens on Holy Saturday—became associated with the cosmological path of the sun from the eastern desert to the western sea. And finally, Spanish mojoneras (boundary markers) for the recently minted repúblicas de indios, augmented the definition of territoriality. Still there are indications of ongoing tributary relations with shamanistically based indigenous authorities and ancestral places throughout the region during the entire colonial period.

With spotty colonial and independence era rule, the communities of the sierra heartland generated an unusual hybrid sociocultural organization. Indeed, messianic movements and charismatic local *caciques* periodically overthrew Hispanic political and religious controls (Meyer 1989a, 1989b, 1990 for a literary treatment of late colonial messianism in the region and two selections of ethnohistorical materials, respectively). By the end of the colonial period, the Gran Nayar was ringed by *pueblos fronterizos* like Atonalisco, Huazamota, Huejuquilla, Mezquitic and Bolaños. Many of these were foci of insurrectionary activity against the Spanish colonial order (if not the figure of the king himself) by resident Indians and mobile mestizos.

During the chaotic decades of Liberal/Conservative civil wars that followed independence, Franciscan clerics sought to concentrate the dispersed Huichols into *reducciones* and to destroy the key manmade expressions of Huichol territoriality and social organization: votive offerings, the *xiriki* (family shrine) and *tuki* (regional temple), which they systematically burned.² The sporadic but violent incursions by Franciscan missionaries during the early independence period ended with the anticlerical measures of Juárez's Liberal constitution of 1856. However liberalism also called for the disentalment of

² Another, culturally crucial aspect of the 19th century Franciscan campaign was the mutilation of natural stone basins (Rojas 1992). Wixaritari deem these to be miraculous votive bowls or receptacles ('aikutsi) belonging to the most ancient ancestors who emerged and still reside in these springs and caves from which they govern the kiekari. Like a decorated gourd bowl (xukuri) left in ancestral places (see chapter 2), the naturally occurring 'aikutsi as a bowl-like shape intrinsically articulates distant places. The term also refers to any similarly shaped depression into which water flows, a water jug, tortilla or dry maize receptacle, the water-bearing barrel cactus found in Wirikuta, and a large tuber (xiri) eaten during crises like the Cristiada, when people hiding in caves had little else. The ritual honorific tatei (our mother) applies at least to the life-giving tuber and the cactus 'aikutsi. The tortilla container mimics the proportions of the cactus exactly: a 12cm high sphere truncated about 80 percent of the way up.

communal properties (*desamortización de bienes comunales*) in the region (Meyer 1983). This led to the greatest encroachments on indigenous territory since the 16th century *encomiendas* and a further reduction and marginalization of indigenous peoples to the least hospitable parts of the sierra. In 1855 armed resistance broke out under the Cora-mestizo warlord Manuel Lozada, who in some ways took up the mantle of the Tonatí chiefs from the previous century.³

However, these *comunidades* were not surrounded, occupied and administratively isolated until the defeat of Lozada in 1873, on the cusp of the Porfiriato, when haciendas made the most serious inroads on all sides of the sierra since the 16th century invasion and early 18th century conquest. Subsequent indigenous resistance was apparently subsumed under mestizo caciques (*e.g.*, the Rentería family). At this point the current pattern of labor migration and patronclient relations with lowland mestizos had probably begun. Indeed there was already evidence of this in the early 18th century preconquest period as Spanish *hacendados* with indigenous clients attempted to mediate the conflict with the Crown (cf. Stern 1983, 1987).

The core sierra had still not been colonized except by missionary, administrative and military institutions but indigenous communities such as Tenzompa, San Juan Peyotán and Huaynamota along the major rivers and the edges of the more inaccessible and less desirable mountains were steadily being taken over by Spaniards and mestizos. Huichols appropriated Plateros, Zacatecas, and other mission sites introduced into their consciousness during

³ Despite the general impression that Lozada was Cora, Rojas' anthology cites a document describing him as "guichol".

this period as part of their own "pagan" form of territoriality that persisted in the interstices of colonialism.

During the revolutionary period, there were shifting alliances between indigenous factions and various revolutionary forces (principally Zapatistas and Villistas, as well as some Carrancistas, all of them internally factionalized). For the area of my study in the western Huichol area bordering on Náyari territory, the Tepic-based Villista general Rafael Buelna seems to have been paramount for a time, with a headquarters established in the Náyari *cabecera* of Jesús María, Nayarit (Coyle 2001). During this earlier Villista/Zapatista phase of the 1910s, warrior caciques emerged throughout the region, particularly in the eastern Huichol area around San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán (Weigand 1979; 1981).

Reproducing an ancient general pattern among central Uto-Aztecan peoples in which power shifts from gerontocratic ritual authorities to younger, bicultural war chiefs during times of crisis, these *caciques* temporarily supplanted the *tuki*-based *kawiterutsixi* (*cabilderos*, counselors) and the more recently introduced civil-religious hierarchies centered on the three *comunidades* the Spaniards had carved out of the sierra. Later, in the 1920s and 30s, the sierra was riven by factions alternately loyal to the federal government, Cristero rebels and the local leadership (Meyer 1986, 1988). This was part of a contradictory effort to maintain powerful external allies and the integrity of colonial *comunidad* boundaries. During much of this revolutionary period, people were reduced to living in caves, as armies and ranchers invaded and occupied heretofore indigenous lands and drove many Huichols west down the Santiago River basin

toward Tepic and the Pacific lowlands, as they had during the preceding Lozada period as well (Jesús Jáuregui pers. com.).

After the Cristiada was finally suppressed in the area in the late 30s, the federal government imposed the modern municipio organization, at first under a military occupation that lasted into the 1940s. Motivated by Lázaro Cárdenas's massive land reform, claims for restitution of the territories defined by the colonial mojoneras and recognized under the 1917 revolutionary constitution were brought before the courts during this period. However, the invasion of indigenous lands by mestizo rancheros that had begun during the Cristero era continued despite the comunidades' mounting land claims. In fact this period saw the officialization of mestizo land tenure throughout the region far in advance of the recognition of the most important indigenous claims (Arcos 1998; Rojas 1992). The bicultural Huichol leader Pedro de Haro (see Figure #7) finally won legal recognition of the largest, but virtually dismembered Huichol comunidad of San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán in 1953 (240,000 hectares). However, the other Huichol communal land claims were not processed until the advent of indigenista modernizing development in the 1960s (De la Peña 2001), and the largely unwanted presence of mestizo ranchers throughout the territory continues to this day and.



FIGURE 7. Kawiteru. Shamanistic political leader Pedro de Haro seated in an 'uweni in his takwá (patio) with muwieri (wand), xukurite (bowls), nierika (deer visage) and takwatsi (ritual implement case). Ocota de la Sierra, San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán, December 1993.

With the onset of federally sponsored development and especially the construction of roads and the growing commodification of subsistence in the 1970s, seasonal labor migration became vital to economic survival. Also during this period cattle, which had long been part of regional trade and the sacrificial system, now became the basis for class formation within Huichol *comunidades* (Weigand 1978, 1981). By the time of my fieldwork in the 1990s, extensive cattle ranching by a few families was frequently contradicting maize-beans-squash horticulture by less powerful families who are unable to fence off or politically defend their *kiete* (*rancherías*) within the *comunidades* — a sea change in Huichol territoriality.

Since the development of roads and other infrastructure under President Luis Echeverría's Plan HUICOT in the 1970s, every year indigenous people migrate more, with more permanent displacements to the lowlands in some cases. However, dry season forays to the coast and rainy seasons spent planting maize on the *kie* are still the common pattern (Nahmad *et al.* 1971). Even when permanent, these demographic shifts do not necessarily lead to indigenous deculturation and *mestizaje*. Instead, there has been a partial recreation of temple organization and global ceremonial territory orientation in various *ejidos* and towns outside the three *comunidades*.

The post-60s era has also witnessed territorially extensive ceremonial practice morphing into commodified ritual spectacles for tourists. Although tourism and out-migration threaten the integrity of ceremonial practices, commercial artistic representations of them provide a new economic niche and enhanced sense of cultural dignity for many people. This growing

commodification of sacred signification is a global development of which many Huichols are acutely and astutely aware. It has led to a heightened sense of ethnic distinction and extended ties with other indigenous people and consumers throughout the Americas and Europe.

Since the government's partial recognition of colonial territoriality in the 1950s and 60s, indigenous demands for fuller recognition have incorporated international human rights discourses. This is especially the case since the 1990s, when the Salinas de Gortari presidency simultaneously shut down the agrarian reform enshrined in Article 27 of the constitution and amended Article 4 to give enhanced albeit vague recognition of indigenous custom. Salinas also signed onto the ILO (International Labor Organization) Convention 169 (OIT, Organización Internacional de Trabajo, Convenio 169), with expanded federal funding for customary territorial practice under Patrimonio Cultural programs already in place since the 1980s.

The contemporary period is marked by the emergence of a literate Huichol political and cultural elite active in linguistics, literature, land law and post-indigenista administration. This vanguard has developed a new historical consciousness and ties to both mainstream and opposition political organizations with global connections. Many members of this vanguard are now seeking to (re)constitute more extensive systems of territoriality. This cultural territoriality implies a new kind of mestizaje from below as they appropriate global discourses of indigeneity instead of fending off state forms of mestizaje that sought to erase local particularity.

A strong proof of this dissertation's central assertion as to the growing importance of cultural territoriality resides in the fact that nowadays even the Franciscans have tried to incorporate key Wixarika ritual objects (e.g., the tsikiri or godseye) as well as ritual metaphors (e.g., peyote as communion) into their Sunday masses. More critically, now instead of burning tukite, in 1995 they attempted to imitate one in a new church construction. This move was so vehemently (and menacingly) opposed by the new Huichol leadership that the priest felt obliged to call in a detachment of policía preventiva for his personal safety. Territoriality continues to be contested on many levels.

To foreground the main points of this brief historical sketch, the key feature of the Gran Nayar region in the southern Sierra Madre Occidental of western Mexico is that it represents a spatially far more extensive and ceremonially grounded form of territoriality than those being constructed in the recently expropriated Lacandón forest of Chiapas or the incipient autonomous regions in the densely populated indigenous areas of Oaxaca. Like many of the systems described in post-1968 Mexican ethnographies discussed below in Section 6, the Gran Nayar's territoriality is rooted in historical memory, rural production and local political structures implanted more or less exclusively in 4,000 square kilometers of the Sierra Madre Occidental, but also in foraging and ceremonial practices across 90,000 kilometers in five states.

After as long as two millennia, subsistence practices among the region's indigenous peoples (Coras, Huichols, Southern Tepehuans as well as smaller populations of Nahuas and Tepecanos) still center on shifting swidden

agriculture combined with extensive hunting, gathering, trading and, more recently, grazing. For most of the roughly 20,000 Huichols, maize agriculture, gathering and hunting have significant ceremonial aspects (Grimes & Hinton 1969), but the incorporation of cattle into the sacrificial system also brings ranching partially under the penumbra of ceremonial authorities, despite the incipient contradiction with communal land tenure. These activities are augmented and in some cases replaced by more intensive, individualized horticulture (a small part of it marijuana and opium), logging (often illegal as well), seasonal intraregional agricultural labor migration and globally marketed craft production.

Some of this region's peoples (especially the Huichols) now claim both their colonial title lands in the Sierra and ceremonial access throughout 90,000 square kilometers where they traded, hunted and carried out sacrifices across this area for at least half a millenium before the Spanish invasion began (McCarty & Matson 1975[Arias 1673]; Weigand 1981, 1985; Arcos García & González Vázquez 1992, Rojas 1993).

Correspondingly, Huichol territoriality entails at least four kinds of relationships to memory: 1) the ancestral creation myths relived in *real time* by contemporary people in ceremonial treks across the 90,000 square kilometer *kiekari*, a *cosmological landscape*; 2) mythical *narratives* (*kawitu*) about that landscape chanted in *ceremonial patios* (*takwate*) that are deemed to represent it through the tropes of synecdoche and iconicity; 3) the subset of those narratives about *mojoneras* (boundary markers) set down by their colonial titles and recognized in Mexican agrarian law as a prime basis for land claims; and 4) the

more conventional, living *recollections* of *agrarian struggle* at specific places in the landscape (*cf.* Parmentier 1987:109-11, who describes how culturally significant places in Belau are linked by structural similarity, narrative order and historical precedence). The Gran Nayar is a culturally conservative enclave that nevertheless has been undergoing major political transformations since the 1990s.

This is just one region that belies the stereotype of indigenous settlements as egalitarian "closed corporate communities". Instead it suggests alternative, indigenous forms of hierarchical power on a regional scale. Indeed, Gupta & Ferguson's warning about the nation-state can also be applied within indigenous regions: "The presumption that spaces are autonomous has enabled the power of topography to conceal successfully the topography of power" (1992:8; cf. Bartra 1998 on the danger of autonomous regimes that revive archaic forms of domination).

From the point of view of state territoriality, the Huichol situation remains complex. Most land is under communal property regimes (comunidades indígenas and ejidos) with degrees of federal oversight and jurisdiction. However, the string of smaller, recently recognized comunidades and ejidos were cut away from their "mother" communities since the revolution by mestizo factions that have since disenfranchised the indigenous inhabitants (Arcos García & González Vázquez 1992). The struggle for Huichols living in these communities has been to foreground and renew their identity with the adjacent mother communities in spite of considerable opposition from their mestizo neighbors. Aside from overt, racially based discrimination and intimidation, the alienation of political power

over the lands they still inhabit has disrupted the coherence of these internally deterritorialized intimate cultures.

Thus, even for thousands of Huichol people who do not live in indigenous-controlled communities, the three *comunidades indígenas* of San Andrés Cohamiata, Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán and San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán recognized by the Revolutionary agrarian administration remain the main focus of cultural identity. These three *comunidades* contain four "civil" *cargo* hierarchies ('itsikate or staffholders) established in the late colonial period (Weigand 1978; cf. Cancian 1965). These 'itsikate are found in the three aforementioned agrarian *cabeceras* plus Tuxpan de Bolaños, San Sebastián's sometimes separatist anexo. There are also incipient 'itsikate and newly emergent syncretic ritual forms in such peripheral Wixarika *ranchería* clusters as Bancos de Calítique, Durango (Medina 2002), but at least Bancos still remains strongly identified with the ceremonial and political life of its mother *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata as well (Arcos García & González Vázquez 1992; Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1995; Vázquez V. n.d.).

The three *comunidades* also articulate some 20 major "temple districts" (*tukipa*), each with its own *cargo* hierarchy (*xukuri'ikate*, *jicareros* or bowlbearers).

⁴ Here I juxtapose "identity" to "ethnicity": whereas I treat ethnicity as a contrastive construct in the context of the state, I use "identity" to refer to people's more locally grounded, subjective self-definition or habitus. Everyday identity for Wixaritari need not always be based on contrasts to other peoples; instead; it often emerges from the relationships between selves within the society engaged in hunting, gathering, agriculture, ceremony and other forms of social production and reproduction.

⁵ Conversely, San Andrés's now-separate former *anexo*, Guadalupe Ocotán (Xatsitsarie), is now largely controlled by mestizos and no longer has a functioning cargo hierarchy —a worst-case future scenario that resembles some Cora *cabeceras* just to the west more than the other Huichol *cabeceras* to the east.

To make an important distinction with regard to Huichols, their comunidades have civil and religious hierarchies much like the indigenous pueblos of central and southern Mexico. These cargos are lodged in the indigenous courthouse and church (gobernancia and teyeupani) and embodied in varas (staffs of authority) and santos, respectively ('itsite and xaturixi in Wixarika).

The dozens of *tuki* temples constitute a third, uniquely Huichol *cargo* system. The *tukite* encompass much more of the Huichol people's colonial title lands than are recognized by the federal government as *comunidades indígenas*. The three kinds of *cargo* hierarchies channel a large fraction of all agricultural production through their ceremonies, and the *tukite* in particular remain virtually isomorphic with Wixarika territory and social structure since they include everyone who lives in the community except Protestants and mestizos. This is part of why such people disconnected from *costumbre* are so problematic. The *tukite*, each with its own territoriality and *cargos*, are largely independent of the "civil-religious" *cargo* system centered on the *comunidad* plaza except insofar as their *kumitsariutsixi* (*comisarios*) maintain ceremonial houses there. Usually when I refer to "religious" *cargos* in this dissertation, it is to the more common town church *cargos*, not to the distinctively Huichol *tuki cargos*, which remain the strongest institutional legacy of precolonial political organization.

The articulation of the *comunidad* and *tukipa* temple districts is particularly tangible during the massive Holy Week ceremonial exchanges that gather hundreds of *comuneros* (members of the *comunidad indígena*) in the *cabeceras*. Holy Week is the largest single communal gathering of the year, the only event that still consistently interrupts the growing dry season migratory labor diaspora

(albeit to a diminishing extent). With the important exception of the *comisariado* de bienes comunales (agrarian reform authorities), institutions and territory within the *comunidad* are otherwise quite loosely integrated. See Chapter 2, Sections 1 and 2 for a discussion of the *tuki* and *comunidad* subsystems' "differential articulation" of locality and region.

Finally each *tukipa* rests upon several major bilateral kinship estates (*kiete* or *rancherías*). The *kie* (*ranchería*) is the fundamental unit of land tenure because it is the household nexus between Huichol society and the ecosystem, at least in terms of maize production and most gathering activities(*cf.* Netting 1993).⁶ However, deer and peyote hunts organized at the *tukipa* level are a major exception to this generalization, as is much of the ceremonial system of *distributing* food.

This layered system thus encompasses revolutionary, independence-era, colonial and prehispanic territorialities, along with their respective forms of social organization, the *comunidad indígena*, civil *cargo* hierarchy and the *tukite*. It is made more complex by the fact that the same three Huichol *comunidades* (to

Whereas rancherías persist in Huichol society and their articulation with aboriginal temples (tukite) is more pervasive than the connection to churches and comunidad-level

⁶ The Yaqui case presents an illuminating contrast to this kind of *ranchería* organization. As Edward Spicer's work (1980) demonstrates, *rancherías* were the basic unit of Yaqui society with no higher level organization except in times of war. Then, war chiefs superceded the *ranchería* elders (who, like the Huichol 'ukiratsi, adjudicated disputes on the basis of traditional ceremonial knowledge). These chiefs evoked the underlying sense of *yoeme* (Yaqui territoriality) united the 40,000 or so inhabitants of the hundreds of rancherías (cf. Hu-DeHart 1981, 1984; *Journal of the Southwest* special issue on Yaquis).

The dispersed Yaqui rancherías were absorbed into mission communities based on sodalities (cofradías) by the 18th century but their constituent households continued to play an important role in everyday life. The eight mission communities gave a new scale of integration to everyday Yaqui life, which must have dazzled the formerly more isolated desert dwellers. Mission villages gave rise to various alternatives: schismatic rebel villages (until 1887) and diasporic urban barrios, which continue to reproduce aspects of mission village solidarity.

say nothing of the people dispersed beyond their historically recognized boundaries) are now gerrymandered among four states, seven *municipios* and numerous *ejidos*. In almost none of these *ejidos* or independent *comunidades* does the politically pivotal agrarian census recognize Huichols as the majority. At times these *ejidos* simply do not count their Huichol residents at all.

Currently, Huichol people continue to make claims to exclusive land tenure within the roughly 5,000 square kilometers "granted" them in their colonial titles. About 4,000 square kilometers were officially recognized in the 1950s and 60s after a long period of agitation punctuated by armed violence or the threat of it against mestizo squatters on communal lands (Rojas 1993; Arcos García & González Vázquez 1992; Weigand 1969; Benítez 1967-). Huichols also demand seasonal land use and occasional ceremonial access throughout a hierarchically structured territory of sacrificial exchange they call *kiekari* (from *kie*, "extended family estate", and *kari*, an abstracting or generalizing noun suffix: "estatedness"). These claims to *kiekari* are founded on relationships between groups of the *tukipa*-based *cargo*-holders (*xukuri'ikate*) and the divine ancestors (*kakaiyarixi*) who inhabit mythical emergence places throughout the 90,000 square kilometer, historically shared prehispanic territory. Particularly crucial are the whole system's cardinal points in the states of San Luis Potosí, Jalisco, Nayarit and Durango.

Xukuri'ikate traverse the territory to leave offerings for the kakaiyarixi, who in turn provide life and wealth to the social groups that maintain their

organization, the ethnic and territorial unity engendered by war chiefs or revolutionary caciques is a strikingly similar feature of Huichol and Yaqui history.

ceremonial obligations to them. This symbolic tribute indexes a highly encompassing type of patron-client relationship that may not provide market goods or state resources except insofar as it gives rise to markets and government subsidies for cultural goods and practices. However, for that very reason it remains largely autonomous and legitimate for Wixaritari. These relations of collective reciprocity at ancestral places are the basis for claims to ceremonial access under Article 4 of the Mexican constitution and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (cf. Concha 1993).

More fundamentally, these sacrificial-tributary relations are the means of legitimizing the changing configurations of spatially dispersed networks of *rancherías* (*kiete*) and the temple groups (*tukipa*) that they constitute. These people use their ceremonial organization as the grounds for making permanent claims to the lands they inhabit within the 5,000 square kilometers encompassed by their colonial titles but not recognized by the smaller contemporary "*resoluciones*" of those titles (Liffman *et al.* 1995).⁷

To further these claims, since the 1990s Huichols have had increasing regional, national and international links based in part on alliances between young bilingual teacher-politicians, traditional ritual authorities and non-governmental organizations. At the same time Huichol culture is quite unlike a social movement in that it has historically deep, structurally encompassing, particularistic ties to different places and social groups. Because of the broader links, more Huichols have begun to describe themselves as members of a unified

⁷ In the case of San Andrés Cohamiata, the Resolución Presidencial of 14 September 1965 allocated 74,940 hectares.

ethnic collectivity –as generic *indios* or *huicholes* (vs. mestizos or *coras*) instead of in terms of more particular identifications like their *comunidades* (*e.g.*, *Tateikietari* vs. *Tuapuritanaka*), *tuki* temple groups (*e.g.*, *Tseriekametiatari* vs. *Tunuwametiatari*) or even *rancherías* (*e.g.*, *Muxurimaye'u kiekame vs. 'aituxamayewe kiekame*) as they do in more local contexts of interaction. The ancient terms Wixarika/Wixaritari (Diviner/s, the Huichol people) and *tewi/teiteri* (Huichol person/s) were always for internal consumption, although some people now identify themselves with the former term in cross-cultural settings. This fact in itself is an indication of the increased political potential of "tradition" as an indigenous political resource since the 1990s.

To remedy the administrative fragmentation of the three Huichol comunidades indígenas, about three-quarters of whose territory is in Jalisco, an emergent pan-ethnic regional administration, the Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes de Jalisco (UCIH-J), was established in 1990 under the auspices of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) and locally administered parts of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's remedial safety net, the Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL) (Fox 1994). The UCIH was paralleled by the Unión de Comunidades y Ejidos Indígenas (UCEI) in Nayarit, which includes Huichols, Coras and Mexicaneros/Nahuas.

Now administratively semi-independent in an era of expanding indigenous land tenure on the regional level and indigenous rights on the national and international levels, the UCIH and UCEI have sought to orchestrate a regional land rights and cultural revival strategy, regulate extractive processes, and to foment long-term sustainable, self-sufficient production and petty

commerce. But they may already be in decline. Although aided legally and financially by the UCIH and UCEI, it is primarily the far older temple *cargo* groups of *xukuri'ikate* who have made the boldest and at times most effective claims for ceremonial "uses and customs" within the far vaster *kiekari* territory (Liffman 1997).

However, the coherence of even the largely recognized 4,000 square kilometer core of this territory is sometimes disrupted by intracommunal and interethnic conflict. Ideological visions of reciprocity and coherence must confront acts of violence and competing claims. These claims include land possession, access to ancestral places, political and cultural spokesmanship, and linguistic or visual representation of the relations of sacrificial exchange. In particular, differential access to local land, government money and regional markets is increasing class contradictions within the *comunidades* compared to the mid-20th century.⁸

In sum, Huichols exemplify the fact that territoriality encompasses a range of concepts, rights, practices and contradictions relating to land use. The forms of collective land use range from legal and exclusive communal tenure by extended families on some lands, through seasonally distributed multi-ethnic access for different productive practices on other ones, to intermittent ceremonial

⁸ This is not to convey an image of an eternal golden past. The elders of some *tukite* constituted virtual lords entitled to considerable tribute in the colonial period and *caciquismo* has been particularly notable during wars and revolutions (Weigand 1979, 2000).

access to ancestral places as well as more individualized or emergent processes of generating new "cultural places".

This production of place entails associating a new space with an existing repertoire of linguistic images and mythological texts, what could be called "topopoeisis". This happens when people translate historically and culturally "thick" relationships defined by movement through circuits of places over a vast region into a specific socially and spatially circumscribed exchange (Liffman 2000; Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Huichols have constructed this territory through ancient cultural identifications with "places" selected from more openended fields of historical migration, trade and ecological relationships -particularly dry season hunting routes and the colonial mining economy. In this sense, Huichol territoriality is an emergent "sense of place" defined as much by what the "centered" participants exclude from "decentered" global flows of things and people as by what they mark as uniquely meaningful to themselves (Feld & Basso 1996; Entrikin 1991; Munn 1996; Vandergeest & Peluso 1995:388).9 Claiming greater control over access to these places and the means of production they contain pushes the government's new openness to indigenous "usages and customs" to the breaking point as regional ethnic tensions grow throughout the area. However, Huichol claims outside their colonial territories are not for

⁹ Huichols both perform the circuits in real space and represent them ritually: *e.g.*, the ceremonial *via crucis* circuits around the *comunidad* center of Tateikie, San Andrés Cohamiata during Holy Week are a synecdoche for bounding the broader Wixarika territory. This power of ritual to demarcate is why most years outsiders are forbidden from participating in the Holy Week processions. Such ritual exclusion is part of the ongoing process of circumscribing the identity of the Wixaritari as an ethnic group.

ownership of large tracts of land but instead for access and use on an intermittent basis.

More formally, this production of place depends on two complementary processes: 1) ongoing circuits of movement, exchange and discourse both within and across the ostensible boundaries of a region, 2) which the participants demarcate and interconnect in terms of more limited communal symbolic identifications held to be centrally meaningful *for that locality*, like a still shot frozen out of a movie (cf. Weiner 1992, cited in Lomnitz 2001). However, for this kind of ceremonial practice to constitute a territorial claim, it cannot be individualistic. Instead, it must be enacted within the ritual framework of *tuki* (temple) organization, if not the agrarian courts where the state's recognition of colonial Spanish titles and contemporary habitation is paramount (Liffman 1995, 1996, 2000).

Like Paul Friedrich's description of how Tarascan political violence reconstituted communal lands in Michoacán (Section 6) and Eckart Boege's labor-based notion of identity in Oaxaca (Sections 3 and 6), the ceremonial constitution of landscape in the Gran Nayar demonstrates the need for a practice-based approach to territoriality (Coyle & Liffman 2000). Such an approach —whether it analyzes violence, labor or ritual—foregrounds the fact that territory constitutes an evolving cultural space and history instead of just reflecting a presumably immutable cosmological hierarchy.

One has to have an eye for detail in these matters because the practices that distinguish a local territory from larger, more impersonal global flows may be quite humble—narrating (Basso 1984; 1990), gathering (Povinelli 1993),

leaving offerings (Coyle & Liffman 2000) and so on. The classical anthropological concern with sacrifice is clearly relevant to the latter type of territoriality because the symbolically charged articulation of social groups and cosmological levels by transforming and transferring objects of exchange to ancestors or other extra-social beings is spatially distributed (cf. Munn 1992[1986]). That is, where do the objects and social groups articulated in ritual come from, what kind of physical space does the ritual happen in, and what kind of territoriality is created in the ritual act? I take up these questions in Chapter 2.

In the neoliberal legal conjuncture, these indigenous peoples have been learning the political power of their collective, narrative-and-practice based territoriality. They now document and present territorial narratives and ceremonies before national political audiences as evidence of long-term habitation and cultural memory. Before the 1990s it would have been hard to imagine the spectacle of a Huichol temple *cargo* hierarchy extending its ceremonial trek for peyote in San Luis Potosí to participate in a Chiapas peace march in Guadalajara. This action both identified Huichol ceremonial territoriality with broader indigenous demands and seemingly sanctified Zapatista demands as well (Liffman 1997). This type of performativity is a metapragmatic statement that Huichols belong to a sacred territory and consequently that in some senses that territory belongs to them as well.

2. ELEMENTS OF TERRITORIALITY

Before entering into the literature on indigenous territoriality in Mexico that is specifically relevant to the Huichol case, in this section I juxtapose some key terms revolving around the concept of "place", a constitutive element of territory. First, it should go without saying that physical *spaces* are not inherently cultural *places*, and conversely not all places are necessarily geographical. For instance, the conventional notion of territory does not include bodily sites or, on the other extreme, world-scale natural or historical anchors of primary psychological and cultural experience –the sunrise, birthing, the Russian revolution (Friedrich, pers. com.). At the very least then, spaces must be invested with personal and shared memory, discourse and practice –even if the only practice is discourse itself— in order to become meaningful *places*. Or conversely, space is a zero-degree place. Cultural memory of key places epitomizes the inseparability of time from the constitution of cultural space; memory is a bridge between discourse and practice. In the ethnography of

¹⁰ Although place is fundamental to territory, there are territories with no physical spaces. They exist fully but only in discourse: García Márquez's Macondo, Colombia; Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha, USA. Still, such discursive territories ground and bound real people's identities and place-based practices. Group identities may also be based on discourse and practice without even referring to an extensive geographic territory even though they may have places and topographies: internet groups have cyberspace, sexual/gender movements the body and some religions a disembodied eschatological cosmos.

However, see Leal Carretero & Ramírez De la Cruz (1992) for the Wixarika topography of death. Briefly, the cosmological opposition between east and west encompasses differences between male/female, restraint/proliferation, light/darkness and though a mythological gambit, life/death. The lands of the dead lie to the west, beyond Mesa del Nayar, the former Cora capital and in the *tierra caliente* by the sea.

Huichol territoriality, this memory is embodied in land documents, ancestral migration narratives and in the places and physical movements of ritual.

Similarly, in Rappaport's ethnohistorical study of the serially "reinvented past" of the Páez Indians of Colombia, territoriality emerges out of successive layers of meaning that a "textual community" ascribes to colonial land documents (1990:187). The meanings are specifically bound to the places described in the colonial titles, and power is exercised as "ritualized political practice performed across a landscape replete with mythic significance" (Gow and Rappaport 2000:18).

Shadow (1985, 1987) documented a similar process in the Gran Nayar region. There in the 1970s Tepecano people, the Huichols' eastern neighbors, rediscovered an extensive territory in their colonial titles. Although they had by this time been relegated to a mere strip of their former lands, they and their scholarly allies (particularly Shadow and Phil C Weigand) could now point to a cultural formation that was already in place in the Classic period (10th century) and had achieved its modern shape with 18th century titles.

In the most general sense place is a fundamental dimension of culture—particularly in metaphor, gesture and other features of language—and positioned speakers always saturate it with meaning in a lived historical dimension (*cf.* Hanks 1990 on the social construction of Yucatec Mayan domestic and agricultural space through indexical reference). Similarly, this semantic richness is the basis for Keith Basso's work (1984, 1990, 1996) on the moral discourse embedded in Western Apache descriptions of geographical places.

The semantics of place is also a basis for the extensive land claims undertaken by Huichol people. For instance, the linguist José Luis Iturrioz has estimated that there are at least 3000 named, narratively connected places within the thinly populated 4000 square kilometers of the three highland Huichol comunidades, an area roughly equal to the size of Cook County, Illinois (see his 1995 volume on Huichols' emergent ethnic consciousness; cf. 1995a). These names refer to the shape and color of landforms and the types of vegetation (and unlike the US, where Indian placenames may persevere despite the absence of Indians, here the names change as people and time transform the places).

Of particular importance are features like springs and caves. Cardinal emergence places like Teekata and Wirikuta are essentially massive natural temple complexes centered on several such features, embedded in and linked through ancestral narratives. In this dissertation I confine myself to a relatively schematic discussion of five cardinal emergence places that define the "corners" of Huichol cosmological territory and their iconic counterparts on smaller scales of organization: a pair of *kiete* (extended family *rancherías*) and *tukite* (temples encompassing dozens of *kiete*) and the *mojoneras* (boundary markers) that define land holdings in a legal as well as ceremonial sense.¹² Huichols deeply frown on the gratuitous dissemination of cultural knowledge, so I generally restrict myself to the politically salient aspects of these ceremonial practices.

In the philosopher Edward S Casey's expression, place is "more an *event* than a *thing*" (1996:26). In this ethnography, the event is condensed in the labor

¹² Indeed this patterning extends down to the level of the *xukuri* (effigy and votive gourd bowl), as described by Kindl (2000).

of sacrifice and in ceremonial exchange that follows it, and it links places on multiple temporal and spatial scales. In that regard, Ingrid Geist has pointed to the fundamental fluidity of Huichol ceremonial territoriality: in its most elemental form, "Pilgrims, with their symbolic load of ritual objects placed in their shoulderbags, install themselves as the center of the world, a center that moves itself" (1996:91; my trans.).

Also, for Nancy Munn in her extensive 1992 review, "spacetime" is "a symbolic nexus of relations produced out of interactions between bodily actors and terrestrial spaces" 1996:449). In the following paragraphs I evaluate and compare studies that address territoriality as encompassing collective historical "senses of place" in order to flesh this concept out. I combine approaches that see the senses of a place as being based on the "taken-for-granted quality of its intense particularity" (Feld & Basso 1996:11) with other, more political approaches that trace that "intense particularity" to from historical practice and discursive constructions. Thus, "emplacement" –people's identification with a place—can emerge in a diasporic telephoto view or by engaging the ecosystem every day in "an intensely gathered landscape such as that of aboriginal Australia" (Casey 1996:25, to cite a philosophical work that inspired this approach; cf. Casey 1993). Territoriality may be criticized as an overly generalized concept that encompasses exceedingly diverse kinds of relationships to place. However, such generality is useful at this point since my aim is to encompass ceremonial practice and political discourse in local, regional and transnational settings.

Inspired by Heidegger (1972), Tilley's essay on dwelling, paths and landscape (1994, chapter 1) is another approach akin to Casey and other writers in Feld and Basso's frequently cited collection (1996):

Place is both "internal" and "external" to the human subject, a personally embedded centre of meanings and physical locus for action. All places thus have metonymic qualities (places and their contents consist of part-whole relations) and differential densities of meanings to their inhabitants according to the events and actions they witness, partake in and remember. A sense of attachment to place is frequently derived from the stability of meanings associated with it (Tilley 1994:18).

Tilley's sense of variable scale is crucial to my perspective because it takes up metonymy and differential density over long periods of time and as people (re)constitute them in new performative contexts. Indeed, it is clear that Huichols extend metonymy (or rather, synecdoche and iconicity) in order to hierarchically order the whole *set* of places and thereby constitute an overarching cosmological landscape they call *kiekari*. ¹³ *Kiekari* as both practice and ideological construction has become the basis for some of their recent political claims.

Tilley bases his linguistic-philosophical orientation ethnographically by referring to studies of Australian aborigines and other contemporary small-scale societies. Perhaps the most novel metaphor in the book reflects his understanding of Aboriginal Dreaming paths: as people traverse and narrate the spaces between places, they physically and verbally articulate them into systematic ensembles. This perspective resonates with the territorial

¹³ By synecdoche and iconicity, I mean a resemblance between the whole and the parts that compose it, a combination of analogy and identifying the whole through a part (cf. Turner 1991:145-46). As Terence Turner has pointed out, Hobbes' image of the sovereign in the frontispiece of Leviathan (1985[1651]:71) is a classical example: in this image the sovereign's person is composed of innumerable smaller persons. (And in a pre-postmodern twist, the iconicity goes a step further because the sovereign's visage is said to resemble Hobbes himself.)

ceremonialism of the Gran Nayar cultivator/hunter-gatherers of western Mexico since their *kiekari* is the product of treks which until recently were undertaken on foot for up to 40 days' time.

Quoting De Certeau (1984:101), Tilley elaborates a dated but still suggestive Saussurean linguistic analogy applicable to Wixarika territorial practice:

Walking is a process of appropriation of the topographical system, as speaking is appropriation of language. It is a spatial acting out of place, as the speech act is an acoustic acting out of language. Walking, like language use, implies relationality in terms of an overall system of differences. It is a movement with reference to a differentiated series of locales just as language is constituted as a system of differences between signs.... Synecdoche then creates spatial densities; asyndeton [the elision of intervening words or places] undermines or cuts through continuities. "A space treated in this way and shaped by practicers is transformed into enlarged singularities and separate islands" (1994:28-29).

Although Tilley is more concerned with the cultural landscape than with political territoriality, it is clear that "walking" is the foundation for a processual micro-politics of landscape that can be articulated into broader territorial claims as the Huichols have done. He also points to another kind of highly "grounded" political perspective by emphasizing the multiple perspectives that the people in any one place may hold, and he indicates how power (in its everyday miniaturized Foucauldian form) inhabits the differences between those perspectives (cf. Rodman 1992). He thus breaks with most phenomenologists' characterization of places as apolitical and unitary:

The relationship of individuals and groups to locales and landscape also has important *perspectival* effects. The experience of these places is unlikely to be equally shared and experienced by all, and the understanding and use of them can be controlled and exploited in systems of domination —a consideration strikingly absent in virtually all

phenomenological theory and one that constitutes a major theoretical void. In small-scale societies the major axes of spatial domination are usually organized along the axes of age, gender, kin, and lineage. Knowledge and experience of particular locales and tracts of the landscape may be restricted and hidden from particular individuals and groups. ... Features of the settings of social interaction may constitute "disciplinary" spaces through which knowledge is controlled or acquired in a highly structured manner (Tilley 1994:26-27).

Certainly a defining feature of Huichol ceremonialism is the restricted access to ancestral places, and not only for Wixarika initiates who are not yet considered ready for places of ancestral power but also for outsiders who would also gain entry to ceremonies and places. This restriction is a way of projecting power into regional space. Possibly even more important is Huichols' struggle to restrict the capacity to represent such places and practices *graphically* because the capacity to reproduce visual images is tantamount to appropriating sanctified control over natural processes linked to the survival of the global ecosystem (Chapter 2, Section 1; Chapter 3, Section 3).

Tilley builds on Casey's perspective sketched above: "Locality' must be rethought in terms of first, the triple distinction between position, place, and region; second, the idea of porous boundaries; and third, the role of the lived body as the mediatrix between enculturation and emplacement—their localizing agent". Or, more concisely, his notion of the actively perceiving body directly experiencing the categories of "staying in place", "moving within a place" and "moving between places" (1996: 23, 44).

More fundamentally, Gow's western Amazonian study (1995:59) reminds us that places cannot be defined except through the people who act on and perceive them: "the local environment is a lived space. It is known by means of

movement through it, seeing the traces of other people's movements and agency, and through the narratives of yet other people's agency". For Huichols, seeing is the essential element of agency and control over territory because visual images are reproduced in sacrificial objects that propitiate ancestral action over the environment and the ancestors who literally "oversee" the territory (Chapter 2, Section 1).

However, all these perspectives take the prior existence of places for granted. This dissertation contributes to a discussion of how "places" are made or refigured through labor, ritual and other practices. In this general regard Munn (1996) shows how territoriality emerges from two kinds of bodily practice. In the first, much as with Huichol ceremonial trekkers in the high desert of north-central Mexico, for Warlpiri people in the western desert of Australia, places were created by ancestors' enduring bodily actions and are marked in objective landscape features. Consequently, ceremonial "Law" in effect recognizes ancestral friezes: "The term *jukurrarnu* [Dreaming, ancestrality] thus seems to connote 'being still there'—a kind of intensification of one position through its temporal extension. In the context of ancient places, 'being still there' asserts a [traditional] legal claim" (*ibid.:456*).

In the second kind of bodily practice, for indigenous peoples the limits of such places are unclear or shifting, as they physically apprehend diverse senses of the "gravitational field weakening out from the [topographic] center" (quoted in *ibid.*:453). For instance, people may experience those variably delimited places through bodily sensations of ancestral "pressure" when they trespass them, whereas narrow official government perimeters (such as those defined for

Huichol places under Mexican *patrimonio cultural* legislation) sever those shifting senses with lines drawn tightly around objective physical features.

Indigenous territoriality (what Munn calls "Aboriginal sense of country"; *ibid*.:460) is thus a reciprocal action between moving bodies and stationary places:

...[T]he immobilized powers in the topography switch over or are transposed into actors and their mobile spatial fields. ...[T]he power of Law fixed in the country becomes a moving space—[for example,] a Law truck [crisscrossing divine ancestral migration tracks on the national roads] with its travelers [on their way to ceremonies]. Conversely, actors are transposed into fixed locales and terrestrial forms (as when the spatial fields of ancient actors become named topographies) (*ibid.*:462).

Huichol trekkers also make it possible to ceremonially reconstitute general cosmological relations as they recognize ancestral signs in new places (cf. Negrín 1975; Neurath 1998).

Most relevant to this chapter, Lomnitz's theoretical construction of Mexican regional and national cultures (1992) elaborates on Bourdieu (1977) when he describes a similarly reciprocal relationship between performative action and authenticating symbols in specific spatial contexts. For Lomnitz place is the spatial coordinates of people's habitus (their enduring cultural dispositions and schemes of improvisation) and therefore an outgrowth of corporeal experience. Then, "...because places are frames of social relations, they become imbued with the values of those relations and therefore help to create the relational values that make up the self" (1992:18, cf. Myers 1986). The ceremonial apparition of palpable ancestral messages and visages is the most profound Wixarika example of this embodied experience of place, which legitimizes their settlement patterns and political claims described later in this dissertation.

Next, places —semantically rich, meaningfully inhabited spaces— are the atomic units of cultural landscapes.

Tilley (1994:34) defines landscape as

a series of named locales, a set of relational places linked by paths, movements and narratives. It is a 'natural' topography perspectivally linked to the existential Being of the body in societal space. It is a cultural code for living, an anonymous 'text' to be read and interpreted, a writing pad for inscription, a space of and for human praxis, a mode of dwelling and a mode of experiencing. It is invested with powers, capable of being organized and choreographed in relation to sectional interests, and is always sedimented with human significances. It is story and telling, temporality and remembrance. Landscape is a signifying system through which the social is reproduced and transformed, explored and structure—process organized.

This concept of landscape as a site of inscription and narrative is central to the ethnography laid out in the next chapter. Such landscapes are articulated through a narrative *topography* to form a shared *territory* essential to people's *identity*. The role of historically mobile people who constantly reformulate the sense of places is integral to this perspective because if territory is only seen as

culturally meaningful terrestrial places or regions, we disarticulate the dynamic relations between spatial regions and moving spatial fields. This sort of reification in turn dissolves the integrity of space and time, for it extracts from the analytic model the centering subject—the spatially and temporally situated actor—through whom and in whose experience the integrity of space and time emerges (Munn 1996:465).

This (phenomenological) experience and social production of territory as a personally experienced, politicized set of places is what I take *territoriality* to mean. Territoriality *emerges from* a wide range of land use and other productive,

¹⁴ See Miller (1995:192-215) for a literary exploration of "topography" as an ideologically embodied space in Faulkner. For me "identity" is not a fixed essence but instead a discursive asymptote like "tradition", a goal or achievement to which some of the political practices described in this dissertation are oriented.

ritual and political practices (especially indigenous identity discourses nowadays) as national and international audiences increasingly recognize or dispute them. In the broadest terms, territoriality is formed in people's active understanding of and response to material practices and institutional frameworks in space and time instead of being automatically *given by* them (*cf.* Marx 1976[1851]). Each successive chapter of this work points more emphatically to the truth of such a contingent definition.

As Munn's quote above suggests, places and territories are rarely brand new: people constantly remake them, often by claiming to reinscribe ostensibly more authentic ancient identities over more recently formed ones. This is the basis of the conflict over Wixarika sacred sites described in Chapter 3, Section 2, below. This is also the case of the Mexican state using "Mesoamerican" archaeology to legitimize itself (Vázquez León 1996); the Israeli state's use of "Biblical" archaeology (Abu el-Haj 1998, 2001); and place-naming and other kinds of geographic domestication in the Israeli-occupied West Bank (Neuman 2000, esp. chapter 3, "The social production of space, territory, and topophilia", pp. 74-134.).

Place-making may always depend on an originary act of violence or colonization in a broad sense since after all, Huichol identifications with place are an extension of sacrificial violence. However, where Abu el-Haj and Neuman work, local places derive their territoriality from social violence and recolonization in the intersection between modern nation-states and ancient texts. In general, as Slater has pointed out, "The struggles to recover an autochthonous

narrative of time and an indigenous ensemble of meanings for the territory of the nation have formed an essential part of postindependence politics" (1998: 391).

Discursive constructions of identity and recreations of territory by states seem to defy long historical breaks and global flows of people. In parallel fashion, indigenous peoples in the Americas have stressed their essentially continuous, historically deep territorial identities even though these may be inflected by centuries of ethnocide, land loss and displacement due to the state, church and market forces. See Section 7 for the impact of deterritorialization on this conception of indigenous identity.¹⁵

Yet despite these breaks, in Latin America many indigenous communities like the Huichols are still defined by colonial corporate institutions (*cargos*) and land titles (*mercedes*, *cédulas* etc.). These artifacts in turn often have reflected prehispanic land use practices. Also, Indians still frequently root their identities in culturally significant material transformations of place such as hunting, gathering, craft and horticultural practices that in turn are taken to be identical with ancestral practice. They continue to do so even though they now may live at greater distances from their home-lands for long stretches of time or can only *represent* those "emplaced" material transformations in literature, "ethnic art" or other media.

For example 'iritemai Pacheco's short stories (1993) embody urban Huichol nostalgia for a semiotically dense landscape in the sierra –a literary

¹⁵ To avoid an endless definitional spiral, suffice it to say that describing the wide range of meanings given to for "indigenousness" would require a Venn diagram composed of three partially overlapping circles: "autochthonous blood", "communal participation", and "cultural

reproduction of territory. Also, Amith (1995) shows how in the early 1990s, the prospect of inundation for over 20 Nahua villages lying in the path of a planned hydroelectric development on the upper Balsas River in Guerrero, Mexico, galvanized the inhabitants' ethnic, territorial and historical consciousness. As a result, they added new mythological and political images to their "traditional" amate paintings of the regional ecosystem and specialized cultural places.

Lest this seem like a drift into a purely discursive territoriality, a caveat: as far as this chapter is concerned, indigenous territoriality is not just any identification by anyone with any place. Instead, the minimal condition for a territorial relationship is people's active, simultaneously material and symbolic reproduction of an indigenous sense of "locality, as a structure of feeling", precisely when they find themselves struggling to save their "neighborhoods" or compelled to reconstruct them elsewhere (Appadurai 1996:199).

Increasingly, elements for these structures of feeling come from wider circuits of information and exchange, and they are represented to wider audiences.

The many displaced, deterritorialized, and transient populations that constitute today's ethnoscapes are engaged in the construction of locality, as a structure of feeling, often in the face of the erosion, dispersal, and implosion of neighborhoods as coherent social formations. This disjuncture between neighborhoods as social formations and locality as a property of social life is not without historical precedent, given that long-distance trade, forced migrations, and political exile are very widespread in the historical record. What is new is the disjuncture between these processes and the mass-mediated discourses and practices (including those of economic liberalization, multiculturalism, human rights, and refugee claims) that now surround the nation-state (Appadurai 1996:199).

identity". Their relative sizes have varied over time and space, with "blood" and "identity"

I hasten to add that such a material and symbolic construction does not need to be fully elaborated in an ideological discourse, but no discursive definition of indigenous identity (e.g., Gow 1997; Rappaport 2000:3) can be very effective without territorially based practices. Or as Rodman's review on the production of locality put it, "places come into being through praxis, not just through narratives" (1992:642).

Praxis and narrative are especially linked at the level of emergent ethnic territories during periods of flux like the present neoliberal transformation of Mexico because the state has seemingly authorized them at a moment when its legitimacy and indeed national identity itself seem in doubt: "The act of narrating expands the spatial and temporal dimensions of the village outwards into a wider landscape, while simultaneously focusing these dimensions to the mutual co-presence of narrator and listener in this one place" (Gow 1995:53). And as the authors of a theoretically suggestive yet concretely policy-oriented work put it in terms applicable to other geographically extensive Native American people,

The landscape is a physical link between people of the present and their past. The landscapes and the stories that go with them depend on each other....[P]laces with stories, being part of the land-based life, are integrated into larger, living landscapes, just as the stories that go with each place are integrated into larger, living narratives. ...[D]isturbance of these landscapes will speed the loss of Navajo stories and culture, which many feel is imminent under the weight of "economic development". The stories and the land are not only powerful symbols, but also constituents, of Navajo ethnicity (Kelley and Francis 1994:2, 188).

currently expanding and "participation" currently contracting.

And to signal a third article that addresses this verbal and physical articulation of places and history into territory, Rodman uses her "multivocal" view of place to build a "multilocal" model of territory: "regional relationships between *lived spaces* are developed through infusing experience in one place with the evocation of other events and other places" (1992:644). This observation expands on Tilley's: "Places are always 'read' or understood in relation to others" (1994:27). Sociology has never assumed that a "community" has to be synonymous with a single place, but by focusing on discourse and practice, I try to follow the literature discussed here to make the social construction of place and territory a central issue.

In short, one major theoretical challenge is to reconcile traditional structural notions of geographical region, land tenure and land use with people's phenomenological "emplacement" and their increasingly eclectic appropriations of global practices and discourses. These two sets of concerns correspond to what Entrikin (1991:3) in a widely cited work called "decentered" and "centered", respectively. This also corresponds to Henri Lefebvre's distinction between the objective "basis of action" and the actor's indexical "field of action" (1991:191, cited in Munn 1996).

Rodman suggests that multiple voices—both within an indigenous group and around it—must be taken into account to understand territory as a multiperspectival construction. Chapter 4 also addresses this problem in an international dispute over the validity of indigenous territoriality. Such a plural, linguistically and experientially-based perspective is also compatible with Lomnitz's (1998) observations, discussed in Section 5 of this chapter, that

multiple centers and peripheries are inscribed within local places with increasingly variegated class structures. Echoing Rodman, another signal article on the topic makes the same point:

Physical location and physical territory, for so long the *only* grid on which cultural difference could be mapped, need to be replaced by multiple grids that enable us to see that connection and contiguity —more generally the representation of territory— vary considerably by factors such as class, gender, race, and sexuality, and are differentially available to those in different locations in the field of power (Gupta & Ferguson 1992:20; *cf.* Tilley 1994:26-27).

The review of theoretical literature in this section points to the need for both a narrative and practice centered appreciation of how places constitute territories. The ethnography I undertook in Mexico has also shown that for Wixaritari, places are multidimensional insofar as they are synecdochically and iconically entailed in one another. Finally the conclusion to this section has shown the need for a multiperspectival understanding of place itself. The final chapter of this dissertation on the tragedy –both personal and political— that can occur when different perspectives on the meaning of a territory are not reconciled makes this point painfully evident.

3. MEXICAN INDIGENOUS TERRITORIALITY IN LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

In addition to the broad range of approaches entailed in the term "territoriality" discussed in the previous section, there is a voluminous literature on Mexican land tenure and land use (particularly the *ejido* and local political structure), and the maize agriculture on which indigenous territoriality usually rests (McBride 1923; Simpson 1937; Whetten 1948, to cite only three foundational works). In this brief section I begin to weave these approaches together. I do this in considerably more depth in Section 6 of this chapter, in the context of state patronage. Here I only point to rural class relations in order to suggest some ways in which they might be theoretically linked to local systems of signification.

One of the best recent works in this area is Eckart Boege's book on regional contradictions in Mazatec economy and society. The opening lines echo Marx's *German Ideology* by reminding us that production remains the fundamental means of creating territoriality:

According to the elder Ramos, to be shuta enima ["humble person"; i.e., a Mazatec] entails working in the bush [el monte]. I would like to emphasize the problem of what labor means for the creation of identity. We are dealing with the transformation of nature—el monte—with human action... The notion "we work"...has the village or villages behind it. In effect, work strategies are based in the first instance on the organization of the community — but also on the experience that emerges through work in el monte as well as collective knowledge, the transmission of management of particular ecosystems, the means of approaching nature....Sharing this knowledge unifies the mountain [Mazatec] groups; planting the cornfield in a particular place ties the peasant to the nature that surrounds him. Maize with its associated crops generates the culture we are going to analyze in this work....With the above only the group identity of a village or small municipio would be explained. However, the regional exchange of goods produced according to community specializations (aside from the production of maize) brings us to forms of

interaction between communities that reinforce the interdependence of "us" (Boege 1988: 26-27, my trans.).

The intimate connections between production, social organization and territoriality could not be clearer, even though maize production alone may not account for all the culture Boege analyzes (Boege 1988:37,62; cf. Palerm 1972[1955], in Netting 1993:264 for the relationship between maize production techniques, ecology and population). Or as an article on western Amazonia by a theorist of Colombian indigenous territoriality succinctly phrased it, the cultural landscape is "predicated on the active work of men and women...as a temporal process" (Gow 1995:49-50). This is the focus of the identity established with the land at the level of the *kie* (ranchería), where the principal divine ancestor propitiated in the xiriki (family shrine) is Niwetsika, the maize mother.

Regardless of how extensive a system may be overall, Boege (1988:37,62) reminds us that for the Mazatecs like Huichols, slash and burn maize cultivation requires a very intense labor investment, which varies according to altitude. For a medium-sized cornfield (coamil) left fallow for 10 years, people need 40 persondays to clear it, four to burn it, three to plant it with a planting stick (coa), 20 to weed it (and with increasingly pervasive chemical fertilizers, there is a second weeding requiring another 10 person-days), two days to bend the stalks when the ears mature, and eight to harvest. Hence, between 80 and 90 person-days are required for just one non-irrigated hectare (2.5 acres) of maize using slash-and-burn clearing and manual cultivation. Based on an average yield of 600-1200 kilograms (8-16 hectoliters) per hectare (about 620-1240 pounds or 11-22 bushels per acre), a five person nuclear family needs to plant 2-3 hectares (200 person-

days of labor), yielding roughly 500 kgs/person/year. This is approximately the average extent of Huichol maize cultivation as well, though many families do not plant enough for all their subsistence needs, especially as involvement in migrant labor and art production increases.

To situate the Huichols in a broader comparative perspective, Palerm (1972[1955], in Netting 1993:264) estimated that the land base a peasant family in Mexico needs to be able to eat maize for a year is inversely and geometrically proportional to the intensiveness of cultivation techniques:

	LAND BASE:C	CULTIVATED LAND/YEAR
SHIFTING CULTIVATION	12 ha.	1.5 ha.
BRIEF FALLOW (1:1)	4.5	2.5 ha.
IRRIGATION	0.86	0.86 (2 crops)
CHINAMPA	0.37	0.37 (continuous cultivation)

Taking Boege's estimated nuclear family size of five people, the 4,000 Huichol "families" would require 48,000 hectares of cultivable land, roughly 10 percent of their currently inhabited land and more than is actually cultivable. Netting (1993:264; cf. 1984) indicated a strong relationship between declining fallow time, stable household land tenure, and rural population density:

YEARS			PCT OF LAND	
CULTIVATED vs.	FALLOW	FALLOW VEG	CULT/FALLOW	POP/KM
FOREST FALLOW	1-2	15-25 high forest	0- 10%	0- 10
BUSH FALLOW	2-8	8-10 low forest	10- 40	4- 16
SHORT FALLOW	>2	1-2 grass	40- 80	16- 64
ANNUAL CROP	1/yr	<1 grass or not	ne 80-100	64-256
MULTICROP	0.2/yr	NONE none	200-300	>256

Maize yields and population densities in the Gran Nayar region correspond to those for forest and bush fallow, the low end of the productivity spectrum defined by Palerm, whereas garden crops in irrigated *arroyo* plots have high, annual yields.

In short, despite the fact that in 2000, 75 percent of Mexico's population was "urbanized" in some sense, in order to understand Huichols' and other indigenous peoples' territoriality, one must still focus on the rural pueblo. At the same time the (post)modern truism that culture or identity is "multilocal" —not grounded in a simple 1:1 relationship to a single place—requires any notion of territoriality to take migration and other forms of displacement (as well as gender differences and household structure) into account. If not, the term is increasingly irrelevant because rooted unilocal territories have never been the rule, even for people like Huichols who retain a substantial land base.

The phenomenology of place (or multilocal places) and the labor process that constitutes people's identification with those places both defines and is constrained by the struggle for access to the rural means of production and to political power. The classic forms of "access to the rural means of production" among peasant-workers in Mexico are as collective *comuneros* or *ejidatarios*, individual *propietarios*, dependent *medieros* (sharecroppers)- proletarian *jornaleros*, or – more indirectly – as migrants outside their home region or as refugees displaced by hydroelectric development, biosphere reserves, wars, etc. ¹⁶

As outlined in Section 1, most Huichols still remain *comuneros* in three *comunidades indígenas* (San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán, Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán and San Andrés Cohamiata, where I did the majority of my

¹⁶ In southern Mexico, Miguel Bartolomé and Alicia Barabas have documented the ethnic reconfigurations and millenarian ideological responses of deterritorialized but historically antagonistic groups that found themselves sharing new lands after being displaced by hydroelectric development (Barabas & Bartolomé 1973; Bartolomé & Barabas 1990). The displacement or subordination of indigenous people by instituting biosphere reserves under outside control is a kindred threat, both in the Gran Nayar region and elsewhere (cf. Collier 1994:49, for a discussion of this in Chiapas).

fieldwork) that straddle the border region of Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango and Zacatecas. However, the key land tenure conflict for San Andrés is the fact that nearly half the area recognized as part of its colonial cédula is now under nonindigenous control even though Huichols who identify socially, economically and culturally with the mother community's corporate institutions still inhabit that area. Many Huichols previously displaced westward during the Lozada insurgency (1855-73) and the revolution (1910-40) into the Nayarit lowlands have now reorganized into ejidos under their control, with state political patronage (cf. Castellón 1991). Many more migrate seasonally from the comunidades to work as jornaleros (day laborers) in the vegetable and fruit plantations of Zacatecas and in the tobacco farms of coastal Nayarit. Some agricultural migrants have set up permanently as rural workers as far away as Colorado. The construction of the Aguamilpa dam on the Río Grande de Santiago in the 1990s displaced some Huichol families from the Zoquipan ejido area (cf. ff. 16). I know of no Huichol propietarios, medieros (private landowners or sharecroppers) if only because the differential access to the means of production on which such categories are based does not exist officially in the comunidad indígena. However, as I discuss in Sections 1 and 4 of Chapter 3, significant wealth differences short of full-fledged agrarian class differences are nevertheless emerging.

And "access to political power" ranges from state clientelism, the disenfranchisement of Indians living without representation in mestizo-controlled *municipios* or as undocumented workers in the US to armed insurgents (re-)appropriating lands from private estates, and members of incipient autonomous indigenous regions. Huichols, like other Mexican Indians, have

inhabited all these contexts, including armed insurgency as recently as the 1950s but the majority remain *comuneros*.

For Huichols as for others, the so-called "multivocality" of place cited in the previous section (Rodman 1992) is largely expressed through the diverse forms of access to the means of production and political power as well as through age, gender and class more broadly conceived. However, the principal discourse of territoriality (*kiekari*) described in this dissertation reflects the still prevalent male gerontocratic social order reproduced through the *cargo* system. The institutional settings for this discourse and consequently the generation of actors has shifted as new actors appropriate the traditional agrarian and broader cultural claims but gender roles remain much the same despite increasing education and bilingualism for women.

Such traditional gender roles have tended to make women more unilocal actors more identified with domestic, wet, earthbound elements (maize, rain, underworld) and men more multilocal actors identified with more mobile, dry, celestial elements (deer, fire sun). However, people constantly displace such symbols into new morally and spatially peripheral domains, occasioning profound contradictions in the process (Friedrich 1977). Jane Hill (1995) describes a similar symbolically charged cultural dialectic between (female) center and (male) periphery as a "moral geography" inflected by narrative structure and multiple cultural "voices". In her Bakhtinian analysis of a

¹⁷ Wixarika noun classes (inflected only in the plural forms) express this dualism. Entities sharing the suffix –*ri* are central or feminine, whereas those sharing the suffix –*tsi* are peripheral or masculine (Iturrioz *et al.* 1986).

Mexicano (Nahuatl) political murder narrative, "we are in *monte* 'uncultivated land', and not a cultivated field, part of the peasant order of things. In this dreadful place a crowd of women, symbols of Mexicano tradition, try to keep Don Gabriel from the sight of his son's body..." (*ibid.*:112).

So, practically speaking, indigenous territoriality in Latin America is still largely concerned with the possession of demarcated pieces of the earth's surface. However, as this chapter discusses in some detail, land is a space of cultural signification that provides the means to reframe local historical identities in terms of globalized autonomous development and human rights discourses. Claims for "autonomy", then, emerge where globalization erodes the coherence of modern nation-states and the social groups ostensibly contained by them respond with a heightened sense of the meanings contained in places (Díaz Polanco 1995). Sometimes this response means that overlapping ceremonial, productive and discursive relationships to multiple places (and especially the cultural or political claims based on such relationships) contradict each other both within a locality and on a regional level. Each successive chapter of this dissertation looks more acutely at how problematic these contradictions can be.

As mentioned in Section 2 with regard to Mexican and Israeli archaeology, the state can represent the strongest such regional contradictions when it appropriates images of historically rooted indigenous territorialities in order to make broader claims for itself. In Mexico state narratives that insert images of indigenousness into a self-serving teleology frequently negate indigenous models of space and time (Liffman forthcoming). As the neoliberal project is caught in the sharpening contradictions of globalization, it has made indigenous

territorial claims constitutionally acceptable in order to compensate for cuts in the social safety net. Indigenous people like the Huichols have taken advantage of this opening, and were the first indigenous group to have pushed a major land claim through the courts on that basis (Arcos pers. com.).

In sum, the point of setting up this wideranging, eclectic approach to Indian land tenure and territoriality is to bring seemingly incongruous practices like "maize horticulture", "cattle ranching", "drug production", "agrarian revolution", "labor migration", "forced relocation", "ethnic discourse" and "religious pilgrimage" within a common framework that permits us to see how, to borrow Appadurai's terminology, Huichols produce "locality" beyond a given "neighborhood" by inscribing literally grounded identities into place. My goal then, is to examine in a preliminary way the connections among forms of indigenous land use, land tenure, ceremonial and productive organization, local political power, regional political articulation and ethnic identity. I do this on three regional scales: local Huichol practice, their regional political discourses and global discourses about them in particular and other Indians in general by conflictive, largely non-indigenous interlocutors. This section has touched on local, regional and national relationships surrounding production and political power. The next section will begin to sketch emergent international legal backdrop to the claims Indians are now making to contest them.

4. MEXICAN INDIGENOUS TERRITORIALITY IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

This brief section turns away from the focus on local territoriality described in Sections 1 and 3 and the more phenomenological approach to the constitutive nature of experiencing place described in Chapter 2, to situate Mexico's recent legal recognition of the territoriality, identity and practices of peoples like the Huichols in broad international perspective. Consider Colombia, another large, multiethnic Latin American republic. Since the 1980s both countries' governments have carried out major constitutional expansions of indigenous communities' legal status along with other political changes. Most notably, in the early 1990s both governments signed the International Labor Organization's Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, among other measures enhancing indigenous autonomy in a post-modernizing period (Gómez 1995). With the concomitant changes to Article 4 of the Mexican constitution, for the first time since the colonial caste system was abolished in the

¹⁸ Also see Van Cott (1996: www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/macnair/mcnair53/m53c2.html) for a crisp comparison of Colombia and Brazil, emphasizing the law and social movements. That chapter is part of a document for the US War College that also analyzes the emergence of the Chiapas Zapatistas (www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/macnair/mcnair53/m53c3.html) in ideological and organizational terms.

¹⁹ In Convention 169, territory is defined as lands that indigenous people "traditionally occupy" and over which they should be granted "rights of property and possession". It also advocates the "right of those peoples to participate in the utilization and conservation of those resources" (Part II, Arts. 13, 14, 15). This theoretically transcends the category of "community land" defined in Article 27 of the Mexican constitution (cf. the Código Agrario, the revolutionary state's bible of land tenure). Indeed, this incipient legal framework recognizes that the "indigenous pueblo" is more than the local indigenous community, and its "traditional occupation of lands frequently includes pastoral and gathering activities as well as ceremonial uses of space" (De la Peña 1999:22; my trans.). Likewise, Convention 169 also recognizes the right of pueblos to govern themselves with their own authorities and legal systems provided they do not contradict "human rights or fundamental laws".

early 19th century, the state recognizes the country's "ethnically pluralistic composition" ("composición étnica plural").²⁰ As such, it promises to "protect, preserve and promote the development" of indigenous communities' "languages, cultures, practices, customs and specific forms of social organization". Especially the latter seems to imply extensive territorial practices if not autonomy.

The legal changes both reflect and enhance the recent transformation of *indígenas* as subjects of state development programs into *indios* as an emergent, autonomous ethnic movement (De la Peña 1995). Van Cott (*ibid.*) focuses on the fact that "the goal of the protagonists of the movement —the thousands of indigenous communities and organizations throughout the Americas— is the recuperation of local autonomy and the exercise of authority over traditional territories". However, the types and pace of legal recognition for indigenous peoples, the relative independence of indigenous movements from political parties and non-governmental organizations, as well as the concrete provisions for categorizing particular kinds of land and social practices as "indigenous" and "autonomous" reflect demographic and structural differences between countries.

Among the structural conditions, the extent of globalization, neoliberal reforms and state vs. guerrilla or Indian hegemony differs significantly.

²⁰ "The Mexican nation has an ethnically pluralistic composition, fundamentally based on the presence of the indigenous peoples of Mexico. The state constitutions and the laws and ordinances of the Federation and of the states and counties will establish the norms, measures and procedures to protect, preserve and promote the development of languages, cultures, practices, customs and specific forms of social organization of the indigenous communities under their authority in all which does not contravene this Constitution. ... In federal and local trials, in which an Indian may be part, their juridical practices and customs will be taken into account during the whole proceeding, and in resolving the heart of the matter" (my trans.)

Neoliberal reforms hit much harder in Mexico, uprooting the rural economy, whereas the crisis of hegemony –and violence— is more acute in Colombia. ²¹ Consequently, much of the Mexican ethnography focuses on economic change as the main determinant of deterritorialization and indigenous identity whereas in Colombia the causes are more often due to violence spawned by the globalized drug industry. The Colombian literature often points to the strategic structural position of indigenous organizations that, at least until the recent US intervention, had emerged in better condition than unions, the left and other groups from a civil war fought over natural resources, drug cultivation and sectional interests.

Still, Mexico has also had a history of rural violence: the national population declined by some 10 percent in the 1910-40 revolutionary period from death and deterritorialization, and following the bloody national repression of 1968, the state of Guerrero had a brief insurgency in the late 70s. In Chiapas the EZLN movement incubated quietly in the early 80s and attacked the government in 1994, and smaller insurgencies have emerged in Guerrero and Oaxaca since then. However, the EZLN shocked nearly everyone because it erupted after a long period of relative calm in the countryside: the Mexican state is basically much more stable and in control of the national territory than its Colombian counterpart.

²¹ Van Cott estimates that by the late 1990s, 400 Colombian indigenous leaders had been assassinated, either by the government and right-wing paramilitaries who assume that Indians cooperate with guerrillas, or by the guerrillas—particularly the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)—who assume otherwise.

In general, then, Mexico has been the increasingly democratic stage for a spatially limited but politically far-reaching neo-indigenous rebellion since 1994 whereas Colombia, which has had the Quintín Lamé indigenous insurgency since as early as 1981, is a state with much less hegemony over its territory or economy. Indeed, Gros (1991:322) has argued that until recently basically neither the Colombian state nor the national or international private sectors have had much interest in nearly half the national territory!²²

The fact that Colombian indigenous people inhabit 20% of the national territory (albeit in a dispersed way) and are often involved in drug production for the international market gives them a strategic political position, even though they number only 800,000 (a mere two percent of the population). In Mexico, 10 percent of the 100 million inhabitants consider themselves indigenous but they occupy a much smaller fraction of the territory and their role in drug cultivation is marginal and subordinate.

In short, as the Colombian state tried to keep territorially pivotal Indians from abandoning relations with it and going over more to guerrillas and/or drug growers, autonomous Indigenous Territorial Entities (Entidades Territoriales Indígenas, ETIs) were created in the amended 1991 Constitution.²³ On the other

²² Until 1974, much of the "national territory" was considered Catholic mission lands. State interests focus on the coffee and livestock areas in the center of the country, banana plantations in the north, and oilfields and rice production in the Andean piedmont. However, the lack of state presence does not imply a shortage of bloody local conflicts over resources (Gros 1991: 322-23) or of the increasingly regional "drug war".

²³ Probably the most important single measure is Article 286, which calls for the ETIs. Under it, "indigenous communities are granted a range of autonomous powers to define their own development strategies, choose their own authorities, and administer public resources, including local and national taxes" (Van Cott 1996). Avirama & Márquez (1994:103-105) summarize other articles of the 1991 constitution of special importance to indigenous people.

hand, in Mexico far vaguer constitutional provisions were enacted to ameliorate the effects of a far more aggressive globalization initiative under NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement or Tratado de Libre Comercio). The measure is widely seen as endangering the small-scale rural subsistence and farming economy (Cornelius 1992; Hewitt de Alcántara 1994; Cornelius & Myhre 1998; also Randall 1996).

In particular, the Salinas government's simultaneous neoliberal amendment of Article 27 (the agrarian reform) clearly contradicted its tentative recognition of indigenous territoriality in Article 4. The amended Article 27 effectively dismantled the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria and cut off new peasant land claims. Indeed it permits the parcelization, capitalization and sale of *ejidal* lands as well as the transformation of communal lands into *ejidos*, thus potentiating their sale as well. This move culminated the dismantling of the revolutionary agrarian regime initiated in 1986 when Salinas's predecessor, Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, signed onto GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, now the World Trade Organization) in order to increase capital investment in Mexico.

In Van Cott's succinct framework (1996), the link between globalization and indigenous land loss is clear:

In the 1980s a number of international trends had a broad impact on national politics in the region. The regionwide debt crisis forced most countries in the region to slash social spending in exchange for debt relief. The new model of economic development prescribed by lenders forced a transformation of the state, while opening protected and inefficient markets to international trade. For rural peoples, this new economic model meant the loss of agricultural subsidies, marketing assistance, and transfer payments, as well as increasing encroachments on Indian and peasant lands due to the expansion of the private sector. It is important,

however, not to overstate the direct impact of neoliberal reforms during the 1980s on ethnic-based political activity, for three reasons: 1) Numerous indigenous organizations already existed at the time reforms were instituted. 2) While many incorporated an analysis of the impact of these reforms on the poor into their political rhetoric, the main focus of indigenous movements continued to be cultural revindication, dignity, autonomy, and land. 3) Most rural and Amazonian indigenous communities never received the public services-health care, potable water, electricity, sewerage, roads-that were cut as a result of the reforms. The key link between liberalizing reforms and indigenous mobilization is changes in land policies threatening communal land tenure. Efforts to privatize Indian lands result from: a) Pressure from local elites to acquire this land; b) Reforms required of debtor nations by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank; c) Modernization of the agricultural sector in order to better compete on international markets and join free trade agreements.24

Now with Salinas's neoliberal constitutional amendment, as with the 19th century Liberal disentailment of community lands, the greater mobility of foreign capital in Mexico has made it far easier to mortgage or even sell *ejidos*. To a lesser degree it also potentially affects the older and usually far less capitalized and modernized *comunidades indígenas*. This is a marked contrast to the Colombian expansion of communal lands through the 1990s. The gutting of Article 27 and the signing of NAFTA were key provocations for the EZLN uprising on the very day the treaty went into effect, January 1, 1994.

In part because their support is less pivotal to the state's survival, indigenous people in Mexico still await effective enabling legislation for a vaguely worded amendment to Article 4 of the Constitution, and nothing like ETIs have yet been mandated. The recent enactment of a weak compromise known as the Ley Indígena has met with general disdain. Vicente Fox Quesada

²⁴ See http://www.ladas.com/BULLETINS/1994/NAFTAGATT.html for the intellectual property issues connected with these globalizing reforms.

promised in his 2000 campaign for the presidency to finally resolve this ambiguity as well as the Chiapas conflict, but Article 4 has also been criticized more fundamentally for privileging cultural over economic or human rights (Díaz Polanco 1995).

Díaz Polanco (1991:203-206; 1995) in particular is highly critical and pessimistic about the prospects for indigenous territoriality under neoliberal constitutional reforms. For him, the only solution is regional autonomy:

If community is the nucleus of ethnicity, threatening the former endangers the latter. In this sense, regional autonomy, inasmuch as it assumes not only the consolidation of the community but moreover the expansion of territoriality (and under new conditions including the updating of ancient regional territorialities, although not the same territories as before), is probably the last chance or historical option for the Indian peoples of Latin America (1995:239; my trans.).

In partial contrast, in Colombia there are international agreements between the government, the Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC, a centralized body founded in 1982 to coordinate the nation's dispersed indigenous populations) and the European Union to develop indigenous proposals for autonomous territories. However the recent massive escalation of armed conflict in the country, based on increasingly heavy US funding and direct involvement on many fronts may radically shift the focus of government policy away from indigenous people and toward a final military solution. See www.usoutofcolombia.org/ for a critical news digest. I turn now to the analysis of indigenous territoriality in the increasingly broad structural framework that this section has laid out.

5. CENTER, PERIPHERY AND LOCALITY

Continuing with this chapter's alternation between even-numbered sections on more theoretical, institutional, intellectual and ideological issues (place theory in Section 2 and comparative constitutional law in Section 4) and odd-numbered sections on the specific (Huichol history and social structure in Section 1, and land tenure in relation to the "moral geography" of place in Section 3) this section addresses the issue of local spatial organization in its regional and national context.

One of the most widely diffused global models of locality has been Arjun Appadurai's. He outlines the multi-sited, recursive reproduction of "neighborhood" and "locality" in global context, but at the risk of implying that such places are in fact the starting points of social reproduction and initially exist without active, extensive interrelations:

... as local subjects carry on the continuing task of reproducing their neighborhood, the contingencies of history, environment, and imagination contain the potential for new contexts (material, social, and imaginative) to be produced. In this way, through the vagaries of social action by local subjects, neighborhood as context produces the context of neighborhoods. Over time, this dialectic changes the conditions of the production of locality as such. Put another way, this is how the subjects of history become historical subjects, so that no human community, however apparently stable, static, bounded, or isolated, can usefully be regarded as cool or outside history.... In this new sort of world, the production of neighborhoods increasingly occurs under conditions where the system of nation-states is the normative hinge for the production of both local and translocal activities. ...the power relations that affect the production of locality are fundamentally translocal... (Appadurai 1996:185, 187-88).

Through their ceremonial practices, Huichols make the whole regional territory they call *kiekari* into a "locality as a structure of feeling". However, this is a

mixed "neighborhood" not altogether under their political or economic control. The viability of the Huichol "neighborhoods as coherent social formations" within the *kiekari* hinges on this ceremonial "technology of localization".

Just as Appadurai suggests, that process has always been informed by the nation-state but now indigenous actors can appropriate global and state discourse to redefine the legal character of indigenous territorialities and identities. Chapter 3 is dedicated to examining signal cases of how Huichols enter into these expanding discursive contexts and in turn how such global discursive spaces treat them. The more traditional anthropological question is how territorialities and identities are collectively constructed and constituted in local practice. That is the focus of the next chapter. In this section I turn to a selective review of recent, historically based literature that addresses how indigenous territoriality is situated in the problematic relationship between communities and the nation-state.

Claudio Lomnitz lays out a theoretical framework for the spatially differentiated process of cultural and political-economic articulation in his "Concepts for the study of regional culture" in *Exits from the labyrinth* (1992:24-42). He discusses six pairs of principal heuristic principles: 1) hegemony and power relations as the opposed terms of the dialectic that defines the nation-state; 2) regional culture and intimate cultures as the spatially variegated embodiment of that dialectic; 3) abstract social classes and concrete ethnic or identity groups as the constitutive poles of experience that intimate cultures may draw from or generate; 4) culture of social relations as the means of articulating the regional ensemble of intimate cultures and localist ideology as people's

skewed awareness of it; 5) coherence and *mestizaje* as qualitative measures of local cultural consistency and regional cultural homogenization; all undergirded by 6) the unifying discursive processes of institutionalization and mythification. "Mythification" borrows its sense from Roland Barthes: "a social class's appropriation, recontextualization, refunctionalization, and resignification of a sign or of statements" (ibid.:29). Much of the next chapter deals with the Huichols' mythification of the state in their ceremonial practice and discourse.

To briefly frame this ethnography in Lomnitz's terms, insofar as the majority of the Huichol ethnic group that lives in *comunidades indígenas* can be said to have a single intimate culture articulated into a single regional culture, it has maintained its coherence and largely avoided the deculturating effects of *mestizaje*. This is because the regional culture of class-based hierarchical social relations has extended to Huichols in discrete contexts that until recently were usually situated outside the *comunidades*. Or, to take more note of the emergent distinctions within Huichol society, the distinct intimate cultures of market-oriented merchants and ranchers, state-dependent teachers and bureaucrats, and largely self-sufficient landholding *comuneros* inside the *comunidades*, alienated peasants outside the *comunidades*, and –to a lesser extent— urbanized Huichol workers share a common identity grounded in shared ceremonial practices.

This increasingly foregrounded ethnic identity aims to order and encompass the developing cultures of social relations and localist ideologies that pattern Huichols' disparate integration into the regional structures of domination. Indeed, through ceremonial practices Huichols who still identify with *comunidades* have *amestizado* (deculturated) or mythified (appropriated)

regional or national symbols on locally favorable ethnic terms. This contrasts somewhat with the culturally subjugated position of Indians in the Huasteca Potosina (ibid.:30-32;216-220) whose localist ideologies have internalized mestizo domination. Huichols' territorial rituals and discourses claim to control the forces of the state rather than to rationalize its power over them.

If Huichol society has not been entirely *amestizado* into the hegemonic frame in most contexts, it may only be because that frame is currently changing shape and is attaining global scope, at least on the discursive level. The global opening created for Huichol political discourse since the 1990s has expanded the terms of the encounter to include relations formerly restricted to the local intimate culture and identity group. These subjects have strengthened their position with respect to the Mexican nation-state by leapfrogging it to appropriate the key discursive categories of indigenousness offered by international organizations. Huichols have thus assembled an endogenous form of mythification, a powerful localist ideology and an enhanced sense of ethnicity out of local and global elements that they then bring to the state in their demands for territorial recognition on local and regional scales.

Another, more classical type of disjuncture between local identity and regional hegemony is described in Daniel Nugent's trenchant land- and labor-based analysis of another former frontier colony's struggle against Indians, land speculators and the state on an international frontier (1993; cf. Alonso 1995). He examined the relationship between the state and Namiquipa, Chihuahua, a northern frontier colony originally granted vast communal lands by the Spanish crown in exchange for fighting the marauding native peoples ("Apaches") of the

region. Aside from the fact that Namiquipa's founders were Indian fighters, Nugent's account has a distinctly indigenous resonance because he focuses on the productive nexus between people and local territory as the principal site of generating cultural value and of opposing expropriation by the state that originally recognized it in colonial land titles. This explains why, despite the fact Namiquipa was first allied with the state against indigenous people in the 18th century, the community became one of the first to rise up against the Liberal state in the 1910 revolution—now allying itself with indigenous struggles insofar as Indians' communal lands were at stake, too. But later, when the Revolution began to betray its peasant base and to undermine the land-based productive strategies that had always been the community's *raison d'etre*, the allegiances changed again. Hence the relationship between local territory and the surrounding ethnic and economic climate, the distant state and the international context "zigzags" in historical perspective.

In such complex local formations, precolumbian, colonial, national and revolutionary states have been linked to their subjects' territories and cultures in significantly different ways, and those diverse historical configurations may remain inscribed in local territoriality. Lomnitz (1998:30,39-40,44; trans. in 2001 ch. 3) points out that before the Spanish invasion social groups, local territory and the supernatural sphere were relatively congruent with one another and also hierarchically linked to ethnic conquest states (the Aztecs, Mixtecs, etc.). This reflects a high level of "coherence" in terms of "social relations" if not "intimate cultures". As with the Huichols' pre-Columbian and colonial political formations and their current ceremonial practice, the power of these states was

based on tribute. Indeed they were reproduced through the spectacle of sacrificing their subjects' human life force to the supernatural patrons of production. Therefore, although this system was hierarchical, it did not exactly produce national citizens.

Whereas the Gran Nayar region maintained a semi-autonomous tributary chiefdom into the 18th century and successfully resurrected it for 20 years in a loose alliance with mid 19th century Conservatives, elsewhere in the Mexican colonial period,

Relative to the prehispanic past, the great change consisted of converting the communal nucleus into Indians' only social space, eliminating the preexisting higher levels of socioeconomic, cultural and political organization along with the territoriality that belonged to them.... Thus the socioethnic organization was simplified: ethnic groups expressed themselves as an archipelago of communities, isolated from each other or with very discrete relations, and each one of them was placed face to face with the power of the state (Díaz Polanco 1995:234; my trans.).

So, while local territoriality continued to be reproduced under a nationally unintegrated state, in most areas of New Spain indigenous peoples' overarching political structures –and with them, the social relations and coherence that undergirded that articulation— were being dismantled. Instead, a *sistema de castas* ranked three new nationalities (European, Indian and Black): indigenous territoriality was now confined to geographically demarcated *repúblicas de indios*. Again, this did not become the case in the Gran Nayar until much later than elsewhere in New Spain. The Spaniards imposed the Huichol *comunidades* of San Andrés, Santa Catarina and San Sebastián on top of the preexisting *tukipa* land tenure system by the late 17th century (Rojas 1993) and the Huichols began the long process of "traditionalizing" (Bauman forthcoming) or "mythifying"

(Lomnitz 1992) those administrative and religious forms. Huichols were also under territorial attack, particularly in the mid-16th, early 18th and mid-19th centuries.

Elsewhere in Mexico since the project of socializing everyone as national subjects took off in the 19th century, most of the once coherent territories (indigenous and otherwise) have now collapsed under the modernizing demands of the state and market (*e.g.*, Warman 1976; Greenberg 1989 to cite only the Morelos peasantry in general and the Chatinos of Oaxaca in particular; see Sanderson 1986 for a more global picture). However, according to Lomnitz, the post-colonial state's failure to actually deliver the resources required to develop a modern nation has led most subjects to doubt its legitimacy. They have ceased identifying themselves as subjects (if in fact, as in the Huichol case, they ever fully did). However, at the same time Huichols have appropriated core state symbols as part of their own sacred inventory. As the next chapter discusses, they then go on to burlesque and resist the concrete instantiations and representatives of those forms, much as other Indians and mestizos did at the end of the colonial period (Van Young 1989, 2001).

So, Lomnitz concludes, whereas in the prehispanic period *states* were composed of coherent regional territories that remained *nationless*, the post-modernizing *nation* is now a congeries of conflicted regional territories that have become *stateless*. The recent (re-)constitution of semi-autonomous indigenous territories within the decaying state's more encompassing orbit may mark a new phase in this dialectic, and a key finding about Huichol territorial ideology is that they have appropriated symbolic functions of the state for themselves. However,

new territorial schemes like that of the Chiapas Zapatistas are still highly contested, even with the Fox government signaling its desire to reach a settlement. Part of the problem lies in the great gap between state territoriality and the autonomous schemes. By Columbus Day 1994, Zapatistas had declared seven regiones autónomas pluriétnicas (autonomous multiethnic regions or RAPs) covering half the area of Chiapas, and hundreds of land invasions had redefined territoriality as a fait accompli (Mattiace 2001). While Huichols have not resorted to military solutions since the 1950s, the extent of their ceremonial claims on territorial access are even more spatially extensive than the Zapatistas' but far less intensive in terms of ownership demands.

Even if such indigenous enclaves as the Gran Nayar were, always have been, or once again are becoming internally coherent, they cannot be separated from their broader contexts.

...the analysts who wanted to go beyond an international structure of center/periphery and explore the marginalization of the interior of a certain country created concepts like "internal colonialism" [cf. González Casanova 1970[1965] –PL]. ...Unfortunately, these points of view [still] tended to imagine that each place is clearly either "central" or "peripheral" instead of being a site where different types of center/periphery dialectics operate (Lomnitz 1998:185, my trans.).

And so even when territories like the Huichol *kiekari*, which have undergone comparatively little cultural *mestizaje*, ostensibly have been reduced to closed corporate communities, hierarchical political-economic and social relationships of center and periphery articulate them into overarching structures. Their local scheme of representations and social structure may be hierarchically structured in ways compatible with the broader regional system.

Lomnitz exemplifies the replication of center/periphery relations within one anthropologically famous and recently re-indianized town: Tepoztlán, Morelos, near the heartland of Zapata's original 1910 revolution (*cf.* Redfield 1930; Lewis 1960). Since the Mexican economy became more diversified in the 1960s, there are different

logics and points of "centrality" that compete among themselves: the relationship with the nation-state has been strongly affected by transnational flows of Tepozteco migratory workers, middle and upper class urban colonists, educated and salaried Tepoztecos and the very process of commercializing local culture and resources. This diversification of the economic centers, together with the final decay of the old agrarian structure of the region, has produced significant ideological alterations, even when some of these hide behind a seeming continuity of traditions...(ibid.).

The social and ideological complexity complicates identity as well. It has become hard to categorize Tepoztecos as Indians, peasants or workers or to even define the boundaries of this once supposedly closed corporate community.

Although Huichol *comunidades* lack the diversified class structure and ethnic composition of Tepoztlán, they exhibit some of the same blurring of economic boundaries and contradictions between territorial boundaries and ethnic identity –even extensive collaboration between the Huichol economic-political elite and mestizo interests that have other designs on Wixarika territory. This complex articulation provides the basis for the struggles described in the body of this dissertation.

In Tepoztlán, with increasing heterogeneity there is no unified local elite or single economic center for the whole town, whereas the Huichol *comunidades* still have gerontocratic *cargo* hierarchies ('itsikate, xaturi and xukuri'ikate –staffs, saints and bowls) that redistribute some of the commercial surplus and much of

the basic agricultural product. Through a regional organization (the Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes) these hierarchies have been loosely linked to the new professional class of teacher-politicians who most consistently articulate the locality to the region. However, many of these local intellectuals still attend cargo ceremonies even if they rarely accept cargos, and together with the traditional intellectuals linked to shamanism, they have elaborated a new form of regional mediation. The commercial and ranching elite also remains generally oriented toward the pueblo center and the cargo system, which it has not appropriated or subverted for primarily commercial ends, as is the case in highland Chiapas. Still, contradictions between these elites' ethnic and economic allies is the basis of the territorial struggle in some instances.

In Tepoztlán the very dispersion of economic life leads people to re-assert communal territoriality:

Families that include members who work as construction workers, petty merchants or specialized workers still like to cultivate a little maize for their own consumption, and everyone is worried about water shortages or how to find a way to keep or acquire a little land for their children. In this context...nativism [a re-indianization of the culture -PL] is utilized to combat the big corporations and large-scale development projects that endanger the existence of Tepoztlán as a site of social reproduction, while economic necessity is used to legitimize the commercialization of local resources and culture. The idea of personal progress helps motivate emigrants to undertake the difficult journey to the north; the ideal of returning to celebrate the fiestas gives them the strength to continue. Therefore it should not surprise us that such an important number of Tepoztecos—peasants or workers, educated or not—are disposed to publicly adopt an Indian identity that they rejected scarcely 20 years ago: this is part of what is entailed in reproduction on the periphery (Lomnitz 1998: 186).

This is also half the story in the Sierra Huichol. On one hand ceremonial practice reproduces local identities that are in some sense pre-ethnic. That is,

they are rooted in processes of social reproduction deemed to be wholly indigenous rather than founded in regional difference. However, the more mobile sectors of the community are the agents of just such an ethnically inflected nativist revival as the one Lomnitz describes, even as they may sometimes collaborate with mestizo cattle and drug interests that seek to appropriate Huichol territory (Chapter 3, Section 3; cf. Urteaga 1995). Now, in order to better situate Huichol territoriality in its national historical context I outline the institutional and intellectual formulation of Mexican Indian territoriality in the 20th century.

6. INDIGENISMO, REGIONAL TERRITORY AND SOCIAL CLASS

This section turns away from the analysis of local territoriality in a concrete regional or national context and addresses instead the institutional framework of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista and the clientelistic and class-based relations that have in various ways been connected to it. At the same time I continue to refer the structural issues back to the ethnographic particulars of the Huichol and by way of comparison, other Mexican indigenous peoples.

Especially in Mexico, the diverse set of identifications with territory reflects major state institutional processes that have affected indigenous communities in the 20th century. These processes have been closely analyzed by Mexican anthropology as well as autonomy movements. And in Mexico anthropology also has been closely linked to government policy so a brief review of the relevant Mexican political anthropology literature is called for. The broader reason for this is to provide a context for three kinds of Huichol territoriality: 1) the ceremonial reproduction of local territoriality through its links to a vast cosmological domain, discussed in the next chapter; 2) the reassertion of both these scales of Huichol territoriality through culturally enhanced agrarian and broader *kiekari* claims including the discourses of Huichol nativism in the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival movement, both discussed in the third chapter; and 3) the mass-mediated disputation of indigenous territoriality outlined in Chapter 4.

In a comprehensive article on ethnic citizenship, territoriality and the state in modern Mexico, Guillermo De la Peña (1999) points out that before the 1910

revolution the state defined indigenous territoriality negatively because it was an obstacle to the Liberal rationalization of agriculture. Even after 1910, the new state continued to do so because revolutionary nationalism idealized the modernizing mestizo –not the traditional Indian— as its archetypal Citizen.²⁵

Consequently, for the Revolution's key political philosopher, José Vasconcelos, national territoriality implied that Indian enclaves like the Yaqui valley or the Gran Nayar region were "empty of nationality" and identified with the historical or archaeological past (cf. Fabian 1983). From this perspective, unassimilated indios bárbaros like Huichols were anti-national because they were the potential pawns of foreign powers seeking to weaken if not dissolve the nascent revolutionary state. This is why Vasconcelos considered American anthropologists who romanticized the Indian Other to be essentially subversive.

This state perspective on indigenous territorialities did not evaluate them in their own terms but as residual, subordinated forms of otherness. They were the "survivals" of prehispanic polities, colonial Spanish enclaves, and 19th century Liberal disentailments of communal landholding rather than viable cultural systems that had symbolically incorporated such historical experience as the motor of their future dynamism. Even the 1970s *proletarista* structural Marxists who opposed the state project's dependence on global capitalism treated indigenous communities as little more than semi-incorporated holding pens for reserve labor power (*e.g.*, Bartra 1974). Such exogenous views could not define Indians positively because they did not consider that the indigenous

²⁵ See also Hewitt de Alcántara (1984, 1988) for a critical analysis of anthropological approaches to rural Mexico since the Revolution.

defense of historical territory, subsistence strategies and collective social organization entailed something implicitly radical rather than reactionary: an alternative organization of the national space and a global trust of biological and intellectual property (cf. Díaz Polanco 1995).

In particular, Díaz Polanco has criticized the territorial organization of the Mexican state for its failure to reflect "regional identities founded in socio-ethnic cohesion" (1991:207). Instead, historically

the different territorial divisions have expressed the interests of the forces or local groups (creoles, mestizos or "ladinos"), which has given way to states, provinces, departments, cantons, etc.; but none of these entities is conceived to reflect or honor the sociocultural plurality of the national conglomerate.... In terms of the political-territorial organization of Latin American nation states, ethnic groups have been an *invisible population* (*ibid.*).

In this temporally and politically disjointed national ethnic topography, the key state project of *indigenismo* (indigenous development policy) not only sought to absorb Indians into the mestizo mainstream, it also aimed for *recuperación territorial*: the injection of Western ideas into indigenous areas in order to *forjar patria* (forge a fatherland) (De la Peña 1999:16). Where this project has succeeded by implanting an effective localist ideology, it is difficult to distinguish state political territoriality from subaltern senses of place in the land.

Even before Vasconcelos promulgated the revolutionary version of Mexican nationhood, Miguel Gamio (1916:311), a student of Franz Boas and the father of *indigenismo*, defined 11 indigenous cultural regions whose otherness had to be assimilated. This meant the erasure of internal "ethnic frontiers and the mestization of peoples and territories" (De la Peña 1999:16-17; my trans.). Gamio's direct intellectual descendant was Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, the

principle theorist of *indigenismo* and its institutional embodiment, the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) when this project was at its apogee in the mid-20th century (1981[1953]). Aguirre Beltrán's notion of *regiones de refugio* (1967) was the most sophisticated version of Gamio's *indigenista* vision, and it guided Indian policy throughout Latin America from the 1940s until the current neoliberal period. The first Huichol *promotores bilingües*, originally based in the *cabecera municipal* of Mezquitic, did not begin working in the Sierra Huichol until the government was issuing its "Presidential Resolutions" with "definitive titles" for the three *comunidades*' longstanding territorial disputes in the mid-1960s (De la Peña 2001; Rojas 1992, 1993). However, Coyle (2001) describes how the impetus for assimilation began during the period immediately before the arrival of the INI, with the divisive intervention of mestizo municipal authorities who had the twin aims of commercial capitalization and compulsory Spanish education.

Aguirre Beltrán analyzed indigenous communities like the Huichols in regional perspective in terms of their role as satellites delivering raw materials, agricultural commodities and labor power from the hinterland to regional centers like Tepic in the west and lesser mestizo *cabeceras* like Huejuquilla el Alto, Bolaños and Huajimic in the north, east and south, respectively (Fabila 1959; Reed 1972; González Martínez 1987). For Aguirre Beltrán Indians were not geographically isolated as the vision of "closed corporate communities" held them to be; they were politically subjugated. So for *indigenista* development authorities and particularly for government anthropologists, territoriality became a relational, interethnic administrative concept rather than an essential historical characteristic of particular peoples. Neither attributed indigenous people much

capacity for elaborating their own models of regional and national space like the one described in the next chapter, much less give them the means to administer those models.

On the contrary, De la Peña points out that with this theoretical development *indigenistas* could undermine the legitimacy of indigenous cultural production for being incompatible with the mestizo national polity of which it was now deemed to be part. Aguirre envisioned land reform as a way to acculturate Indians into the polity because the uniform legal administration and economic development of lands under central control would transform intercultural regions from archaic backwaters skewed by ethnically-based power structures into homogeneous, egalitarian "mestizo regions". The government would "grant" assimilating Indians *ejido* lands, credit, infrastructure, and access to labor and agricultural markets, education, health clinics and political participation in the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI).

This regime did not really make its mark in the Sierra Huichol until the 1970s under the Plan HUICOT (HUIchol-COra-Tepehuan) when roads and schools began to transform centers of traditional indigenous authority like San Andrés Cohamiata into rural development poles. However, since the Huichol sub-region is primarily comprised of "backward" comunidades indígenas instead of "progressive" ejidos, their agricultural production was never seriously capitalized except for some abortive livestock ventures in the 70s, nor were they brought decisively into the PRI's patronage system (Nahmad 1971). However, health clinics, schools and other infrastructure (bad roads, ineffective hydraulic

systems, failed meat distribution facilities) were erected, with little local coordination or even consultation.

As part of this centralist plan for social change, all territorial units *not* coterminous with states and *municipios* (counties) were to be abolished. De la Peña considers that this is why Aguirre vehemently opposed the formation of the Consejo Supremo Tarahumara in the 1940s and 50s (*cf.* Aguirre Beltrán 1953:86-93). At the same time that *indigenista* theorists were defining cultural areas to be assimilated into regional territories, ethnic identity was generally limited to the ethnocentric village level (or at most the small monolingual *municipio*).

For *indigenistas*, these bounded identities embodied in "surviving" colonial or prehispanic institutions like the *cargo* systems, *consejo de ancianos* (council of elders) or *cabildo* (town council) simply "indicated lack of participation in national politics" (De la Peña 1999:17) –a self-fulfilling prophecy. Like the independent regional indigenous organizations, such traditional local institutions —even if perfectly nested into *municipios*— were an obstacle unless they could be taken over by agents of the state (like bilingual indigenous schoolteachers) and incorporated into the Revolutionary state apparatus. This is exactly what happened in highland Chiapas during the 1940s and 50s (Rus 1994) but as mentioned above, Huichol *cargo* systems and other corporate institutions have thus far not been coopted so much as partially eclipsed by new elite groups.²⁶

²⁶ To illustrate how horribly wrong the Aguirre model turned out in practice, in highland Mayan Chiapas a clique of government bilingual schoolteachers and merchants took over the traditional ceremonial *cargos* and made them into their closed corporate patrimony. With its

Along with government assimilation came new rural class formations. For the Mazatecs who Eckart Boege studied in his neo-Marxian ethnography (1988), municipio limits were supposedly coterminous with dialect boundaries, the style of traje (traditional clothing), the authority of the consejos de ancianos (councils of elders) and a general endogamous line circumscribing a restricted set of exogamous extended families. The municipio defined supposedly independent spaces for the exchange of women, tequio (corvée labor), gifts and land -social relations continually reproduced at the moment of forming marital alliances (ibid.:64-65). Municipio elders and even national presidents were referred to with kin terms like "father" provided they maintained their legitimacy by participating in their respective reciprocal exchanges to protect and help the community (*ibid*.:78). Hence, before the collapse of the PRI's modernizing development regime, the political leadership was compatible with local territorial identity because tributary relationships of reciprocity seemed to be upheld. However, class and political alliances extending beyond the region generated internal contradictions for this supposedly hermetic scheme, as it has in the Sierra Huichol.

newfound legitimacy and state connections, this clique monopolized state resources, augmented class differences, concentrated landholding and thereby deterritorialized thousands of former comuneros to the slums of San Cristóbal de las Casas, among other sites (Rus 1994). These refugees from modernization increasingly identify themselves as Protestants.

In the highland Tzotzil Mayan community of San Juan Chamula, Chiapas, land concentration in hand of *cargo* officials linked to the PRI was the 1970s prelude to the radical transformation of territoriality in the 1990s. Now, in the Zapatista era thousands of people marginalized from communal land have ceased to function as members of landed patrilineages or to participate in *cargos* which they say only drain their wealth. Instead they have converted to Protestantism, been expelled for their religious resistance and emigrated to the slums of San Cristóbal de las Casas or the Lacandón forest, where increasing land pressure was a key cause of the EZLN rebellion (Collier 1994, 1999).

For Huichols since the mid-1990s the collapse of the PRI has been registered in ceremonial practice and political discourse even as the much older general symbolic structures of legitimation based on ritual identification with the sun and the formal hierarchy of government remain intact. But the legitimacy of the actual government has always been weak for Huichols, and has only gotten weaker.²⁷

On the other hand, there is an ideological flipside to the government's assimilation programs based on the lingering images of Indian otherness. People like the "authentic" Indians of the Gran Nayar have always been a source of symbolic legitimation for the government ever since the colonial period, when an auto-da-fe of the chiefly mummies seized from La Mesa del Nayar was the basis for a great state ritual (Castorena y Urzúa AGN). Most recently, President Vicente Fox staged a spectacle in the very same former Cora capital:

In the ceremony that announced a new relationship between the state and the indigenous peoples, based on respect for the diversity of their culture [sic], the gobernadores tradicionales, tenientes, alcaldes [i.e., traditional authorities], agrarian delegates, mara'akames and priests, Coras and Wixarikas, were placed one step below the constitutional authorities, facing them and listening how the orators talked about Indians while they were silent. They were waiting for a meeting with Vicente Fox to deliver him documents with ancestral petitions. In the ceremonial center of Mesa del Nayar, decorated for the occasion with cobs of black, blue, red, yellow and white grains, wrapped in protective flowers and leaves, the men and women of maize, standing or seated, protected by an arbor of fresh branches, surrounded by tabachines, huizaches, mesquites and guayabos [i.e., middle elevation subtropical trees] and dressed in their traditional dress, listened how for the authorities they in turn have been transformed into

To rinstance, in the Holy Week rituals in the Huichol comunidad of San Andrés Cohamiata in 1994, the ritual jester (tsikwaki), who is always the most irreverent figure and historically disposed to ironically adopt symbols from contemporary national popular discourses, replaced his traditional simple homemade wooden mask or the more outré rubber monster mask someone had recently acquired with one of the then ubiquitous Carlos Salinas masks, to the generalized amusement of the comunidad.

something more than what they are every day, converted into the representatives of millions of Indians in the country to whom a message is to be directed (*La Jornada* 7 Mar 2002, "Escenografía priísta, marco para presentar nuevo programa indígena"; my trans.)

Boege broke with both the "closed corporate" and "regions of refuge" models of territoriality by recognizing that commodity production and consumption ties Mazatecs, who formerly were more centered on their municipios, to national and transnational commodity flows. These flows contradict, foreground, expand and displace regional territoriality based on a Mesoamerican maize, beans and squash subsistence economy. As he explained it, the wealthy members of the cabildo/consejo de ancianos in the municipio—each of whom may have 150 personal contacts among large networks of extended families—enjoy state patronage to monopolize credit and land (coffee plantations in the Mazatec case, cattle or drugs elsewhere) (cf. Greenberg 1989, for an indepth study of violence and capitalist development in nearby Chatino communities in lowland Oaxaca).

Rich Mazatec men still get poor people to be their clients by granting them generous terms for renting land or trucks and by participating in the *tequio*.

These pyramidal patron-client relations typify rural *caciques*, who mediate the state (as described in Eric Wolf's classic articles of 1956 and 1957). While the Huichol ranching and commercial bourgeoisie does not have formal control over land resources, much less a corner on a market in land or a full-scale class structure that they can dominate, they do enjoy growing control over grazing land in particular. Clientelism similar to that described by Boege ties commercial and landed elites to regional capital transcending communal, municipal and

state boundaries. Syndical ties link the political elite based in the *magisteriado* (schoolteachers) to the state, albeit in partial and even contradictory ways. These contradictions were made manifest in the Zapatista context when some of these government employees invoked or supported the indigenous cause in Chiapas and led conflictual land claims on the contested fringes of the sierra *comunidades*.

As they concentrate wealth, bourgeois members of the Mazatec consejo de ancianos foist duplicitous definitions of territory on their different interlocutors. That is, these patrons try to force their poor clients within their community to accept that land is individual property so that they can buy more of it. At the same time they try to convince their patrons in the government that the same lands are communal property, of which they are the legitimate representatives, so that they can expand their political power and get more state resources (Boege 1988:84). Here Rodman's previously discussed notion (1992) that territoriality is "multivocal" —composed of differing perspectives— is exemplified within a single, Machiavellian set of speakers who pitch their voices to contrasting audiences. Similarly doubly situated discourses may characterize Huichol politicians who represent themselves as popular to the state and specially entitled to the community.

For Boege, in case of conflict between the *municipio* and the mestizo state, the *consejo de ancianos* may publicly mark its interests as more strongly *indio* (*ibid.*). This ethnification is also one of the hallmarks of the ongoing Zapatista rebellion as well as the situation described below in chapter 3 for San Andrés Cohamiata and other territorial movements throughout Latin America. As in African segmentary lineages, conflicts between an indigenous territory and the

state –or between rival peasant groups, as in the Sierra Huichol— can foreground ethnic identities and blur some of the internal class contradictions. Conversely, competition between homologous territorial units of homogeneous people can unite each one (*ibid.*: 83), even as it fragments them ethnically. As noted in the opening paragraphs of this dissertation, horizontal conflicts between and within rival peasant groups may be more common than direct conflict with the state, even though vertical tensions generally underlie or combine with the more local problems. And in Chiapas open conflict with the state is the marked feature despite the rampant local factionalism in the background.

Pointing out the inherent link between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of conflict, at the same time that he seems to take ethnic boundaries to be basically unproblematic, Boege frames the subtitle of his book, which translates to "contradictions of ethnic identity in contemporary Mexico", with a Marxist question:

How long can the contradictions with the outside keep internal group contradictions on a secondary plane? ... The class contradictions inside the group will make this form of ethnic struggle substantially more difficult. How then will the ethnic group redefine itself facing the nation (1988: 85)?

As I describe throughout the following chapters, social conflict in the Sierra Huichol retains a distinctly ethnic character and the development of full-fledged social classes is not universal. Instead, Huichol *comuneros*, like many other landholding peasants, maintain small units of non-proletarianized labor organization (Weigand 1972; 1992). But some of the new elites who are associated with emergent class structures are also promoting an enhanced sense

of ethnic identity and territoriality, rooted in the traditional sector's quotidian ceremonial practices.

Like Lomnitz (1998) in his Tepoztlán study discussed above in Section 5, Boege goes on to elaborate the internal territorial disjunctures created by the partial introduction of capitalist relations of production: "with the introduction of commercial crops, the ethnic region stops coinciding with the unified economic region... Economic organization does not necessarily coincide with social organization nor the latter with political and religious organization" (Boege 1988:55,57).

In the Sierra Huichol the commodification of labor takes place more in migratory contexts and in the limited sphere of putting-out art production at home. The principal form of local economic development is through private livestock herding on communal grasslands, commercial capital in the beer-and-vegetable stores, and from professional salaries in the crowded bilingual schools. The growing concentration of commercial capital and access to land (if not ownership) within the *comunidades* points to the general relevance of Boege's approach, especially for the future. However, social power within that region still depends highly on access to the gerontocratic, shamanistically based control over the ancestral forces of production and on the public right to deploy these practices and the discourses based on them.

Boege's critique of the hierarchical mediation of power in indigenous *municipios* was part of an attack from both intellectual and popular quarters that began in the 1960s and 70s against what De la Peña calls the "centralist fallacies"

underlying many official visions of Mexico's territory". In particular, the revisionist political scientist Pablo González Casanova (1970[1965]) launched his famous critique of the "internal colonialism" that capital and the government visit upon indigenous areas. (Recall Lomnitz's critique of this model for not yet considering the reproduction of center/periphery relations within the periphery).

Other key actors in the intellectual attack on *indigenista* paternalism were the cultural geographers around Claude Bataillon (1982[1969], 1973) and the micro-historians around Luis González y González. In particular, González y González's *Pueblo en vilo* (1968) —a fine-grained rendering of one Michoacán mestizo pueblo's autonomous world view in terms of land, labor and national historical developments over 200 years— remains a classic of Mexican rural history that points at the very least to the mediation of global history through local systems of value, even if it did not yet fully escape the old antinomy between the local and the regional or national.

Despite the fact that the boundaries of the locality and its interiorization of larger scales of order may not have been fully problematized in those works of the 1960s and 70s, De la Peña points out that these writers subverted the *indigenista* paradigm's indigenous/mestizo dichotomy by demonstrating that a range of regional cultures spans it. More generally, he notes that after the government crushed the 1968 student movement a whole generation of anthropologists revived Moisés Sáenz's critique of agrarian *caciquismo* (bossism) from the 1930s and 40s (Friedrich 1968; Bonfil 1972; Bartra 1975; Warman 1976;

De la Peña 1986; Greenberg 1989, to name the ones who directly influenced this dissertation).

And other influential writings (Spicer 1962; Nutini 1968; García Alcaraz 1973; J. Collier 1973; G. Collier 1975; Friedrich 1977; Boege op. cit.) pointed to indigenous peoples' creative resistance and persistent identities. In clear contradiction to indigenismo those identities were now recognized as having positive content regardless of whether they are "marginalized" by mestizos. Studies of peasant rebellions, often of strongly indigenous character, were the strongest exemplars of these attacks. In particular, Friedrich's Agrarian revolt in a Mexican village (1977) has been cited consistently for its insights into indigenous communal identity, agrarian radicalism and violence in Tarascan (Purhépecha) Michoacán during the later revolutionary period.

Agrarian revolt illuminates political territoriality with its focus on the emotional and ideological power in land, maize and motherhood, key values of indigenous culture throughout Mesoamerica. The violation of these values by government-backed private land expropriations in the Porfiriato spawned suffering and rage that Indian leaders articulated into a collective program. They first mobilized this program against the non-indigenous investors and peasant clients who had expropriated their mother-land. But disturbingly, once they themselves became clients of the PRI and Boege's hierarchical contradictions took hold, they turned against each other (cf. Friedrich 1986, for a more in-depth look at the Machiavellian indigenous political actors themselves). The present study looks at indigenous territorial practice and ideological construction in a different type of inter-ethnic land struggle and globalized discursive context.

All these works view territorial identities extending beyond individual communities. Some "allude to regional solidarities and even to historically constituted ethnic territories" (De la Peña 1999:19), but Friedrich pointed most specifically to how such territories emerge from concrete, deeply conflicted political practice on a local, indeed psychic level. This study builds on these examples by looking even further beyond the bounds of the colonial community to more expansive, performatively constructed versions of collective territoriality.

7. MIGRATION AND DETERRITORIALIZATION

This section marks a break with this long chapter's foregoing preoccupation with defining territoriality from the point of view of landed communities in historical, phenomenological, productive, legal, regional and institutional frames. In this section I deal with the increasingly prevalent converse of fixed territoriality: deterritorialization.

At the same time that researchers in Mexico were recognizing more spatially extensive and historically rooted indigenous territorialities, migration was breaking them down, along with the previously sharp distinctions between Indian/mestizo, peasant/worker, traditional/modern, country/city (Arizpe 1985; De la Peña 1981).

...perhaps the most important members of many households are those who are not in residence at all. ...In those peripheral parts of the world system where labor migration is appreciable, households must be examined for the presence of intermittent coresidents whose economic contributions adapt local productive and reproductive units to the demands of larger, money-based exchange sytems (Wilk & Netting 1984:19; cf. Massey 1987 on this key relationship between western Mexico and the US).

Lourdes Arizpe was one of the first to show how migration produces a non-local identity. Because of their precariousness in Mexico City, Mazahua people from the state of México maintain ties with their home villages *in absentia*. Or as Gupta and Ferguson phrased it in their pathbreaking article, "cultural dreams are played out in urban and rural settings all across the globe...as displaced peoples cluster around remembered or imagined homelands, places, or

communities in a world that seems increasingly to deny such firm territorialized anchors in their actuality" (1992:10-11).

The Mazahua scenario could be the exception that proves a rule: rural-urban migration usually de-indianizes people if the move is successful: they simply become urbanites. However, as De la Peña points out, sometimes people establish firm urban economic bases and still maintain their home identities (Hirabayashi 1993). All three scenarios –persistent rural identity because of urban marginality, emergent urban identity because of economic integration and persistent rural identity in reaction to urban economic integration— suggest that for urban Indians, ties to ancestral territory are largely discursive or indirectly material if they endure at all. In any event, they are more likely to send mutual aid to their rural kin and support them through voluntary associations than to engage in primary production back home, unless they do not migrate permanently or far –as is the case with many Huichols.

Migration may also lead to "a virtual reconstruction of communal spaces and institutions in urban niches" (De la Peña 1999:19): an iconic village partially overcomes deterritorialization. At various points I indicate the situations in which Huichols have also reproduced some levels of traditional territoriality in new rural and urban settlements that recreate the *tuki cargo* hierarchy even though they are disconnected from the courthouse and church-based "civil-religious hierarchy" of their ancestral communities. De la Peña points out that the Otomís who have created a neo-traditional *barrio* next to the Guadalajara, Jalisco, city dump say they still "live" in Santiago Mexquititlán, Querétaro, a village hundreds of kilometers away that they may only visit on ritual occasions

(Martínez Casas 1998). What does it mean for Indians to say they "live" in a distant "neighborhood" they no longer inhabit and to inhabit for years on end a "locality" they say they do not "live" in? Huichols seem to root their new settlements in diasporic spaces and the home territory at the same time through synecdochical ties, if only because they are not as great a remove; indeed nearly all Huichols still live within the original 90,000 square kilometer *kiekari*.

In yet another form of deterritorialization, people who in most ways apparently have adopted urban lifeways indistinguishable from those of the mestizo population and have lost all connection to a traditional community may consider themselves indigenous in a generic sense. They may adopt aboriginal identities and a relatively placeless sense of rootedness in the territory based on neo-indigenous ritual practices, as in La Nueva Mexicanidad, the Mexican New Age. This path out of modernity belies the supposedly homogenous nature of the urban population and addresses its alienation (De la Peña 1999: 20).

Huichols span the range of these modes of deterritorialization: short trips to cities to work on art, sell the work, attend to health care needs and/or stock up on low-cost tools, fabric and art supplies while crashing with upper-middle class patrons, foreign anthropologists or NGOs; dry season habitation of squalid apartments in poor neighborhoods to work on art; permanent relocation with a strong indigenous identity bolstered by ethnic artwork or other culturally based activity punctuated by periodic ceremonial returns to the home community; and total assimilation.

The different spaces inhabited by indigenous peoples may also traverse international as well as rural/urban divides (cf. Rouse 1991; Boruchoff 1999).

The best-known transnationalized Mexican Indian territorialities involve Mixtec and Zapotec people, who are originally from Oaxaca, as well as the aforementioned Mazahuas (Nagengast & Kearney 1990, possibly the most famous single article on the topic; also see Pérez Ruiz 1993; Valenzuela 1998). These peoples' extremely extended cycles of migration to and from home communities give rise to "transnational, or postnational identity" (De la Peña 1999:20). As if to extend the internal communal disjunctures that Boege noted for the Mazatecs and Lomnitz for the Tepoztecos, De la Peña concludes that "...not only has the distinction between ethnic spaces and national spaces been dissolved: the magic formula that kept territory, people and the State united has been broken" (*ibid.*: 21). In this sense, "territoriality" in this chapter corresponds to Slater's notion of "spatiality", since for him identification with place is not necessarily contained by the nation-state (1998:381 ff., in a theoretically venturesome essay on globalized identity).

Regardless of the terminology, there is a marked tendency to form transnational territorial relationships through explicitly political means, as in "new social movements":

In particular, new associations have been made between democratization and decentralization, and in the struggle against centralism new forms of spatial subjectivity and identity have emerged. These new forms, which contest the given territoriality of the political system, can be viewed as reflections of the political expressed spatially (Slater 1998:387).

As we will see, although Huichols have not yet traversed international frontiers in great numbers, they have made explicit demands based on their long-time ceremonial appropriation of the national space. Also their international reputation as artists and shamans has gained them unusually strong alliances

with Euro-American intellectuals, cultural institutions and NGOs, including the International Labor Organization. These transnational networks and the artistic representation of Wixarika culture in particular are topics for future work.

Kearney (1996:182), in a theoretically ambitious work, sums up the range of territorial relationships in Mixtec history in terms of the classical "closed corporate community" which had been deliberately isolated from and set against its neighbors. Because of such vertically inspired horizontal conflicts, these communities (whether articulated into regional territories or not) can no longer support their entire populations and have given rise to "transnational communities". The old mother *pueblo* remains the "spiritual core" and its various offshoots in other regions or countries identify with it. However, the offshoots may also break off relations and still retain indigenous identities.

Aside from inter-communal conflicts, another factor promoting transnational territoriality is state-sponsored "development". In southern Mexico, hydroelectric projects in densely settled indigenous areas have been notorious in this regard (see ff. #16). Extractive development (logging and extensive grazing) has also disrupted the sustainability of indigenous territoriality throughout the country, including the Sierra Huichol (cf. Bartolomé 1995:8). These processes were already vastly disruptive during the development of mines and haciendas that took place following the Spanish invasion and during the 19th century expansion of haciendas in the Gran Nayar region (Rojas 1993). Indeed the Gran Nayar has never provided all the bases for its peoples' social reproduction, hence the vast size of the prehispanic *kiekari* exchange sphere. More recently dams have displaced hundreds –far fewer people than

elsewhere in Mexico— and land claims are now leading to the resettlement of significant numbers of mestizos away from historically Huichol lands. Now an as yet underspecified electrification project may have more serious ecological and cultural impact on Huichols and their ancestral places (*La Jornada* 7 Mar 2002; Neurath, Lilly pers. com.).

Whether they displace people to resettlement communities inside national borders or to transnational migration circuits, these modernization projects can generate new, more generalized indigenous identities to contest deterritorialization.

... the [Mixteca] region has been and is the target of innumerable development programs and projects (Collins 1995). However, the history of the Mixteca since the conquest has been one of constant environmental deterioration and economic stagnation.... There is thus a perverse correlation between the presence of development projects and the persistence of de-development.... This situation suggests that breaking through this impasse requires abandonment of the hegemonic definitions of "development" and of "rural peasant communities" ...a breakthrough might be possible through displacements to other organizational contexts in which alternative identities and projects are possible. In the case of the Mixtecs, such political displacements are nurtured by spatial displacement, namely, migration (Kearney 1996:175-76)

Consequently "the Mixtecs" as a people are now simultaneously denizens of their original Oaxacan heartland and neophyte urban shantytown dwellers, as well as long-time migrant farmworkers in northwestern Mexico and more recently in US California. Because of the farmwork, they initially identified and sought to organize themselves as agricultural proletarians but had little more success at this than they had as land-poor peasants in Oaxaca (*ibid.:*15-22, 176). Subsequent urban squatters' movements and subsequent women's ethnic

artwork express a new set of identity-based strategies and claims as well as a newly articulated transnational territory: "Oaxacalifornia" (*ibid.* 176-77, 182).

Although Huichols are a smaller, less bilingual and less internationally mobile population, their experience as exploited, indeed poisoned farmworkers, especially in the tobacco fields of coastal Nayarit has led to international, ethnically-based ecological activism on their behalf (Díaz Romo 1994). Also, their internationally famous artwork has enhanced the reproduction of a markedly Huichol identity among producers and others, and it has created a small artistic middle class as well as a few major entrepreneurs who in turn have helped create a politically sympathetic public, especially in the US and Europe.

The Lacandón forest of Chiapas is another area in which deterritorialization has long been the backdrop to new ethnic and political identities. There "a model for innovative, regionalized versions of indigenous identity and political organization" was created by Tojolobal workers who have *ejido* land bases but long ago lost their *comunidades* and the concomitant *cargo* organizations. They reconstituted themselves as a people based in part on their class status as migrant workers and *ejidatarios*.

As even "autocthonous" people are increasingly deterritorialized, they adapt discourses produced in NGOs, globalized identity movements and other sectors of the public sphere to defend the domestic sphere. This is territoriality reinscribed through absence, which paradoxically makes it grow stronger albeit more diffuse.

...within the Indian movement, demands that transcend specific locales and territories—for cultural revival, national programs of bilingual education, and protection form racial discrimination—are typically

juxtaposed with and even subordinated to local demands for land. Given that this connection to the land has been a source of indigenous peoples' continuity, a key question for the Indian movement is how to strengthen regional and panethnic identities precisely at the moment when the tie to land is becoming increasingly tenuous (Mattiace 2001:87-88).

Like Huichols, Tojolobals also construct cultural and territorial identity through their communal religious pilgrimages (romerías) to saints' shrines that they share with other Mayan peoples from the Chiapas highlands to Guatemala (Mattiace 2001: 74, 77, 92). This ceremonial territoriality resembles that of the Huichols in terms of both extent and interethnic significance. For instance, the Virgen de Plateros shrine in Zacatecas (associated with the Josefino missionaries who worked in the Sierra Huichol during the Porfiriato) is sometimes a stop on the trek by xukuri'ikate (tuki cargo holders) to the emergence place at Wirikuta. On the level of regional indigenous peoples, the emergence places of Haramaratsie at San Blas on the Pacific coast and Hauxa Manaka in Tepehuan territory in Durango are shared with Coras and Tepehuanes if not others.

Along with these interethnic religious solidarities, relation to the means of production rather than community membership has become the main determinant for some indigenous peoples' identity. However, such class solidarity at times "reinforces...ethnic identity as *indígenas*" (J Nash 1995:26 cited in Berger 2001:158; cf. Nash 1994). In the Huichol sierra, such a sharp distinction between community and class cannot yet be drawn because sacrificial relations still tie most Wixarika people's identity to place independent of class status, but

²⁸ Also, many Huichols take the pan-Mexican Virgen de Guadalupe in Tepeyac (Mexico City) to be a prime instantiation of their Ur-Mutter Tanana, but few visit this distant site and therefore have not made it part of the continuous regional *kiekari*.

with increasing migration and incipient deterritoralization, such broader bases for pan-indigenous or class identity have begun to emerge.

To summarize the chapter up to this point, the disparate meanings of territoriality in Mexico include a coherent national space in the mestizo imagination, a coherent regional space in indigenous ceremony and historical memory, isolated communities based on subsistence production in the service of an urban mestizo elite, and migratory communities reproducing, rediscovering or reinventing aboriginal links to place, sometimes at great remove from where they currently make a living. These territorialities may stem from land use (including ritualized identifications), land struggle or other collective efforts at (re)constituting cultural places, or they may be largely discursive as community formation is driven by urban market imperatives. As Chapters 2 and 3 (Sections 1-2) will show, memory of boundary markers and the ceremonies performed there embody people's sense of literal "entitlement" to land and broader senses of indigenous territoriality. The initiative described in Section 3 of Chapter 3 foregrounds the traditional territorial knowledge of elders mediated by a bilingual commercial elite for the benefit of young people in the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival project.

All this indicates the empirical and theoretical complexity of what De la Peña calls "the drastic contrast between the concept of territory from an administrative perspective and the concept of those who experience it and subvert mechanisms of control, borders and the official definition of spaces on a

daily basis" (1999:20). The reindianization of a nation-state's territory counteracts the statelessness and denationalization of Indians.

As indigenous people find themselves in increasingly diverse, unprecedented relationships to geographical places, they depart from peasant livelihoods and enter more generalized and fragmented class positions. With Kearney's Mixtecs and the Tepoztecos discussed by Lomnitz in Section 5, these new relationships may not be expressed in terms of class but in terms of "the so-called new [pan-indigenous] ethnicity, human rights, and ecopolitics" (Kearney 1996:177-78). The following passage suggests that Kearney may have forgotten that land and peasant production are full of symbolic value and that ethnic values depend on symbols tied to the land and traditional forms of economic production. However, he is surely right that in order for new, deterritorialized identities to cohere, new symbols—or as this dissertation shows, new valorizations of traditional land-based cultural symbols—are necessary.

Unlike peasantness as an identity that, because of its productionist nature, is tied only to certain environmental and political landscapes that permit it, ethnicity has no such direct dependence on the means of production. It is thus a dimension of identity suitable for the dispossessed, the exiled, those in diaspora, the marginal, the migrant, the diverse.... [E]ven movements of ethnic autonomy, which may seek some kind of territorial autonomy, nevertheless involve not only the struggle for land and other economic value; they involve the struggle for symbolic value as well. For just as control of land as means of production allows for the creation and possession of economic value, so does the possession of collective symbolic value translate into political potency (Kearney 1996:179-80).

As the next section illustrates, collective symbolic value is also important to the indigenous autonomy movement in Oaxaca and especially to the EZLN, many members of which are not from indigenous communities and may not

have deep roots in the Lacandón forest ((Van Cott 1996:

http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/macnair/mcnair53/m53c3.html).

8 AUTONOMOUS REGIMES IN CHIAPAS AND OAXACA

"Land, territorial autonomy, and the reassertion of indigenous identities coalesce in ways that reemphasize the close intersections between the cultural and the geopolitical". —David Slater 1998:395

In order to contextualize the Huichol territorial claims that I discuss in the following chapters, a brief closing sketch of the legal and political initiatives for indigenous identity and autonomy that have emerged since the 1990s is essential. This section represents the most ideologically elaborate indigenous reply to the emergent legal framework described in Section 4 and the institutional history outlined in Section 6.

In Mexico the ongoing attacks on the assimilationist model of indigenous development —along with the desire for a progressive international image—led President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94) to sign Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization in 1990. It then became Mexican national law, and in 1992 Salinas had his PRI-controlled Congress amend Article 4 of the Constitution to officially define Mexico as a multicultural country for the first time since the colonial caste system was abolished in the early 19th century (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/r1citp.htm).

However, unlike Colombia, where the constitutional reform specified territories and degrees of indigenous autonomy, the vague wording of Mexico's Article 4 led to an as yet unresolved debate over its meaning and the content of any enabling legislation (*leyes reglamentarias*). This debate was sharpened and transformed by the 1994 uprising of the EZLN in Chiapas: it led to unprecedented negotiations between the rebels and the government and the 1996

San Andrés Larráinzar Accords calling for indigenous autonomy. Likewise, proposals by the multilateral COCOPA (Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación) peace arbitration commission and the state government of Oaxaca called for policies based on the legal recognition of the category of *pueblo indígena* (indigenous people) (http://www.ezln.org/fzln/cocopa961129-sp.html).

President Vicente Fox Quesada initially promised to dramatically mediate all these long-stalled indigenous issues between the dramatically visible Zapatista *comandancia* and a resolutely unmoved Congress (ongoing coverage at http://www.jornada.unam.mx/index.html and http://www.fzln.org.mx/), but divisions in Congress and his own party have dramatically slowed the process.

Still, it is significant that *indígenas* are now defined in Article 4 of the Constitution as the population descended from Mexico's preconquest inhabitants, who are conscious of their historical identity and have partially reproduced it. From what little can be perceived through the military blockade of the region, a sustained territorial plan for the Zapatista region still remains to be carried out. However, much suggestive discussion has appeared in the journal *Memoria: Revista de Política y Cultura* associated with the anthropologist Héctor Díaz Polanco, as well as in the Zapatista-inspired journal *Ce-Acatl* (1996:27-32), which has aired many of the EZLN's visions, proposals and demands (ceacatl@laneta.aqc.org; see also *Cuadernos de la Gaceta* 1993). There is also a useful summary of the rebellion's agrarian and political history in Collier

(1994).²⁹ The recently published work of Lynn Stephen (2002) gives important insights into local understandings of this process.

Not much of the subsequent discourse about territoriality in Mexico can be understood independently of the EZLN. One of its signal ideological documents defines territory in both ecological and broader cultural terms as "the totality of the habitat that indigenous peoples occupy or utilize in some way as the basis of their sustainable self-development" (López Bárcenas 1996, cited in Barabas 1998:360ff; my trans.; cf. Toledo 1989, a leading theorist of indigenous economic autonomy who has influenced the NGOs working in the Huichol region and many others).

Despite the Huichols' principally communal and ejidal social organization, the discursive construction of a new Huichol ideology of territoriality described in Chapter 3 also contains elements of the last three tendencies –liberation theology, neo-traditionalism and grassroots democracy— as they emerged in the NGO workshops in the Sierra Huichol since the 1990s. Unlike Chiapas, these developments reflect ongoing communal organization and ceremonial practice.

It should be recalled that ideological conflicts between Zapatistas or Huichol traditionalists and their Protestant or other neighbors reflect factional splits within and between villages on religious, political partisan, municipal and ejidal grounds (Friedrich: pers. com.; Mattiace 2001:75,88-89). "Some argue that indigenous people simply use organizational affiliations, for example, membership in religious groups and political parties, to distinguish themselves from those with whom they have already been at odds for years" (Mattiace 2001:89). Indeed, one could extend this argument to the level of ethnicity itself, but that leads to a utilitarian reductio ad absurdum.

Without mentioning territoriality per se, Collier succinctly describes how the EZLN rebellion emerged from a classically complex mixture of territorial regimes in Chiapas, particularly in the Lacandón forest. They include large cattle and coffee estates, dependent peasant clients (*peones acasillados*) surrounding and defending these estates, smallholders (*parcelarios*) and more recent colonists (*colonos*) from the highlands and elsewhere in Mexico, all in the context of the increasingly problematic international frontier with Guatemala.

The Zapatista ideology of territorial autonomy emerges from independent peasant organizations with both *agrarista* and productivist agendas (the Organización Campesina Emiliano Zapata –OCEZ— and the Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos –CIOAC) as well as from Catholic liberation theology's vision of social justice and democratic organizational structure. This is a type of leftist counter-reformation response to the inroads made by decentralized, socially supportive Protestant churches in the area. Or in the economical phrasing of Berger (2001:159), Zapatismo "is a synthesis of Guevara-style Marxism, liberation theology, reconfigured Maya traditions, and participatory forms of democracy".

Territoriality often has been formulated in tandem with the equally problematic notion of "autonomy". People have interpreted autonomy in wildly divergent ways: part of a political program of *desmestizaje* or dis-assimilation, a reversion to premodern forms of local patriarchal authoritarianism (Bartra 1998), an anarchistic fragmentation of the state, a strategy that backfires to actually increase self-disenfranchised peasants' need for the state (Gros 1997), a return to ancestral authenticity, etc. Or as Díaz Polanco describes the misperceptions: "autarky, separatism, full sovereignty, return to the 'natural' life, etc." (1991:150; my trans.). Insofar as he considers a general definition of "the system of autonomy" to be feasible, Díaz Polanco adopts formal political terms:

a special regime that configures its own government (self-government) for certain member communities which thus choose authorities who are part of the collectivity, exercise legally attributed powers and have minimal capacities to legislate their internal life and administer their affairs (*ibid.*:151).

The new Colombian constitutional definition may be taken as a basic legal groundwork for both countries:

The authorities of indigenous communities will be able to exercise juridical functions within their territory, according to their own norms and procedures, as long as these are not contrary to the Constitution and to the laws of the Republic. The forms of coordination of this special jurisdiction with the national judicial system will be established by law (Colombia 1991: Art. 246) [cf. Art. 4 ff.].

Indigenous peoples' resistance to state intervention in local affairs is one reason why they do not codify their autonomous legal regimes. More fundamentally, ley consuetudinaria (customary law) is a gloss for a fluid set of norms and discursive practices that is simply not easily subject to codification. But beyond any notion of an autonomous legal regime, this ethnography demonstrates that

autonomy also refers to the freedom to reproduce culture in an exclusive manner but interstitial manner throughout the national space.

Accepting the principles of autonomy implicit in these practices, proposals and legal measures could lead to political-administrative reterritorialization as indigenous peoples articulate *municipios* into *distritos* under their control (*redistritación*) and thereby even modify state borders through the "constitution of intermunicipal associations in ethnodevelopment programs" and a "grouping of indigenous *municipios* in autonomous ethnic regions" (De la Peña 1999:22-23; cf. Bartolomé & Barabas 1999). Huichol demands for ceremonial access to sacred places throughout their territory may imply putting limits on the private and state control of the national space. These changes would directly stand Aguirre Beltrán's state assimilationist agenda on its head (1953:92). Zapatista-era notions of indigenous autonomy generally counterpose territorial schemes based on communities organized into regions (presumably from the bottom up) to the older *indigenista* administration of *municipios* organized by the state (from the top down) (Esteva 2001:144, note 3; Mattiace 2001:83).

Such autonomy schemes do not imply the expulsion of non-Indians, only their equality with the formerly subordinated peoples (*ibid.:223,229*). Díaz Polanco calls for

a new *step* in political-territorial organization, with the double purpose of being able to constitute regional entities (that group together various *municipios*, when this should be the case) and of leading to autonomy,

³⁰ The smaller unit of the *comunidad* and the larger one of the multi-municipal *distrito* in Oaxaca are briefly mentioned because of the great variations among the state's 9800 communities and because Oaxaca contains 570 of the entire country's roughly 2400 *municipios*. Therefore they have been organized into 30 *distritos* to simplify administration.

especially for those regions where indigenous peoples have an appreciable or majority presence. It could be claimed that the legal status constituted by *municipios* can be enlarged and enriched so as to configure truly autonomous entities (*ibid.*:224).³¹

In the Sierra Huichol of Jalisco there have been informal calls from elements of the new indigenous leadership of the UCIH for an indigenous *municipio* combining the Huichol areas of three current Jalisco *municipios* (Bolaños, Mezquitic and Huejuquilla). Still, no initiative for formal unified governmental organization of the contiguous Huichol population straddling seven *municipios* in the four states of the region has been promulgated.³² However, proposals for a multiethnic administration including mestizos and oriented around the principle of ecological stewardship for the Chapalagana River watershed have been formulated in NGO workshops and discussions (see Chapter 3, Section 3 for how this incipient process discursivizes key cultural concepts.)

These renewed claims by indigenous people to reclaim an historically and culturally grounded *autonomía municipal* echo Mexico's 1857 Constitution (a more federalist document than the 1917 revision by the newly emerging Carrancista state). Such claims were also expressed in the eschatologically tinged Cristero

³¹ Díaz Polanco in effect rejects early-20th century Austro-Marxist (and Russian Menshevik) theorists like Otto Bauer (1907). Bauer's proposal for freely chosen associations of individuals to enjoy "national-cultural autonomy" foreshadowed postmodern claims by dispersed populations for deterritorialized identity. Instead, Díaz Polanco sides with Lenin, who sharply rejected Bauer's individualistic, culture-based identity politics because the Austrian supposedly ignored territorially bounded relations of production based on social class. Thus until the collapse of the USSR, Díaz Polanco was inspired by the Soviet autonomous regions, post-Franco Spain and the late Sandinista attempts to establish autonomous regions (*ibid.*:164, 173-199).

³² These *municipios* include the three Jalisco entities just mentioned, La Yesca and El Nayar in Nayarit, Valparaíso in Zacatecas and Mezquital in Durango.

rebellion of the 1920s, which opposed the Agrarian Reform's centralist agenda and emphasized primal blood-soil links (Meyer 1974, especially vol. 3).

For Alicia Barabas, the *municipio* in particular is the basic "territorial space of self-government, defended from outside power in numerous rebellions" (*cf.* Pérez and Navarro 1996:21). In the same breath, however, she also views these resistant spaces of historical autonomy as "the basic cell that links central power with the social units it governs" (1998: 344; my trans.). Hence, "localities could be the basis for a restructuring in which the *municipio* would be the articulating instance between the State and constellation of local autonomies" (*ibid.*:362). Barabas considers that if autonomous *municipios* are restructured along "ethnocultural" lines, they will remove the legacy of state and class domination (*ibid.*:345).

Invoking the title of Clifford Geertz's 1983 book, Barabas claims that such an indigenous order which "seeks to create or recreate an internal political culture for autonomy sustained by local knowledge is frequent in Oaxaca" (ibid.:362). For her "local knowledge" is a synonym for "common sense" and the emergent form of cultural property known as costumbre (custom)—the selected everyday norms and practices now officially recognized by the amended Mexican constitution and objectified in the emergent institution of ley consuetudinaria (customary law) (ibid.:346-347). More generally, for this type of project to succeed Barabas concludes that

One necessary path is to research the concrete networks...having to do with...beliefs, ritual practices, sites of worship, institutions, kinship, activities or objectives with the power to convocation...of...historical, linguistic, kinship, ecological, economic, religious, ethnopolitical... ethnocultural affinities within each ethnolinguistic group. This would

permit the interested parties to design a geopolitical reordering in which the communities would join more embracing units with new political and territorial borders. But any attempt at ethnocultural reorganization of governments and indigenous borders must be based on the local knowledge where the networks of affinities which constitute the social substance of the ethnolinguistic groups are reproduced (*ibid.*:348,363).

Such a sound methodological suggestion for ethno-ethnographers also has been proposed by the Huichols directing the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Other recent theorizing in Mexican anthropology (De la Peña 1995; Rosaldo 1994) has synthesized these trends under the rubric of "ciudadanía étnica" ("ethnic citizenship"). This refers to the right of

cultural identity and differentiated societal organization within a State, which in turn must not only recognize but also protect and legally sanction such difference. All this implies the reformulation of what up to now we have called the nation-state. ...its functions of centralist territorial and cultural homogenization are now put in doubt...safeguarding [indigenous] human rights and status as citizens implies a reformulation of the nature of territory, jurisdictions and forms of representation (De la Peña 1999:23-24).

In a less formalist mode, autonomy has been concretely linked to ethnodevelopment initiatives, as the aforementioned Chapalagana River watershed planning proposals.

As an important article on Black-Indian development schemes on the Pacific coast of Colombia has noted, such new legal openings as those created in Mexico since the 1990s and cultivated in coordination with NGOs "reflect important formulations concerning the relation between territory, biodiversity, culture, and development". In other words, these actors phrase territorial control in terms of "biodiversity conservation, genetic resources, and the control and management of natural resources" (*ibid.*:209). It is assumed that this struggle

will be "a real defense of the social and biophysical landscapes..." Such landscapes are thus grounded in both the phenomenology of place and in the political action required to save them: "cultural and ecological attachment to a territory, even as an attempt at creating new existential territories" (*ibid*.:213).

Aside from outlining the main goals of the ostensible Black-Indian alliance in Colombia, Grueso, Rosero and Escobar (1998) features the subaltern actors' own rich, albeit culturally and historically essentialized definitions of the key terms at stake in their struggle (and in this dissertation). These are strikingly similar to those discussed below in chapter 3: "the right to territory (the right to space for being)...is a necessary condition for the re-creation and development of our cultural vision...where black people develop their being in harmony with nature". Elsewhere, territory is "a fundamental and multidimensional space for the creation and re-creation of the social, economic, and cultural values and practices of the communities...within a historical perspective linking past and future". The redefinition of territoriality as an autonomous development regime is a notable evolution from the focus on land per se or on territoriality in a more cultural sense just a few years ago. It is essentially a reappropriation of state *indigenista* development schemes by emergent indigenous regions.

To conclude this chapter, two distinct dynamics emerge from the foregoing review of 20th century Mexican anthropological notions about territory. As De la Peña phrases it, in the first "…in a large number of countries there are diasporic groups whose actions resignify territories and subvert the conception of these countries as self-contained and immutable". In the second dynamic,

indigenous territorial recognition and autonomy outside the government's agrarian and *indigenista* framework are based on people's historical patrimony and current economic and ceremonial practices *within* a national territory. The Huichol experience suggests that the state may not have much more hegemony over such internal populations than it does over transnational ones.

De la Peña does not discuss the second dynamic as much as the first, mostly because it is still largely on the drawing board, but it will certainly be an important area for future political work and research. Questions include what strategies these expanded indigenous territorial regimes will develop and what internal conflicts will emerge as a result. Issues may include resource distribution, democratization, individual rights to politically entextualize cultural tradition (Briggs 1996), and the legitimacy of new indigenous brokers in semi-autonomous cultural formations (Jackson 1989, 1995).

Despite its stated willingness to debate, the Zedillo administration's (1994-2000) proposals for the Chiapas peace process ruled out any ethnically based territory that jumps jurisdictions defined by the government and local agrarian regimes. The historically unprecedented change of government in Mexico taking place in the first years of the 21st century may address both specific issues like the Chiapas conflict and the general configuration and extension of the state as the neoliberal project continues to evolve. Such grand debates should pay some attention to how indigenous people conceive of territory in their own frameworks. I turn now to a description of Huichol *kiekari*, a most encompassing indigenous model of regional territory.

CHAPTER TWO

GOURDVINES, FIRES AND HUICHOL TERRITORIALITY¹

0. INTRODUCTION: NANAYARI AND KIEKARI

One goal of my research and advocacy work on Wixarika (Huichol) territoriality has been to show why outsiders' images of it as historically static and geographically isolated are harmful to these resilient but hard-pressed mountain people in the southern Sierra Madre Occidental of western Mexico. This chapter explores the flexible social and spatial relationships Huichols sum up with metaphors about roots, vines, lianas and gourdvines (nana, pl. nanari) or, more abstractly, rootedness (nanayari).

Looked at from the top down and outside history, *nanayari* is a system of meridians emanating from central places of mythologically sanctioned reproductive energy down to the household level. Looked at instead from the bottom up as a historical process, people invoke *nanayari* to connect the ceremonial fires of dispersed *kiete* (*rancherías*, households) to the fire of a great temple (*tuki*).² Beyond that, *nanayari* extends to primeval creation places dispersed across 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) in five states of western and north-central Mexico: Nayarit, Jalisco, Durango, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí plus the northwestern fringe of Colima. This kie-*tuki*-creation place hierarchy constitutes what Wixaritari call *kiekari* –their territory. Trekkers

¹ I greatly appreciate the theoretically informed enthusiasm and criticisms of Santiago Bastos, Bernard Bate, Carlos Chávez, Philip Coyle, Guillermo De la Peña, Paul Friedrich, Claudio Lomnitz, Tamara Neuman, Stuart Rockefeller, Terence Turner and Elizabeth Vann.

² For centuries Wixaritari (Huichols) have translated *tuki* into Nahuatl or Mexican Spanish as *kalliwei* or *calihuey* — "great house". Section 3 of this chapter is basically an argument for the profound aptness of this gloss.

articulate *kiekari* into a territory with narratives and paths that connect Wirikuta (places in the desert of northern San Luis Potosí) in the east to Haramaratsie (places on the Pacific coast of Nayarit) in the west and from Xapawiyeme (places in the Lake Chapala, Jalisco, region) in the south to Hauxamanaka (Cerro Gordo, Durango) in the north.

I argue in this chapter that the *kie* (extended family *ranchería*) is the constitutive unit of Wixarika *kiekari* insofar as it is the level at which people actually engage in their productive relationship to land and begin to reproduce it ritually, but one must look far beyond the *kie* to understand the complete process. The *kie-tuki-*creation place hierarchy is basic to San Andrés Wixarika territoriality because even as it changes its relationship to the natural and historical landscape, it remains the society's fundamental hierarchical principle.³ *Kiete* are where one encounters the historical dynamism of a land tenure system often viewed from without as a static structure in passive retreat from the Hispanic onslaught. Such views have alternately bolstered anthropological traditionalists, gloomy romantics and cynical assimilationists. To a degree the notion of a timeless hierarchy is also compatible with new Huichol political actors' ideological construction of a fixed territory, as the next chapter demonstrates.

Wixarika *kiekari* in its most expansive sense as the exchange sphere covering some 90,000 square kilometers was only partially recognized in 18th century Spanish royal titles. These three decrees assigned roughly 5,000 square

³ Johannes Neurath (pers. com. 1999) indicates that in Santa Catarina, where he did his doctoral fieldwork, the *xiriki* is not territorially salient because such shrines and the land tenure they represent depend more directly on the *tuki*.

kilometers to the then recently baptized *cabeceras* (head towns) of San Andrés Cohamiata, Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitán and San Sebastián Teponahuastlán, and contemporary ritual still sanctifies those limits.⁴ We will see the different degrees to which the current Mexican agrarian laws and constitution as well as the international treaties that Mexico has signed also recognize this traditional territoriality.

Finally I also show how the ostensibly timeless Wixarika (and anthropological) model of social and spatial hierarchy is reconciled with the actual growth and change of settlement patterns over time. Ideologically, the male-dominated, "diurnal" social order descends from primeval creation places in the "high" east through great temples to *ranchería* shrines in the central part of the *kiekari*, whereas feminine proliferation and growth (*nuiwari*) rise from the "low" "nocturnal" west and the tropical canyons that lead from it through the feminized corn-producing *milpas* of those *rancherías*. These constitute deep structures or principles for processes of historical change (cf. Sahlins 1985).

Wixaritari reconcile these male and female principles through a set of ceremonial practices that employ metaphors about rootedness and inscription. These metaphors set historically shifting settlement patterns into the forms given by myth and ritual practice, thereby modifying those forms. In the first two sections of this chapter, I outline the social structures (*tuki* and *comunidad* organization) and ceremonial practices (sacrificial treks and narratives) that

⁴ According to the presumed locations of the colonial *mojoneras* (boundary markers), the original lands were divided up roughly as follows:

San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán

San Andrés Cohamiata (including Guadalupe Ocotán)

Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán

4,000

800

define and legitimize territory in terms of creation places and colonial boundaries. This general framework is intended to make the ethnography of *xiriki* ritual practice, kinship, myth and metaphor in the last two sections readable with something approaching local understanding.

The first two sections also examine *tuki* and *comunidad* organization as regional political relationships, the first stronger, the second weaker in terms of their cultural and political legitimacy for Huichols and in terms of Huichols' power to influence those relationships. Taken together, these sets of relationships variably connect Wixaritari to their landscape and to local religious and national political institutions. I call these relationships, which correspond to Lomnitz's (1992) concern with "coherence" and "mestizaje", "differential articulation" (cf. Chapter 1, Section 5).⁵

Section 1 describes a set of cultural and political relationships deeply embedded in everyday Wixarika life. This set articulates the extended family Wixarika homestead or household estate (*kie*) to one or more of about 20 great temples (*tukite*) located on mythical creation paths that traverse 5,000 square kilometers of the highland Wixarika region. From the *tukite*, these paths then lead to the five great cardinal creation places that define the eastern, southern, western and northern limits and the center of Wixarika territory in its broadest

⁵ In terms of a general theory of articulations, I also draw on: 1) the hierarchical mediation of resources in Mexican social structure (Wolf 1956; De la Peña 1986); 2) the conflictual, historically shifting relationship between spatially differentiated modes of production (Lomnitz 1992; Nugent 1993); and 3) local political domination mediated by corporate kin groups and symbolic structures (Friedrich 1977, 1986; Greenberg 1989). In particular, I focus on the kinship and historical symbols embedded in the local sense of territory because for Wixaritari land is a rich text articulating ancestral mythological actions that are associated with different historical places and periods.

geographic and cosmological sense. In other words, this first set of relationships is comprised of the connections that define *kiekari* as the paths crisscrossing some 90,000 square kilometers in five states of western and central Mexico and administerd by the community's *tuki* (vs. "civil-religious") *cargo* hierarchies (cf. Cancian 1965).

Section 2 describes two interconnected but culturally and politically distinct sets of relationships less commonly marked in Huichol ceremonial practice but these relationships are the basis for the legal definition of the comunidad and as such are the primary constraint on communal identity. The first of these two sets described in Section 2 partially articulates the tuki-based system of land tenure described in Section 1 to the Spanish land titles issued in the 18th century. Superimposed on the prehispanic kie-tuki-creation place hierarchy with its vast, multi-group, seasonally utilized territory on the edge of the Mesoamerican sphere of influence, these colonial grants gave Wixaritari exclusive "primordial" title to three repúblicas de indios under a paternalistic caste system and local church-courthouse cargo hierarchies on New Spain's violently disputed early northern frontier. These titles recognized considerably less than five percent of the global territory traversed by the Wixaritari and left them with no official claim on the 95 percent they utilized during the long dry season for hunting, gathering, trading and sacrificial activity. This omission has had increasingly acute consequences since the mid-20th century, to say nothing of the only partial recognition accorded to the colonial boundaries since the Mexican revolution.

Even weaker in terms of its connection to everyday Wixarika cultural practice but more crucial in terms of the Mexican legal system is a second, more recent set of relationships that ties part of the territory recognized in the colonial titles to the federal agrarian system (Secretaría de Reforma Agraria and the *tribunales agrarios* as embodied locally by the *comisariados de bienes comunales*). Under this system, since the 1950s about 80 percent of the area titled under the colonial order has been recognized with Mexican federal titles. In the past Wixarika land claims based on the colonial titles and the recently recognized right of access to sacralized places throughout the prehispanic territory have been adjudicated on a generally unequal footing compared to more powerful regional economic interests when they conflicted.

To briefly make the historical periodization of the Sierra del Nayar described in the last chapter correspond to the three forms of relationship to the land I have just described, *kiekari* in the most extensive sense is a historical trace of the fact that the Wixaritari along with their indigenous neighbors, the Náyari (Cora), O'odam (Southern Tepehuan) and Mexicanero (Nahua) peoples had regional cultural, economic and political links during prehispanic times. They were sub-Mesoamerican hunter-agricultural tributaries of various political and religious power structures including prehispanic urban centers and the colonial Cora Tonatí chiefdom.

With the military triumph of the Spanish Crown, the *comunidades* were established and their rights to control land restricted to a 5,000 square kilometer area bounded by *mojoneras* (stone markers). Since the late 19th century encroachment of haciendas on their crown lands, Huichols have been

transformed into western Mexican agricultural migrant workers and peasants with state recognition of only those upland remnants of their land that do not have significant hispanic populations. Nevertheless Huichols still maintain unusually strong ceremonial links to their former tributary mode of production and political-religious organization.

In short, they have maintained a high degree of autonomy and coherence in terms of ceremonial activity and language while they have become more economically and politically dependent on regional and global systems of production, distribution and signification. In terms of their manifest ceremonial life in the sierra (where most Wixaritari comunidad members spend at least three quarters of their time), their links to the past —overlapping nostalgias, if you will—may appear stronger or more meaningful than their links to the regional order. However, through an ideological gambit they claim that the ceremonial links encompass that order and now the Mexican legal system enables them to make land claims based on those links.

After these two sections describing the three principal modes of Huichol territoriality, in Section 3 I describe the social organization of the *kie-tuki-creation* place hierarchy in greater detail. Finally, in Section 4 I analyze some of the symbolic or mythological discourses Wixaritari use to explain the territorial relationships described in Sections 1 and 2. In the following chapter I begin to take up the more global discourses that draw upon the local ones described here. Finally popular Huichol discourse seems to have taken up some of these collective claims for private dealings, and critics of indigenous autonomy and

Indian human nature have seized on that to argue for greater vigilance of the Indians. I take up those themes in Chapter 4.

But how outsiders construct or misconstrue Wixarika culture could easily become another book. Even though Chapter 1 sketched how regional power has always been joined to local forms of knowledge and practice, in this chapter I do not discuss the State discourses about territoriality except for the legal statutes on which Huichols make claims. Nor do I discuss the recent New Age and missionary appropriations of Wixarika ritual symbolism for their special purposes (but see Liffman 1995 on the Franciscans). Instead I focus on the ideology and practice of land tenure on the most local level, to which all further posturings must ultimately answer.

But first, a bit of cultural geography: about 20,000 Wixaritari inhabit the area in western Mexico where the states of Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango and Zacatecas meet. Most of them live widely scattered (about four persons per square kilometer) throughout the roughly 5,000 square kilometers titled to the three comunidades indígenas of San Andrés Cohamiata (Tateikie), Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitán (Tuapurie) and San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán (Wautia) by the Spanish king around 1725. The portions of these "original" comunidades still recognized by the Mexican state cover about 4000 square kilometers (1,600 square miles or one million acres). Wixaritari living in about 1,000 square kilometers of the crown lands are now under non-indigenous control. This is also the case with most of those spread across Nayarit in ejidos and peripheral barrios of mestizo towns and cities, but many of them continue to identify with

their mother community through kinship and ceremonial activity (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1995).6

Before the great hacienda land grabs of the Reforma (1856-1876) and Porfiriato (1876-1910) and the *ranchero* invasion underway since the beginning of Cristero phase of the Mexican revolution (1926-40 in this zone), the Wixaritari of San Andrés Cohamiata controlled nearly twice as much land as they do now, including rich forests, upland pastures and valleys (cf. Meyer 1983).⁷ The social memory of this officially repressed part of Wixarika "cultural patrimony" is still reproduced in ritual practice both inside the *comunidades* and at contested places throughout the broader *kiekari*.

The remaining parts of the three *comunidades* lie deep in the Sierra Madre Occidental. There the Chapalagana River and its tributaries have cut precipitously down to create colossal, torrid canyons measuring up to 1,200 meters (4,000 feet) deep and viewed as fecund but wild, dangerous, even sinister spaces with scorpions and some of the last feline predators. The canyons have left small, temperate, *relatively* densely populated and cultivated mesas a few

⁶ The Huichol *ejidos* around the old Nayarit *fronterizo* community of Atonalisco (north of Tepic, near the Aguamilpa Dam on the Río Grande de Santiago) are an exception to the broader pattern of disenfranchisement. A unique political culture engendered by the leftist sponsorship of the *ejidos* in the 1970s and 80s (by Alejandro Gascón Mercado of the Partido Popular Socialista) was a topic of my earliest research in the region. The *ejido* Salvador Allende's installation of an image of the fallen Chilean socialist in its *xiriki* (extended family shrine) was the most striking example of this. These largely Spanish-speaking settlements had lost most connections to their mother *comunidades* by then but some old men had served as bilingual intermediatries with the sierra *comunidades* as recently as the 1940s and 50s, when few people in those places read Spanish.

The original size of San Andrés, excluding its now –independent former anexo, Guadalupe Ocotán (Xatsitsarie) was approximately 150,000 hectares. The 1958 provisional survey recognized 130,000 of these but the Resolución Presidencial of 1965 titled just 75,000 hectares.

hundred hectares in area. Windswept, pine-clad peaks – often deemed to be ancestral places – reach up above the mesas to about 8,000 feet (2,400 meters) and some overlook virtually the entire Gran Nayar region. Many Wixaritari shift their residence among the varied ecological niches of their *kiete* by moving up and down the mesas and canyon slopes according to their seasonal and more long-term needs for slash-and-burn maize plots, pasture and water. If they do not in fact migrate elsewhere in the region, people also move throughout the "original" *comunidad*, driven by shifting marriage patterns, the rapid demographic recovery of the post-revolutionary period, and economic specialization in art and labor markets oriented around the *cabeceras*.

FIGURE 8. CONCEPTUAL SCHEME OF WIXARIKA KIEKARI.

x = xiriki (family shrine)

T = tuki (great temple)

C = cabecera (head pueblo): e.g., "Tateikie"

="original" comunidad boundary (colonial mojoneras)

N,E,S,W,C = cardinal creation place: e.g., "WIRIKUTA"

~ = intervening space (100-400 kms.)

N HAUXAMANAKA

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XAPAWIYEMETA

1. "REGISTERING" THE KIE-TUKI-CREATION PLACE HIERARCHY

This section describes a hierarchical system of ceremonial narratives, practices and offices (cargos) that reproduce and expand Wixarika territory (kiekari). Wixaritari themselves define kiekari as the natural and cultural landscape in a variety of senses. In particular, Neurath's informative structuralist discussion (1998, 2000, 2001) of this same term principally treats it as the global cosmological space demarcated by the five cardinal points and the vertical axis mundi as represented iconically in the architectonics of the tuki compound (cf. Fernandez 1977). On the other hand, kwiepa denotes "lands" (kwie = earth + pa = place), and is more appropriate to notions of rural property. I would attribute the difference between our two accounts in this regard to the ceremonial vs. political context of our fieldwork rather than to fundamental differences between our informants' understandings.⁸

In its most place-based sense, *kiekari* entails people, plants, animals, architecture, forms of economic production, social organization and ceremonial exchange, all saturated with historical and mythical referents and simply the

the structuralist and Mesoamericanist traditions that originated with Konrad Theodor Preuss (1998) in the early 20th century, frames his original ethnography of the *xiriki-tuki* ceremonial complex in terms of hierarchical dualism. Following Louis Dumont and Maurice Bloch —and the detailed ceremonial knowledge of his main informant, a *kawiteru* of the Keuruwetia (Las Latas) *tuki* in Tuapurie (Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán)— Neurath illustrates how Wixaritari rank binary oppositions like east/west, light/dark, dry/wet and male/female as unmarked to marked and as high to low in contexts ranging from *tuki* architecture to the logic of sacrifice. My fieldwork has spanned more eclectic kinds and scales of practice. They include traditional, monolingual ritual settings, especially at the *xiriki* level, and bicultural political meetings and interviews both within and outside the community. In the latter contexts interlocutors articulated the uniquely Wixarika ideology of land, descent and hierarchical exchange described in this chapter.

overwhelming omnipresence of life as they know it (see Chapter 3, Section 3, on the cultural revival movement that produced this definition). In a more fundamental sense *kiekari* is the shifting territoriality defined by reciprocal exchanges between historically mutable *ranchería* groups and the divine ancestors who formed and continue to control the landscape: "more an *event* than a *thing*" in Casey's terms (1996:26). (See Chapter 3, Section 1 for an agrarian episode rooted in this more formal sense.)

The main point I want to make here is how the apparently stationary, freestanding *ranchería* household (*kie*) is symbolically established, connected, extended and reproduced in terms of *kiekari* — the larger "household" as it were. One way Wixaritari describe this process is that they "register" (*registrar*) their *kiete* by making sacrificial treks to places in the immediate locality, to the temple (*tuki*) and ultimately to Wirikuta and the other four cardinal emergence places. These emergence places define the limits of Wixarika *kiekari* in its broadest, cosmological sense as the sun's daily path from east to west and as the domain of earth and rain ancestors in the north and south.

It may seem paradoxical —or an indication that virtual hierarchy is far more evident in "sub-Mesoamerican" peoples' world views and rituals than in political institutions "on the ground"— that Wixaritari fix and legitimate their settlement system of little *rancherías* widely scattered across the "isolated" mountains of Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango and Zacatecas by traversing the space that separates them from regional temples (*tukite*) and distant ancestral

⁹ Kiekari is composed of the root kie (ranchería; i.e., extended family "household") and the abstracting or generalizing kari. See the introductory section to Chapter 3 for a more extensive discussion of this etymology.

emergence places. That is, in order to claim a place to live, you have to describe and relive how your ancestors moved there from an authenticating place. But this may be a defining feature of frontier or nomadic peoples including the early Mexika Nahuas, whose migration across the desert eventually brought them to the Valley of Mexico.

This system of indigenous land tenure based on relatedness between places and across historical time partially contrasts with western-based systems like the *Código agrario* (Mexico 1964) under which their colonial titles were partially recognized in the 1950s and 60s. The *Código* tends to define land tenure in terms of abstractly delimited, independent pieces of ground on a two-dimensional grid, whereas as we saw in Section 1, Wixarika landholding is founded on its shifting connection to routes on which key "historical" events occurred. As such events are rediscovered and reshaped in shamanistic discourse, they open discursive spaces for historical dynamism and flexibility.

Extended family estates (*kiete*) do not automatically "belong" to this territory simply because they fall within its boundaries on a map; instead, they must actively articulate themselves to the sentient, morally charged *kiekari* by replicating ancestral dramas. This narrative creation of territory begins by condensing family labor, extended social bonds and ritual meanings into the specific act of animal sacrifice (*mawarixa*). The victim's flesh articulates (and transfers life force) to both extended kin and neighbors, and the blood connects inhabitants of the kie to their ancestors and the territory with which those ancestors are metonymically identified.



FIGURE 9. Xarikiya mawarixa (Parched maize sacrifice). buil prepared for sacrifice at Parched Maize ceremony, San Andrés Cohamiata. Sacrificial knife, bowl for collecting blood, peyote, bottles of ancestral water and tepari (ceremonial disks) are at the edge of the tenari.

The initial moment of *jouissance* or catharsis in this narrative is in the delirium of the killing. A bound and beflowered bull lies quietly on its side by the subterranean chamber (*tenari*) and the fire place in the central earthen patio (*takwá*) of the *kie*. A ritual fiddler ups his tempo to a frantic level, the attending shaman raises the volume of his chant and the designated sacrificer plunges a knife into the neck of the victim. The doomed, wide-eyed animal bellows in horror at what the great pain and weakness signify, and its life spurts from a pierced heart or artery into ceremonial gourd bowls that women struggle to keep positioned so as to catch as much precious substance as possible.

The gourd bowl reservoirs from this fountain of blood serve as inkwells for the *muwieri* wands (brazil-wood arrow shafts with eagle feathers attached) that the chanting shaman and senior men and even a resident anthropologist repeatedly dip into as a semiotic medium to hurriedly inscribe votive bowls and arrows and the faces of the immediate family and all the guests with the life force that blood embodies. This life force ('iyari) is also embodied more generally if less dramatically in the vast amount and variety of maize forms boiled, fermented and toasted for these ceremonies as well as the meat that will be unequally distributed to the one or two dozen guests in order of social importance, beginning with the shaman and sacrificers.

These votive objects specify the petition but Huichols say it's the blood that "makes the offering talk" [(Neurath 2001). It is notable that at least since the 19th century coins have been used in votive bowls to represent the sun, invariably with the eagle and serpent "tails" side up in the case of post-

independence currency. This suggests that money -as an appropriation of the key symbol capitalist value to a tributary mode— talks too.

After performing the sacrificial *mawarixa* at home, the elders of the *kie* undertake exhausting, costly and often legally hazardous treks to places in caves, water sources and mountains where the *kakaiyarixi* (divine owners of natural forces, in particular of the sun, earth, fire and rain) first emerged, performed cosmologically crucial actions and returned to inhabit forever. They can then exchange the bloody icons of sacrifice –blood itself (*xuriya*), sanctified candles (*hauri*), inscribed arrowshafts (*'iri*) and gourd bowls (*xukuri*)— for concessions of other sacred substances –water, plants and deer.

The intention to win ancestral concessions of goods like food, money and health is inscribed in the votive objects and embodied in the little gourds of water that people bring back from those caves and springs, as well as in the peyote that they harvest from the desert of San Luis Potosí. Both of these ancestral goods — water and peyote — embody the sacredness of the places where they come from. Moreover, eating peyote actively communicates that sacredness by allowing ritual participants to see ancestral visages (nierika) and

nature of peyote, some of its most important intrinsic qualities have been ignored. On one hand peyote is just like the water brought home from springs because it also makes an indexical connection to places and the ancestors who inhabit them (cf. Coyle 2000, 2001). Specifically it is a metonym of the primordial solar landscape and the deer-shaman Kauyumarie from whose body it is cut. More generally, peyote is also symbolic because people say hikuri embodies the communal, creative and spiritual values of the Wixarika people. They deem it to be the principal sacrament of their religion. The peyote consumed throughout the annual ceremonial cycle at tukite and kiete throughout the sierra also has an iconic connection to the solar emergence place at Reu'unaxi in Wirikuta and to the entire Wixarika cultural "complex" because its bitter substance –a deer heart cut from the ground— imparts images and voices of the ancestral beings who created the places.

hear their voices.¹¹ These visions are a form of communication that imparts moral counsel ('ixatsikayari) and esthetic gifts (nierika) that people reproduce in art and subsequent sacrificial offerings to enhance life (ta'iyari).

In return for the tribute, the divine ancestors should grant rain, moderate heat and good health for people, animals and plants. This engenders a further spiral of reciprocal sacrifices, treks, requests, needs and shamanistic calls for more sacrifice. If rains and heat are either scarce or excessive and if famine or sickness (particularly measles or tuberculosis) prevail, it is likely that a *tsaurixika* (*tuki* official in charge of sacrifices), *mara'akame* (shaman, "dreamer") or other *timaikame* ("knower" of dreams and unseen actions) will divine that the fire Tatewari, as a medium for the other ancestors, wants people to offer a living thing because the ancestors have been slighted. Given the basic structural opposition between female proliferation embodied in the devouring fertility grandmother Takutsi Nakawé and male restraint embodied in Tatewari (the fire grandfather), it seems that controlling excess seems at least as important as augmenting scarcity. A recurrent shamanistic activity is to ask the ancestors to "cover" (*tapar*) or "calm" (*calmar*) water sources and the sun.

¹¹ This key concept in Wixarika religion literally means "vision" (niere, to see plus ka, habitual). Often represented by small hand mirrors worn around the neck or placed in votive disks, one shaman described nierika as a mirror for seeing clearly at great distance—an optical telescope as it were. Nierika is also an epithet for the collective milpa (cornfield) tended next to each tuki for the bowlbearers (cargo holders) there. This alludes to the bowlbearers' role as living embodiments of the ancestors nourished by the collective maize. Maize plants themselves are often taken as being isomorphic with people, particularly in the form of Niwetsika, the maize mother, and the fact many people are given maize-derived names that elders have dreamed to reflect the person's character.

The fact of the matter is that according to official estimates, 61% of Huichols are malnourished, the mortality rate is 1,100/100,000 people –double the general rate for Jalisco, and infant mortality is 40 times that of developed countries, so there are abundant reasons to

But even before they arrive to deposit their offerings at primordial emergence places like Wirikuta, *hikuritamete* vividly embody their territorial and broader cultural claims in the very process of getting there because they are reviving the memory of ancestral treks that formed the landscape in the post-diluvian darkness. So, if only by virtue of this particular trek's great length, Wirikuta is the Wixaritari's principal territorial narrative and the most expansive claim for renewed access to Wixarika *kiekari*. Once they are in Wirikuta, Wixaritari are especially moved by peyote-enhanced visions in which they identify with their ancestors and ancient practices, so it is where they truly "root" their *kie*-based settlement pattern.

Re-enacting ceremonial history also helps them develop a long perspective on local events and the comforting distance afforded by a profound sense of irony so that they can see and talk about their oppression, poverty and alienation from most of their ancestral territory humorously, like the fallen lords of *As You Like It*. In short, Wixarika land tenure must be understood in terms of its integrated relationship to a vast 90,000 square kilometer territory and 1,000 year mythical history, not as a set of separate, much less isolated parcels or communities.

Trekking to ancestral places not only establishes hierarchical links between them, *tukite* and *rancherías*. Particular kinds of inscribed arrows in particular can forge an *acuerdo* or homology between places. For instance this is how the places of 'ututawita (in Durango) and Tatei Matinieri (in San Luis Potosí) are connected: if you take tributary offerings to the ancestors at 'ututawita, they

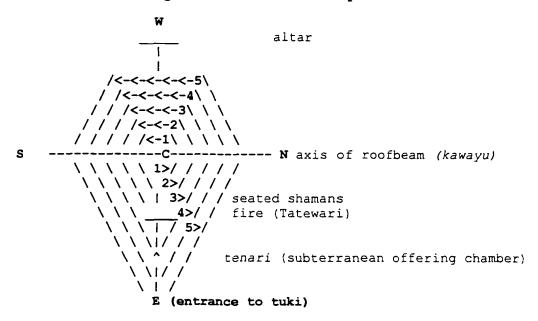
propitiate the ancestors.

arrive in Wirikuta because the two places were originally linked when menstruating girls journeyed between them in ancestral times. So clearly, movement is essential to place-making and territorialization. Indeed, the Wixarika term closest to the English word "religion" is *yeiyari*: the "path" composed of spatially and socially integrating treks to ancestral places and counterclockwise ceremonial dances which replicate those treks.

The apparent paradox of fixing a claim to a specific *kie* by traveling somewhere else far away is contained in the multiple denotations of the verb *yeiya* on which the noun for "religion" is based: the root *yei* means to move, to live and consequently to be in a place (Grimes *et al.* 1981:128). Much as 20th century physics recognized the fundamental inseparability of wave and particle, movement and stasis seem interwoven in Wixarika language, where the capacity for motion is the basis of identity with and power over a place (cf. Witherspoon 1977). Through the tropes of iconicity and synecdoche, *yeiyari* in its ceremonial sense as a dance around the fire traverses *kiekari* in its broadest sense, just as Neurath (1998) points out that the architecture of the *tuki* in which such dances quintessentially are held is a microcosm of that territory and Coyle (2001) shows that Náyari community-level ceremonies replicate rancho-level *mitotes*.

The rhomboidal yarn crosses (*tsikirite*) popularly known as godseyes also manifest this principle as the string begins at the center point where the two sticks cross and works outward counterclockwise along the N-S and E-W axes as in a ritual dance: superimposing a *tsikiri* on the layout of a *tuki* we get a counterclockwise spiral emerging from a central fire and defined by the other four directions:

FIGURE 10. Tsikiri design entailed in tuki dance pattern.



One could go further and point out that it is as if Huichols have had detailed astronomical knowledge since if you connect the four principal creation places at the cardinal directions, the connecting lines between them form a distended *tsikiri* with its center within a few kilometers of Teekata, the fifth and most primordial cardinal point (see Figure 3).

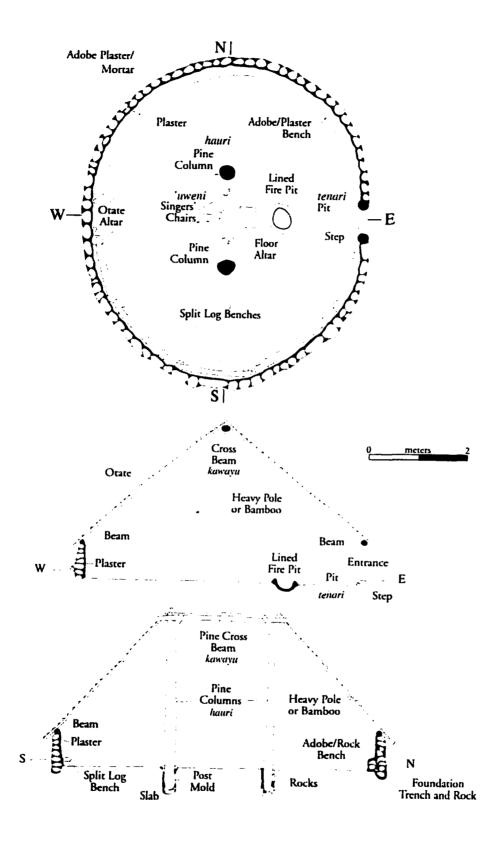


FIGURE 11. Idealized plan of contemporary tuki (from Coyle and Liffman 2000).

Wirikuta, the desert in San Luis Potosí where one must trek to "hunt" peyote and "register" claims to the lands of a kie, is the most distant ancestral place: some 400 kilometers from the Wixarika heartland in the Sierra Madre Occidental. This meant a 20-day walk until the advent of motorized transport for Huichols in the 1950s. It is as if the peyote-rich desert and the bare, cleft peak of Reu'unaxi looming above it (which is deemed to be the birthplace of the sun) were the capital of a polity where one must petition to receive title to the land and the life that it gives. This is why one San Andrés shaman I know used the term gobernancia (seat of the comunidad "civil" cargo hierarchy led by the tatuwani/gobernador) to refer to Wirikuta and the expression presentarse en la presidencia con jícaras firmadas en sangre con plumas (present oneself in the municipal building with bowls signed in blood with feathers) for the journey there.¹³

The most literally "stately" image associated with Wirikuta is of the sun himself: a figure seated with his feet tucked up (like a traditionally interred mummy?) on an 'uweni (shaman's reclining wooden armchair) with a resplendent corona of multicolored feathers emanating all straight up on his head. At his feet, the waters of nearby springs (e.g., Tatei Matinieri), on either side (north and south) the distinct rains. He doesn't so much rise as climb up five stairs or platforms to the zenith, referred to by the shaman who painted this verbal image for me as the Palacio Nacional (presidential palace). It is as if since

¹³ The expression *lugar sangrado* for "sacred place" is a widespread play on words: the standard Spanish word for "sacred" is *sagrado*; *sangrado* means "bloodied". The link between sacrifice and territoriality could not be clearer.

they lack official state recognition of their territoriality, Wixaritari had decided to produce a state of their own.

As in Foucault (1979) the association between politial power, elevation and nierika (vision) in Wirikuta is patent: "es como subir en un helicóptero para ver todo el mundo" (it is like climbing up in a helicopter to see the whole world). This stands in direct opposition to the cut off, non-communicative darkness of the procreative rainy season isolation on family kiete. The austere, apparently uninhabited place of Wirikuta is described as a center of communication and productive activity: "el crucero, el centro, donde hay Libro Internacional que conecta con Estados Unidos, Canadá, todo.... Allí la gente, los que saben, van a trabajar" (the crossroads, downtown, where there is an International Book that connects with the US and Canada¹⁴, everything... There the people, the ones who know, go to work"). Or as the linguist José Luis Iturrioz (pers. com.) has expressed it, for Wixaritari, Wirikuta is like a screenplay written in nature, a semiotic landscape where shamans go deciphering the footsteps of the divine ancestors and directing a dramatic reenactment of the canon. The features of this landscape, then, are a kind of "conceptual writing", a form of textuality, a natural literature inscribed through sacrifice like the blood painted on faces at a mawarixa.

Wixaritari root this seat of legitimacy (and the requirement to ritually renew the force of communal boundaries defined by the "corner" *mojoneras* that define them) far before the revolution or even the arrival of the Spaniards.

¹⁴ Kwiniwari made these pronouncements over two years before the enactment of NAFTA, but may reflect the neoliberal cant to which he as an official ceremonial representative to the state, may have heard during the early years of Carlos Salinas's presidency.

... no quiere llover, yo estoy oyendo al Dios que dice que le falta lo que necesita, porque cuando apareció el Dios en el mar y luego en San Andrés Cohamiata, él ya había medido este terreno, es aquí donde se quedó el Dios, ahora no está todo completo, en las esquinas puso la vela para que cuidemos el mundo, ahora dice el mundo, el cielo y el sol -¿por qué no respeta México el título virreinal completo?, cuando se acaben la velas, ya se acabó toda la vida, el santo quiere que lo midan, así dice ahora, que le devuelvan todas las esquinas donde están las velas para ponerle nuevas, por que si no ya no va a llover en todo el mundo, va a bajar el agua, va a acabar la vida porque no oímos lo que dice la luna, el maíz, y los antepasados ya no están oyendo el canto de los ancianos, yo le encargué a Carloque le dijera al Presidente.

(... it doesn't rain, I'm listening to the god who says that he lacks what he needs, because when the god appeared in the ocean and later in San Andrés Cohamiata, he had already measured this land. It's here where the god stayed, now not everything is complete. In the corners he put candles so that we take care of the world, he said, the world, the sky and the sun. Why doesn't Mexico respect the whole original viceregal title? When the candles burn out, all life ends. The santo wants them to measure it, that's what he says now, that all the corners where the candles are be returned so that new ones can be placed there, because if not it will no longer rain anywhere in the world, the water will dry up, life will end because we don't listen to what the moon and the corn say. And the ancestors are no longer listening to the elders' chants. I designated Carlo [the head of the NGO coordinating the comunidad's legal strategy] to tell the President [of Mexico]. (Kawiteru Daniel Villa, quoted in Arcos 1998))

A young shaman connected to the agrarian struggle I was assisting told me that the *historia* of Kiriniku Xureme (Bloodred Gringo) begins in Spain, where the original entourage of ancestors who created the physical features of the landscape of western Mexico departed from. They then arrived in Wirikuta, the eastern edge of the *kiekari*, where the sun was born. There they acquired a *tepari* (an incised stone disk used to cover an underworld offering chamber) and took it to Mexico City, where they gave it to the Aztecs. The Aztecs placed it on the Mexican national currency as the ubiquitous eagle-and-serpent image. Huichols have subsequently reappropriated the coins and placed them as images of the sun in their sacrificial gourd bowls (*xukurite*). This indexes a symbolic economy

that both undergirds and in practice intersects the monetized one as symbolic "art" objects become commodified. In exchange for delivering this index of value, the Aztecs gave the Huichol delegation titles to the land they had just formed. It is not clear whether the Huichols kept the originals but Bloodred Gringo took the efficacious photocopies, and the ancestors' fourth stop was where the Huichols now live in the Sierra Madre Occidental.

The shaman now explicitly conflated this narrative with the day of its telling: the Cambio de Varas ceremony held each January 6th, when the new civil *cargo* hierarchy of the *comunidad* makes a grand entrance from the east. He even more pointedly indexed my presence and that of various tourists in the event: Bloodred Gringo, accompanied by Teiwari Miyuawi (Blue Mestizo), ¹⁵ was standing with a camera outside the *comunidad* at the moment of the ancestors' arrival –their fifth and final stop. Implicitly the incoming authorities in the Cambio de Varas replicate the original ancestors, so this is a narrative of legitimation in which the gringo and his mestizo counterpart serve an ancillary, documentary function rather than a primary role in the reproduction of the sacrificially rooted community. ¹⁶ They have displaced that primary role to what for them is the prehistoric world of Aztecs and Españoles.

¹⁵ This is an epithet for San Cristóbal, who is said to have led the divine ancestors on their primordial trek from the sea across the as yet unformed landscape.

¹⁶ The general subordination of mestizo and gringo to a cosmology of power governed by Huichols and their ancestors would seem to contrast with the markedly dominant roles that Huastec traditional "internal intellectuals" (ritual experts) assign to mestizos (Lomnitz 1992:205-220). There "localist ideology is expressed by assimilating the culture of social relations into intimate culture", what he calls "syncretism" (ibid.:219). In this regard, as an anthropologist my main ritual task at the Cambio de Varas was to write down in a community secretario's official notebook (but not to actually calculate) the kweta (from the Spanish cuenta, "account"). You will see below how the ritual role of accounting resurfaces in the Holy

As if to put the imprimatur of governance on the profound personal experiences they have on treks to ancestral places when people explained to me how their territorial system gets anchored through ritual trekking, Huichols frequently employ a bureaucratic metaphor: "registration" (registrar). Clearly this is just one of a wide lexical set Huichols have appropriated from the bureaucratic operations of the Mexican state, in particular the power associated with inscription and reproduction, to describe ritual and cosmological processes they claim are under their control. That subordination of state functions to ritual functions was made explicit in the foregoing account of Bloodred Gringo, but there is more such fascinating evidence.

Week rituals. The *kweta* is the exact size of the literally staggering outlay of sugar canes, fruit, soft drinks, cigarettes, cookies and other lavish gifts heaped upon the *'uweni* (ceremonial chair) of the incoming *cargo* holders by their outgoing their counterparts, who must pass the service on the subsequent year. Recently the size of these prestations has grown from year to year, requiring more wage labor and extended family cooperative labor organization.

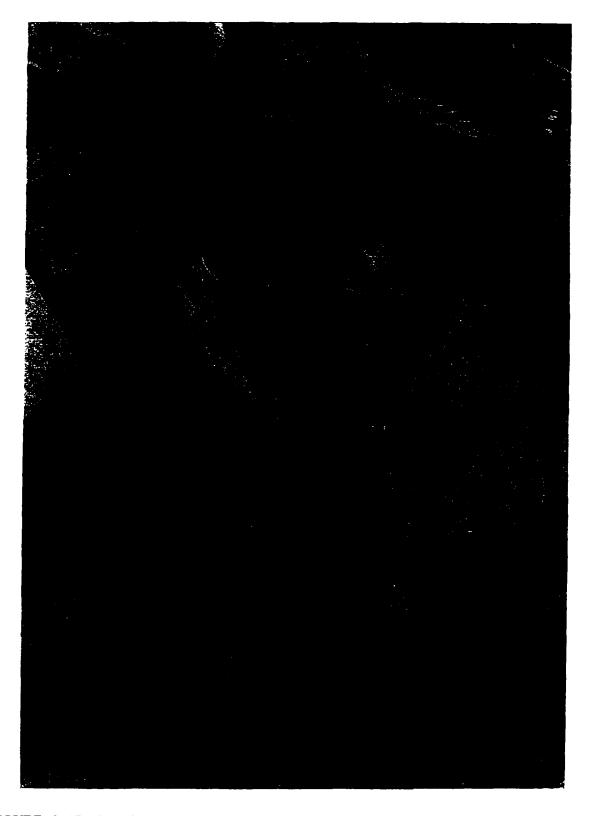


FIGURE 12. "Registration". Returning hikuritamete with 'uxa (yellow plant pigment) on faces, legs, sandals, xaweri (violin), kanari (guitar) and rifles. Tuaxamayewe, San Andrés.

The yellow 'uxa facepaint made by hikuritamete (peyote trekkers) for themselves, their tuki group and allies is, like the blood of mawarixa, ritually daubed on such efficacious instruments as branding irons used on livestock, hunting rifles used for sacrificial deer and the comunidad authorities' typewriters used for legal oficios —materially potent documents. This metonymic link between ritual initiation, social reproduction and state political power suggests that these subaltern indigenous authorities encompass the state as much as the reverse. More generally, there is a strong link between ritual process and graphic representation in Wixarika culture (Iturrioz 1995:86ff). This is often noted with respect to shamanistic divination of ancestral visages (nierika) in the flickering flames of the nighttime fire, but 'uxa painting on the face is directly linked to writing on paper as well because as a consultant said, both knowledge and the 'uxa designs that embody it are "written around one's eyes" (pira'utiakia yuhixita).

Among the actual artifacts of state power encompassed in these rituals are Wixarika officeholders' eagle/serpent seals and their pens with which, among other things, land boundaries are formalized by the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria. The eagle/serpent image, also seen on Mexican coinage and the flag, is significant to Wixaritari because as we saw with Gringo Xureme, they realize that they share common mythological sources with other Uto-Nahuan groups like the Aztecs, who had this battling pair of animals as their emblem. The

¹⁷ 'uxa designs (see Lumholtz 1900) make people's faces into divine ancestral visages (nierika). By metonymic extension, applying 'uxa to a typewriter or implement of production makes it part of the moral and spatial domain of ancestral authority, appropriating it for use on behalf of the kiekari.

struggle between eagle and serpent embodies the fundamental ecological, economic and ceremonial dualism between the dry and wet seasons, sky and river, the high desert cactus garden vs. canyon *milpas*, hunting vs. agriculture, ritual at the austere *tuki* vs. subsistence production around the fecund *kie* (cf. Zingg 1938; Fikes 1985). Fundamentally, this opposition between eagle and serpent parallels that between the diurnal (*tuka*) and the nocturnal (*tika*): the dry season, *tuki*centric, communal ceremonial life with its male-regulated moral code is counterposed to rainy season, *xiriki*centric, agricultural dispersion with its female fecundity (Iturrioz, pers. com. 1993; cf. Fikes 1985; Neurath 1998). Some Wixaritari also read this eagle as specifically related to the two-headed owner of the sky, Tatei Werika 'iimari (Our Mother Young Eagle Woman).

However, the pen is mightier than the seal because it resembles the feathered arrowshaft (*muwieri*) that shamans gesture with in order to receive, inscribe and transmit knowledge. Consequently, Wixaritari take it for granted that the Spanish *pluma* for "pen" is the mestizos' acknowledgement of the fundamentally shamanistic nature of writing since the word's other meaning is "feather".¹⁸ The resemblance extends from how they are held in the hand to the

¹⁸ Wixaritari often delight in punning on the resemblances between Wixarika and Spanish or Nahuatl terms, but they have the serious purpose of affirming their culture's historical precedence in the territory and its innately superior knowledge just as they claim dominion over the state. Another example one commonly hears is ethno-etymologies of Nahuatl-derived placenames since it is easy to recognize (or invent) resemblances between the two closely related languages: Mazatlán, Kwiniwari told me, was originally a Wixarika place because it is a corruption of Maxata (Deer Place) and he went on to name another half-dozen examples. He was apparently unaware that the terms sometimes in fact do mean the same thing in Nahuatl as Wixarika. The territorial claim in this linguistic game is explicit but shallow; the cultural claim is implicit but more profound.

Another kind of common etymological play makes referential claims within Wixarika language and culture. A common Huichol etymology for *kawiteru* (temple elder) is *kawi* (horned caterpillar) because the winding tracks that the assiduous grubs leave in the dust are

fact that they inscribe knowledge in a socially powerful way. Hence a shaman refers to the daubing of sacrificial blood on one's children or in a gourd bowl and candle that will be taken to Wirikuta as a "signature" (*firma*) that "authorizes" (*autoriza*) the offering. This lent gravity to a Wixarika's suggestion that I ask the shaman conducting a ritual to paint the shaft of my ethnographic pen with 'uxa.¹⁹

But even if the metaphors about writing give a very literal sense to the word "authority", in the Wixarika theory of writing the shaman is a different kind of author. The *muwieri* condenses spatially and temporally diffused knowledge already "authored" by the ancestors who speak and sing from Wirikuta. It is more like an antenna for capturing and making a *copia* (reproduction) of what are treated as faraway mythical images transmitted through the wind and projected in the shaman's visions and chants. Huichols employ the metaphor of a telephone, TV or movie or for this, and some people seem incredulous at the idea that people in movies don't really fly or die.

said to guide hikuritamete on their paths to Wirikuta, and ceremonial elders are also assumed to have this territorial knowledge. Neurath (pers. com.) relates that kawitu (mythical history) is also treated as the root of the ritual office. However, Iturrioz (pers. com.) argues persuasively for the colonial Spanish cabildero (town council member) as the origin of the term. This interpretation accords with the phonology of Spanish-Wixarika loan words in general and with kawiteru's otherwise exotic "eru" ending in particular. In any case, the morphological convergences are felicitous.

¹⁹ The power entailed in writing and other forms of graphic representation is also indicated by the essentially Hebraic prohibition against it (along with other forms of non-ritual activity) on Thursday and Friday of Holy Week. One year a pair of huriu (judios, Jews, filthy, chaotic underworld ritual trickster-policemen) approached me on the plaza and told me they had to confiscate my surreptitious ethnographic notebook so that they could note down (apuntar) all the beers being drunk in the comunidad (an inverted reference to my own deviant writing and the fact that huriu are the only people drinking at this point). In exchange for another, blank notebook (which they found perfectly acceptable), these two crazed officials proffered me a swig of peyote gruel and excused themselves, explaining with professional solicitousness that they had to "cure other people as well". They then ran off hooting and

In any case, with both the eagle/serpent seals and the values placed on bureaucratic and shamanistic "feather-writing", graphic representation is directly implicated in the process of establishing and reproducing the basic forms and relations of production: sanctifying food, registering territory and perpetuating the paths of sacrificial exchange relationships across the territory that guarantee health and fertility.

By describing ceremonial activity in terms of bureaucratic objects and practices as well as the ancestral forces that defined the landscape in the first place, Wixaritari doubly legitimize their presence in the region. On one hand, they recoup the powers of the mestizo State embodied in the bureaucrats' cosmological "eagles" and signifying "feathers". Wixaritari say they originally had control over the national government as well as the means of production, but with the sacrifice of Jesucristo (whose sins included sleeping with a mestiza) the non-indigenous interlopers were given control over those manifest forms of authority and wealth so that the Wixaritari could concentrate on being the priestly guardians of the sun and rains (Zingg 1938; 1998).

One could argue that this myth just rationalizes Huichol alienation from political-economic power and territorial control in the regional ethnic system. However, Wixarika ritual practice also validates deep cultural values placed on recording and retransmitting as basic forms of social reproduction. Therefore instead of being simply poor, dispossessed Mexican peasants, Wixaritari have ideologically elevated themselves to the level of sacred governance by taking charge of the means of both semiotic and ecological reproduction. The

screaming and waggling their black wooden sabers.

seemingly surreal bureaucratic metaphor of "registration" and classical Uto-Nahuan notions of ritual as semiotic replication are fundamentally compatible.

For Wixaritari, in this context "registration" does not refer to an omniscient Weberian bureaucrat regulating the observance of abstract norms. Instead, Wixarika land tenure is based on a fundamentally reciprocal — although most certainly hierarchical — Mesoamerican sacrificial economy based on tributary patron-client relations. As with other Uto-Nahuan groups like the Náyari (Coras) and Aztecs, the ideological basis of this system is complementary exchange of symbolic substances between people and the divine ancestral owners of the earth, rain and sun.

This logic of land tenure and political authority is why for centuries Wixaritari have gone to Wirikuta to not only to extract the valuable cultural resource of peyote but also deposit sacrificial blood and objects that represent elements of the lands, livestock and persons they seek to ensure. We see here how they have also conflated this sacrificial logic with subsequent forms of political authority and semiotic practice. The archival record has not yet yielded any data on whether they also went to Wirikuta to work in the Real de Catorce silver mining complex situated just behind the mountain they deem to be where the sun first emerged, but with money as the symbol of solar power in sacrificial objects, one would hardly be surprised. In any event, there is an explicit sense that such treks are a form of tributary payment: one goes to pagar manda (fulfill a vow) or to settle a never fully payable debt with the ancestors (Durin n.d.).

Against what I have been asserting here, it could be argued that Huichols' appropriation of Spanish and Mexican cultural forms in their ritual discourses

represents an interiorization of mestizo domination, and sometimes it does. Some Huichols view capitalism and the state in classical clientelistic forms: "la economía es nuestra madre" ("the economy is our mother"), said a formerly corrupt official turned ceremonial authority; "el presidente es nuestro padre" ("the president is our father"), said a friend who has vacillated on the missionary presence in the community. However, the dominant rhetorical strategy for most Wixarika ritual actors is to ironically encompass and subordinate state hegemonic forms within the ritual and ecological processes that they themselves are performing and thereby controlling. The ritual inversions of the hikuritamete, whose lofty scorn for national power and market commodities as pale shadows of Wixarika power and cultural goods is the canonical example.²⁰

Having ritually "registered" (registrado) their settlement system in ceremonies and treks, the historically and ecologically shifting location of a family estate (kie) becomes a fixed part of the nanayari "root". This root now extends from the hearth of the kie in the center of the patio (takwá) before the family shrine (xiriki) to the fire in the center of one of 20 great temples (tukite) distributed across some 4,000 square kilometers of the Wixarika highlands to the geographically and cosmologically central cave at Teekata, where Tatewari (Our Grandfather [of the fire]) was first found, to the birthplace of the sun at

²⁰ The cultural weakness or questionable legitimacy of the current regime is clear; in peyote discourse mythological personages are assigned satirical, even Rabelaisian epithets. *The hikuritamete* (peyote people) I traveled with renamed the ceremonial fire "flashlight" and the sun "Zedillo". In both cases, they simultaneously revered power as a principle and mocked its modern, secular, mass-produced embodiments as laughably paltry, ironic versions of the real thing.

Reu'unaxi, some 400 kilometers to the east.²¹ The ceremonies and great tributary treks bridge the space separating hearths in the *takwate* of their homes, the center of their temples, the center of their territory and the blazing cleft where the sun emerged from a desert mountain by making those hearths symbolically equivalent.

This territory is performatively engendered through the tropes of synecdoche and iconicity.²² Indeed, along with the sacrifice of peyote "hearts" in the desert (which in itself constructs a metonymic bridge between hunting, gathering and agriculture), the ritual firefeeding of a most animate Tatewari in Wirikuta is one of the most powerful and poignant aspects of that trek.²³ These treks not only traverse a vast space and distinct, symbolically opposed modes of subsistence production, they also bridge time. As mentioned above, the ritual process of reaching that desert and consuming peyote to open one's eyes (neophytes are actually blindfolded just before they arrive) transforms human individuals into interlocutors if not personifications of the primordial ancestors who began history. This collapse into mythological history is indexed by the

²¹ Reu'unaxi is composed of *reu* (where), 'una (burn) and xi (past tense): "Where It Burned" or in the parallel Spanish toponymy, Cerro Quemado.

²² By "performatively engendered", I mean that through the enactment of the ceremony, the two ranked levels — *xiriki* and *tuki* — reference each other, thereby constituting and reproducing their hierarchical relationship.

²³ Lumholtz's (1902 II), Zingg's (1938), and Myerhoff's (1970) observation of a simultaneous symbolic equivalence (or more exactly, a "complex") among maize, peyote and deer stops just short of recognizing a significant fact. These entities are associated with separate spatial contexts and types of activity, so the treks to Wirikuta to "hunt" peyote are required to enact the ritual transformation of "female" corn growing and plant gathering into "male" animal sacrifice and thus fuse opposed domains of gendered economic production. More exactly, the earlier accounts do not quite focus on the sacrificial transformation of a round desert plant smaller than a fist that looks like wet ocean jade inside into the blood-filled

reciprocal use of the term *teukari* (grandparent/grandchild) between *hikuritamete* (*peyoteros*), who in fact are generally of the same generation but represent the ancestors to one another and to society in general.

A second kind of time also used to be important because before the advent of motor transport for Wixaritari in the 1950s and 60s, the trek entailed an 18 to 20-day walk each way. In addition to its other functions as a dry season hunting, gathering and trading expedition, this extended time frame for the trip helped make it more literally a rite of passage because the lengthy performative time mediated between quotidian and mythological time scales.

On a long, ascetic trek with little food or water, extreme physical privation enhanced the drama and peyote dreams of personal transformation as it does throughout the Wixarika ritual system, particularly in the context of shamanistic initiation. But on the old 40 day treks on foot there was an intensified spatial dimension. The personal suffering of the trekkers was identified with that of the ancestors and objectified in places throughout the landscape they came to know so intimately. The resulting connection between sacrifice and creation of territory is profound.

In short, participants' identities could be more thoroughly transformed on a long trek than during two or three days in the back of a three-ton pickup truck or the seat of a bus.²⁴ Still the experience remains profound. It culminates in the

heart of a solar animal.

²⁴ I got a hint of the huge cultural loss associated with highway travel to Wirikuta when I went there with the extended family of an 85 to 90 year-old shaman who had walked to the desert and back many times as a young man in the second quarter of the 20th century. Unlike the old days, now we sat near the back of a second-class bus on a sprung, sweat-stained seat next to a cracked, half-jammed green window. Instead of winding our way east for 20 days

second great moment of sacrificial *jouissance* when a great peyote is shot with arrows, cut out of the earth like a deerheart and shared as a sacrament just at the moment the sun rises out of Reu'unaxi.

This painfully won intimacy with the landscape imbued with intense personal experience created a sense of place covering a vast territory. As one shaman explained it to me, a royal eagle (águila real) wounded in the side with arrows cries out from Reu'unaxi (the birthplace of the sun in Wirikuta) and the echo creates landscape features in all four directions. The eagle is clearly an outgrowth of the peyote literally shot with arrows at that place, the act which culminates the eastward leg of the trek and stands in a reciprocal mirroring relationship with the ranchería mawarixa.

Numerous period documents suggest that this shamanistic mediation of sacrifice was the basis of the more elaborate social hierarchy in the Gran Nayar region during the prehispanic and colonial periods. As late as the 1780s Huichols were apprehended and tried for bringing ornate gourd bowls to ceremonial elders in the former Cora capital of Mesa del Nayar or nearby communities. As

on paths marked by the *kawi* worms that slowly transcribe their trail in the dust, in a matter of hours we shook and rattled across the increasingly dry, treeless plains and long hills on a 200 kilometer, two-lane stretch of pitted concrete that connects the Catholic pilgrimage center of Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, with the desert oasis of Salinas, San Luis Potosí.

At a robust 80 kilometers an hour, the wind of 30 open windows rushed in our ears as if to wash away the deep, dry heat of the relentlessly brilliant sun. Perched omnisciently at the zenith on a late May day, any shadow was a precious little oasis. At one point, the old man pointed out the tip of a high hill in the blanched distance (probably 30 kilometers away) and shouted over the roar that on the other side of it lay a certain creation place where people would rest after so many days of walking. It took me about half a minute to really discern the landform and, in an ethnographic frenzy, scrawl its name along with a few hopefully memorable associated words in my green notebook, the letters lurching across the page in a pothole-inflected cross between orthography and seismography. By then, the place had vanished from view and the old man's gaze had returned to the road ahead. So went my elided apprenticeship in Wixarika geography. More importantly, so it goes for most young Wixaritari nowadays as well.

recently as the early 1990s when I began my fieldwork there were calls for Huichol *mara'akate* to put order back into the main ceremonial plaza (*limpiar el patio*) of the strife-torn Cora *comunidad* of Santa Teresa del Nayar.²⁵ This would have eliminated the sicknesses (*males*) taken to be the cause of the rampant homicide there. In Santa Teresa I heard an account of a Náyari cult leader called "El Dios" in the 1970s, who also promised cultural renewal and material bounty and was living off the largesse of his followers but was discredited as a sexually opportunistic charlatan (Gómez Dué, pers. com.), yet another sign of the crisis in the legitimacy of that community's ritual system (Coyle 2001).

Even now, ceremonial activity takes up a huge proportion of agricultural production (easily a quarter) in the form of corn beer, fruit and other goods, to say nothing of the huge monetary outlays for sacrificial cattle, alcohol and other commodities. The exactions may be extreme in another sense as well. Contemporary accounts of child sacrifice in the region are tied to desperate circumstances in which the ancestors demand a supreme offering through their shamanistic mediators, thus emulating the logic by which the sun was born from a fire that cooked a sick child willing to die so that the oppressive darkness of night/the rainy season would end (McIntosh 1949; Riley & Hobgood 1959).

²⁵ Coyle (2001) seems to refer to this same episode when he mentions that the imploding ceremonial *cargo* hierarchy in the Náyari community of Santa Teresa contracted a *mara'akame* to "clean the patio" after a series of factionally related killings but later reneged on paying him.

²⁶ One issue I have not fully resolved is whether it is preferrable to buy sacrificial cattle or use one's own.

To conclude this section, for Wixaritari and their Uto-Nahuan neighbors, narrative and ritual practice evoke profound personal identification with their ancestors and territory. People connect themselves to divine ancestors and the cosmological divinities through personal sacrifice and blood sacrifices of hunted and domesticated animals. These sacrifices accompany votive representations of desired goods and persons at key places of the landscape, particularly primeval emergence places situated in caves, springs, on mountaintops and at the ocean (cf. Coyle 2001). Consequently, relating the divine history of the landscape to the place where they are narrated and leaving offerings at the places where those primordial events occurred so that the earth will continue to produce are practices intrinsic to Wixarika land tenure and political legitimacy in general.

These practices articulate outlying shrines (xirikite), principal ceremonial centers (tukite) and creation places (kakaiyarita) throughout the Mexican landscape. This ceremonial linkage between xiriki, tuki and landscape endows the land tenure system with such great historical and semantic depth that Wixaritari deem its reproduction to be crucial to all natural processes and to human fertility for all people in the region if not the world. Therefore, as they probably have been doing for many, many centuries, Wixaritari define a key function for themselves as the ceremonial guardians of natural processes — a kind of global ecological priesthood.

As the Section 2 of the next chapter discusses in greater detail, this itself is a basis for broad territorial claims because they argue that if they are not allowed to hunt deer and perform rituals at ancestral places, how can the divine ancestors reciprocate with the sun, rain and health on which all people depend?

In any case, the logic of sacrificial exchange is pervasive: you bring an offering to a divine ancestral dwelling-place, whether family shrine, regional temple, cave, desert or ocean, and you bring back an embodiment of life for your family and community, whether that embodiment be peyote, water or some other sacred substance. By doing so, you legitimize your existence in that place.

2 THE COMMUNITY-STATE HIERARCHY

As outlined in the introduction of this chapter, Wixarika territoriality is based on a culturally strong and weak set of articulations between where people live and various levels of regional authority and power. I now discuss the relatively weak set of articulations between the local ceremonial basis for land tenure I described in the last section and the federal agrarian system defined in the *Código agrario* and litigated in the *tribunales agrarios* of the region. Insofar as the state recognizes the Huichol territoriality described in the previous section, in the highland Wixarika area this articulation happens at the level of the *comunidad indígena* through the agrarian authorities of the *comisariado de bienes comunales*.

Beyond the currently recognized limits of the *comunidad indígena*, since the 1940s the courts and Reforma Agraria have reconstituted nearly half the original colonial grant of San Andrés Cohamiata as *ejidos* and new *comunidades indígenas* under non-indigenous control. This effectively leaves thousands of Wixaritari inhabiting tens of thousands of hectares of their colonial title's territory alienated from official political representation. This regional structure is a thorny, violent contradiction in which individual or family economic interests may cross ethnic lines while ethnic groups that define themselves against each other have recently verged on renewing the brutal land struggle of the revolutionary period.

Among Wixaritari themselves, depending on their relative amounts of land, water, maize and animals, conflicts may arise between *kiete* or even whole Huichol *comunidades* over each other's rights to use particular pieces of land.

Traditional local governing institutions centering on the *kawiterutsixi* (counselors)

and tatuwani (governor) may settle disputes between kiete, but problems between comunidades are more likely to bring in the comisariados de bienes comunales and the federal agrarian courts. However, even these intra-ethnic community conflicts pale in comparison with the large-scale, often municipal or state government-backed invasions by rancheros, who have displaced so many Wixaritari west into Nayarit and into the space of mestizaje.

On this more general, self-consciously ethnic level Wixaritari increasingly contest the nearly 500 years of Hispanic onslaught in conventional legal terms as well as in terms of the same primordial, ancestral claim upon the land used for the *kie-tuki* hierarchy. As Chapter 3 discusses in detail, this gives the traditional ceremonial leadership allied with NGOs and anthropologists an opportunity to leapfrog "modernizing" bureaucratic patronage and appeal more directly to a profoundly rooted set of national and international values about indigenous rights.

In particular people living in the northwestern part of San Andrés Cohamiata's colonial title lands have employed just such a hybrid mixture of arguments in their recent land claims, and it is my work with them that provides much of the information in this chapter. These people belong to *tukite* located within the officially recognized *comunidad* boundaries but find themselves living outside them and subject to discrimination and expropriation since the official *resolución presidencial* of the regional land question in the 1960s. Our legal work focused on that primordial cultural identification with the *tuki* and accounts in part for the Wixaritari's refined hierarchical vision. In short, these Wixarika people react to their weakened land tenure arrangements by referring to a

ancestral social memory (*memoria*) that includes the inclusive boundaries of their *tukipa* (*tuki* territory) and community's "original" title. This is the sedimentation of maize-based economic practice and migrations within the *kiekari*. As we will see in this section, *kiekari* also sacralized the colonial order.

Like the lack of government recognition for their *comunidades*, economic practice not based on local land also threatens *memoria*. Seasonal migration beyond the limits of the colonial title to Nayarit tobacco plantations, truck farms and ranches in Zacatecas, and the cities is increasingly common during the dry season (October-June). Even if it does not lead to a cultural rupture, such migration inherently limits ceremonial participation to the more global, *comunidad*-level rites.²⁷ Conversely, one of the key personal economic sacrifices of holding a *cargo* is that ceremonial requirements prevent you from migrating during the dry season. All three levels of ceremonialism (*xiriki*, *tuki* and *comunidad*) have suffered from migration, even as material survival increasingly depends on it. This ceremonial decline is indexed by the declining number of cattle sacrificed on Holy Saturday. The intimate transmission of shamanistic and ceremonial knowledge in *xiriki*-level ceremonies as well as informal fireside and workplace '*ixatsikayari*' (counselings) may be the biggest casualty.

For now, suffice it to say that since the Institutional Revolutionary state "resolved" the land question in the region, many Wixarika *kiete* that maintain

²⁷ On the other hand, the attempt to extend or reconstitute ceremonial life outside the geographical limits of the *kie-tuki* system in the Nayarit lowlands deserves serious study. Also, the growth of Wixarika Protestantism may not be such a sharp break from traditional *costumbre* as is commonly depicted. Instead, it may be a way to maintain the broad principles of communal ceremonial practice and escape the contradictions implied by competition, *envidia*, witchcraft and ritual drinking. These contradictions have been exacerbated by land

ceremonial and kinship relations with a *tuki* are no longer deemed to lie within a Huichol *comunidad indígena* even though the *tuki* from which its *nanayari* grew does lie inside the border (Liffman et al. 1995). Therefore the non-indigenous local authorities to which such a *kie* has become subject can supplant it with a cattle pasture for a powerful non-indigenous rancher because they are not required to subscribe to Wixarika territorial principles.

Just as Wixarika territoriality has a contradictory relationship with the mestizo society, economy and state, particularly in those areas outside the currently recognized *comunidad* boundaries, even within the parts of the three "original" *comunidades* still recognized as such, the articulation between traditional local and modern regional institutions remains problematic and tenuous. Within the official *comunidades*, the state is represented by a few crucial but generally "provisional" bilingual actors (Lomnitz 1992). These include the *comunidades' comisariados de bienes comunales* (a local agent of the Agrarian Reform administration), the emergent pan-*comunidad* Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes de Jalisco (UCIH-J), and a legal code that only these brokers and their non-indigenous interlocutors know how to operate.

More alarmingly, during the latter part of my fieldwork (following the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas), a permanent detachment of policía preventiva was installed in the presidencia of San Andrés and annual military sweeps became de rigueur— a most alienated form of territorial administration that seems to be increasingly popular throughout Latin America in the new century. On the other extreme, mara'akate (shamans, diviners, "dreamers") and kawiterutsixi (tuki

pressure and proletarianization (Otis 1998).

councilmen) talk in ritual chants and 'ixatsikayari (counselings) about the colonial demarcation of their comunidades as a primordial ancestral path they must reproduce through the sacrificial system. So at best, the state only authorizes Wixarika agrarian officials to administer part of the colonial title and the ritualized claims based upon it.²⁸ From local people's point of view, this makes these agrarian officials important but incomplete and potentially compromised.

To expand on this point, in principle the state respects the ceremonially based system of land tenure described earlier in this chapter. That is, Mexican agrarian law generally recognizes royal titles issued to colonial *repúblicas de indios* as the basis for modern *comunidades indígenas* when the inhabitants still (or, in some cases, once again) hold the land communally ("en estado comunal") (cf. Shadow 1985). However, the tribunals may be very reluctant to acknowledge indigenous claimants like the Wixaritari when they are in direct competition with more powerfully connected regional economic interests for large swaths of cattle pasture, pine forest and agricultural land, to say nothing of areas under the control of drug exporters.

On the regional level, cargo holders' rights to claim land have been officially restricted to the ceremonial domain, but the tatuwanitsixi (gobernadores), kawiterutsixi (tuki elders, councilmen) and kumitsariutsixi (comisarios) act as delegates and advisors to the UCIH-J and pan-Indian organizations, which do have a formal connection to state power. On the comunidad level, kawiterutsixi

²⁸ In an era of globalization and privatization unequalled since the Porfirian regime (1876-1910), perhaps the remarkable thing is that the state still recognizes such claims at all. But see Liffman (1998) for an example of how the state itself attempts to make such claims in the name of its putative Aztec forebears.

formally integrate the *tukite* —the Wixaritari's prevailing, prehispanically based landholding units (cf. Weigand 2000)—with the *comunidad indígena*'s traditional political authorities ('*itsikate*- staffholders) like the *tatuwani* (governor) in major seasonal rituals celebrated in the *cabecera* plaza, as they have since the Spaniards established the *comunidad* level of authority, so the articulation of locality and region is highly mediated and tenuous, but it does exist.²⁹

Links among kie and comunidad as a corporate landholding body are concretely expressed in the fact that the people who represent their kiete must accept "civil" cargos up to and including tatuwani (gobernador) as well as "religious" cargos (santos) in the town church (teyeupani). These consist of xaturi (santos) in the teyeupani and 'itsite (varas) in the comunidad cargo hierarchies. This is the counterpart to the gourd bowls and arrowshafts stored in the tukite but the comunidad civil and religious cargos' relationship to discrete territorial units is not so isomorphic.³⁰

This *comunidad*-based *cargo* system together with the far more extensive *tuki* system discussed in Section 1 is the formal basis for territorial integration in

²⁹ These rituals include the Turning of the Table of Government on San Francisco Day (October 4), which marks the return of the solar powers of government and ritual after the wet season; the Change of Staffs on Epiphany (January 6), which is the investiture of the new tatuwani and his court; Carnival, which celebrates the flourishing of the sun; and Easter, the sun's death and apotheosis.

³⁰ While comunidad cargos may not correspond directly to kie territoriality in the same way that the tuki is synecdochical and iconic with the xiriki that belongs to every kie, there is a strong tendency for certain comunidad cargos and santos to be associated with particular locales. Most notably the chief "civil" cargo of tatuwani (gobernador) is identified with the Hayukarita (San José) tuki district, even if the kawiterutsixi who divine the man for the cargo must go to tendentious lengths in order to find kin links between there and where he actually lives. Similarly, the large xaturi cross in the teyeupani is linked to Tsikwaita (San Miguel Huaistita) and this cargo is always filled by people from there in some sense, albeit attenuated.

Wixarika thought. The totality of ancestral places, *kiete* and *tukite* constitutes a hierarchical exchange network that continues to defiantly cut across the agrarian, state and municipal jurisdictions imposed by the government, but modern institutional practice in the courts does not yet really recognize this network (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1995; cf. Esteva 2001).

Instead, cargo holders, kawiterutsixi, kumitsariutsixi and 'itsikate alike have been largely enclaved and eclipsed by the comunidad's comisariado de bienes comunales of the Agrarian Reform administration, the pan-comunidad Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes de Jalisco (UCIH-J) and the courts in terms of their power to determine community-level land rights. Still, as Chapter 3 shows, this history is still being written. Traditional authorities and people from besieged or alienated outlying kiete form new aliances with non-governmental organizations, thus creating new publics and practicing new politics. They are able to do this on the strength of the place-based comunidad territorial system described in Section 1 and in the next subsection.

2.1 MOIONERAS

History, ceremonial practice and myth

Section 2.0 outlined some differences between the continuous territoriality defined by *nanayari* paths across 90,000 square kilometers of territory and the more problematic community boundaries that make Huichol territoriality discontinuous and conflictual. The *nanayari* migration paths articulate a space far beyond colonial limits and were bounded only by the distant edges of the *kiekari* in its expansive cosmological sense. *Mojoneras* (boundary markers) are a vestige

of the Spanish caste system that defined the limits of each *comunidad indígena's* colonial title and so originally restricted the territoriality enjoyed under prehispanic seasonal nomadism, but they have now become a resource for demanding more of the current Mexican state. Consequently, *nanayari* are connected to the *mojoneras* because they are now both part of the ancestral paths that shamans retrace in their territorial narratives.

Although the *nanayari*-based system of ceremonial territoriality described in the previous section is increasingly connected to state and international indigenous land rights discourses (the topic of Sections 1 and 2 of Chapter 3), the colonial *mojoneras* are particularly marked by the Mexican Constitution and the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria as the basis for land claims by *comunidades*.

The colonial title for the *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata is demarcated with 74 *mojoneras*, heaps of stone originally placed at distinguished natural features of the landscape when the title was granted (Appendix 1). By the poetics of Wixarika toponymy, the sites where the *mojoneras* were placed are the subjects of moral and mythological narrative recounted by *mara'akate* (shamans) (cf. Basso 1990, 1996). And since they have been part of a legally and politically crucial line for centuries now, the *mara'akate* have tied them together in narratives of primordial, ancestral movement across the landscape.

For instance, the great *tuki* called Tunuwametia (Under the Morningstar Shaman) is located just north of a village that, since the 17th century imposition of colonial government, has been San Andrés's eponymous *cabecera* (head town) but the *tuki* system throughout Wixarika territory was in place long before the Spaniards arrived. Now, because of the importance of *comunidad* organization to

land tenure, Tunuwametia is ranked above other *tukite* by being deemed to be the first one ever built!³¹ It is striking that Wixaritari say features like this *tuki* were "created" and linked on an ancestral path that the *kakaiyarixi* (divine ancestors or gods) followed in the prehistoric past because part of this path appears to follow the *mojoneras* in the *acordonamiento* which measures out the distances (*cordeles*) between them.³² This interiorization of the Spanish administrative order into the prehispanic past conforms more closely to Lomnitz's interpretation of mestizo domination in the local culture of social

other major *tukite* in the *comunidad*: Temuríkita (Las Guayabas), Hayukárita (San José) and Kwamiata (Cohamiata), five being the cosmological prime number. In a thought-provoking discussion, Arturo Gutiérrez (1999) has argued that from the point of view of San Andrés's historical town plaza design and formally structured ceremonial exchange among *hikuritame* (peyote trekking groups), there are eight salient *tukite*: the five just mentioned plus Santa Bárbara, Las Pitayas and San Miguel. However, as I argue in the next section, it has been an anthropological and bureaucratic short-circuiting of social process to categorize the largest ceremonial centers as an entirely separate class of installation because there is a virtually continuous gradient of ceremonial centers spanning the *xiriki* and *tuki* levels.

The ritual narration by mara'akate of San Andrés's origins as a comunidad center is an explicit purpose of the Naxiwiyerika (Pachitas or Carnival) ritual. This Franciscanderived ritual is also identified with the national flag day (Día de la Bandera) because of the season and the multiple banners of double paliacates (bandanas), the national flag and standard of the UCIH (regional indigenous confederation) on long Holy Week lance poles that the child participants tap on the ground during this procession. This apparently has the effect of awakening the underworld huriu (judíos, Jews), who will misrule the comunidad five weeks later during Holy Week. Children led by ceremonial elders bearing the Christian gods Tanana (Our Mother, Guadalupe) and the santos circulate first counterclockwise (the normal ritual direction) from the church (teyeupani) to the table of traditional "civil" authorities gobernancia and then around the fundo legal that the colonial title defined as the comunidad center. They repeat this procession clockwise the next day. These two complementary cycles correspond to the religious (teyeupani) and civil (gobernancia) sides of the colonial authority structure.

This village-scale cosmological procession proceeds from the plaza to a simple, xirikilike platform called 'utianaka at the edge of the village cemetery (camposanto) where offerings are left for the dead. It then proceeds to Paniku, an inconspicuous pile of rocks that looks like it might once have been s structure of some sort though people say it never was. Still, a kawiteru explained to me, this is a central place of communication where messages come in from all over, like a post office. It is located about 100 meters north and east of the Tunuwametia tuki. Meanwhile the newly hatched judios build up and tear down other piles of rocks.

relations. However it should be noted that the colonial limits of the *comunidad* are far broader than current agrarian limits and so are now a basis for contesting more than rationalizing Hispanic power.

San Andrés's acordonamiento was apparently conducted in 1789, and my colleague Beatriz Vázquez Violante unearthed an 1809 copy of it in the Franciscan basilica at Zapopan about 1992 (Vázquez V. n.d.: Appendix 2).³³ A simplified typescript from the early 1930s, apparently elaborated for a preliminary agrarian survey prior to the Cárdenas-era claim, contains the identical list of *mojoneras* (Appendix 1). It describes the *fundo legal* (central pueblo) and a path of *mojoneras* beginning at the graveyard. It then travels east down the canyon to the Chapalagana river (Hatia — Water Down Under) along the *camino real* (royal road) that the rising *tatuwani* retraces on the day of his inauguration (see the sketch of the Cambio de Varas Ritual in the next section). From the river it makes its vast counterclockwise sweep around the originally titled community.

The relationship between shamanistic narrative, ritual and colonial document or between myth and history may be best understood as a result of the *mara'akate'*s creative adaptation of lived experience into the archaic, canonical forms of ritual narrative. Neurath (1998) has also mentioned in passing that *mara'akate* "discover" new "primordial" places on their treks, which may have

³³ Perhaps wishing to avoid getting involved in territorial issues, shortly after Vázquez made this discovery, the ecclesiastical authorities in charge of the archive denied the request by a delegation of Wixaritari to make a photocopy of it and in fact denied the document's very existence. They also questioned the delegation's Indian identity (presumably because of their activist political stance, not their dress, appearance or language use). However, our colleague had wisely made a longhand copy of the phantasmagorical document,

both economic and ceremonial objectives. These enter the traditional canon through what Bauman (in press) calls traditionalization [cf. conclusion to this chapter]. This is "the capacity of the mediational process to socialize individual discourse, to render a text part of a public, collective discursive repertoire and to endow it with temporal and cultural continuity".

The mythological precedence assigned to key places in colonial history is reflects their potential efficacy under the agrarian legal code (Código Agrario). The articulation between myth, ritual and historical practice around the mojoneras has been acted out many times over the past centuries in contexts that are neither legalistic nor "merely" ceremonial. In living memory (probably about 1937, at the end of the Cristero wars and the onset of the still ongoing litigation in the region's agrarian courts), joint animal sacrifices at one of the comunidad's key "corner" mojoneras (Haata or El Pozo de Agua) consolidated an inter-group boundary between the Wixaritari and their northern neighbors, the O'odam (Southern Tepehuans) of Santa María Ocotán, Durango (cf. the discussion in Section 3 of the next chapter; Appendix 1, #27, for the context of this site). In the 1950s the "Indianized mestizo" Pedro de Haro – now a San Sebastián kawiteru – led a successful movement to gain federal recognition of the colonial title (Weigand 1969; see Figure #7). And in the 1990s the kawiterutsixi of the three Wixarika comunidades (including Haro) have taken renewed interest in politically situated ceremonial practice around the *mojoneras* and creation places.

Kindl (pers. com. 2000) has described from memory an ironic ritual performance improvised in 1995 by the returning *hikuritamete* at San Andrés's

on which I base this description.

tuki, Tunuwametia, that indicates a communal scale of representation in the tuki as well as the more generally described cosmological scale. An "engineer" with a measuring tape, sunglasses and a feedcap was pontificating in loud, aggressive Spanish as he delimited the "boundaries of the comunidad" in the dust of the tuki plaza. This sparked generalized skepticism and then loud protest from other hikuritamete playing the part of "communal authorities". They complained because the purported boundaries fell short of the plaza's edge and therefore could not really represent the whole territory of San Andrés.

The identity between plaza space and cosmological space is a theme developed at length in articles by Guzmán (2000) and Neurath (2000a); here we see plaza space used to represent a more specific historical territoriality: the limits of the *mojoneras*. After the women and "communal authorities" forced the "engineer" to eat "dung" and leave the plaza/community, they took an "authentic" map or title (a large piece of paper with a *tsikiri*-like crossed rhomboid drawn on it) to the *kawiterutsixi* in attendance. Significantly, these real authorities "signed" –one could also say "registered" – it with sun-yellow 'uxa thumbprints at its four corners and the center. General euphoria ensued.

Beyond the level of the comunidad, Section 3.4 of the next chapter shows how this configuration also characterizes the kwiepa –the combined territories of the three Huichol *comunidades indígenas*. Also, this crossed quadrangular shape as a general territorial model is implicit in the kiekari map at the beginning of this dissertation: a remarkably geometric design centered within a stone's throw of Teekata is formed by connecting the four outside principal ancestral places with six lines to externally delimit and internally subdivide the territory.

Although my fieldwork did not center as other researchers has on the comunidad center, it is clear from such accounts as Kindl's (and the sketch of the Naxiwiyerika procession below) that the village plaza is another synecdochical representantion of cosmological space. The comunidad plaza is defined by the classical Hispanic pattern with the church on the east and the courthouse on the west, with houses for each of the major cargos of the comunidad: the principal communal officers (tatuwani, etc.), the santos' mayordomías, and the major tukite within the borders of the mojoneras. In short, the plaza is the intersection between the apices of the aboriginal tuki organization and the Franciscans' colonial version of Christianity.

2.2 HIERARCHY AND RECIPROCITY

As I describe in the next section, despite the primacy assigned to *tukite* and *cabeceras* in myth and community-level ritual as well as in official anthropology and government programs, the relationship between *kiete* and the various ceremonial and political centers over time is really far more fluid and reciprocal than it may appear in formal representations. The mythical attribution of historical precedence to the centers is belied by the dispersed settlement system and the probably even greater dispersion based on seasonal hunting and gathering that prevailed prior to the Hispanic invasion. Following the development of mines and haciendas surrounding the sierra in the 16th century and the periodic *reducciones* of indigenous populations into strategic hamlets like San Andrés after the 18th century conquest of the region, the expansive dry season migrations into the multi-group *kiekari* became more difficult. *Kiekari*

continues to be restricted by fences and legal harassment in the present. Thus both traditional narrative and this account you are reading assert the existence of a pyramid with the *tukipa* (*tuki* territories), *comunidades* and cardinal emergence places at its apex but historical practice is constantly changing the pyramid's shape.

The base of the pyramid is the family shrines (*xirikite*) located in the mythically infused landscape where people live, work, and make repeated ceremonial contact with their divine ancestors. These *xirikite* are ideologically subordinated to the relatively uninhabited major *tukite* and *comunidad* center, but until fairly recently (ca. 1970) people only went to these symbolically preeminent places to carry out their *cargos*.³⁴ Although Wixarika ideology is pueblocentric or at least *tukicentric*, these higher levels basically seek to replicate, encompass, and subordinate *kie* level practice, where quotidian experience is grounded.

Indeed, as I describe in Section 4, the founding myths of the *kiete* claim that places of primordial ancestral action became *tukite*, which in turn generated paths to the *xirikite* (patio shrines) of the *kiete* (*rancherías*). Finally, these *kiete* may grow and become a "great root". This means they branch out to become the nuclei of new networks of *kiete* and thereby come to approximate the status of

³⁴ Since the 1970s, with the advent of roads, airstrips, schools, clinics, jobs, and housing as well as private stores and cattle enterprises, the *comunidad's cabecera* (eponymous head town) in particular has grown rapidly and is assuming greater power in many respects. But this demographic growth of the *cabecera* is ironic. Since it is fueled by money and political forces from far beyond its limits, in fact the *comunidad* is getting weaker, not stronger (cf. Coyle 2001). Huichols themselves often prefer to avoid the burgeoning village with its chronic drunkenness, fights and break-ins that seem to be fueled by a commodified existence. The many stores selling costly Sabritas snacks and 12-packs of Modelo Especial are the local centers of that world.

tukite themselves.³⁵ This mythologically legitimized process provides "traditional" Wixarika territoriality with its internal historical dynamism, as periodic shamanistically based rebellions have demonstrated over the past five centuries.³⁶

This historical dynamism contradicts government bureaucrats and official anthropologists who extend their recognition of mythic practice no further down the *kie-tuki*-creation place hierarchy and no further into the landscape than the *tukite* and the five cardinal creation places (Wirikuta, Haramaratsie, Xapawiyemeta, Hauxa Manaka, Teekata). These governmental and anthropological practices thus circumscribe "high culture" and the sacred realm to the confines of some 20 great temple compounds, the *cabecera* plazas where community-wide ceremonies are performed a few times a year and to strictly delimited pieces of unconnected territory conceptually separate from each other and from history itself.

³⁵ Although the great *tukite* are viewed as being primordial — in existence since the time of the first divine ancestors — the line of demarcation between historical and mythical time is no sharper than that between *xirikite* and *tukite* themselves. An old *xiriki* may have nearly as many *cargos* as a *tuki*, and it is said that its founders had direct contact with the original beings, five generations being the line of demarcation with the mythical past (Weigand 2000). Therefore the difference between the two levels should be understood as one of formal hierarchy, not intrinsic, essential differences in terms of size or historicity. Indeed, Neurath (1999) —who has found fundamental differences between *kie*-level *xiriki* and the *tuki* of Keuruwetia in Tuapurie— reports a myth in which the *tukite* were originally the *ranchos* of the *hewixi*, proto-human autochthonous beings: in the beginning was the house of the extended family.

³⁶ Ingrid Geist (1996:91) has also pointed to the fundamental fluidity of Wixarika territorial practice: in its most elemental form, "Pilgrims, with their symbolic load of ritual objects placed in their shoulder bags, install themselves as the center of the world, a center that moves itself" (my trans.). However, this kind of ceremonial practice is usually constrained by the historically profound hierarchies that it seeks to reproduce. To be legitimate, such practice cannot be territorially or socially unbounded.

Such bureaucratic and academic practices seem not to consider the historical and political reasons why *kiekari* boundaries get fixed where they do or how they change. This makes indigenous culture more susceptible to a structural analysis, but at the cost of leaving out transformative actors and local historical process. It also cuts real, everyday Wixarika land tenure out of the cosmological picture and exiles it to a trivial, "non-sacred" space without the cultural wherewithall to do anything but wither.

In short, although it may not be intentional, on one hand these politically neutered ideological operations leave the fluid, extendible Wixarika system vulnerable to constant, piecemeal erosion by regional ranching interests, and on the other, they consign it to the oblivion of cyclical, ahistorical time and rigid spatial categories. Fundamentally, such approaches elide the ethnographic fact that the narrative constitution of ancestral paths permits the land tenure system to shift according to the needs of an extensive slash-and-burn agricultural system and other, broader, historically changing economic practices, to reclaim long-alienated places, and even to grow into new ones.

Still, in the classical political ideology of the Gran Nayar region, the polity is symbolically subordinated to the solar symbols of the *comunidad*. In the largest processions of the annual cycle, the Change of Staffs (Cambio de Varas) and Easter (Semana Santa or Patsixa), people literally circle counterclockwise around the sun, as represented by the rising new *tatuwani* (*gobernador*) and the "sleeping" sun-*cristo*, respectively.³⁷ The Cambio de Varas is the apotheosis of

³⁷ In this sense, the new *comunidad* authorities' annual trek eastward to the *cabecera* municipal in Mezquitic (and during the colonial era, to the original Tlaxcaltecan frontier center

the new year's *tatuwani*, who is lifted by as many hands as can reach him onto a stone disc set into a raised platform located just outside the *cabecera* of Tateikie just after the winter solstice and just as he is about to reenter the community from the east. As such, the ritual strongly indexes the rising, returning sun and the ancient concept of reproducing the male-dominated social order by bringing solar power into the *comunidad* from an external source.³⁸ The conflation of sovereignty with solarity both under the colonial era Cora Tonatí chiefdom and — in a more ironic light — the Institutional Revolutionary regime was still a feature of Wixarika communal political culture in the 1990s (see Section 1).

Conversely, even the post-PRI state under the PANista president Vicente Fox continues to legitimate itself in part through the symbolically powerful traditional structures of the Huichols and Coras. See *La Jornada* (7.III.2002) for a description of Fox's staggering display precisely in the former capital of the Tonati, Mesa del Nayar. There he announced a new set of rural infrastructure development plans questioned both by indigenous people and, in the event, Alfredo López Austin, who happened to be in attendance.

in Colotlán) in order to receive the imprimatur of the encompassing political order parallels the *tukipa cargo*-holders' annual journeys to Wirikuta for purposes of territorial "registration". See Note #73 in Chapter 3. The ceremony begins at 'i-parimakumane (Circle of stools), the eastern gate to the *comunidad* and the foot of the San Andrés mesa. It features a low stone platform like the far more spectacular one at which the new *tatuwani* is literally elevated to power at the eastern edge of San Andrés pueblo's *fundo legal* by many hands from the large entourage that circles around his ascendance in stately counterclockwise affirmation.

³⁸ One need only note here that the paramount Cora chiefs who took tribute and shamanistic services from Huichols and maintained an independent polity into the early 18th century were called by the Nahuatl-derived term *tonati* (from the Nahuatl *tonatiuw*, resplendence, sun). This was a common epithet for the sun or brilliant leaders including the blond conquistador Pedro de Alvarado, who met his death suppressing the Coras, Huichols and their allies in the Mixton rebellion of 1540-50.

The ideological capacity of the *cabecera* to symbolically encompass the whole community may be reaching an end because as the *cabeceras* become increasingly given over to goernment and regional mestizo power, their local legitimacy is fading. As mentioned in the previous section, Coyle (2001) describes an inversion of the *rancho-comunidad* hierarchy in the Náyari (Cora) communities immediately to the west of San Andrés. There, the main pueblos are losing importance as ceremonial centers because the Náyari are losing political and economic control of them to mestizo merchants and to the violent, alcoholic conflicts spawned by the *narco-*economy and by being subjugated to a hostile regional power structure that has been implanted in the indigenous homeland since the revolution. Instead, as *comunidad* institutions enter a legitimation crisis, *ranchería* ceremonialism is growing to rival the scale that pueblo-wide rituals used to have.

Similar to the Cora devolution of ceremonial legitimacy to the extended family *ranchería*, the outlying Wixarika *kiete* in Nayarit demonstrate the essential self-sufficiency and completeness of the *xiriki* as the basis for ceremonial practice. These *kiete* conduct the major agricultural and hunting rituals (Tatei Neixa, Hikuri Neixa, Namawita Neixa) without recourse to a *tuki* or the Christian-derived *comunidad*-level ceremonies of San Francisco/Turning of the Table (4 October), Epiphany/Change of Staffs (6 January), Carnival and Easter.

Where ceremonies resurface, the *tuki* may not be far behind. New *tuki*-type organizations have been established in the Zoquipan area recently and in the Wixarika *barrio* of Zitacua [sic: Xitakwa] on the outskirts of Tepic in the 1980s. This shows how *xirikite* tend to produce *tukite*, and presumably these new ones

are connected to the five great emergence places even though they are not part of a *comunidad indígena* with a civil-religious *cargo* hierarchy. It also suggests that synecdoche prevails as a principle of organization even when some of the older intervening levels are missing. However, at least Xitakwa receives official government assistance, which mimics earlier historical links between state institutions and *comunidad* organization.

Finally, beyond the colonial *mojoneras*, two more points of convergence between the ceremonially-based system of *comunidad* land tenure and the state are at least vaguely authorized by the Carlos Salinas de Gortari government's amendment of Article 4 of the Constitution and its signature on Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization's indigenous rights declaration. That is, Mexico's early endorsement of these measures (it was the first Latin American government to sign onto Convention 169) recognizes indigenous peoples as a legal estate for the first time since the abolition of the caste system marked the end of Spanish colonialism in the early 19th century. Concomitantly the government acknowledges those peoples' right to base land claims on consuetudinary "usages and customs". Chapter 3 describes some key ways in which Huichols have taken up these changes.

For now suffice it to say that treks to ancestral emergence places are canonical examples of such usages and customs. Wixarika and other indigenous activists throughout Mexico constantly point to these two legal measures but neither of them has yet received what most indigenous leaders would consider to be satisfactory enabling legislation (*leyes reglamentarias*). In the late 1990s that process of *reglamentación* was stalled and quietly disintegrating just like the

Chiapas peace process. It was resuscitated only to be profoundly weakened with approval in 2001 of a compromise *Ley Indígena*. This difficulty is due in part to the fact that regional landowners find the Chiapas movement's call for autonomous regions to be radically unacceptable, much as the project of restoring Wixarika sovereignty to areas inhabited by them is opposed at every turn.

Still, in early 1997 Wixaritari exemplified their capacity to invoke shared national symbols of the indigenous and the land as fundamentally authenticating symbols for political claims. As part of a march in solidarity with the Chiapas peace movement, a large contingent of Santa Catarina *hikuritamete* (peyote people, Wirikuta trekkers) filed in ritual fashion through downtown Guadalajara (La Jornada 1998). In more recent expropriations of stray mestizo livestock in San Sebastián they have also demonstrated their ability to act as other militant peasants do (Liffman 1997).

As Chapter 3 also shows, Wixaritari assert indigenous land rights before the local *mexa* (Table of Government) agrarian judges, journalists, anthropologists, and global publics when they reiterate how the primordial ancestors created the landscape and the major *tukite* in their ancient travels and how the Wixaritari's collective memory and ceremonial practice ensure that this landscape will continue to give life to all. Much as Amazonian Indian activists claim to be the guardians of the forest, Wixaritari point out their indispensable function as guardians of regional or even global ecological harmony through their sacrificial and divining practices

In this sense, it is just as erroneous to draw a strict and exclusive line of demarcation around the Wixaritari as a people as it is to impose strict and exclusive territorial limits: both the people and their territory have been inextricably woven into regional patterns of exchange, shared ritual practice, and overlapping land-use since prehispanic times.

To summarize the argument thus far, tying oneself and one's homestead (*kie*) to the mythological travel narratives that link up ancestral places is key to establishing Wixarika land tenure in two different ways. Section 1 described the divine migration paths that tie the *kie* to the original creation places at the five points of the compass. These places and the practices that link them create one, cosmologically extensive form of *kiekari* (in the sense of ritual territoriality) over 90,000 square kilometers roughly corresponding to the Wixaritari's prehispanic range. In Section 2 I have described a related but legally more established way of establishing land tenure in the sense of exclusive communal ownership, albeit over a more limited area of roughly 5,000 square kilometers that correspond to their colonial titles and 4,000 that are recognized in their current *Resoluciones Presidenciales*.

Now, so that we can delve deeper into these two forms of territoriality, in the next section I take a more ethnographic turn and describe the places, practices and social groups that constitute the Wixarika people's hierarchical territorial organization in historical time. Inevitably, this ethnographic description is subversive of the scheme elaborated thus far because it exposes complexities that call for further study and theorization.

description is subversive of the scheme elaborated thus far because it exposes complexities that call for further study and theorization.

3. XIRIKI RITUAL PRACTICE: THE ROOT OF TUKIPA LAND TENURE

In this section I explore the ceremonial dimension of a *kie*'s expansion in time and territory in order to find the practical link between the hierarchically ranked levels of *xiriki* (extended family shrine) and *tuki* (multi-family temple).

Otherwise, these levels would seem to be unchanging, qualitatively different forms. This is a theme that the following section also explores, but more from the perspective of metaphor and myth.

Here once again I begin with the extended family *rancherías* (*kiete*), whose holders authenticate their claims to a tract of land by tracing themselves to the hearth of a *tuki* (principal temple) and the primordial emergence places of the ancestors all across the local and regional landscape. Most crucially, they must retrace their ancestral path to the hearth of the sun in Wirikuta, the peyote garden in San Luis Potosí. The *xukuri'ikate* (bowl bearers or *jicareros*³⁹) who hold the two dozen or more *xukurite* (*cargos*, bowls) at each *tuki* should make an annual trek to Wirikuta to hunt the psychoactive cactuses and bring their flesh home to renew the life of the whole corporate group.⁴⁰

Within the three *comunidades*, the *kie* where you live and plant maize is governed by the *kiekame* (householder), who may be an 'ukiratsi (elder man) or

³⁹ In Wixarika, a *tuki cargo* is typically referred to with the metonym *xukuri* (gourd bowl), the actual physical object that embodies it. Likewise, the *cargo* holder is called a *xukuri'ikame* (bowlbearer), 'ikame being the nominalized form of the verb 'ikarika' (to raise).

⁴⁰ In practice many *tuki* groups only go in alternate years, delegating the task to each other in return for reciprocal prestations of peyote, corn beer (*nawa*), beef, tamales and fruit at major ceremonies.

'ukaratsi (elder woman). Often in conjunction with "dreamers" (mara'akate, shamans) contracted for the purpose, these elders manage ritual practices centered on the domestic shrine (xiriki). The xiriki is a miniature tuki, or better said, the tuki is a xiriki expanded and differentiated to global proportions, an ancestral ranchería in effigy and ceremonially embodied form. Characteristically, the xiriki along with the kitchen (kutsina, from Sp. cocina) and raised bamboo granaries/sleeping houses (kaxetuni, from Sp. carretón) are all set around a bare, pounded earthen patio (takwá, an autochthonous term). The takwá serves as a dance plaza on ceremonial occasions, just as at a tuki.

⁴¹ Kiekame is composed of kie (ranchería or homestead) and the personifier kame. 'ukiratsi/'ukaratsi is composed of 'uki/'uka (man/woman) and the honorific ratsi. In one of the many Rabelaisian inversions that seem to constantly delight Wixaritari in both ritual and quotidian contexts, an old man might address his tiny grandson or another male baby with the same term, although he would perhaps infantilize the pronunciation by palatalizing the final consonant /ts/ to the allophone /ch/: "'ukirachi, 'ukirachi, 'ukirachi", as he tickles the squealing tyke's navel. Of course, in doing so, the basic (umbilical!) principle of lineage is upheld in any case. This kind of reciprocal kin term usage seems confined to 2+ ascending generations. On the other hand I have heard fathers playfully call their sons nekema (my brother-in-law)— a bit of incestuous teasing given the generally tense feelings for in-marrying affines: hɨnari nekema (my brother-in-law's penis) is a metaphor for an incestuous union. See Chapter 4 for the criminal implications of this incestuous tension.



FIGURE 13. Tatei Neixa offerings in takwá (ceremonial patio) at a large xiriki/incipient tuki. The shaman narrates a journey to Wirikuta as people keep the narrative on course with the constant beat of the tepu (deerskin drum). Near Kwamiyata, San Andrés Cohamiata.

An incipient kie with little more than a nuclear family living there may construct a xiriki little more than two meters square after a mara'akame has divined the best place in the patio for it. But even such a tiny shrine should obey the same structural canon as a tuki: both xiriki and tuki have a roughly 1.5 meter high altar platform on the western wall. This altar ritually displays the collective xukurite (gourd bowls), candles, arrowshafts and maize to the ancestors. As at a tuki, sacrificial offerings are kept in an underground tenari chamber roughly a meter deep, located to the west of the fire. In a tuki the tenari is inside the structure; smaller xirikite have them outside, but in either case they are topped with a stone tepari disk, usually incised. The tenari is part of the nocturnal female underworld and together with the complementary element of the patriarchal fire and the sacrifice, it constitutes one of the founding elements of any ceremonial patio. Its ceremonial epithet is Tatewari Mutinieri (Grandfather fire's chamber ["looking inward"?]). These elements constitute the kie's synecdoche and iconicity with larger, ultimately cosmological scales of structure. Also similar to tukite, xirikite have traditional pole and thatched roofs (kiyari)⁴² with specific

⁴² The term is composed of the root *ki* (house) and *yari* (a nominal suffix that indicates a defining attribute of a greater whole like "ness" in the English "sugar's sweetness"), so *kiyari* can be translated as "houseness", the essence of a house being the roof over your head (Grimes *et al.* 1981:128).

Every tuki must be re-roofed every five years when its cargo hierarchy changes hands. Under the direction of shamans and cargo-holders, dozens of men from throughout the tukipa (tuki territory) collect and process a huge volume of material — hundreds of bunches of dry grass ('ixa), pine joists (keuruwe), strips of rawhide-like roasted ixtle strips (tsai) used to bind the roof together and two great 8 meter vertical trunks that in a stunning example of synecdoche, are called 'iteuri (plants) or hauri, ceremonial candles. In this ceremonial register, such "candles" are associated with flowers because gazing at brightly colored candle flames one sees symmetrical patterns that resemble the botanical variety. These candle/trunks in conjunction with the kawayu (from caballo, horse) crosspiece and two meter high circular stone or adobe wall at the perimeter support the kiyari. All this collective organization, labor and material testify to the hierarchical values crystallized in these imposing structures.

plants (gendered pairs of *kimii* –young pine boughs— and *hakixita* –palm sprouts) inserted to mark their sacred status, and their sole opening always faces east to admit the rising sun from Wirikuta.⁴³

Just outside this opening, in front of the Tatewari (Our Grandfather) fire, the *mara'akame* receives visions and chants the accompanying song (*kwikame*) of the ancestors to the assembled family members during a nighttime ceremony. The fire is the most common feature of all scales of ceremonial patios, as the final section of this chapter on "borrowing fire" demonstrates. Typically, after dark the shaman wraps himself in a blanket, reclines in his brazilwood, bamboo and cane armchair ('*uweni*) and stares east under the shade of his fringed, broadbrimmed *soyate* hat into the fire-grandfather with his peyote-glazed nocturnal hunting eyes wide open to watch for visions. As the ceremony develops, he is flanked by two men who play a miniature violin (*xaweri*) and a ukelele (*kanari*). The scratchy, repetitive but poignant strains enhance the drama like plaintive ragas, and the shaman sings with rising intensity until the morningstar (*xurawe*) appears. One of the musicians may also double as an auxiliary chanter (*kwinepiwame* or *secundero* in Spanish). Five times in the course of the chant,

⁴³ As if one were always facing east to the sunrise through the door of a *xiriki* (*kie* shrine), south (*netserie*) is "my right" and north (*ne'utata*) is "my left", and the path leads from the *ranchería* to the *tuki* and the five cardinal points.

⁴⁴ In the entire corpus of Wixarika music the greatest crescendo comes at dawn on sábado de gloria (Holy Saturday) at the moment of the Cristos' return from the underworld, when the male and female xaturi crosses are lifted from the floor of the native church back up to the altar and the exultant congregation penned up by the now vanishing judíos is purified with a spray of sacred spring water by a host of shamans. Animal sacrifices are the other major crescendi. Strains of fiddle music surge sweetly as blood spurts from slashed, bellowing throats and the sacrifier's family members and the attending shaman frantically fill gourd bowls with and blood and anoint offerings that they will later take to ancestral places.

ceremonial participants dance counter-clockwise around the ritual officiants and the fire and then enter the *tuki/xiriki* to pass before its altar.⁴⁵

A tuki is usually larger than most xirikite (up to about about 15 meters wide and eight high), and the fire and shaman may also be inside between the great wooden pillars and the eastern door. But otherwise the layout is the same, with a high, raised wooden altar platform standing against the rear, western wall of the structure (see Figure #11). The similarity between xiriki and tuki does not end here: on both levels, obligations to maintain the buildings, patios, ceremonies and ritual objects — especially the xukurite (gourd bowls) — are called cargos in Spanish. In practice, xirikite are usually distinguishable architecturally from tukite but otherwise differ from them principally in terms of the number of cargos held there. Great tukite give rise to xirikite, which in turn may attain tuki dimensions over time, so this should be seen as an architectural continuum or cycle. This accounts for the historical dynamism of the xiriki-tuki-creation place hierarchy.

In fact, Wixaritari sometimes use the terms *tuki* and *xiriki* interchangeably, so they may more accurately describe the difference between *xirikite* and *tukite* in terms of the number of *cargos* or, more concretely, beaded gourd effigy bowls stored there. The smallest *xiriki* has only one, whereas a big *tuki* may have over 30 along with small, square, outlying *xirikite*. The *xiriki/tuki* of 'awamukawe depicted in Figure 13 is roughly eight meters wide, has four to six *cargos* and one

⁴⁵ Neurath (1998) found that in Santa Catarina (Tuapurie), the only *xiriki*-level dance ceremony is Tatei Neixa. In San Andrés (Tateikie), the Namawita Neixa planting dances are also held at the *xiriki* level and the Hikuri Neixa (Peyote Dance) may be held at least at the large, ancient, *xirikite* that function as incipient *tukite*.

outlying *xiriki*. More formally, the difference between the two ceremonial structures is that a *xiriki* is structurally subordinate to a *tuki*, whereas a *tuki* is subordinate only to the path of the divine ancestors who created it. 46 Performing *cargos* formalizes this hierarchical relationship between Wixaritari, the ancestral places in the landscape, the hearth of the *tukipa* and *kiekari*. More precisely, *tukipa* is both the area encompassing all the *kiete* and *nanayari* that connect them to the *tuki* fire that they must feed.

To relate this point about hierarchy to other recent research done on this topic in the Gran Nayar region, the design of the *tuki* and its key objects iconically and synecdochically encompass the entire Wixarika *kiekari* in its expansive, cosmological sense. That is, the *tuki* and *xiriki* structures arrayed around a large ceremonial plaza in themselves are models of the entire Wixarika cosmos (Neurath 1998; 2000), much as the Náyari (Cora) patio is a model of that people's cosmological geography (Guzmán 2000). This function was already suggested by the *tuki*'s political pre-eminence in the colonial period and the symbolically rich concentric and radial divisions of its elaborate archaeological prototypes (Weigand 1993; 2000).

Xiriki rituals and the sacrificial treks that must both precede and follow them connect the family hearth to nearby and to distant mythical creation places

⁴⁶ However, Gutiérrez (1999) has found a more pervasive hierarchical and dualistic organization among the eight major *tukite* of San Andrés Cohamiata. As in Andean social structure, ranked pairs are patterned into ranked moieties. Each individual *tukipa*'s internal hierarchy is clearest in the layout of the temple complex, where a number of functionally specialized little square *xirikite* identified with particular divinities surround the far larger, round *tuki* structure. Kindl (pers. com. 1999) suggests that in the *tukipa*, the raised "male" *xiriki* with its ceremonial arrows is contrasted to the sunken "female" *tuki* with its gourd bowls.

shared among many if not all *tukite*. Members of the corporate group prepare for these treks by becoming identified with their divine ancestors and the sacrifice (*mawarixa*) itself through the violent ritual act (Gutiérrez 2000). On the treks, family members/*cargo* holders exchange substances like sanctified bull or deer blood, water and maize with the divine ancestors (*kakaiyarixi*) who inhabit those places and in turn provide fertility, health and "life" in general (cf. Coyle 2000). People proffer the offerings in gourd bowls (*xukurite*) or on calligraphically painted cane arrow shafts ('*irite*). These gourd bowls themselves are, like the *xirikite* and *tukite* that house them, miniature cosmological models insofar as they metonymically embody and iconically represent persons, property, land and *kiekari* (Kindl 2000).

The 'ukaratsi or 'ukiratsi's very right to the lands their family cultivates depends on identifying with these cosmological symbols by ceremonially tracing the historical path from the fire of the kie to the fire of their ancestral tuki or tukite through the mara'akame's chant and on having this territorial genealogy generally legitimized. The kie's nanayari root is thus grafted into geographically-based narratives about the history of the community, its landscape and institutions that begin in the earliest imaginable times. In short, xiriki ritual makes the kie into a microcosmic appendage of the tuki, which in turn is a microcosm of the broader kiekari. These narratives echo the Wixaritari's history as seasonal hunters and gatherers, as do the tukite's treks to gather peyote and hunt deer. On these treks, in ritual narratives at the xiriki or tuki, as well as in political discourse, narrators point to the embodiment of the ancestors and their actions in "natural" geographical features.

Xirikite embody religious, political, economic and kinship links with the tuki in extended family ceremonies. Ceremonial cargos reproduce exchange relationships with the ancestors who inhabit creation places not only in the community, but across vast expanses of western and north-central Mexico. This is to say that the iconic and synecdochical model of San Andrés Wixarika social structure is the kie and its xiriki.

3.1 HETEROGENEOUS TERRITORIALITY: THE "HOUSE"

In a now-classic model of Wixarika kinship ideology (Weigand 1992), each 'ukiratsi is thought of as the son of his predecessor and the 'ukiratsitsixi of neighboring kiete are thought of as patrilateral kin organized around the same tuki. However, historical population movements, heterogeneous marriage and residential practices, and cooperative recruitment for costly ceremonial activity complicate this ostensibly patrilineal model. Instead, whole arrays of bilateral and affinal relations (both sons and daughters and their in-laws of both sexes) constitute actual kie populations, the nanayari root of divine descent, ceremonial cargos and hence the tuki itself. Thus the network of residence, alliance and labor breaches the strict patrilineal model (cf. Weigand 1972).

FIGURE 14. "A GREAT ROOT" (idealized patriline).

Compare this idealized model with a typical *kie* composed of two households located roughly 200 meters apart. During my fieldwork it was not clear whether the older daughter's husband (**OlBro**) or the as-yet unmarried son (**YoBro**) will become the next 'ukiratsi or whether the two households will continue to separate as the **OlZi** is increasingly drawn away from her natal household, thus doubling her children's potential ceremonial obligations.

FIGURE 15. Typical kie in Kwamiyata tukipa.

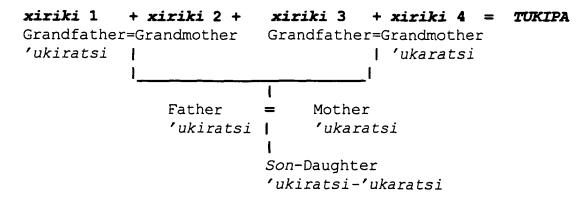
How are the idealized model and such complex practices resolved?

Territories are ceremonially constituted as patrilineal since the eldest son *should* become the new 'ukiratsi after his father dies. But Wixarika consanguineal kinship terminology is extremely open and inclusive (almost "Hawaiian"), so descent is defined very broadly in this "bilateral" system (Grimes & Grimes 1962). This should probably be seen as a compromise between patrilineal

ideology and cognatic practice because, as the preceding genealogy illustrates, the *kie-tuki* hierarchy is often a congeries of affinal and lineal relationships with no clearly discernible lineages.⁴⁷

Conversely, as a child you may attend ceremonies at both your own xiriki and at the home xiriki of your in-marrying parent. Then, if you move into your spouse's kie when you get married, you may still retain this pair of family ritual obligations, so your children in turn can inherit the right or obligation to participate in four sets of xiriki rituals — one pair from you and one pair from your spouse although one of the four potential households is privileged over the rest (cf. Coyle 2001). The resulting overlap of patrilineal and cognatic relationships within a tukipa can be mapped as follows:

FIGURE 16. Xiriki-tukipa organization.



Tukipa territory is an overlapping network of families, xiriki hearths and places culminating in an imposing, oval-shaped, two-story high, thatched stone temple

⁴⁷ Friedrich (1979[1964]:132), citing Murdock, has pointed out the economic and genealogical compromise inherent in such kin groupings. Moreover, he explicitly links the Wixaritari's bilateral kinship structure described in Grimes & Grimes (1962) to the 19th

located on the western edge of a large dance patio with *xirikite* at its other borders. Various extended families organized as *kiete* use these temple grounds to perform larger collective ceremonies and *cargos* that help replicate the family *xiriki* on a more encompassing level.

In short, the *kie-tuki* hierarchy is a nested series of heterogeneous territorial units rather than agnatic lineages. This is a characteristic of what Lévi-Strauss called *societés a maison* ("house" societies) (Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995:7-11,21). Perhaps their most commonly shared trait is that they are transitional between genealogically based polities organized by "negative" kinship proscriptions (like marriage rules) and class-based, hierarchical societies like ours, which have few forms of prohibited marriage. This transitional quality is precisely the historical position of the Wixaritari and other societies of the Gran Nayar region (cf. Weigand 2000).

These societies express inequality in the "idiom of kinship", "inscribing boundaries and hierarchies and giving them an aura of naturalness" (Carsten & Hugh-Jones, *op. cit.*:21). Most strikingly appropriate to the Wixarika case, such relatively fluid societies with emergent hierarchies and shifting boundaries "stress the role of feeding, and thus the hearth, in the active creation of kinship" (*ibid.*:38).⁴⁹ As the mythological imagery discussed in the next section so plainly

century Russian household and a handful of similar systems in the world.

⁴⁸ I want to thank Philip Coyle (pers. com.) for pointing out the potential appropriateness of this broad category to the Sierra del Nayar region. Johannes Neurath (1998) has also employed the concept in his discussion of *tuki* organization.

⁴⁹ The Western folk notion of "literally consanguineal and affinal" kinship is not so meaningful for the peoples of the Gran Nayar region, who in the final analysis are related through gourd bowls and maize (Coyle, pers. com. 1998). Of course even in our own culture,

shows, I only need to add that feeding the hearth fires themselves is key to creating kin-based territorial claims as well.

adoption, disinheritance, ethnic brotherhood, feminist sisterhood, queer marriage and other kinds of social solidarity and rupture belie fundamentalist kinship ideologies (cf. Schneider 1968).

4. THE UMBILICAL LOGIC OF ROOTS AND FIRES

To better understand the dynamic territorial relationships that articulate *xiriki*, *tuki*, *comunidad* and the state through sacrificial exchanges, in this section I explore Wixarika narrators' own mythological and metaphorical explanation of how the relationships began and continue to exist. After the most divine and distant ancestors had established the landscape and great temples (*tukite*), there was a mythical-historical time when people began establishing their homesteads and shrines (*kiete* and *xirikite*). As we have seen, genealogical lines –shadowy though they may be– must be traced from the *kie* back to divinities of that protohistorical period. Beyond that, even the most historically remote cosmological divinities like the rains and sun are still referred to by kin terms: Our Mothers, Our Father, Our Grandfather, Our Grandmother, etc.⁵⁰

As we have also already seen, the *kie-tuki*-creation place hierarchy is summed up by the metaphor of *nanari* (gourdvines) or *nanayari* (rootedness). This concept is best visualized as squash vines (*xutsi nanari*) that grow out across the earth producing seed-bearing fruit at intervals. The growth of the *xutsi kwaxuayari* (a gourd whose dry stuffing looks like brains) is like thinking,

⁵⁰ This gendered opposition of women:rain::men:sun is encompassed by a suitably androgynous symbol for the celestial realm they inhabit: the double-headed Young Woman Eagle, Werika 'iimari. This overarching symbol (which Wixaritari identify with the golden eagle) seems identical to the Bourbon-Hapsburg house's family icon. 18th century Wixaritari would have seen this encompassing colonial symbol on the coinage of the time as well as in the wall of the mint on their tributary and labor treks to the Real de Minas at Bolaños southeast of San Sebastián. Strikingly, this emblem is still visible in the well-preserved ruins of the mint and looks much like a *tepari*, the carved stone disks Wixaritari place in their *xirikite* and over the subterranean chamber (*tenari*) by the ceremonial fire of the *tuki*.

development, testing a direction without knowing if it will go far or not: a metaphor for speculative thought as well as social ramification.



FIGURE 17. Nanari design in woven kitsiuri (shoulderbag), an iconic model of territoriality.

As I was told, "Los que tienen mucha familia ya son una gran raíz, mucha gente los visita" (Those who have a big family now are a great root; many people visit them").⁵¹ A kie connects itself to the tuki by borrowing fire from the tuki's hearth. The fire Tatewari (Our Grandfather) is symbolized by kɨpieri/kɨpuyari, 10 x 2.5 centimeter solid green oak or encino (tuaxa or xiu) cylinders cut on the way back from Wirikuta and adorned with waxen animal figures and occasionally beads. Along with gourd bowls, kɨpieri/kɨpuyari are among the xiriki's offerings taken to the tuki of Tunuwametia in San Andrés.

By requesting fire from the divinities of the *tuki* (or rather the *cargo*-holders who personify them) and later fulfilling the reciprocal ceremonial obligations to carry out sacrifices and fulfill *cargos*, the founders of the *kie* connect themselves to the *tuki*'s Grandfather fire as "little children" and hence as replications or junior members of the "house".⁵² In other words, shifting *kie* settlement patterns are legitimized by genealogically connecting newly inhabited places to ancestral temples. Shamans do this by recounting a mythical path that led the founders there. This putative genealogical connection makes the metaphor of *nanayari* essentially a ceremonial umbilicus.

⁵¹ This is a probable calque of *memɨy-irariyari* (they who are budding; *i.e.*, they have a big family). Note the emergent use of this verbal form in regional development discourse, Chapter 3, Section 3.

⁵² Replication always implies social control: for instance, the first fire may have been divinely produced but subsequent ones are made through human action (T. Turner, pers. com.). Turner's example of fire is highly appropriate to the Huichols. As noted above, the fire built at Wirikuta is poignant because it closes a cycle begun with the original divine emergence there. Also, earlier on the Wirikuta pilgrimage the first fire built after reaching the springs at Tatei Matinieri is on top of a maturanixu (gobernadora) plant there. Its extremely red boiling sap replicates the menstrual flow of the girls who first came there from 'ututawita in the Tepehuan sierra near La Ciénega, Durango, and became the springs on their polluted but landscape-forming hunt for deer and peyote. This reproduction through fire is why offerings

Aside from weaving the landscape together through shamanistic narratives and treks to tukite and creation places, the territorial metaphor of umbilical gourdvines is clearly represented in the Green Corn or Tatei Neixa (Dance of Our Mother) ceremonies held in the fall. In these children's initiation ceremonies (held at both tukite and xirikite in the comunidad of San Andrés), people take turns drumming day and night so that noone will lose the path to Wirikuta that the *wimakwame* singer is narrating for the children.⁵³ Thus children shaking kaitsa gourd rattles are narratively connected to a string of creation places located between where they sit in front of a mara'akame in a takwá patio somewhere in western Mexico and Wirikuta, 400 kilometers to the east in the San Luis Potosí desert. In effect this ceremony employs the same metaphor of nanayari as the mythical connection between kiete and tukite does because it links hierarchically ranked but structurally equivalent levels of organization through reciprocal sacrificial exchange. In fact, in the Tatei Neixa chant the figurative path taken by the children through a "string" of places is actually modeled by nothing other than a cord holding cotton-puff rainclouds. The string is stretched west to east across the ceremonial patio, linking the kie to the birthplace of the rain in the caves of Ni'ariwameta (a feminine counterpart of the relatively nearby cave of Tatewari in Teekata) to the birthplace of the sun in Wirikuta.⁵⁴

left at 'ututawita reach Tatei Matinieri.

⁵³ Neurath has frequently pointed out the strong correspondence between rites of passage and cyclical agricultural rituals in Wixarika culture.

⁵⁴ These sticks may be topped with a *tsikiri* (the protective yarn rhomboids popularly called "gods' eyes") to ensure a safe journey.

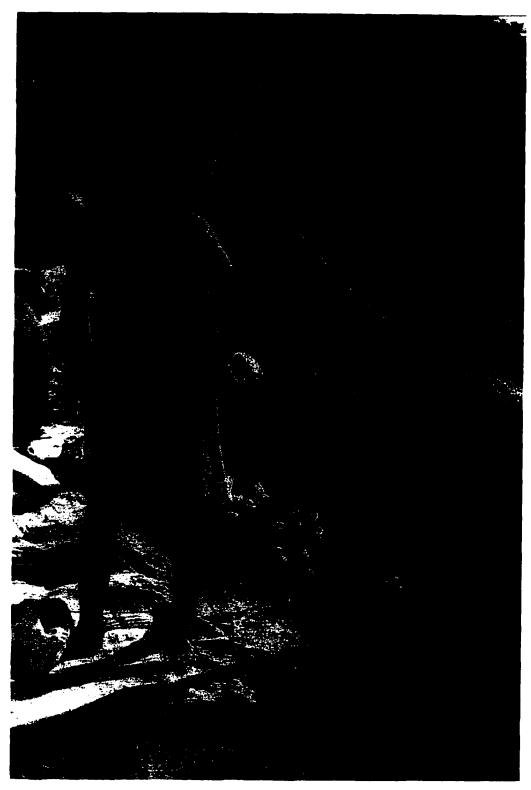


FIGURE 18. Tatei Neixa ceremony with cloud string figuratively leading across the *takwá* (patio) to Wirikuta. Ejido Salvador Allende, Nayarit. The *tsikiri* (godseye) with tiny *xukuri* (gourdbowl) represents the child it pertains to.

As you go from the *kiete* to the *tukite* and outward to the horizons of the Wixarika world traversed in Tatei Neixa and other chants and treks, the ancestral places and ritual objects of the three Wixarika *comunidades* become more shared and universal among Huichols and even mestizos in the case of some saints. The next section takes up one of those saints in his transfigured Huichol form.

4.1 TUAXAMAYEWE

To give a specific example of the system of reciprocal territorial connections embodied in *kiekari*, one of the principal *xirikite* or small *tukite* in the northwestern part of San Andrés Cohamiata, where I was helping to document agrarian claims for the community, is at a forested hilltop called Tuaxamayewe (Oak Grove).⁵⁵ After the more distant and generalized cosmological ancestors had left their imprint by creating distinctive natural features, the *teukarima* (grandfathers, peyote seekers) brought Tuaxamayewe's fire from Tseriekametia, the already ancient, divinely created *tuki* at Kwamiyata, some 40 kilometers away. It is worth mentioning the etymology of the Kwamiyata *tuki* because it makes a larger point about Wixarika territoriality. This *tuki* is called

^{&#}x27;awamukawe pictured above, is another place that confounds the official anthropological and governmental distinction between family shrines and collective ceremonial centers. Like many smaller *xirikite* and unlike larger *tukite*, the ceremonial structure at Tuaxamayewe is square but the number of *cargos* held there approaches that of a major *tuki*. When *indigenista* functionaries, in their effort to support Indian tradition within narrow budgetary limits, created a separate stratum of "high" ceremonial centers and defined a limited sphere of "cultural patrimony" eligible for government funding, they circumscribed the overall *kie-tuki*-creation place hierarchy's territorial and political functions. Places like Tuaxamayewe and their territories are outside the official frame, but clearly within a fluid traditional exchange sphere.

Tseriekametia because it is built "under" (-tia) where the promethean god

Tseriekame, the discoverer of Our Grandfather (Fire), stayed and died for us.⁵⁶

Tseriekame had first discovered Our Grandfather in his cave at Teekata, the conceptual center of Wixarika territory, and then brought him northwest to

Kwamiyata. This mythological order exemplifies the hierarchy that descends from principal emergence points like Reu'unaxi and Teekata through the major tukite like Tseriekametia, the minor ones like Tuaxamayewe and finally to the kielevel xirikite.

According to the narrative, in order to legitimize the Tuaxamayewe xiriki/tuki, the current inhabitants' ancestors decided, "Let us make an accord", and they went with offerings of kipieri/kipuyari to Kwamiyata to borrow a fire: "...they asked for the fire of this place from the gods at Kwamiyata", and they brought it back with them to Tuaxamayewe.⁵⁷ At Tuaxamayewe, then, the

⁵⁶ Tseriekame is composed of *tserie* (right) and *kame* (personifier): One-on-the-Right or Southerner. The equivalence between right and south emerges when you face east, as a shaman does when singing into the fire (cf. Guzmán 2001, for an elaborate discussion of this type of Mesoamerican directionality). Tseriekame is thus the primeval shaman Tamatsi Kauyumarie's right-hand man. Tseriekame is more commonly known as Tatutsi Maxakwaxi – Our Great-Grandfather Deertail, who is also identified with a cave near Los Cajones in Tuapurie. The notion of guiding the people is thus implicit in the name of the cultural revival movement discussed in the next chapter.

In the account I was told, Tatutsi Maxakwaxi ("the chief ancestor") heard mountain lions (mayé) cry and knew what it meant. At the base of a big red cliff, it looked like fire and in a cave was an ancient personage: Tatewari. Clouds exited from his fringe of white hair. He wore beaded bracelets (matsiwa) with the designs of deer and double-headed royal eagles and had yákwai (little tobacco gourds with galls) which are taken on the trip to Wirikuta because the clouds of smoke are associated with rain and tobacco enhances peyote visions and wakefulness. Tseriekame took Tatewari out of the cave and a treetrunk-like rock was left and it dripped water. This is an accurate description of the cliff and adjoining cave in Teekata called Tatewarita, where a huge stalactite drips icy water into a deep tea-colored pool and you still hear lions howl at night. "This is where the light of the world began". However, it would be necessary for the entourage of ancestor-animals to go to Wirikuta to produce the sun.

⁵⁷ Key among such gifts are candles. In return for the temple fire, for the protection and

great-grandfathers and great-great-grandfathers gathered with their kipieri/kipuyari (representations of even more remote ancestors), thus making it a place of Tatewari and part of the nanayari or rootedness of the tuki at Kwamiyata. The mythical ancestor who founded the xiriki at Tuaxamayewe taught his family about the reciprocal obligations he had now contracted with Kwamiyata to feed the fires. Such ancestors fasted five days when they planted maize and five more when it sprouted. They only ate in the evening, avoided salt and were sexually abstinent or at least faithful (i.e., not "salty"). They were therefore able to harvest vast amounts of maize and when they died, "their souls went down with the root" (su alma fue abajo con la raíz), whereas the subsequent generations ate the salt and were not able to become part of that root. Over time the family expanded and moved away, so now people from all over the community of San Andrés belong to Tuaxamayewe: it remains "a great root". Conversely, many kiete identify with multiple tukite. This is a logical consequence of the potential cognatic allegiance a person may contract at all four grandparents' kiete.

Not only resident divinities like the locally installed synecdoche of Tatewari (the fire) guide local ceremonial life. Divinities that live in other Wixarika comunidades throughout the region are also "invited" to participate in the same way as mara'akate (shamans) and 'itsikate ("civil" cargo holders). So, Wixaritari not only bring sacrifices to distant gods; they also bring gods and

growth of the whole family, the kie offers a large votive candle (hauri) to the tuki. However, it goes away little by little over 20 or 30 years. Once it disappears your fuerza (strength, vitality) is gone as well, so it's important to renew the gift before it wears out. You also put in little candles for each person born into the family but a big candle is coterminous with the nanayari root.

symbols of power to local ceremonies, and they integrate territory by both going to places of power and by bringing that power into the domestic sphere.

In the case of people descended from the fire of the Kwamiyata tuki (Tseriekametia), these hierarchical symbols and gods include that tuki's santo known as Tutekwiu, the 'itsite (varas) of San Andrés's tatuwani (gobernador), hariwatsini (alguacil), and the pan-Huichol symbol of economic and bilingual efficacy called 'apaxuki. Such rituals create multiple correspondences between persons and places: the kie is simultaneously identified with the tuki, the comunidad and the places from which the symbols of power and sacramental substances have been brought. At the end-of-the-dry season Xarikiya (Parched Corn or Esquite)58 ceremony I attended in at Tuaxamayewe, an emissary was sent all the way to Nueva Colonia, in the *comunidad* of Tuapurie (a two-day, cross-canyon marathon), to bring back the coin-studded cross of the 'apaxuki (Santo Domingo). The 'apaxuki is key to Xarikiya at Tuaxamayewe because his ancient, mobile form took part in the original trek along with the other gods like Tseriekame who defined the landscape on which Tuaxamayewe depends. He would be angry and send disease if he were not invited back to re-enact that trek and celebrate its recent completion by the hikuritamete of that place. As a result, the ceremony was delayed for several days until it became clear that the santo was not available because some other tuki group had gotten him first. So it was with some trepidation that the ceremony proceeded without his image.

⁵⁸ This pre-planting ceremony, called the Fiesta del Esquite in Mexican Spanish, is often conflated with the Hikuri Neixa (Peyote Dance) as in fact it was at the Tuaxamayewe *tuki*. However, Wixaritari say that these are two different ceremonies and could be held at separate times (cf. Furst 1968).

Wixaritari consider that in order to reproduce the social and ideological integration of this dispersed system, it is not only essential to bring 'apaxuki as well as the 'itsite (staffs) of comunidad leaders like the tatuwani (gobernador) and 'aruwatsiya (alguacil) to the agricultural and hunting ceremonies in Tuaxamayewe. They must also attend major Spanish-derived seasonal community ceremonies like the Change of Staffs in San Andrés, the cabecera. All these comunidad institutions refer to the system predicated upon mojoneras, so here a basic link between the two systems of territoriality is at least implicit in tuki ritual. This was a key proof of comunidad identity presented in the peritaje antropológico (expert anthropological testimony) feature of San Andrés's legal claim for restitution of the lands where Tuaxamayewe is located (Chapter 3, section 1).

However, the entailment of *tuki* territoriality in *comunidad* rituals is more commonly marked than the reverse (see Section 2.2). The ancestors established this connection to seats of power so that they could cure themselves of maladies, have more life, and in order for it not to be necessary for them all to go all the way to Kwamiyata or even more distant and ancient places every time they needed to perform a ceremony. The ability to carry out ceremonial functions at this peripheral *tuki* in Tuaxamayewe means that people do not always have to walk for a full day (some 40 kilometers north and 1,000 meters up) to reach the *tuki* to which their root is tied.

Thus, for Wixaritari with whom I have spoken, this substitutability (or, in Wixarika and more general Uto-Nahuan thinking, mirroring and replication) of

places at different levels of social hierarchy from the most universal cardinal emergence places to the most local *xiriki* has both a generative and a utilitarian logic. This replication is discussed in the next chapter with regard to the cardinal place of Xapawiyemeta. On the other extreme of the *kie-tuki-creation* place hierarchy, the local *xiriki* of Tuaxamayewe, like many other places in the extreme topography of San Andrés Cohamiata, also embodies the organic growth and reproduction denoted in the term *nanayari*.

Not only do these territorial relationships extend for days of walking distance in space, but the kin-land identities established in ritual practice persist over a *long time* as well. After Tuaxamayewe's mythical founder died, the fire and his lineage stayed "planted" there. Generations have passed and people have moved on to other parts of the community, but they keep "belonging" to the same fire "because their root comes into being from Tuaxamayewe". For example, a segment went to live in San Andrés's eponymous *cabecera* for years "but they always belong here [in Tuaxamayewe] because that is how they were made". Hence, in Wixarika descent ideology there is an conservative quality to the old hearth that marks your very essence at the same time that you can establish a new hearth somewhere else. It is as if the ascetic, governing, male fire were trying to constrain the promiscuous, anarchistic, female tendency to generate more and more "little children" without ceremonial roots.

Even though the *kie* fire could go out it would never "die". Even if the *kie* is abandoned, the ashes remain and are "alive" because they are part of Tatewari, the cosmological grandfather who was brought there from the Tseriekametia *tuki*. The root also remains alive. I once asked why a post-

mortem ceremony to expedite the departure of the dead soul of a recently murdered man was being held at a nearly abandoned *kie*. I was told that it was once an important place with a major *xiriki* and so was the dead man's "territorio", an example of a far more pervasive cultural memory. Marie-Areti Hers reports that in the 1970s and 80s groups from San Andrés continued to conduct periodic ceremonies at an otherwise desolate oval ceremonial structure at La Soledad, in territory now controlled by mestizos with whom *compadrazgo* relations had been established for the purpose of maintaining the installation. She reported similar ceremonial practices and *kie* or *tuki*-like structures for other areas of the alienated northern periphery of the colonial title lands (Hers 1992:112-113).

But the ritual fire in the *kie*'s dance patio will not prosper if people do not "feed" it. That is, territorial claims require not only a history but also ongoing collective ritual activity. This may be why people sometimes travel long distances to semi-abandoned *kiete* to perform ceremonies. The animate fire is deemed to have its own "memory", so as long as people can ritually reenact the mythological history of that place and its relationships to the *tuki*, culminating with a bull sacrifice before the local *xiriki* or *tuki*, the entailed links of land tenure remain legitimate in Wixarika thinking. Or as the man who explained this to me said, "Now it is registered".

Failing to "feed" the fire or to "invite" ritual object-persons from afar to integrate the place in terms of space and reciprocal relationships with the ceremonial hierarchy are not the only dangers to the success of sacrificial exchange rituals. The ceremonial legitimation of land tenure can also fail if

people do not "plant" themselves well in the place where they live —if they fail to live together harmoniously on an everyday basis.

In the worst case, they bewitch one another. Witchcraft is a malevolent, self-interested distortion of sacrificial power through the manipulation of ceremonial arrowshafts. In that case the ancestors who are not being propitiated send punishments in the form of sickness, death and further social conflict to compound the disorder. If this happens, people must then retrace their "path" to find the "root" of disorder planted by ceremonial irresponsibility or witchcraft and ferret it out. This chronic disorder and sickness can be planted in the very ashes of the fire if the discord is deep; then the emblematic little kipieri/kipuyari logs must be found again. That is, genealogical land tenure relations between a household and a tuki must then be completely reconstructed, or the nanari stop growing and kiekari retreats.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has explored the social relationships and practices expressed in the Wixarika terms nanari (gourdvines) and nanayari (root or rootedness). Wixaritari in the community of San Andrés Cohamiata say that the genealogies and social bonds constructed in ritual grow along divine ancestral migration paths, just as gourdvines grow out across the earth. These ancestral vines connect the ceremonial fire of the xiriki (shrine) of a kie (ranchería), where people live, to a great temple (tuki), from which the kie's founding ancestors first "borrowed fire", to creation places throughout 90,000 square kilometers of western and north-central Mexico. If the ranchería expands and ramifies like a gourdvine, those

ancestors' descendants must "borrow" and "register" (inscribe or legitimate) new fires, and their *xirikite* may ultimately grow up to be *tukite*.

This historical process of establishing land tenure entails fulfilling *cargos* (five consecutive annual cycles of ceremonial obligations) at the *tuki*. *Cargos* make the growing *gourdvine* paths of divine descent extremely vivid by retracing them in sacrificial treks to the creation places, most notably Wirikuta, the birthplace of the sun. As the next chapter shows, people sometimes describe and enact these extensive, hierarchical ceremonial and cosmological relationships to make territorial and cultural claims on the regional, national and global levels. In this way *kiekari* is explicitly becoming part of an agrarian and broader indigenous ideology as well as its motivating principle.

Historically, Spanish colonial *cédulas* as well as contemporary Mexican federal land titles, a legislative resolution⁵⁹ and "cultural patrimony" legislation have recognized some Wixarika territorial claims, as embodied in *mojoneras* (colonial boundary markers) and creation places, respectively. But since the 1990s Article 4 of the Mexican Constitution and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization acknowledge "customary" land use practices as a general basis for further claims. In sum, the relationships entailed in the concept of *nanayari* ideologically integrate Wixarika territory and differentially

⁵⁹ The *Periódico Oficial* of San Luis Potosí (vol 57, special issue, 22 September 1994) published a declaration based on Convention 169, Article 4 and several ecological and transit statutes, which recognized seven sacred places in the Wirikuta area (Tatei Matinieri, Tuimaye'i, Kauyumarie, 'ututawi, Mukuyuawi, Reu'unaxi I and Reu'unaxi II, comprising 0.35, 0.8, 0.2, 0.02, 0.01, 0.04 and 0.05 hectares, respectively, as well as the 73,689 hectares that connect them) as a "site of historical and cultural patrimony" subject to general ecological and cultural protection. The official act was signed by the state governor, Horacio Sánchez, and witnessed by Mexico's president, Carlos Salinas, as well as the director of the INI (and former Huicholista anthropologist), Guillermo Espinosa.

articulate it to the Mexican legal system as well as to global discourses about land and indigenousness. Therefore the mythical growth or retreat of *nanayari* across the landscape is part of ongoing interethnic regional processes, of which this research is also part.

For the Wixaritari who practice *kiekari* into existence, an ascending hierarchy of rituals and treks links the fires that grow along ancestral vines (nanayari): historical paths of divine action and mythical lines of descent. This hierarchy ties the local landscape to kiete to tukite to the central caves, eastern desert, western ocean, southern lakes and northern mountains of western and central Mexico. As the next chapter discusses in more detail, shamanistic narratives recounting treks to sacred places and other evidence of the territoriality and hierarchy are one Wixarika means of making claims to land and legitimacy before local, regional, national and international audiences. In the case discussed here, the *gourdvines* described in narrative extend from the *xiriki* fires of Tuaxamayewe through the tukite of Hayukarita (San José) and Kwamiyata, the comunidad of San Andrés and further southeastward to Teekata where Tatewari, the grandfather of fires, first emerged in the Sierra Madre. Through both sacrificial journeys and the rituals and narratives that model them, the path of fires ultimately returns to the birthplace of the sun at Reu'unaxi in Wirikuta, 400 kilometers to the east of the Sierra.

However, instead of describing this system from the bottom up in terms of historical demographic movements or genealogical constructions, one can also say that there is a series of structurally identical but hierarchically ranked fires. These are nested within each other from the top down as originals are

entailed in their copies through a semiotic process of reproduction like writing, photography or tape-recording. This generation of hierarchy out of identity is synecdoche, as in the frontispiece of *Leviathan*.

The semiotic reproduction is achieved by surrounding the fire with linked, dancing kin and the images of their divine ancestors in *santos*, bowls and arrows (*e.g.*, see the evocative photographs of Hikuri Neixa dancing in Ortiz, Nava & Mata 1992). These ceremonial actions replicate a basic set of sacrificial exchange relationships with the divine ancestors who regulate the ecosystem. These dancers and images whirl around the oracular Tatewari fires in a self-fulfilling display of articulation between *kiete* and the sun. Ideologically, the fires begin at Reu'unaxi Mountain and trail down the *nanayari* vine to Teekata, the *tukite* and *xirikite*. But historically, Wixaritari constantly inhabit different ecological niches; they connect them to ceremonial-administrative centers and thereby legitimize or "register" them by retracing ancestral paths at fireside "remembrances". These in effect constitute traditional land claims. Fireside chants keep the paths of the ancestors alive and give Tatewari more places to be heard. Thus links of sacrificial and ceremonial exchange between the living members of the *comunidad* and the ancestors are reproduced, expanded and transformed.

The shaman's ostensible reproduction of ancestral speech in his or her chants corresponds closely to Bauman's (in press) notion of "traditionalization". This approach is a turn away from a "reified view of tradition and toward an understanding of tradition as a discursive and interpretive achievement, the active creation of a connection linking current discourse to past discourse". It "rests fundamentally on the establishment of textual iconicity through

reproduction of a source text in a new context and the concomitant double grounding of the recontextualized text". That is, the ritual narration of the *mara'akate* is made to appear resemble the original speech of the divine ancestors (*kakaiyarixi*) by employing lexical forms, alternating phrases with falsetto vs. normal pitch, and other figures. These bring the distant past into the present and root the present in the distant past. They also empower the shaman as ritual performer, "pointing up the capacity of the mediational process to socialize individual discourse, to render a text part of a public, collective discursive repertoire and to endow it with temporal and cultural continuity".

Citing Bakhtin, (1981:342) Bauman goes on to point out that a key aspect of traditionalizing discourse is to define a distance between it and the target audience: "The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher". Taking these words to literally refer to topography and cosmology, nothing could better characterize the distanced relationship between Wixaritari sitting around a ceremonial fire in the Sierra Madre of Jalisco and Wirikuta, the cosmologically higher place where the language of legitimacy comes from. That is Wirikuta, in the eastern *altiplano* where the masculine forces of light and shamanistic articulation originate whereas the low western ocean associated with Haramaratsie is where feminine wetness and darkness prevail and the land of the dead is located. And as we have seen, Wirikuta is a long time away, too.

This theorization provokes specific ethnological questions for future work with Wixaritari. For the Xavante described by Graham (1995) and discussed by Bauman, the ceremonial "target dialogue ... mirrors the process by which [the

dreamer] received it from the ancestors". Huichol traditionalization also often takes place in a peyote "dreaming" (heinitsika) trance and hierarchically reproduces the past into the present. This "audience" includes both the living sacrifiers who sponsor the ritual and the deceased ancestors to whom it is directed.

Do these ceremonial participants stand as "little children" to the shaman in the same way that peripheral family shrines (xirikite) stand to the ceremonial centers (tukite) because mara'akate mediate the ancient tukite? But since the ancestors are also part of the audience as the endpoint in a "communicative cycle of recontextualization ... back to the immortals, as the ultimate target audience" (ibid.), does this imply that the ancestors are also ceremonially subordinated to the ritual performer? Is this why they are miniaturized in sites like Teekata, where six little shrine structures are actually defined as the Ur-tukite? Given the shaman's transformative role, how do Wixaritari think about historical agency? The broader anthropological point is that "traditionalization", whether as an attempt at precise replication or as an ideological ruse equivalent to the "invention of tradition", is a formal process equally capable of reproducing ancient forms of discourse and introducing new ones, and this must vary historically.

Baumann does not note that his analysis is predicated on the historically and politically variable assumption that "upholding the integrity of the [past] form opens the way to acceptance of the validity of the [new] message". The negation of these conditions for validating new messages is one way of describing a legitimation crisis, a generalized problem for traditional authority in

the Gran Nayar region. Coyle frames his ethnography of the Cora *comunidad* of Santa Teresa del Nayar (2001) in terms of how federal government and mestizo invaders have undercut the legitimacy of a local syncretic tradition. This is also the problem that the emergent *aleluya* (Protestant) Huichols in the sierra and the cities (particularly around Tepic) pose to shamans and the neo-traditional, post-*indigenista* authorities who claim to represent a "cultura chamanística". That is, aleluyas challenge the authenticity of contemporary shamanistic mediation of ancestral authority (although not the efficacy of other shamanistic practices, particularly witchcraft, cf. Otis 1998).⁶⁰ We might call this aspect of legitimation a representation crisis. The final chapter takes up such a crisis with regard to the emergent category of indigenous territoriality in the national space.

In sum, claims to land are made by citing one's position on a long ancestral vine and therefore by locating oneself on a path through kinspace (cf. Myers 1991). These claims have in theory now finally been accepted by the Mexican state insofar as it adheres to Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization's Declaration of Indigenous Rights and the 1992 amendment to Article 4 of its own Constitution. This is because both documents recognize traditional ceremonial land use practices as legitimate bases for territorial recognition. Thus Wixaritari have internationally and constitutionally recognized claims to ancestral places throughout some 90,000 square kilometers

The generalized belief in the efficacy of witchcraft and shamanism, even by people who reject *costumbre*, extends to the regional mestizo population, which often employs mara'akate –from poor sick workers in Nayarit visiting humble patios of rural Huichols to fine bourgeois homes in Guadalajara, who pay shamans to come do *limpias*. By the same token, Huichols are certain that an angry shaman can destroy an evil mestizo or gringo as well as another Huichol –one sure sign that a regional culture of social relations does include this

of western and central Mexico. But, as you might imagine, those claims have not yet been fully recognized by the state that helped to engender them. The next chapter examines new ways in which Huichols are trying to make their demands known not only to the state but to new global audiences as well.

aspect of Wixarika symbolic production.



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HUICHOL TERRITORIALITY: LAND CLAIMS AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN WESTERN MEXICO

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CHAPTER THREE

FENCES, ISLANDS AND CLASSROOMS: DISCOURSES AND ACTORS IN TERRITORIAL CLAIMS¹

0. INTRODUCTION

How do people use their religious practices as a basis for making political and cultural claims in national and international arenas? This chapter examines how Huichol political actors have represented the territoriality constituted through ceremonial practice during a period of unusual ferment in Mexico. The representations include public performance of those practices and discursive constructions about them in regional, multi-ethnic contexts. Behind these actors' interests in land lie historically deeper premises about the hierarchical replication of places and expectations of material reciprocity from the state for sacrifices and shamanistic services. Through their historically situated discourses, Huichols construct a virtual sociocultural order. It lacks the concreteness of the actual ceremonial exchanges upon which so much of the discourses are predicated but they gesture toward a much more embracing, continuous system.

There are three general types of land claims: 1) standard agrarian claims such as the *restitución y titulación de bienes comunales* made in the *tribunales agrarios* based on the *Código Agrario*; 2) expanded agrarian claims also pressed in the courts but based on emergent legal categories rooted in recent constitutional reforms and international treaties that recognize "traditional" cultural practices and social relations; and 3) territorial claims pressed in the public sphere, which are based on a combination of the aforementioned emergent legal categories

¹ I want to acknowledge the patient, forbearing readers of parts or all of this chapter at various points in its development: Paul Friedrich, Shane Greene, Carol Kazmer and Claudio Lomnitz.

and even broader, universal claims to historical rights for indigenous peoples. These broader rights in turn are founded in a widely shared sense of Indians' cultural value to the Mexican nation as a whole and in their increasingly explicit representations of a land-based ethnic identity. This chapter documents iconic episodes of all three types, as produced by Huichols from the three *comunidades* indígenas of San Andrés Cohamiata (Tateikie), Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán (Tuapurie) and San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán (Wautia), which straddle the contested border region of Jalisco, Nayarit, Zacatecas and Durango.

In this chapter my most immediate objective is to understand Huichols' regional political panorama by looking at how they strengthen these three kinds of claims by elaborating on a key cultural category, *kiekari*. Nowadays *kiekari* is often translated into Spanish as *territorialidad* (territoriality) to encompass this people's struggle to reclaim its patrimony. By looking at the conjunctural variations between the three types of territorial claims, you can begin to understand how Huichol ethnicity is constituted as a status predicated on alienation from power in the context of the nation-state (Giménez 2001:52), even as they imagine their territoriality in strikingly state-like ways.

Following the Salinas de Gortari government's recognition of indigenous peoples by adopting Convention 169 of the ILO and amending of Article 4 of the Mexican Constitution, along with the growth of numerous autonomous indigenous movements including the EZLN rebellion of January 1994, the mid-1990s saw an upsurge in ethnically based claims by indigenous people in Mexico and throughout Latin America. Therefore these iconic episodes involving Huichols also provide comparative data on a far more widespread phenomenon

(De la Peña 1999; see Chapter 1, Sections 6 and 8). The various meanings different kinds of Wixarika people give to "kiekari" also point to the complexity and potential contradictions entailed in the Foucauldian notion of "territorialization" as a series of practices that spatialize power (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995:388-389) —whether this territorialization is carried out by state actors or, as in this case, by subaltern people. Despite the fact I focus on three partially contrasting sets of discursive claims on territory, they all refer to traditional subsistence activities, social organization and ceremonial practice (yeiyari) as the basic forms of territorialization; in particular, yeiyari performatively engenders kiekari.

I summarize the Huichols' three areas of contention in shorthand as "fences", "islands" and "classrooms" but to be more detailed, these three terms refer to: 1) a conventional territorial struggle in the sense that people go to agrarian courts (tribunales agrarios) seeking exclusive communal rights to disputed lands originally titled to three repúblicas de indios covering 5,000 square kilometers during the colonial period, but also unconventional in that it includes aspects of 2) claims made in meetings and demonstrations on the basis of ceremonial practice through both verbal and visual forms of political discourse and performance for access rights to places outside the main area of Wixarika habitation throughout a territory (kiekari) measuring approximately 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) that has formed this Uto-Aztecan people's sphere of exchange since the prehispanic era, based on those places' mythic narratives, toponyms, topographic characteristics, and especially the sacrificial offerings carried out there; and 3) an even broader cultural revival

envisioned in an educational project whose pedagogy is intended to help a new generation of more culturally hybrid students to reproduce their territoriality in a political-economic framework governed by principles of autonomy and sustainable development. The increasing expansiveness of these three types of territorial claims goes hand-in-hand with their increasingly generalized descriptions of Huichols' relationships to the land: from specific ceremonial organizations in the agrarian claims to religious practice in general for the ancestral place claims, to everyday subsistence and organization in the case of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival.

To expand a bit on the first, seemingly conventional type of territorial claim sketched above, since the 1917 revolutionary constitution was first put in place, agrarian boundary claims have been based on a combination of *de facto* residential and agricultural land use needs and of *de jure* precedent as inscribed in colonial titles. In turn, the colonial *cédulas* originally may have included some dry season extensive hunting and gathering territories utilized to gather plants and animals needed for both subsistence and ritual pruposes but such recognition tended to be relatively restricted. However, under recent measures intended to ameliorate the ravages of neoliberal deregulation on the poorest Mexicans, now claims may be based on *de jure* historical rights, *de facto* residential and subsistence practices as well as on ceremonial activity.

Specifically, land claims can now theoretically take ceremonial "usages and customs" (usos y costumbres) into account under the proposed enabling legislation for the 1992 amended version of Article 4 of the Constitution and partially recognized under the Instituto Nacional Indigenista's category of

patrimonio cultural (cultural heritage), a government anthropology notion also applied to archaeological sites under the emergent legal framework. This is a comparatively narrow field of action compared to the autonomy provisions in other countries, notably Colombia and Canada, but it is also far broader than the rights afforded indigenous peoples by the US, which has never signed Convention 169.

To better distinguish traditional agrarian claims from more general discursive ones on territoriality as a cultural space for reproducing indigenousness, on one hand members of the three Huichol *comunidades indigenas* in the Sierra Madre Occidental demand permanent and exclusive ownership and occupation rights to lands within the area of their colonial titles.² For instance, the *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata, with whose *comuneros* I did most of my fieldwork, had an 18th century title of which about 60 percent (1,000 of 1,800 square kilometers) is currently under indigenous administration in two separate *comunidades* (San Andrés and Guadalupe Ocotán), and thousands of Wixaritari live outside their historical communities' currently recognized limits. The colonial titles of the three Huichol *comunidades* together include about 5,000 square kilometers of legally recognized but historically deep Wixarika occupation, of which about 4,000 have been officially titled to the *comunidades* since the revolution began to respond to Huichol land claims in the 1950s (Arcos & González 1992; Rojas 1993).

² Wixaritari who do not live near or any longer identify with the three mother communities may make agrarian claims more the way most other peasants do — on the basis of recent occupation and land use, as in the lowland *dotaciones ejidales* (communal land grants) around the Santiago River in Nayarit.

On the other hand, while these claims for exclusive communal property rights may include both ceremonial and agricultural-residential dimensions, claims to places elsewhere in the *kiekari* (in its extended sense of the shared, multi-ethnic semi-nomadic trading, hunting and gathering territory covering at least 90,000 square kilometers and utilized at least since Post-Classic times) are primarily based on ceremonial usage. Under these ceremonial claims Wixaritari generally seek seasonal (deer) hunting and (peyote) gathering and ceremonial access rights, full access and protection for the votive objects left there —but not permanent residential or agricultural rights. At the same time, non-Huichols may dispute the ceremonial nature of such *usos y costumbres* precisely on the grounds that they impinge upon current animal populations, property rights or other national laws (including the ambiguous status of peyote as a ceremonial substance and a drug, much as in the US).

Huichol ceremonial rights have been acknowledged in a sweeping (though weak) federal resolution on Wirikuta, the peyote country and eastern terminus of the *kiekari* in San Luis Potosí (San Luis Potosí, *Periódico Oficial* vol 57, special issue, 22 September 1994; cf. ch. 2, ff. 59) and within absurdly small fenced-in lots enclosing the most obvious central features of some key ancestral places like Tatei Matinieri (the springs at the gateway to Wirikuta) and Haramaratsie (a cave opposite a sea pillar at the Pacific shore at the western

³ These claims to access would not fully coincide with the Zapatista definition of sovereignty over an autonomous territory; we are dealing here with five Mexican states containing major population centers. Hence the demand is more for free movement, site protection and access to renewable natural plant and animal resources.

⁴ This conflict points to the contested and shifting boundaries between cultural and

terminus of the *kiekari*), whereas the northern and southern places of Hauxa Manaka and Xapawiyemeta remain virtually without meaningful recognition or protection (Section 2).

Despite differences between these different kinds of claims, they have been linked by the discursive elaboration of *kiekari* as a global category (similar to "culture" for other people) in the context of the new legal dimension opened by Mexico's adherence to Convention 169 and by a modified definition of the juridical status of Indian peoples in Article 4 of the national constitution. This is a unified political strategy based on a convergence between local, national and international categories.

At the same time, the other major neoliberal change to the Mexican Constitution —the amendment of Article 27— essentially ended the Revolutionary legacy of agrarian reform. Aware of this paradox, Wixarika leaders frame some of their agrarian demands in terms of Article 4 even as Article 27 signals that market forces may now play through indigenous land tenure to an extent unequaled since the land reform of the 1930s. The historical question is whether post-indigenista, multicultural inclusiveness will permit the formal recognition of territorial structures against the riptide of neoliberal commodification of land (cf. Polanyi 1975[1944]).

Rather than attempting to review the lengthy procedural side of agrarian claims, ancestral place claims, or educational organization in the context of municipal, state, national and international politics, I examine *kiekari* in terms of how actors define it in different ways to different audiences for different ends.

economic values in Mexican political discourse about indigenous territoriality (see Chapter 4).

That is, I describe how Huichol brokers represent their culture and construct a regional identity in distinct sociopolitical conjuctures.⁵ Indeed, without such a situated perspective, the model of *kiekari* as a practice-based hierarchy of sacrificial relations described in the previous chapter would hover above the ground that it seeks to claim from non-indigenous interlocutors. What are some points of conflict between actors who represent *kiekari* and their counterparts in the government, private sector, the Catholic church and other peasant groups who compete with Wixaritari for control over land?

I take the Xapatia land claim described in Section 1 to stand for a new genre of culturally grounded legal initiative in the Zapatista era, the thick overlay of actors and discourses in the Xapawiyemeta claim described in Section 2 to offer a snapshot of a new national political language in regional context, the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival described in Section 3 to be a representative response to recent social change in the sierra, and the social drama provoked by the death of Philip True in the following chapter as a meta-discourse about Indian cultural space in Mexico.

At the same time, as argued in Chapter 1, Section 2, it should be clear that one cannot understand any culture solely on the basis of discourses about it although some actors may try to construct political niches for themselves that way. So, how different are the various discourses from each other and from the practices and people they supposedly represent? How different are the lives of the actors speaking for *kiekari* from less socially mobile people who inhabit it in

⁵ In fact, the notion of "cultura" itself is part of what is at stake in the regional contention over kiekari, both implicitly (insofar as the terms kiekari and cultura are at times virtually synonymous) and explicitly (as a separate issue).

more traditional ways? This chapter and the previous one must be taken together: the recent political discourses should be interrogated in terms of the economic, political and ceremonial practices and institutions that have long constituted the bases of this people's identity. Chapter 2 examined *nanayari* (rootedness) as the dialectic of practices and narratives about those practices that create Wixarika territoriality (*kiekari*). In this chapter we see how those practices are a bridge to the Mexican legal system because the relatively stable inscription of territorial relations can anchor regional political practices and narratives.

In particular, this chapter examines how Huichols justify territorial and other material demands on the state in terms of shamanistic reciprocity: they say they are entitled to land rights as payment because through sacrifice, shamans maintain reciprocal relations with divine ancestors, who in turn maintain the health of the whole region's ecosystem. Lest it be thought this is quaint or worse, the significant state ritual activity centering on the Gran Nayar indicates that the government depends on legitimation through Huichols as much as the reverse. Instead of considering themselves to be clients of the state, these Indians conceive of the state as their client and treat sacrifice as a means of production that dwarfs capitalism in importance. As we have seen in Chapter 2, this lends *kiekari* a state-like place in the Wixarika territorial imagination.

Contrary to Benedict Anderson's (1991) simplified vision of "fraternity" as a hallmark of Latin American nationalism, Lomnitz (2001:337) points out that any such project must encompass the hierarchies, dependencies and asymmetries within the corporations (whether familial or community-based) that constitute a

nation. Conversely, in ceremonial practice Huichols conceive of themselves as hierarchial but in fact are still fairly "fraternal" in terms of class structure: the collateral kin term 'iwama (brethren) is a generalized cultural category for all Wixaritari. It is an incipient ethnic marker and diffuse linguistic underpinning for corporate identity, but Huichols' patriarchal model of austere hierarchy concentrates access to the largesse of the ancestor-divinities who control the landscape and the elements in the hands of a small, high status ceremonial elite. This tendency is pitted against the proliferating, "feminine" tendency of unbounded, "unregistered" growth to generate autonomous actors and domestic units without hierarchical considerations.

The Huichols' state-like "imaginings of a people tied to a territory" (Lomnitz 2001:352) —a precursor to the creation of an autonomous political formation—relies more on religious practice, land and blood than language as a marker of identity. This is the more archaic form of inventing a national community, predating the language-based collective imaginary Anderson used to typify England and Holland in the 18th and 19th centuries. So, if "citizens could represent various corporate bodies to the state, and they could represent the power of the state in these corporate bodies" (*ibid.*:335), Huichols open up the question of how different these "representations" might be. That is, while new legal measures instituted by the neoliberal regimes of the 1990s might make it possible for Indians to represent their cultures to the state, the representation of the state by Huichol citizens remains very much within the confines of a Wixarika hermeneutic oriented around ancestrality and sacrifice.

If attempts to link claims for control over communal lands, ceremonial territory, and cultural reproduction depend in part on creating a discursive category like *kiekari*, one way of understanding it is to profile the actors who have promoted it to the state (cf. Friedrich 1986). The range of actors and their conflicting interests point to the need to refine our conception of intermediation and verticality in relations between peasants and the state so that it includes their internal contradictions and how they personally embody the discourses they share, reshape and appropriate anew from both local and global sources (cf. Wolf 1956, 1957; De la Peña 1986).

This more nuanced understanding of competing actors on the regional stage leads me to conclude the chapter by comparing their different strategies for making claims on a regional scale with the land struggles *inside* Huichol *comunidades*. To what point do local territorial conflicts among Wixaritari contradict their portrayal to regional audiences of *kiekari* as a structured, harmonious hierarchy? And finally, in Chapter 4, how do outsiders also contest these definitions? But before addressing these issues, it is worthwhile to sketch the history of the word "kiekari" itself.

0.1 KIEKARI: THE ETYMOLOGY OF A DISCOURSE

Although the etymology of a term may be far from its current definition, the speed of the evolution of *kiekari* into a politicized category on the regional level and the continued currency of its morphological components as everyday elements in Wixarika speech avoid this problem. In both practical effect and

explicit metalinguistic discourse there is a daily struggle over the meaning of this word (cf. Voloshinov 1986[1930]).

As mentioned at the outset, nowadays kiekari is translated as "territorialidad" because people have reshaped and expanded its meaning, but in the first place kiekari comes from the word ki: in the beginning was the "house"—the dwelling. It is as if the Greek root of "ecology" and "economy" (oikos, which also means "house") were still current in modern English. So, for Wixaritari the notion of the domestic unit as a prototype of the polis and the universe is very close to the semantic surface of the words used to describe the environment of both natural and cultural production and reproduction. Later, a compound form of ki is kie (ranchería, extended family house cluster—the basic ceremonial unit of Wixarika society). By adding kari (a nominalizing suffix that implies abstraction or generalization), kie becomes kiekari, so a more literal, etymological translation than "territoriality" would be "domain" or the funky neologism "rancherity".

In its historical usage, *kiekari* does not refer only to the *ranchería* but also to other levels of social organization both within and beyond the *comunidad*: "village" and "city" (McIntosh and Grimes 1954:24). In its most encompassing sense, it means "the cosmos" (Neurath 1998⁶) or, by adding a localizing suffix to form *kiekaritsie*, it is "the world" or by instead adding quantifiers one can say

⁶ Without neglecting its more quotidian uses, Neurath focuses on *kiekari* principally as the cosmological space demarcated by the five cardinal points –in which the central point is an *axis mundi* connecting diurnal zenith and nocturnal, subterranean nadir— and represented iconically in the architectonics of the *tukipa* (temple compound). On the other hand, *kwiepa* denotes "lands" (*kwie* = land + pa = place), which applies more to the conventional idea of rural property.

kiekari naititama —"all the inhabited places". In the same way, kiekame (kie + kame, a personalizing suffix) is an "inhabitant" (whether human or not) of any environment, but more properly the synecdochical "elder of the kie" or in a more general sense, a "citizen" of Mexico (Grimes 1981:89). The extended form, kiekarikame (pl. kiekaritari) also denotes "inhabitant" but not "ranchería elder". In short, this lexical set is a powerful resource for constructing new social and political identities.

Neurath's (1998) cosmological, structuralist perspective on *kiekari* was derived in large part from conversations with don Chepo, a *kawiteru* from Keuruwetia Las Latas in the *comunidad* of Tuapurie Santa Catarina. In partial contrast to that global, symbolically elaborate perspective, the most elaborated concept of *kiekari* that I encountered was the model of hierarchical exchange described in the last chapter. This emerged from the agrarian struggle that I explicate in the following section called "Fences". As Chapter 2 described in detail, this model is based on the image of a network of paths or in Wixarika terms, "roots" (*nanari*) that connect *rancherías* (*kiete*) to structurally homologous temples (*tukite*) and finally to the primordial creation places or more literally, ancestral places (*kakaiyarita*).

Among the five key creation places is Xapawiyemeta, the southern cardinal point of Wixarika cosmography, whose recent cultural claims I sketch below in Section 2, "Islands". For now, suffice it to say that in that context, *kiekari*

⁷ I ascribe a deeper, more prevasive sense to that definition because of its fine-grained connection to long-term, place-based ceremonial practice. That is, it is less ideological than the others because it is more grounded in people's linguistic and material activity, and less in diffuse or particularistic schemes tailored for non-indigenous interlocutors.

is represented more in terms of specific, permanent ancestral *places* than in terms of the sacrificial *relationships* that performatively engender and narratively inscribe a fluid, multi-tiered hierarchy linking *rancherías*, temple districts and the place of a sacrifice through a dense structural homology.

This is because just as more ancient ancestors are considered to be more divine and inclusive of all Wixaritari, more people identify with more distant and ancient places as eternal places of the ancestor-gods (kakaiyarixi). As a result, the process of claiming ancestral places beyond the zone of Wixarika habitation depends on the largest possible number of temple districts (tukipa) trekking there and performing sacrificial acts that reaffirm already constituted relationships with them. The breadth of such claims is constrained by the insistence of government patrimonio cultural legislation on bounded definitions of singular lugares sagrados (sacred places), despite the gamut of social relations and economic activities extending around them.⁸ This official territoriality also ignores a Wixarika cultural logic that asserts kinship between a potentially expandable set of synonymous, iconically linked places, predicated on ancient ancestors' movement between them. Instead it puts a premium on demonstrating the traditional cultural legitimacy of the actors who can connect a

⁸ In the early 90s this program included ritual displays by ceremonial elders when government recognition of key ancestral places and zones included permission to construct xirikite at Haramaratsie (San Blas, Nayarit) and Tatei Matinieri (Yuliat, SLP). This territorial recognition, however, remained of very limited scope. Kawiterutsixi were invited to bear community seals, the tatuwani's (gobernador's) 'itsi (vara or staff of authority), deer rifles and a huge votive candle, to be anointed in sacrificial animal blood before government authorities. In turn these officials would provide federal, state and municipal seals (i.e., permission for ritual deerhunting and peyote gathering) plus funds for these ceremonial activities both at home and on the road as well as for registering ancestral places with the INI.

place to the greatest number of *tukipa*. Many Huichols complained that in effect the government was buying *costumbre* and *kawiterutsixi*.

Finally, the most locally oriented, detailed construction of *kiekari* emerged in the meetings and workshops that I attended during the initial construction of the first classrooms of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi secondary school in Tsikwaita San Miguel Huaixtita. As described in Section 3, "Classrooms", in the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival center, *kiekari* is coming to be defined as the natural and cultural landscape in its most saturated sense as a plethora of objects, beings, activities and relations that emphasize the legitimacy of traditional activity and authority.

The point of that section is perhaps not so much this particular definition as the fact that it resulted from the pragmatic discursive engagement of all generations in a rapidly modernizing area of the Sierra Huichol. This discourse was centered around a traditional category and led by communal leaders, thus reinforcing their authority. This new conception of *kiekari* entails people, plants, animals, architecture, forms of subsistence production, socio-political organization and ceremonial exchange, all saturated with historical and mythical references —and moreover the sheer redundancy of this set. I would translate such a totalizing sense of an index of things and relations in local space as "cultural domain". It is also akin to the kinds of even more encompassing

⁹ These workshops, developed by AJAGI, involve role-playing by community members in order to construct an "instrumento de comunicación" and a clear conceptualization of future political strategy in which Huichols take foreign roles, sketching regional actors and legal proceedings. This resembles to some extent the ironic inverted roles adopted by peyote trekkers, but according to AJAGI attorney Angeles Arcos, it all emerged quite spontaneously from the need

definitions that underlie "cultural property" discourses (Brown 1998).¹⁰ Various Huichol actors and other theorists in the Zapatista era of indigenous autonomy discourses frequently translate this type of dense local connection to the land as *territorialidad*, thus creating a discursive bridge between local, regional and broader national or international indigenous claims.¹¹

to make extremely concrete explanations of the actors situated throughout a regional political structure with which most Huichols were unfamiliar.

Compare this sense of *kiekari* to the Inter-Apache Summit on Repatriation's definition of "cultural property" as "all images, text, ceremonies, music, songs, stories, symbols, beliefs, customs, ideas and other physical and spiritual objects and concepts" (cited in Brown 1998:194).

However, it could also be said to resemble the 19th century definition of "culture" elaborated by Edward B. Tylor (1874), and to be part of a similar museological approach to inventorying culture (cf. Stocking 1985).

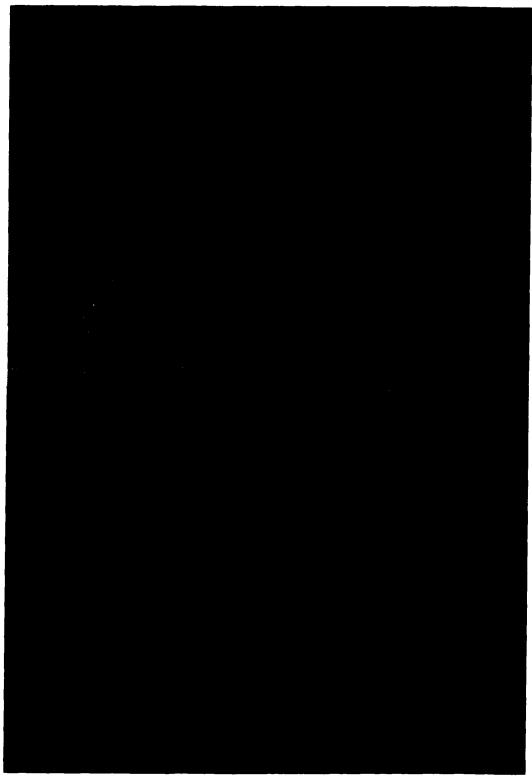


FIGURE 19. Colonial *mojoneras* and contemporary land claims. Local leaders presiding at a political meeting with superimposed territorial limits illustrated in background. Xapatia, San Andrés Cohamiata, May 1995.

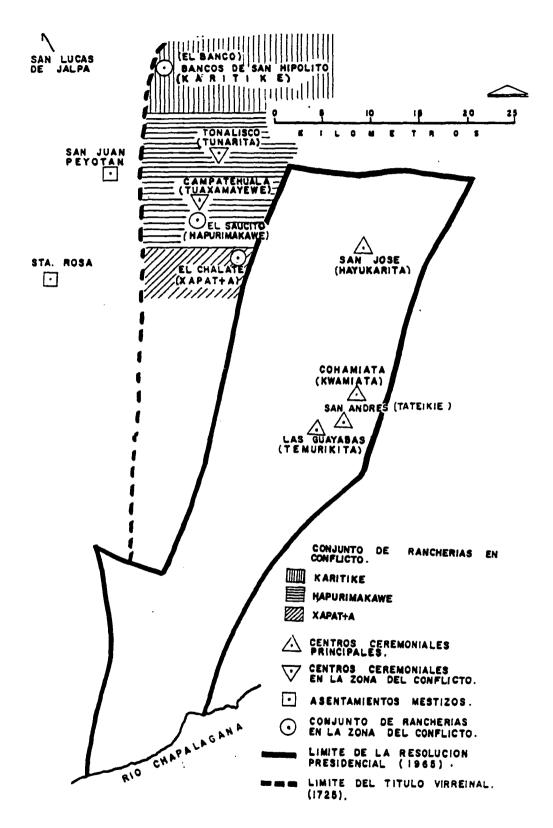


FIGURE 20. Area of agrarian conflict, western San Andrés Cohamiata (from Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1994).

1. FENCES: XAPATIA

In this section I first describe part of the Wixaritari's attempt to expand their rights to a 1,978 hectare slice of land centered around the hamlet of Xapatia (Under the Figtree) and currently defined by the federal government as being just outside the northwest boundary of San Andrés Cohamiata, Jalisco. ¹² This land now lies just inside the mestizo-controlled *comunidad* of San Juan Peyotán, Nayarit. ¹³ This disputed tract begins around 2,000 meters above sea level in the upland pine and oak forests on the western slopes of San Andrés highest peak, Tirikie (Ranchería of Children or the Cerro de Lechuguilla in the official toponymy). ¹⁴ It then drops off sharply down a spring-fed *arroyo* to a thorny middle altitude *chaparral* esplanade around 1200 meters high, where most people live in *rancherías* and a few larger hamlets including Xapatia. ¹⁵ The dwellings of

¹² The authorities of San Andrés Cohamiata filed their application for *restitución* of their colonial titles on 25 November 1938, at the height of the Cardenista land reform. The final *ejecución* took place a week shy of 30 years later, on 19 November 1968 (Arcos & González 1992:70). The royal title to the *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata issued in or about 1725 defined the boundaries of roughly 180,000 hectares (1,800 square kilometers or 450,000 acres) of highland forests, valleys and deep canyon country in what are now four Mexican states. Under the 1917 Constitution and *Código agrario*, this was a generally accepted basis on which the minority of peasant communities still able to document their history back to the colonial period undertook agrarian litigation but the modern titles of the *comunidades* of San Andrés and its now independent *anexo* Guadalupe Ocotán (Xatsitsarie) were issued in the 1960s and recognize only a total of about 100,000 hectares.

¹³ The figure of "comunidad indígena", though originally intended to restore lands to ethnic Indians with old claims, can in theory be granted to any group of peasants with communal tenure inhabiting such lands.

¹⁴ According to the Huichol *comisario* of the disputed land, the mestizo *vecinos* of San Juan Peyotán had succeeded in shifting the toponym Lechuguilla from a different peak Huichols call Maka'uweya to Tirikie (otherwise known as Cerro de los Niños). They thus moved the *mojonera* a considerable distance southeastward into Wixarika lands since the 1789 accordonamiento referred to toponyms rather than map coordinates.

¹⁵ See Hakkarainen, Leskinen & Seppo 1999 for evocative photographs of this precise

Xapatia are clustered around the *arroyo* and smaller springs and enjoy the glorious shade of *chalates* (*xapa*), *tabachines* and other massive flowering trees.

Beyond this tract, the *arroyo*s keep dropping relentlessly down toward the mestizo village of San Juan Peyotán and the infernal main canyon of the Jesús María River, some 20 kilometers to the west. At only 400 meters above sea level it takes hours to drive your way down there on dusty, cratered sinuous roads or walk it –only slightly more slowly but far less dustily— on nimble paths.

The Xapatia case (and the linked claim to the nearby ranchería clusters around Hapurimakawe (El Saucito) and Karitike (Bancos de Calítique) was my most direct involvement in "traditional" agrarian issues. However, this claim was only traditional up to a point. It was promoted by a disparate though increasingly common type of alliance in Mexico and beyond (e.g., Harvey 1998; Stephen 2002): aggrieved, essentially landless indigenous peasants; elders with detailed ceremonial knowledge of mojoneras or traditional communal boundaries; younger, literate bicultural activists who typically have studied and worked outside the community for considerable stretches; urban middle class professionals representing a progressive non-governmental organization dedicated to Indian land rights and ecologically sustainable grassroots development (in this case, the Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas); and a foreign academic with specialized theoretical knowledge potentially useful in terms of the cultural criteria opened up under new legislation (in this case, me).

landscape and its people. This book is part of the significant cultural and political flowering that took place around this particular land claim, and it foregrounds the inhabitants' newfound courage and defiance to the decades old mestizo invasion of the area.

Hence, this section introduces the traditional bases of Wixarika society, actors who are often invisible in broader regional negotiations. Here we deal with agrarian struggle in its more conventional sense of territorial claims based on historical precedent (colonial titles, evidence of long-term habitation and agricultural use, contemporary legal title). However, as we will see, it was also somewhat unconventional in a legal sense. These peasants of Xapatia were oriented in part by the *kawiterutsixi's* political advice and by their own definitions of *kiekari*, as they confronted another agrarian entity, the post-revolutionary mestizo *comunidad indígena* of San Juan Peyotán, Nayarit.¹⁶

Now the peasants of San Juan compete for the same lands as San Andrés but under different forms of land tenure and use that resemble independent ranchero family parcelas and rely more on livestock raising. This struggle is part of the centuries-old conflict between transhumant, extensive cattle grazing and sedentary, intensive corn cultivation, which in turn often takes on ethnic dimensions as a conflict between Spaniards or mestizos and Indians, respectively. We will see in Section 4 that this is no longer strictly the case elsewhere in San Andrés but it was here. These confrontations took place in the tribunales agrarios (agrarian courts) and (more dangerously) in the countryside as Huichols built

¹⁶ San Juan was able to define itself as a comunidad indígena because its mother community, the Cora cabecera of Jesús María, dates to the colonial era as a república de indios. When San Juan separated from Jesús María amid the late-revolutionary agrarian agitation of the 1930s, in all probability with Nayarit state patronage, they were still both nominally under Cora Indian leadership and so presumably intended to maintain communal tenure. However, the increasingly powerful mestizo contingent was apparently orchestrating the separación behind the scene and rapidly marginalized the Coras after it achieved legal independence and title to 18,000 hectares of land near the Río Jesús María. By the post-revolutionary period, its main minority population was not Cora, but Huichol because of the inroads it had made into San Andrés territory.

fences to keep mestizo cattle out of their *milpas* (intensively cultivated cornfields) and the frequently armed and mounted Sanjuaneros tore those fences down.

At one point the Huichol maestro bilingüe who led the local land claim was able to take slides of the army of 50 presumably armed mestizos from San Juan Peyotán including their leader breaching the Huichols' fenced-in cornfields. They invaded the milpas around Xapatia's highly prized ciénaga (marsh) on 27 September 1994, when the ripe maize was beginning to dry on the stalks. This was just after a tentative accord had been signed and a detachment of policía preventiva sent in earlier to maintain order had left. Using chainsaws, Sanjuaneros cut the Huichols' fence with its kilometers of barbed wire and 300 hand-hewn posts sunk into deep holes in the ground. Hundreds of head of thirsty cattle then entered to slake their thirst and feast on the tons of purple, red, white, yellow and spotted maize. It was assumed that such a blatant move had to be backed by the pro-mestizo Nayarit state procuradora de asuntos indígenas, the presidente municipal of the municipio of El Nayar, Nayarit, and the head of the ministerio público (district attorney/police). The maestro Jesús Cosío Candelario estimated the costs of the fence alone at around 35,000 pesos (roughly US\$6000). Bringing in the indigenous people's extensive allies on the national and global level during that immediate post-Zapatista era, the maestro presented the case to the Comité de 500 Años de Resistencia, where it was given prominent coverage by the leading pro-Zapatista national newspaper, La Jornada (3-5 October 1994).

The diversity of the three domains of struggle outlined in this chapter is as striking as the links between them in that several of the same kinds of actors with their respective ideological discourses and historical narratives are involved in all of them. In Xapatia the actors included the new leadership—originating largely from among the *maestros indígenas*— and the NGO discussed below.¹⁷ The crucial broker was the charismatic bicultural local teacher, a recently reindianized young man from Tuapurie who since he was orphaned as a child, had spent 20 years in the mestizo world. Not only a key local organizer and interlocutor with NGOs, he also made highly persuasive impressions on the international bodies that fund NGOs as well as the people of the International Labor Organization in Geneva who oversee Mexico's compliance with Convention 169.

This brokerage would havb been meaningless without support from Xapatia itself: the *comisario* (*comunidad* representative), the most powerful local shaman (also a major temple *kawiteru*), and the initially cautious *comuneros* weary after years of intimidation from the overweaning cattlemen of San Juan but now emboldened by the multi-level support. Aside from the galvanizing role of the *maestro* and his interlocutors in the NGO and beyond, another kind of support came from academic anthropologists (represented in this case by two highly

¹⁷ The Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas, one of several spinoffs from Juan Negrín Fetter's pioneering 1970s and 80s Asociación para el Desarrollo Ecológico de la Sierra Madre Occidental (ADESMO), was started in 1990 by progressive Guadalajara mestizos to develop a hybrid medical system in cooperation with shamans and doctors but now focuses on land rights, sustainable development, the educational project discussed in the following section, and—increasingly since 1994—indigenous autonomy in Mexico. It has received support at various points in its history from foreign NGOs, the Instituto Nacional Indigenista and private benefactors.

motivated students from the bachelor's program of the Universidad de Gudadalajara and me). At the behest of AJAGI, over the course of several months we developed a new kind of *peritaje antropológico* (expert anthropological testimony) that demonstrated shared communal identity between the Huichols distributed to the northwest of the officially recognized boundaries of the *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata and those within the official limits (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1994, 1995; Vázquez n.d.).

On the other hand the Sanjuaneros enjoyed powerful political patronage from the PRI-controlled state government of Nayarit, which took special interest in Huichol land claims in the border region that it disputes with Jalisco. Hence, the land struggle does not only have an ethnic dimension; since the 19th century period in which the current state of Nayarit was still the western cantons of Jalisco, the area has been the object of struggles between wider regional economic and political interests. These struggles in fact made possible the rise of the last great Cora warlord, Manuel Lozada (Meyer 1984). Now those interests center on extensive territories with cattle, timber and drug cultivation potential, and they are global in reach and officially represented by two state governments.¹⁸

The most important part of the legal case rested on evidence that the agrarian boundaries simply had been badly measured in favor of the politically

¹⁸ Cf. Ramón Longoria state boundary commission report. More broadly the whole Nayarit region was at the periphery of central control during the mid-19th century period of Reforma and Intervención. This position permitted the intromission of English interests and the development of Manuel Lozada's major separatist initiative in reaction to Liberal reforms (Meyer 1983, 1984, 1990). Indeed, the region was also considered to be at the fringe of Aztec

better connected mestizos and that therefore the alienated lands remained within the map of San Andrés drawn up by the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria itself, to say nothing of the colonial *mojoneras*, which extend much further into the current zone of conflict. This northwest *zona de conflicto* between San Andrés and the mestizo-controlled *ejidos* and *comunidades* carved out of San Andrés's colonial title lands during the early revolutionary period is where much of the hierarchical and systematic definition of *kiekari* described in the previous chapter emerged. Aside from the more intense nature of the interviews carried out in this area, Chapter 2's recursive model of Huichol social structure is due in part to the legal and cultural context of the conflict. That is, the anthropological side of the legal claim was based on the kinship and ceremonial links that Wixaritari who now live outside the recognized boundaries of their mother community (San Andrés) still maintain with its temple groups (*tukite*), so both the researchers and local consultants thought long and hard about ceremonial organization on a fine-grained local basis.

The anthropological part of the legal claim also took popular memory of the *mojoneras* as part of the evidence but primarily it sought to frame the "usages

control during the post-Classic period, and is classified as "sub-Mesoamerican" for its indirect central Mexican urban influences.

¹⁹ Kawiterutsixi have described three concentric series of mojoneras as a set of progressively more ancient horizons: the current official ones bounding the 74,940 hectares of San Andrés Cohamiata in the resolución presidencial of 1965, followed by the colonial limits twice as expansive as the modern ones, and then —revealing the scale of regional political organization in the past— a third set of limits extending to the region of Mesa del Nayar (cf. Chávez pers. com.). La Mesa —to this day the most closed, resistant Cora comunidad— was the capital of the independent colonial era Tonatí polity; it remained unconquered into the 18th century and rose up again under Manuel Lozada in defense of indigenous territorial sovereignty during the first flowering of liberal capitalism in Mexico in the mid-19th century. The notion that the mojoneras extended that far would suggest the Río Jesús María was once the border between Wixaritari and Náyarite or that they constituted a single polity before 1722.

and customs"—particularly the location of the ancestral *tuki* where people gather for major ceremonial events— as proof that these Huichols are still living in "estado comunal" with the officially recognized comunidad, irrespective of whether current agrarian boundaries define where they live as another community (Mexico 1964). The most complete metaphor that Wixaritari use to describe this type of "communal state" is *nanayari* (root, rootedness), which entails the set of kinship relations and ceremonial cargos that objectify the territoriality of a kie (ranchería) within a hierarchy of tukite (temples) and ancestral places (Chapter 2; Liffman 2000). It is notable that in comparison with the "Tylorean" definition of kiekari elaborated by the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students (see Section 3 below), this conception based on ceremonial exchange between rancherías and ceremonial centers takes social relations to actively constitute territoriality instead of being features or indexes of it.

Motivated by the general discontent of a people with a long shared memory of territorial struggle and by the structural opportunity afforded by the Article 4 amendment, the team at AJAGI (led by Lic. Angeles Arcos García, Lic. Ramón Longoria Cervantes and the organization's director, Carlos Chávez Reyes) in coordination with both the traditional and agrarian leadership of San Andrés Cohamiata (that is, both the *tatuwani* and the *comisariado de bienes comunales*) as well as the emergent regional authority of the Unión de Comunidades Huicholes de Jalisco (UCIH) developed a multifacted and quite possibly unprecedented strategy in Mexico for reclaiming lands titled to the *república de indios* by the Spanish crown in the 1720s.

This strategy included two main elements. The first was to compare the mojoneras specified in the acordonamiento²⁰ with the far smaller provisional map of contemporary communal boundaries executed by the government's agrarian survey commission in 1958 and the even smaller "definitive" map that constituted the basis of the resolución presidencial in the 1960s.²¹ The comparison demonstrated at the very least that a discrepancy between the 1958 survey and the 1965 plan definitivo -whether due to misalignment or mismeasurement - had sliced 1,978 hectares (4,885 acres) off this part of western San Andrés and effectively ceded this land to the mestizo controlled comunidad indígena of San Juan Peyotán –a comunidad which, as we have seen, is neither indigenous nor communal in the Huichol sense of corporate, residence-based kinship and land tenure based on the symbolism and cultivation of maize (cf. Exp. CNDH/122/92/jal/6027.000 on mismeasurement). The Huichols of Xapatia were essentially demanding the part of this land that had historically been used by them and offering to split the difference of the land within the colonial title but which they had never used: a total claim of about 1,250 hectares out of a total of 3,600. More generally, Huichols living under mestizo administration in the zona de conflicto are frequently not even counted in the agrarian censuses and are

The acordonamiento ("cordoning") specifies the boundaries of the original title in terms of mojonera markers and the distances between them in cordeles. Consulting with elders in the comunidad of San Andrés and the Wixarika linguist Héctor Montoya of the Departamento de Estudios de Lenguas Indígenas at the Universidad de Guadalajara, I compared the 1809 acordonamiento unearthed in Zapopan by Beatriz Vázquez (n.d.: Appendix 1) with a virtually identical typewritten list of mojoneras assembled in 1933 by an unnamed surveyor, and updated the toponymy to correspond with the language and its local meanings. See Appendix 1 of this dissertation.

²¹ Between these two stages, the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria effectively shaved off 8,000 hectares of land from this particular area (Arcos García 1992:70).

thus deprived of voting rights in their nfficial, local level representative bodies (asambleas).

The second element of the AJAGI-San Andrés strategy was more experimental. This strategy emerged as the AJAGI team consulted with various authorities of San Andrés—principally a kawiteru of Karitike (José Carrillo Cervantes), the principal shaman of the disputed kie of Xapatia, the charismatic young bicultural maestro bilingüe of the small escuela primaria of Xapatia and San Andrés's comisario de bienes comunales, Ernesto Hernández. It sought to demonstrate that the ceremonial linkages between the inhabitants of the disputed Xapatia area and San Andrés were proof of community membership and hence a basis for restitución of the alienated lands. For this purpose, I was invited to coordinate the research project and serve as a perito antropológico (expert anthropological witness).

The original strategy of the AJAGI staff depended on a survey and detailed census of some 360 Wixarika residents in Xapatia and two other nearby alienated clusters of *kiete* —Hapurimakawe El Saucito and Karitike Bancos de Calítique— which were soon to be litigated as well. This strategy would demonstrate kinship links as well as shared ceremonial participation throughout the western area of San Andrés's original 18th century title. I was specifically asked to help direct this latter aspect, which was just then being undertaken by the AJAGI fieldworkers and Universidad de Guadalajara students Luz Macías Flores and Beatriz Vázquez Violante (working toward *Licenciatura* degrees in sociology and anthropology, respectively).

My main initial observation was that the survey should shift its major focus on ceremonial participation away from asking people where they participated in Tatei Neixa ("Our Mother's Dance", the Green Corn ceremony) because in San Andrés —unlike its neighbor, Santa Catarina— this ritual is often held at family ranchos (kiete) rather than at major ceremonial centers (tukite; cf. Neurath 1998). Hence, a focus on Tatei Neixa would tend to show that Wixarika ceremonial activity in the disputed area is in fact independent of the main comunidad insofar as all people in San Andrés tend to stay at their home xirikite to memorialize the cosmological kiekari in an agricultural and children's initiation ritual. This would not be a fair indication of communal identity with San Andrés, or more precisely with its major ceremonial centers (tukite) —in this case Hayukarita (San José) and Kwamiata (Cohamiata), the northwesternmost of the five principal tukite. However, see Medina (2002), who focuses on an emergent local syncretic tradition in Calítique that draws on neighboring Cora and mestizo practices, particularly in Holy Week rituals.

Instead, the point was to determine the extent to which community membership and land tenure could be defined in terms of participation at the major *tukite* and *comunidad* centers during the more complexly articulated communal gatherings of larger networks of extended family coparticipants fulfilling *cargos*.²² That is, the survey now focused on two other dimensions of

²² With the Huichols, one can make the classical Mesoamericanist distinction between "civil" and "religious" cargos as institutions. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, I restrict the term "religious cargo" to the nominally Catholic tradition lodged in the native-run teyeupani or village churches of the cabeceras (main villages of each comunidad). The cargos of the tukite—the far more numerous and far less Catholic temple districts— are another matter (cf. Weigand 1978).

ceremonial activity: 1) whether people participated in the colonial Christian-based rituals of Cambio de Varas (the change of traditional "civil" authorities, especially the *tatuwani*) and Semana Santa (the climax of dry season, Catholic-inflected ceremonialism by the "religious" *cargos* of the native church or *teyeupani*) in San Andrés's cabecera, Tateikie; and 2) whether they went to major *tukite* within the already recognized boundaries of the *comunidad* for Hikuri Neixa, the maximum expression of the autochthonous temple *cargos*.

The survey found that despite a significant degree of autonomy in Bancos de Calítique, in fact there was a very high index of participation throughout the disputed areas on the western and northwestern periphery of the *comunidad* of San Andrés in both the *cabecera* (for the colonial-based civil and church *cargos*) and the *tukite* (for the more aboriginal temple *cargos*) (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1994, 1995).²³ We took this as proof of community membership (*pertenencia*) and therefore as a basis for claiming territorial (re-)integration (*restitución*) under agrarian law. Furthermore, we had more qualitative interviews on the meaning of the pilgrimages undertaken by family groups to major sacred places (*lugares sagrados, kakaɨyarita*) throughout the *kiekari* and particularly those undertaken to the San Luis Potosí desert by the *tukipa hikuritameteya* (large groups organized in terms of temple *cargos* to "hunt"

Most people from Hapurimakawe and Xapatia said they went to participate in major ceremonies in Tateikie (San Andrés pueblo) and Kwamiyata: 43 percent and 85 percent respectively; only 13 percent and three percent, respectively, conducted such rituals at a ceremonial center in the locality where they lived. However, in Karitike 55 percent said they attended major ceremonies right there. Still, over 25 percent said they celebrated major ceremonies in Tateikie, Hayukarita and Kwamiyata (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1994).

peyote). These showed that in terms of customary law (*ley consuetudinaria*), land tenure is ultimately legitimated through such treks. The ideology of *nanayari* laid out in Chapter 2 inscribes these ceremonial practices so essential to validating land tenure within a more pervasive mythical history and sacrificial logic. However, here we see that it is not only a ceremonial metaphor but also a discursive bridge that enables Huichols to make claims based on ceremonial practice through anthropologists to the Mexican legal system (Liffman 2000).

Following the pattern of mediating between ceremonial practice and the law, the evidence presented in the *peritaje antropológico* included the sharp contemporary Wixarika memory of the *mojoneras* that we collected from senior experts in traditional politics and community ritual (*kawiterutsixi*). This confirmed the list of these same *mojoneras* collected in the 1930s and the Spanish *acordonamiento* adjacent to the title of 1725, which first defined those places as the boundaries of San Andrés Cohamiata. In other words there was a collective memory of at least eight generations.

The case languished in the courts of Tepic and Mazatlán through most of the 1990s but after numerous last-minute continuances, unfavorable decisions, changes of venue to less problematic *tribunales* (*i.e.*, outside Nayarit) and appeals, the Xapatia *comuneros* finally won an *amparo* (injunction or restraining order) permitting them to reoccupy 1,250 hectares of land that had been appropriated by the *sanjuaneros*. Presumably full *restitución* was in the works. At least the *amparo* effectively permitted the Wixaritari there to keep their fences, maize and spirits up, and the mestizo ranchers out. However, since then a regionally coordinated strategy by several of the Nayarit communities carved out of San

Andrés's colonial title lands has again thrown the whole scheme of land measurement in the area up for grabs, and recently the *amparo* was voided. The *comunidad* and AJAGI plan to keep litigating and to carry on with an effort to develop a watershed-based interethnic development strategy they call *Nierika*: reconstitución integral de territorio y habitat.

2. ISLANDS: XAPAWIYEMETA

In this section I present a general sketch of the negotiations (also still fruitless up until now) to guarantee Wixaritari pilgrims access and other rights to Tatei Xapawiyemeta (Our Figtree Rain Mother Place). This family of structurally similar places is characterized by being an island or outcropping with a cave or other passage to the underworld, with a *chalate* (Mexican fig tree) on top. As such, Xapawiyemeta is one of the five cardinal *Wixarika kakaiyarita* (Huichol ancestral places) that demarcate the *kiekari* in its most embracing geographical sense as the prehispanic exchange sphere. Previously, the entire area was crucial to the economy because Wixaritari depended on it for hunting, gathering and the transcontinental exchange of precious goods (such as turquoise, feathers, peyote and salt).

Much of the region is now regaining economic importance as vendors of ethnic art and migratory farmworkers inhabit it seasonally and in some cases permanently. The Nayarit coast has always been economically essential to the survival of the sierra cultures, whereas the eastern reaches where Wirikuta lies are primarily of (crucial) ceremonial importance. It is not clear that this resurgence of economic activity in a capitalist wage labor context will remain associated with ceremonial activity for most people, but *cargo* holders continue to combine commercial journeys to ancestral places with religious obligations. In any case, Wixaritari have always treated the whole 90,000 square kilometer ceremonial *kiekari* as a living archive of primordial divine ancestral action.

Despite new economic interest in the area, in the domain of signification conditioned by the struggle to regain control of Xapawiyemeta, *kiekari* remains a

fundamentally ceremonial space. It is territory defined by places and by the paths that connect those places where parties of pilgrims pass, leave offerings and collect essential substances for reproducing "life force" ('iyari) because those places reflect mythological action.

Xapawiyemeta raises two more general issues. In the first, on one hand there is a contrast between the vindicatory politics that focuses on a single place (the Isla de los Alacranes, a tourist spot in Mexico's largest body of vaguely fresh water, Lake Chapala), as if it were the only Xapawiyemeta and a far older and more flexible cultural logic that treats a range of places with similar characteristics as a family of Xapawiyemetas. In this older scheme, the different places are connected by a narrative "root" that relates the mythical migration of Figtree Mother when she still existed in her mobile form.

The second issue deals with the impressive range of actors who take different positions on claims for Huichol access to the island. These include: 1) the fishermen's and boatmen's unions that effectively restrict Huichol access to the island; 2) the PANista authorities of the busy tourist town of Chapala who seek to spectacularize Huichol ritual for their own benefit; 3) the numerous US and Canadian tourists and residents in the area who constitute a major, sympathetic audience for indigenous custom; 4) the agency (CUACI, Coordinación Universitaria de Apoyo a las *Comunidades* Indígenas) of the state university in charge of fomenting development and land claims initiatives with the indigenous communities of Jalisco; 5) the non-governmental organization (AJAGI) which has worked the most in grassroots sustainable development and on behalf of Huichol territorial claims; 6) "post-mestizo" representatives of a

group identified with La Nueva Mexicanidad, a range of Indian revival movements primarily composed of urban mestizos who identify themselves as "mixed-blood Indians", and in this case as communal authorities of nearby small towns (cf. Friedlander 1975; Rostas 1995); 7) the new Huichol leadership, of less mixed blood but composed of professionals and technicians with broad experience if not bicultural identities on the regional level who nominally lead the land claim effort; 8) various *kawiterutsixi* who had been invited as consultants because of their exact knowledge of ancestral practices and places; and of course 9) the anthropologist who mediates this narrative and in the event was brought along primarily as an authenticating witness.

As already noted, the expansiveness of Wixarika cultural territoriality is constrained by Mexican legal, political and economic factors. Most of the above-listed actors aimed to reduce the southern 180 degrees of the 90,000 square kilometer ceremonial exchange sphere that the term "Xapawiyemeta" maximally indexes to a single "sacred place" (*lugar sagrado*). Here the political and economic issues were particularly acute: the claim had to be circumscribed largely because the main Xapawiyeme place has great economic importance to many people in the region and especially to the small city it is effectively part of.

The combination of conflicting issues made the number of interested actors and discourses swell to constitute a virtual snapshot of the political, social and cultural structure of the whole region —an "iconic episode". In that sense, this case is parallel both to the next chapter, which is dedicated to the "discursive avalanche" provoked by the death of US journalist Philip True in the Huichol sierra, and to the next section of this chapter, in that the attempt by Huichol

authorities to expropriate and expel the Franciscan missionaries from the *comunidad* and establish a culturally autonomous school provoked a national political conflagration (cf. Liffman 1995).

So, to present a more complete analysis of the Wixarika territorial logic for Xapawiyemeta, I first explain the term's multisitedness –how identically named places replicate each other synecdochically in much the same way as Chapter showed a similar replication of *xirike* and *tuki*. I then narrate episodes from meetings held under the auspices of the Universidad de Guadalajara in the lakeside town of Chapala, Jalisco, in August 1995 at which Huichols presented claims to the "main" Xapawiyeme place. This should demonstrate – if nothing else – that field data are often more complex and suggestive than theoretical sketches. It is also clear that there is a byzantine confluence of economic, ethnic and cultural factors operating in the struggle over this one site and more generally when a corporativist state's power is fragmenting.

2.1 SACRED MULTISITEDNESS

In this subsection I outline the generic nature of ancestral places, their multisitedness and the materiality of the linguistic metonymy connecting those sites. In this sense, the multiple, hierarchical, historically contingent quality we saw in the replication of extended family *rancherías* (*kiete*) and ceremonial centers (*tukite*) (Chapter 2) also characterizes more expansive territorial processes. Here, people assign mythical toponyms and sacrificial relationships to multiple places (and therefore create the possibility of making different kinds of claims on them).

In contrast, the 1930s University of Chicago anthropologist Robert Zingg held to the cartographic convention that a toponym should apply to one and only one place within a bounded set of sites (and to the belief that both this tribe of "primitive artists" and the jackbooted Germans of the period were engaging in Lévy-Bruhlian "primitive participation" in their respective core symbols); he considered that parallel toponyms must be "mistaken", primitive participation notwithstanding. In point of fact, Wixaritari reproduce toponyms with particular mythological references to accomodate the vision that a place generates for people who visit it. That is, a placename may fit any number of sites that fulfill a general set of topographic and narrative criteria that conform to a geographically based storyline. This mythological basis for toponymy is made concrete when people perform sacrificial practices there. They then can make ownership claims on them as *kakaiyarita* (ancestral places). This may reflect a very old Mesoamerican geopolitical logic of territorial expansion, even a kind of

"Huichol manifest destiny" (Anonymous Reviewer, *Journal of the Southwest*, 1999).

In my experience no toponym was more frequently invoked than Tatei Xapawiyemeta (Our Figtree Rain-Mother Place). In the abstract, decontextualized cosmological formulas most often produced by and for the anthropological literature, this rain mother is associated with "The South", but we will see presently how, aside from missing the point, this is not entirely correct. It is true that Tatei Xapawiyeme (Our Figtree Rain-Mother) is a blue serpent or an 'imukwi lizard who appears in lagoons and brings rain from the south and (consequently) is identified with maize (Lumholtz 1900:13-14). However, her association with xapa (Mex. Sp. chalate or giant fig trees) may be the most potent symbolic referent: the xapa is the Huichol banyan tree both in terms of its visual impact and mythological role.²⁴ Its massive trunk spreads downward and outward into thick roots visible as they enter the earth, and a huge spreading canopy thrusts out overhead.

Xapa has a mythical association with the birth of culture itself: Watakame and the little black dog-woman who gave rise to the Wixarika people survived the primordial flood in a dugout figtree canoe. The appearance of a xapa atop a rocky, obsidian-rich island with a cave inside constitutes a quintessential emergence point for the neighboring Náyari Cora people as well (Coyle 2001). Or as one of Zingg's Wixarika informants put it, Tatei Xapawiyeme "chose a great rock, since she was very 'delicate' (sacred)" and Ur-mother Takutsi

The term *xapa* must originally have covered other species of fig trees since it is also the term for paper, derived no doubt from the *amate* fig tree. *Amate* is the source of bark paper used in prehispanic codices and some contemporary indigenous painting, especially in Guerrero.

Nakawé brought her water so Xapawiyeme became a spring (1938:346). Given these generously broad topographical characteristics, it should come as no surprise that there are several major Xapawiyeme places along the southern 180 degrees of Wixarika territory. Let me now list some of these places and, in something resembling Wixarika fashion, try to narrativize them in relation to each other (see the online regional maps at http://www.maps-of-mexico.com/jalisco-state-mexico/jalisco-state-mexico-map-main.htm).

The first point is that like all the water-related deities, Tatei Xapawiyeme was born in Haramara, the sea that surrounds the world. As we move inland from the Pacific sea, the westernmost Xapawiyeme place identified by Lumholtz (1900:14) was at the Laguna de Laja near Mascota above Puerto Vallarta and the Bahía de Banderas. This bay was the center of a major prehispanic coastal polity that Wixaritari may well have visited on hunting, trading or tribute-paying trips down the Ameca River valley from the Magdalena area. Recently, Huichols have also claimed a Xapawiyeme place near Manzanillo, Colima, (Rosa Rojas, pers. com. 9-2001). Some 200 kilometers down the coast from the Bahía de Banderas, this is the rain mother's southernmost and most coastal emergence point to date. Not far upstream from the Laguna de Laja is another Tatei Xapawiyeme lagoon by Talpa, Jalisco.

These places were scarcely being visited any more when Lumholtz conducted his expedition for the American Museum of Natural History in the 1890s but if in fact they represent a deep Mesoamerican trade and sacrifice network, the Norwegian explorer-collector caught the last fleeting shadows of a 1,500 year old regional system. Both Lumholtz (*ibid.*) and Weigand (pers. com.)

have identified another quintessential Xapawiyeme on an island in Lake Magdalena, the highest in the chain of broad shallow lakes that stairstep southeastward from Magdalena down to Chapala and constitute the cradle of Classic Period West Mexican civilization, most notably the urban complex around Lake Teuchitlán (Townsend et al. 1998; Weigand 1993).²⁵

Unfortunately for Wixarika ceremonial territoriality, Lake Magdalena was drained in the 1950s to expand the local *ejido*'s arable land. Nevertheless the obsidian-rich outcropping with its cave is still there and is even still visited occasionally by Wixaritari from Wautia (San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán), as it probably has been by many indigenous groups for both religious and mining purposes for two or three thousand years (Weigand pers. com.; cf. Weigand 1993).²⁶ Still, like Lumholtz's Talpa and Mascota Xapawiyemes of the 1890s, this one was also now on the edge of oblivion in the 1990s.

²⁵ Quite unlike the pyramids and square patios prevalent elsewhere in Mesoamerica, the concentric circular platforms and patios of this Teotihuacán-era urban complex resemble pagoda complexes (Weigand, pers. com.). Weigand considers these unique round Teuchitlán ceremonial centers to be a key influence on the Tepecanos' and Wixaritari's own round *tukipa* complexes, right down to the positioning of symmetrically opposed square shrines at cardinal points along the patio's circumference. However, note Jáuregui's objection that the large round Wixarika structures are always set off on the far western edge of the ceremonial plaza, juxtaposed to little square solar *xiriki* shrines on the east, north and south, whereas the Teuchitlán complexes were radially symmetrical with the major structure in the center (pers. com.).

when the agrarian activist Catarino de la Cruz (described in the previous section), who was part of the *kawiteru* delegation identifying Xapawiyemeta places in the region in April 1995, gave me one of three little chunks of unworked high grade obsidian that he had picked up at Xapawiyeme place near Villa Corona, Jalisco. Since at that point Catarino was being reintroduced to his culture after a 20 year lapse (and not given to amateur geology), the *kawiterutsixi* must have just taught him the significance of obsidian, despite the fact it no longer has economic uses and only rarely appears to be employed ceremonially as a votive offering (Weigand 1970). The very process of making the survey of sacred places in the region was part of teaching territorial principles to the younger activists, just as participating in ceremonies is the main way to learn ritual knowledge and construct Wixarika identity in

Moving across the trans-Tarascan lake zone, contemporary elders of Tutsipa (Tuxpan de Bolaños) in the *comunidad* of San Sebastián still take offerings to Villa Corona in the *municipio* of Tuxcueca, southwest of Chapala, although the precise location of Tatei Xapawiyeme's emergence there was not clear to the delegation of *kawiterutsixi* who surveyed the area in 1995, prior to making the claims described below in Section 2.3. Other nearby Xapawiyeme places are said to be at the Chimulco hotsprings (another major tourist site) and Valencia, Jalisco. In response to the call for demarcation, the Tutsipa *kawiterutsixi* and shamans were said to be *heinitsika*—"dreaming" or divining it (AJAGI meeting 7.IX.95). In this sense, trekking to places is interwoven with dreaming them –a process of traditionalizing the landscape identical to the process for selecting new communal authorities each year on the day of the Virgen de Guadalupe (12 December).

By far the most commonly visited Xapawiyeme place nowadays is on the Isla de los Alacranes, a small wooded volcanic outcropping that rises perhaps 15 meters out of Mexico's largest lake. The Isla is a few kilometers south of the bustling tourism and resort town of Chapala, located on the lake's north shore just 30 minutes (50kms) south of Guadalajara, Mexico's second largest city. This is the territorial context for the meetings in which representatives of the three Wixarika *comunidades* and lakeside municipalities expressed their conflicting claims on the Isla de los Alacranes. As such this case is a representative episode

general. (This efficacy of practice –and particularly trekking to ancestral places— to impart potent knowledge explains the occasional reticence to let outsiders join in rituals.) However, I did not see any obsidian on the Isla de los Alacranes Xapawiyemeta, but we could postulate obsidian as one of a few sufficient but not necessary qualities of Xapawiyeme-ness.

of indigenous territoriality getting redefined as it butts up against regional mestizo structures.

Commercial launches regularly ply the waters separating the small lakeside city from the island, charging each of the roughly 20 passengers the equivalent of several dollars for the leisurely half-hour cruise to spend an hour or two on the pleasant, shaded island. There tourists can stroll part of the tiny island's narrow developed perimeter, purchase knicknacks identical to those sold back on the Chapala shore, lunch on the polluted lake's questionable little white fish, and wash them down with a cold beer or *refresco*. Afterwards, if so inclined, they can take in the blue panorama of Mexico's largest lake if they are among the few intrepid enough to take a brief stroll up the sloping 50 meter path to the volcanic outcropping at the island's center. There you notice small but fathomless niches littered with curious homemade bundles of painted cane arrowshafts, tiny gourd bowls, two-inch embroidered squares of white muslin (*manta*) and handformed four-inch beeswax candles.

Despite the fact neither Zingg nor Lumholtz mention the Isla de los Alacranes Xapawiyemeta, this does not mean that it is not as old as the others. One friend, Werika (b. 1962) told me that his maternal grandfather (b. 1915?) told him that his "uncle" used to go to Chapala. This would take us back at least to the early 20th century if not to Lumholtz's era, and there is no reason to think the place has not been visited for a millenium. These ancestors would sit up all night [chanting] at the edge of the water with their candle lit and their takwatsi or tsamuri bundles (containing ritual implements) at hand until the next day, when a passing canoe might take them to the island. Now Chapala has become a

concentrated symbol of Xapawiyeme-ness in an era when Huichols no longer intimately traverse the landscape of western and central Mexico on foot as they once did. Much the same can be said of Haramaratsie, Hauxa Manaka and -as we saw in Chapter 2— Wirikuta; increasing rural insecurity and fencing on one hand, and, on the other, wage labor time commitments and motorized transportation are transforming Huichol territoriality. These new commodified patterns of organizing time and space are making *kiekari* discontinuous and mediated by greater dependency on state or market subsidies for its continued viability.²⁷

But let's pick up the early 20th century principle of continuous territoriality and Tatei Xapawiyeme's centripetal, counterclockwise spiral path from the sea through Talpa, Madgalena and Chapala, and follow it to the sierra: Zingg referred to a moutaintop on the eastern side of the Sierra Huichol as the one and only "Rapauwieme".

This Huichol told me that [Xapawiyeme] is a goddess who lives on the top of a hill three days away from Tuxpan, toward the East. All Huichols carry votive arrows and bowls, and other objects, and my informant said he had done this many times (1938:346).

In terms of the region's cultural geography and Huichols' Olympian endurance,
Zingg's vague "three days east" of Tutsipa could be 120 kilometers in the general
direction of the former Tepecano and Caxcan areas somewhere between

²⁷ In terms of these places' official recognition, Haramaratsie has received some protection and transportation subsidies, with at least a solid brick *xiriki* (which can serve as a small shelter) inside a tiny fenced area. Hauxa Manaká has only received a gubernatorial decree specifying a tiny place amid clearcutting operations in the Tepehuan *ejido* (or *comunidad?*) of San Bernalillo, Durango. In Wirikuta the protected places are discontinuous, and there has periodically been talk of building a new San Luis-Saltillo superhighway through there, despite a generally worded federal decree respecting Huichol cultural practices throughout some 60,000 hectares of mestizo-controlled, largely *ejidal* lands.

Juchipila or Nochistlán and La Quemada. That is, Zingg seemed to be referring to the Juchipila River valley, known for its numerous Mesoamerican conquestera fortified mountaintop sites (peñoles). It is curious that he insisted that this is the only Xapawiyemeta and that Lumholtz's identification of the other sites was simply wrong! Instead, it seems clear that a bundle of topographical features connected to other similar places by a geographical narrative combine to define a place's "Xapawiyemeness" or family resemblance.

I have already suggested that one form of such connectedness among the various places was the eastward mythological journey taken by Xapawiyeme after her emergence from the sea: a spiral succession of equivalent units, distinguished only in terms of narrative and geographical order. Werika (12.VIII.95) proffered what at first glance would seem to be a different metaphor for the relationship among these dispersed Xapawiyeme places: there is a root (naaná) connecting them. However, as Chapter 2, Section 4 demonstrated, the way Wixarika people talk about nanayari (rootedness) suggests that "roots" are narrative paths, so path and root are essentially the same.

As summarized in the last section and described at greater length in the last chapter, what appears to be really different is that the *nanayari* in the *comunidad* of San Andrés synecdochically ranks iconically analogous places in an ascending order from *kie* (*ranchería*) to *tuki* (temple) to increasingly distant primordial ancestral places (*kakaiyarixita*). With the family of narratively connected Xapawiyeme *kakaiyarixita*, no such hierarchy is evident if only because the most distant Xapawiyemeta are no longer in use. It is, however, entirely

possible that the general equation between geographic distance and ancestrality implies a hierarchy in any case.

Now, the late 20th century discursive form which favors establishing a paramount place or *primer inter pares* in order to focus government *patrimonio cultural* support (and restrict the breadth of territorial claims) now tends to skew places into a new kind of hierarchy. Werika considers that the *nana* root of Xapawiyeme extends from the place on the Isla de los Alacranes out to more out-of-the-way sites like Villa Corona and presumably the rest. This principle of organization is similar to the hierarchical paths that extend out from the primordial emergence point at Teekata to the *tukite* and finally to the *xiriki* family temples at the level of the *kie*. Hypothetically it may therefore be taken to be a pattern that applies to all five major emergence points in the *kiekari*, but the cosmologically most important place has now shifted as political and economic forces restrict Wixarika territoriality.

However, not only the ancestral places scattered along the axis that connects Xapawiyemeta in the south to Teekata in the center and Hauxa Manaka in the north are becoming ranked only as a result of recent land struggle and commodification. A clear economic and political hierarchy has already existed for a long time among places on the east-west axis as well. For instance, of the various Haramaratsie places said to exist along the Pacific coast in the west, the one at the port of San Blas, Nayarit, is paramount, perhaps due to its importance as a trade and tribute center since the 18th century. And while there are various symbolic doubles for Wirikuta along the path to the easternmost one on the San Luis Potosí steppe, the latter is unquestionably paramount because of the

abundance of a crucial ceremonial good (peyote), the number of related places there, and a cultural equation between geographical distance, historical depth and mythical importance.

Finally, according to a Tuxpan man who I met at Teekata when he and the San Andrés people I was accompanying were all fulfilling their ceremonial obligations there (and consequently more in tune with expansive meanings), Xapawiyeme also has a "brazo" ("arm") in the heart of the sierra.²⁸ His metonymic expression suggests the same kind of connectedness among places that Werika does: hierarchical ranking as much as horizontal connections along a path. This notion of hierarchical extension finds its ultimate embodiment in the xukurite (gourd bowls) kept in the tukite (temples), institutionalized in their ritual offices and constantly reconstituted in ritual narrative: microcosmic representations of the entire kiekari (Kindl 2000).²⁹

But in any case, how to account for the proliferation of places? Is "Xapawiyemeta" a fuzzy set of places defined by a bundle of topographic and geographic features that can be ranked according to the speech events in which they are indexed? To summarize this logic as concisely as possible, at particular moments each *comunidad* (or *tuki* group or even individual *kawiteru*) seems to have a different interpretation of where exactly the place of Xapawiyeme is

[&]quot;Brazo" could also refer to "hand" given the single term maamá for both body parts in Wixarika—in either case glossed as an "extension" considering the implicit subordination of the hand and arm to the torso. The kawiteru Pedro de Haro (pers. com.) employed a more political metaphor, reminiscent of those cited for Wirikuta in the previous chapter: "juzgado de primera instancia" (county court).

²⁹ As Kindl shows, the bowl's round shape is iconic with the world and its function as a cup for liquids also evokes the water sources so many ancestral places contain.

located. Part of this ambiguity can be resolved by considering that the term Xapawiyemeta refers not only to specific places but also to the general ancient *region* of Xapawiyeme, the south as Lumholtz put it, or perhaps even to the whole southern hemisphere of the prehispanic exchange sphere. This region may be identified more concretely as the trans-Tarascan lake region extending southwest from Magdalena to Chapala along the south side of the Río Grande de Santiago, the westernmost arm of the central Mexican plateau³⁰ and from Chapala northeast to the Tepecano region between the Bolaños and Juchipila rivers. However, this analysis is still static and atomistic because it leaves out the Wixarika narrative that puts the landscape in order.

In this subsection I have argued that it would be more appropriate to understand the succession of Tatei Xapawiyemetas *processually* as this divine ancestor's migration paths that uncoil in a counterclockwise spiral from her place(s) of birth in the Pacific Ocean in the southwest through one lake after another toward the northeast. Moreover, this mythological spiral could have been significant in terms of Mesoamerican geopolitics: the general association between ceremonial treks and commercial exchange in the premodern world (cf. Polanyi 1968) makes the search for connections between ancestral places and prehispanic centers of resources and political legitimacy a potentially useful hypothesis for future archaeological and ethnohistorical research. Different actors invoke, rank and indeed expand this series according to the sociopolitical context of reference.

³⁰ In fact, the westernmost Xapawiyemeta places at Talpa and Mascota occupy the very last edge of this mesa at around 1,200 meters elevation.



FIGURE 21. Territorial claim beneath the tourist gaze. *Kawiterutsixi* (council elders) and *mara'akate* from San Andrés Cohamiata leaving offerings at Xapawiyemeta (Isla de los Alacranes, Lake Chapala), August 1995.

2.2 FROM POLYSEMY TO PATRONAGE

Who are the principal actors and what are the interests at stake in a major ancestral place claim? What do Huichols demand of regional mestizo authorities who control access to ancestral places? How do they represent expansive territorial logic described in the previous subsection to non-indigenous audiences? Specifically, how do Huichol cultural brokers try to convince their counterparts in the state (or the church, in the case of the cultural revival described in the next section) that Wixarika cultural practice deserves respect and material, even territorial concessions?

Some of the answers come out in a nearly 360° series of eleven contiguous 35mm photographs I snapped on the island the same day as the Chapala ethnic encounter described below when the Huichol delegation hired two launches and made the 20 minute ride out to the Isla de los Alacranes. At the far left a Wixarika shaman prepares to perform a cure on a solidary mestiza employee of the Universidad de Guadalajara's CUACI (the ancient practice of interethnic shamanistic services). Just a few meters to the right, a mestizo tourist and his daughter observe and videotape the spectacle of the Huichol delegation demarcating the area of the island they wish to fence in, probably for the private consumption of their family and friends (the more recent practice of spectacularizing and commodifying displays of ethnic difference). Again just a few meters in front of these non-participant observers, a Wixarika community leader and a schoolteacher prepare to leave an offering for the consumption of the ancestors (kakaiyarixi) in a cleft in the rock outcropping at the highest point on the island, the mythological epicenter of the whole struggle (as ancient a practice

as shamanistic services because it is the basis of their efficacy). Further to the right, a young Wixarika activist and schoolteacher videotapes the proceedings as well, perhaps to raise the political consciousness of his students and other *comuneros* (a modern mode of the shamanistic art of narrativizing territoriality). At the center of the circle and therefore outside the photograph, a gringo anthropologist with a camera also demarcates and documents for more diverse audiences (perhaps the most modernist practice of all). And finally above the whole group a massive *chalate* fig tree graces the rocky crest of the island with its shade and strong, elegant form (surely the most ancient feature of all). Here then, in an even more condensed form than the meetings I analyze at greater length below, is a regional encounter with overlapping forms of reciprocity, representation, and spectacularized power relationships.

Yet for all that, many of the Huichols' requests were ostensibly quite humble. They were asking for chain link fencing material which they would then erect around the rocky outcropping at the center of the island and for permission to build a small *xiriki* (a two or three meter square, roofed shrine structure). They were also asking for help to ameliorate the cost of transportation in commercial motor launches to the Isla de los Alacranes, the endemic theft of ritual offerings from the place. Most adamantly, they were contesting the fact that the Chapala authorities want to condition their support for the protection of Xapawiyeme on making Huichol ceremonial practices into tourist spectacles, part of a regional economic strategy.

However, respect can be an elusive concession from people unaccustomed to accept otherness —and not all the Wixarika demands

dovetailed with the local authorities' desire for regional economic development because their demand that the authorities respect Huichols' universal human rights seemed to impinge on political and economic interests. One leader announced, "These sites are our churches; respect them" ("estos sitios son nuestras iglesias; tengan respeto para ellas"). They also made a far more radical and ancient claim for reciprocity from the state in exchange for shamanistic services when a shaman proclaimed that the survival of the planet depends on Wixarika sacrificial activities: "The rain which benefits everyone comes because the shamans make it come" ("la lluvia que beneficia a todos viene porque los chamanes la hacen llegar"). So now Huichols were not requesting but insisting on their entitlement to reciprocity from the state based on a premise the markedly Catholic PANistas who had recently won political control of the state would not be disposed to accept too readily. But from the Huichols' point of view, given how essential they are to the world, materials for building a chain-link fence and permission to construct a xiriki on about 500 square meters of the rocky, uninhabited peak in the middle of a small island controlled by the federal government are not too much to ask.31

That is, as in the Jesucristo myth cycle collected by Zingg in the 1930s, Wixaritari do not so much posit a democratic, modern social order as an organic, caste-like regional division of labor in which their shamans provide fundamental ecological conditions for the survival of all (cf. Dumont 1980). Therefore the

³¹ The two principal agencies regulating use of the lake and its islands were the Comisión Nacional de Agua, under Felipe Tito Lugo and strongly influenced by a limnologist, Dr. Guzmán Arroyo. Also important was the Plan de Desarrollo Nacional, in which Julio Carrabias was a key actor.

dominant political order in turn should provide certain material benefits to the Huichols. This complementary logic is reminiscent of the colonial Spanish administrative model of social harmony. It may very well also have encompassed the Wixaritari's role as traders in ceremonial goods (turquoise, peyote, feathers) and as ceremonial specialists serving other societies throughout the Gran Nayar region in prehispanic times.³² These terms of exchange between Huichols and regional clients are coterminous with the general form of shamanistic reciprocity within Wixarika society: as sacrificial mediators with ancestors, *mara'akate* are entitled to the lion's share of the sacrifice. This is only fair because they expend their tremendous strength divining in consecutive allnight chants or curing rituals and complying with the attendant prohibitions. In effect shamans sacrifice themselves undertaking ventures into the harrowing nocturnal underworld, just as Wixarika *hikuritamete* (peyote people) walked 40 days in the desert to hunt and return with the deer-heart plant.

Of course, independent of such reciprocity-based arguments, the sheer fact of seeing a contingent of some 20 generally elderly, befeathered shamans wearing white *manta traje* (muslin Indian clothes) and distinctive handmade *soyate* (ixtle fiber) hats ornamented with eagle feathers, and an equal number of young, more eclectically dressed Indians with video cameras walking rapidly down the main street of Chapala had its own performative force in a mestizo region scarcely accustomed to seeing more than a handful of Huichol artisans or

³² In traditional rural areas, belief in the efficacy of Wixarika shamanism is still widespread. I was struck by the moral authority of the old *curandera* and *mara'akame* doña Andrea Ríos, eldest daughter of Furst and Myerhoff's famed anthropological informant, don

pilgrims passing through at a time. As we walked down the main street, the local inhabitants simply stopped and stared. Some of the numerous gringo tourists on hand half-trotted alongside the entourage of shamans and community leaders as it maintained a quick, determined pace (*el paso huichol*, as it is known to the literally breathless admiration of non-Indians) down the main street to the edge of Lake Chapala. They singled me out from the group, asked if I spoke English and then peppered me with questions: Are these people from Oaxaca? Why are they here? Why now? Who are the Huichols?... I was perforce at the center of a spontaneous teach-in.

In the meetings from which I excerpt representative discourse fragments in the next subsection, the PANista authorities were polite but conservative and ethnocentric. They did not recognize the sanctity of Xapawiyemeta, its provenance in a religious tradition established in the area for at least twice as long as their own, or the fatuousness of the tourists whose eyes and cameras were free to take images of the place, to say nothing of their hands which transform offerings into curios to decorate their houses. Indeed, the PANista authorities' main basis for supporting Huichol ritual activities at all was precisely that Indian ceremonialism might be a good tourist draw to the towns of the region or an interesting educational experience for the local school children. To a greater degree than their PRI precursors, the PANistas sought to mobilize cultural tradition more to save the economy than to legitimize the state (Liffman forthcoming). This position was motivated in part by the fact that at the time of

José Matsiwa Ríos, as she performed a classical (and very expensive) sucking cure on a poor

these meetings in 1995 the area had been hurt by increasing pollution and declining water levels from the construction of more dams along the Río Lerma tributaries upstream of the lake and by sharply reduced Mexican disposable income since the previous year's 65 percent currency devaluation.

There is a confluence of interests here because like the tourist-hungry PANistas, Huichols also depend on the market for "magical ethnic art". However, they make a sharp distinction between commodified objects that may refer to ceremonial practice but are produced for the market and those practices per se or the places where they are carried out. Conversely, some of the other local mestizo authorities wanted the Wixaritari around because indigenous ritual activity is an authenticating source of identity for their Nueva Mexicanidad-related groups, and they would like to be able to participate in authentic (peaceful) Aztecan rituals with their would-be hermanos huicholes (Huichol brothers). In particular, in the proceedings we are about to review, a mestizo politician sought to adopt an indigenous voice to promote his own influence, at least among his own group if not among the Wixaritari themselves. A more famous example was the longhaired, traje-wearing presidential candidate of the Partido Ecologista Verde de México, who had a bull killed for ceremonial-style caldo during his campaign stop in San Andrés Cohamiata (Liffman 1996).

Although absent from these meetings, another potentially important group in terms of public opinion was indexed by the inquisitive North American tourists described above. That is, the north shore of Lake Chapala features one of the largest concentrations of US residents anywhere in Latin America,

mestizo worker in Atonalisco, Nayarit (cf. Furst 1972; Myerhoff 1974).

upwards of 5,000 during the pleasant winter dry season. The largest of three US community organizations representing them is the Lake Chapala Society, with 1,600 members, many of them retirees enjoying the enhanced purchasing power of their US Social Security checks in Mexico. This middle-class leisure population is economically crucial to the region and also values a folkloric ambience (within the limits set by its age, conservatism and language skills). These interlocutors have expressed interest in indigenous themes, which are reported on with some regularity by the Guadalajara area's English language newspaper, *The Colony Reporter* (Sean Godfrey, pers. com.; www.guadalajarareporter.com/). In fact the editors and I arranged for the Xapawiyemeta claim to receive major coverage in that publication (e.g., 15 Sep 95), and up to a point Huichol strategists consider crafting their statements to reach this group of resident readers.

In addition to the PANista government, other social sectors militating against a positive reception of Huichol claims on the Isla de los Alacranes have considerable importance in the general economic and political structure of the conjuncture. The union of fishermen who use the island (under the leadership of a Sr. Morales and the tour operators who run motor launches to it did not find it in their immediate interest to subsidize Wixaritari pilgrims. Likewise, the merchants who enjoy federal permits to operate food stalls and small restaurants along the edges of the shady island are not disposed to cede access rights to any part of it. Neither are local vendors of industrialized artesanía, who might well fear competition from Wixarika pilgrims discounting attractive handmade beaded bowls and jewelry emanating the aura of indigenous authenticity.

Reinforcing all this, the federal officials who have granted access to lacustrine resources to an established set of regional clients are ill-disposed to upset the status quo in favor of poor people just passing through on their way to the lake from the mountainous northern reaches of the state of Jalisco, much less Durango or Nayarit. Finally one must mention the underlying mixture of condescension, revulsion and mythification that constitutes regional racism and does not lend itself to making material concessions to "Huicholitos". In this perspective, Huichos' virtues —if they have any— are more symbolically rooted in the prehispanic past than in sharing territory with contemporary mestizos.

2.3 TOURISM, LA NUEVA MEXICANIDAD AND AUTOCHTHONY

This subsection analyzes discourse fragments from an interethnic encounter held on the shores of Lake Chapala at the Universidad de Guadalajara's Hotel Montecarlo in Chapala, Jalisco, in early August 1995 near one of the Wixaritari's cardinal ancestral zones: Xapawiyemeta. This encounter was part of a series of meetings held with municipal authorities from the Chapala area. The meetings culminated the survey that ceremonial elders, *comunidad* authorities and younger political activists had undertaken of the various Xapawiyemeta places in the Chapala region (see ff. #26). They were now presenting their (not entirely conclusive) conclusions as to the exact locations of the Xapawiyemetas in the area and their demands.

For the San Andrés representatives with whom I visited Chapala on 8 August as part of an official delegation representing the three *comunidades*, the land rights NGO Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas (AJAGI), and the Universidad de Guadalajara's Centro Universitario de Apoyo a las *Comunidades* Indígenas (CUACI), the authentic Xapawiyeme place was unequivocally on the Isla de los Alacranes. Set in a vast expanse of water with subterranean passages and a massive *xapa* canopy overhead, this is surely as classical a setting as any of the Xapawiyeme places, and it dovetails with Wixaritari pilgrims' commercial agenda of migrant labor and ethnic art sales in the Guadalajara region. We will also see how representatives of mestizo lakeside municipalities attempted to channel this cultural value into their own identity politics and political-economic schemes. The day-long conference at the

Montecarlo revolved around Huichol complaints about the difficulty of reaching the site and the lack of respect for their ceremonial practices and offerings, assuming they manage to actually reach the site on one of the normally expensive launch rides.

The coordinated strategy announced by the CUACI and Huichol elders from all four gubernancias (civil cargo hierarchies with a gobernador: Tateikie San Andrés, Tuapurie Santa Catarina, Wautia San Sebastián and Tutsipa Tuxpan de Bolaños) had several goals. The first was to gain official recognition of the Xapawiyeme places by constructing xirikite (shrines) there. This exemplifies an ancient pattern in a new, more public context: ceremonial practice has always been a basic form of territorialization because it performatively engenders places through sacrificial acts for the divine ancestors who inhabit them. Now the ancient ceremonial performance is conducted and narrated with a multi-ethnic and not just ancestral audience in mind. In order to help stake their ceremonial claim to the places, the Huichols' hope was to get the ayuntamientos (town councils) representing the north shore of Lake Chapala to pressure the Comisión Nacional de Agua to issue a decreto (decree) recognizing Huichol rights in the area and to provide construction materials and chain-link fencing for the planned xiriki as well as transportation subsidies to the island.³³ The apparent dependence on government largesse implicit in these demands is notable and while it may very well be understood as the ancient expectation of reciprocity for

³³ A boatride for about 7 passengers cost N\$90 (about US \$13 or four daily minimum wages at the time); it would cost each Huichol nearly a half-day's migrant farm labor income or the profits from several small beaded gourd bowls for the ethnic art market to reach the island from the shore, to say nothing of the rest of the trip to Chapala from Guadalajara and to

shamanistic services, it seems to contradict the more autarkic tendencies in the autonomy discourses commonly enunciated in the 1990s. In any case, the lack of a rapid government response may reflect the Wixaritari's dubious value as a political clientele in the area.

A 5pm meeting at the Hotel on 3 August was held outdoors on the attractive patio/deck overlooking the lake. The Huichol law student and activist 'uxatiki Samuel Salvador (from San Miguel) moderated it under the general auspices of the CUACI, and various *kawiterutsixi* from the four Wixarika *gobernancias* had been brought there as consultants and arbiters.³⁴ Lic. Beatriz Vázquez of the CUACI defined this whole event in bureaucratic terms as a *diagnóstico*, which would be followed by a *concientización* (consciousness raising).³⁵

The performance was organized around formal statements followed by questions and answers. The official mestizo authorities included "Javier Rojas", a serious young man who cultivated an air of power and reserve often associated with politicians, the Secretaria de Cultura of Chapala's PAN-controlled ayuntamiento, Maestra "Araceli Figueroa". (Figueroa was already viewed negatively by Huichols for being insensitive to Wixarika ceremonial practices and instead inclined to promote them for tourism.) Another mestizo interlocutor was "Apolonio Vizcaíno", who introduced himself as the Secretario

there from the sierra.

³⁴ 'uxatiki has since gained national prominence as a rising Huichol politican and spokesman for general indigenous causes.

³⁵ I was not clear on who would be made aware of what they did not already know -the mestizos of Huichol demands for religious freedom or Huichols of mestizo injustice.

of the *Comunidad* Indígena of Ajijic (an upscale village, home to many of the area's US expats and snowbirds, just a few kilometers west of Chapala). Vizcaíno sought to position himself as a mediator between orthodox mestizo power and the Huichols, repeatedly asserting that he too was an *indígena aunque ya mezclado* ("Indian though now mixed" —not a mestizo but a mixed Indian since some undefined point in the historical past). Hence, one of the diagnostic features of this scenario was the appearance of autonomous actors from civil society who sought to insert themselves as post-mestizo brokers at a time when the revolutionary mestizo state's capacity to reproduce patron-client relations was decaying (De la Peña 1995).

To sketch the discourse of this would-be mediator, Vizcaíno scarcely addressed the Wixaritari's concrete concerns. Instead, it struck me and several of them as bizarre that he opened his talk by attempting to establish his own credentials as an Indian. To that end, he explained that his group (jocularly known as Maicito –"Little Maize", possibly a nickname for the then powerful New Age organization MAIS [Mancomunidad Americano Indio Solar]) in the comunidad indígena of Ajijic, Jalisco, holds a Danza del Sol, attended by all kinds of Indians from all over greater America including Tepehuanes, Tarahumaras, Lakotas, some unspecified people from southern Mexico, and a number of Huichols who he named one by one.

These included some people from San Andrés Cohamiata who use Ajijic with its large US expatriate population, stylish galleries, picturesque plaza and hospitable self-made Indians as a commercial base. These partial names and epithets, which Vizcaíno was apparently trying to represent as a political

clientele or at least as a set of unsolicited personal references, included "'Rafael' el mara'akame", his son, 'Carlos' (a sanguine artesanía producer), "Carrillo" (another well-known artist), and "'Tacho', el buen amigo" who he further characterized incongruously –or condescendingly— as a "boy who has a ceremonial office" ("muchacho que tiene cargo"). A complementary type of mestizo discourse has been noted during mestizos' emergence as a national ethnic group and political force in the late colonial period, as they were in the process of winning control of the state from the creoles. At that time brokers striving to organize and represent the numerically overwhelming Indian masses claimed messianic connection with the divine Spanish crown rather than with the magical indigenous base as is now popular (cf. Van Young 1989). Hence this vignette is a glimpse at the other side of the mestizo historical trajectory.

One of the more astute young Wixarika leaders, "Dagoberto Muñoz", immediately contested Vizcaíno's "buen amigo" Tacho's legitimacy as any kind of Wixarika representative. He openly characterized Tacho as a professional Huichol with "no cargo other than a load of bullshit", 37 who commercializes the culture, hangs out in the tourist center Puerto Vallarta and takes non-indigenous people on trips to Wirikuta –a commodification of sacrificial practice that Wixaritari widely despise. In the sierra as well, Muñoz often vilifies outsiders in formal public settings; this is a time-honored way for

³⁶ My initial ethnohistorical research indicated a key role for culturally eclectic ringleaders in mobilizing resident indigenous people and traveling migrants (*forasteros*) in the *fronterizo* towns ringing the Sierra Huichol.

³⁷ Thus directing the ever-Rabelaisian tendency of Indian humor to the close kinship between *cargo* (office) and *carga* (load, burden).

political leaders to gain status or establish their legitimacy in the *comunidad*. It is essentially a double ethnic strategy: defend Wixarika cultural authenticity and marginalize outsiders or local rivals. Here he had upgraded it to a multi-ethnic regional form as mestizos make claims on the terrain of indigenous ethnic identity.

Finally Apolonio alluded to enjoying institutional support from the Huichol Consejo de Ancianos (the official body of senior ritual authorities with the emergent indigenous regional administration, the Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes de Jalisco –UCIH-J.) This seemed implausible given the UCIH's generally negative stance toward outsiders. In this bid for legitimacy as a mediator, he pointedly announced that Ajijic's village fiestas were to be held from 9-13 November that year and that Huichols would have the right to sell their *artesanía* there. While within the general boundaries of the logic of reciprocity described above, under the circumstances Huichols instantly saw the offer as woefully inadequate at best and an attempt to buy political representation at worst. The public sale of representation is not within those boundaries.

Returning now to the authoritative young PANista politician, Javier Rojas was quite unlike his would-be Indian counterpart Vizcaíno. He opened by responding to a specific Huichol complaint: the lack of support from local boatowners for their transportation needs. He argued indirectly that the Huichols are responsible for this problem beause they often undertake collective trips with little advance notice. Aside from his paternalistic assumption that

activities in the indigenous religious sphere should be regulated by mestizo government bureauracies hundreds of miles away from where they are undertaken, he failed to acknowledge that Huichols' "failure" could have been due in part to the material difficulties attendant to calling from the sierra, where in fact at that time there were no telephones (and as of this writing, neither of the two official numbers in San Andrés functions). Rojas emphasized that it is crucial for Huichols to advise the Chapala authorities in advance the next time they plan to descend from the sierra to perform ceremonies at the lake; then transportation support would in fact materialize. In a classic delegation of responsibility, this reasonable sounding if condescending advice came from an assistant to the very presidente municipal of Chapala. However, just the day before this authority had falsely promised the Huichol delegation that the fishermen's union would provide them boats to the island, but Rojas was not to be held responsible for his boss's failings.³⁸ To assuage any doubts, he claimed to have direct contacts with both the tour boat operators (lancheros) and the fishermen's association, who could also provide boats for transporting Huichols to the Isla.

These attempts by the PAN and La Nueva Mexicanidad to entice Indians with a clientelistic relationship in which politicians would mediate and commodify Wixarika religious activities was totally unacceptable to all members of the indigenous delegation. Huichols may engage in regional patron-client relations for commercial reasons as well as during political crises like the

³⁸ This rhetorical strategy of fragmenting responsibility is precisely opposed to – and probably the reason for – the Wixarika posture of assigning collective blame to mestizos or non-

revolution or the Lozada movement, and in more everyday political contexts like government welfare and development programs. However, outsiders' attempts to appropriate core Wixarika symbolic practices in return for material rewards remains as contested as the public sale of mestizo political legitimacy. Interethnic exchanges should not commodify core cultural goods. Conversely, at no point did these mestizo actors – for whom the regional space is governed only by their logic – accept the notion of an autonomous, unregulated indigenous ceremonial territoriality extending beyond the Wixaritari's sierra homeland. The mestizos' territorial imaginary is based on a rather different vision than the Wixaritari.

Nevertheless, in the context of an interethnic meeting in the Zapatista era, the PANista officials felt obliged to pronounce a discourse of openness, albeit one with a panoptical dimension that would benefit mestizos more than Indians. Figueroa, the secretaria de cultura, repeatedly emphasized the need for "difusión y comunicación sobre las actividades de los grupos étnicos" ("publicity and communication about the activities of ethnic groups") in order to avoid misunderstandings in the future. In this utterance, Giménez's definition of ethnicity as a rubric for state control over the population, with which the chapter opened, could not be clearer. For instance, she said, a group from Wautia San Sebastián had gone to a local escuela primaria and gave a presentation about their culture. The implication was that the Wautiatari were "indios buenos" because they advised the authorities of their plans in advance. Here the cultural performance took place in a state institution rather than the tourist market but

Indians in general (teiwarixi) when one of us violates local norms.

these PANistas' prime objective was to represent Indian culture in a remunerative way.

Returning now to the concrete matter of supplying Wixarika pilgrims with transportation to the Xapawiyemeta island, the disliked *secretaria* claimed that because of the lack of advance notice, there was no money for the second *lancha* the delegation needed in order to go out to the island that same day. She, like her male counterpart, tried to draw a moral out of this failure: if the Indians were to give information in advance, "la gente participa, apoya" ("people [i.e., mestizo people] participate, give support"). She asserted that on the previous occasion alluded to above, the Chapala people paid for 40 Wautiatari to travel to the island, supplied them with *despensa* (foodstuffs), and later financed their *transporte* (presumably local taxis or busfare back to Guadalajara—about US\$1 per person assuming the city fathers had to pay the government regulated *transportistas* anything for the service). She did recommend going to talk to the head of the Chapala lake commission and –as if to cajole the Huichols into cooperating—mentioned that there is support from el señor Presidente Municipal for protecting the ancestral place.

The secretaria now asked rhetorically if the Huichols couldn't produce some text about why they come to Chapala "que relata en forma genérica en lo que consiste las ceremonias, el objetivo, sentido, etcétera para apreciarlo" ("that narrates generically what the ceremonies consist of, their goal, meaning, etcetera in order to appreciate it"). She thus invoked the rationalist argument that overcoming ignorance is the best way to create respect, but ignored the basic fact that Wixaritari deeply resent the unauthorized or gratuitous diffusion of cultural

information as well as the adage that tall fences make good neighbors —i.e., legal guarantees are more enduring than marketing.

The Huichols' resistance to being publicized is part of Wixaritari's wider resistance to the panoptical presumption that they, like other Mexican Indians, must expose themselves culturally in order to be accepted. Even though they may cooperate in such publicity by producing ethnic art and even participating in government *indigenista* pageants, both of which have long been key to the national project, they know that such spectacularization and subjects them to a new, more insidious form of economic exploitation that capitalizes the sacred. So, like the Indians of the US Southwest in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, while Huichols have let people make them into signifiers for the state's invention of history, have sold artistic extensions of that knowledge on their terms and thereby opened a space for the commodification of culture, they increasingly guard cultural knowledge and delimit outsider participation in their ceremonies.³⁹ Hence the resistance to letting the eager adept Apolonio speak as an Indian.

Now, various Huichols asked to speak for themselves. Araceli (the secretaria de cultura) and Javier (the young PANista) yawned but politely acceded. Their expressions of boredom were not very likely lost on the Wixaritari but during the brief ten minute lapse before these two gregarious young politicians departed in a big, important hurry, they had to listen, often rather uncomfortably.

³⁹ Although beyond the scope of this work, the highly contested, rapidly evolving field of Huichol artistic representation of the ancestral and ceremonial has been a site of cultural negotiation and economic development since the 1960s.

"Horacio Morales", the *segundo gobernador* of Tutsipa Tuxpan de Bolaños, insisted that the Wixaritari had come to this meeting in order to *rescatar* (rescue) Wixarika ceremonial activity so that it can "funcionar como antes" ("function as it did before"). This was a brilliant rhetorical move because *rescate* (rescue) was a key metaphor utilized by *indigenista patrimonio cultural* programs in the 1980s. This creative Wixarika speaker was reappropriating government paternalism by putting Huichols in charge of their own rescue. However, he did not specify when the disruption of ceremonial activity "before" which things still functioned might have occurred. Nor for that matter did this Huichol interlocutor specify which in the historical string of disruptions he meant to address, thus generalizing the sense of mestizo disorder.

Morales went on to demand the same respect for Wixarika ritual as that given to what he strategically described as the *ceremonias* held for *nuestro Señor* (our Lord) in the church. In this second appropriation of dominant categories, he relativized Christian religious practice by using the more anthropological term *ceremonias* (normally applied only to non-Catholic rituals), rather than the standard Spanish *culto* ("worship service"). In the very same utterance he situated himself within Catholicism by using the shared possessive "*nuestro Señor*" (our Lord) (cf. the earlier definition of ancestral places as "our churches").

This doubly situated discourse fragment indicates an astute reading of Zapatista-era cultural politics: like many Huichols Horacio was working both sides of the post-*indigenista* street by simultaneously indexing (agnostic)

⁴⁰ It is apposite that Lorenzo held this office: as a bilingual, "modern" assistant to the tatuwani (gobernador tradicional, the head of the traditional civil cargo hierarchy), the segundo gobernador mediates relations with the state.

anthropological authority to rise above mere indigenousness and identifying with (Christian) doxa to command respect among mestizo equals. In another artful display of doubleness, Horacio's concrete demands to the mestizo authorities were both unequivocal and implicitly reaffirmed the mestizo political order's legitimate monopoly on exercising the police function: they could be responsible for controlling all the visitors to the island, including the predators who "desalojar o llevar ofrendas" ("move or take offerings").⁴¹

Next Dionisio, the aspiring broker from Ajijic, made a bolder effort to both coopt and identify himself with the Huichols. He first invoked the New Age ecological category of *la madre tierra* (Mother Earth) as an element that has to be universally respected. He then extended the metaphor of indigenousness to include a real estate incentive for ceremonial activity: "Ajijic también es comunidad indígena, quiere donar tierra para que se construya un callihuey allá" (Ajijic is [like the Wixaritari's home communities] also a comunidad indígena; it wants to donate land for a [Huichol] temple to be built there"). This is to say that he wanted both to convince Huichols of his authenticity as an Indian and to have resident indigenous ritual practitioners serve his Nueva Mexicanidad tribe.

In this sense perhaps Vizcaíno's discourse resembled that of prehispanic and colonial era indigenous *principales* more than a late colonial *cacique*. At the

⁴¹ This demand for the sanctity of offerings is as representative of long-term Wixarika values as their presumption of ceremonial reciprocity with politically dominant peoples. Another fieldwork example was the fury aroused among Wixaritari with whom we shared a ruined 19th century bourgeois house in Tepic, Nayarit, when I told them of an old gringo hippie living in a ruined 1950s luxury beachfront hotel in San Blas, Nayarit. This man paid local kids to pick Wixarika *mawarixi* (offerings) out of the water at the cardinal ancestral place of Haramaratsie and bring them to him. He had hung dozens of objects on his wall: a derelict, uncaptioned ethnological cabinet.

same time he shared the Chapala PANistas' economically motivated voyeurism. The difference is that it went beyond the desire for commodified spectacle to a more personal attempt to interiorize an esoteric indigenous culture into his friends' post-mestizo lifestyle. As if he were a real estate agent trying to sell some credulous, homeless Indians on the advantages of his location, in this public political meeting Apolonio attempted to depict Ajijic as a substitute for the Sierra Huichol: high up with a fine view of the lake (although there are in fact few lakes in Huichols' canyon-filled mountains). He now explicitly revealed his close parallel to the PANista authorities by advising the Huichols to talk with all the *presidentes municipales* as well as with him –hardy a confidence-builder for Huichols. At least he was enacting his desire to please those authorities in attendance at that moment with his acknowledgement of their legitimacy as interlocutors in the disposition of ancestral places, surely an indication of his subordinate political position.

Next, as if to mirror the Tutsipa segundo gobernador Horacio's clever simultaneous identification with and relativization of Christian culture, Javier Rojas spoke of the "penetración española en el territorio indígena" ("Spanish penetration in indigenous territory"). In this example of situated discourse, the speaker again put himself on the side of the opposite ethnic group, or at least shifted himself out of the standard argument of his ethnic group and permitted an expansive vision of indigenous territoriality to exist in the past. 42

⁴² This double identification and double evasion may be the founding trope of mestizo identity: a simultaneous identification with indigenous victimization, particularly in its noble 16th century form, and hispanic power, which depends on the continued exploitation of Indians and indigenousness.

Finally, as if to exemplify the regional division of labor with which I began this section on Xapawiyemeta and to show how Wixaritari bridge the gap between their ceremonial territoriality and a regional audience, a marvelous, only partially bilingual Huichol speaker ended the session. He stated the plain fact that despite all the talk, it's still difficult to assure access to the ancestral places here and in Wirikuta, San Luis Potosí. He explained the logic of such territorially extensive ceremonial practices:

"Le duele el corazón si muere una familia, un ganado, la milpa. Allá en el pueblo hay de todo. Los jicareros son los representantes legítimos que afrentan todo esto". ("It pains the heart if a family member, livestock or the cornfield dies. There in the pueblo there is every kind of thing [in the way of problems]. The temple cargo officials are the legitimate representatives who face all this.")

As in the next section, here we see a close identification of traditional authority —in this case, the temple *cargos*— with the reproduction of territoriality: as a result of their sacrificial practices, "cuando se moja es para todos" (when it [the ground] gets wet, it's for everyone). Once, in a ceremony in San Andrés the debonair Hayukarita ritual authority Pedro Carrillo asserted this meteorological ethnocentrism to me even more bluntly: Huichols make the weather. As suggested above and documented at least since Zingg, it is a classic Huichol claim that their ceremonial activity benefits everyone in a multi-ethnic region. Now —before a multi-ethnic audience in the new legal and discursive space that has opened up since the emergence of a neoliberal regime— they claim that their importance extends to the whole planet.

For dessert, the Huichols ate the Ajijic Newager Apolonio. This gave me quiet pleasure, for once it was someone other than the generally burdensome

anthropologist who seemed to be the object of mirth, as my long probationary period in the community seemed to have type-cast me. Dagoberto: "Ah, y ;qué clase de indígenas son Uds.?" ("Oh, and what kind of Indians are you-all?") Apolonio replied again with the often-heard argument that his people may be mezclados but they are of the same blood as Indians. (Here he used the unmarked participle "mixed" rather than the ethnically loaded noun mestizo.) In contrast to my pleasure at being a guest of these Indians -politically subsumed on their side of the offensive against mestizo politicians— you could almost hear the hapless would-be broker exclaim that at least he has more Indian blood than this gringo interloper blithely taking notes at the side of the room. 43 Horacio, in response to Dionisio's invitation to come up and see their callihuey (Huicholinspired temple), replied glibly and with a knowing glance at his colleagues, "Oh sure, sometime if we're in the neighborhood, why not?". One can imagine his ancestors employing similar discretion and irony with the Franciscan priests who sought to cajole them into church in strategic hamlets (reducciones) during the colonial and independence periods.

In closing this section we see that even as Huichol brokers invoke a general model of regional reciprocity to justify their access to ancestral places and to demand more of the state resources on which they now depend, they both gesture toward Zapatista discourses calling for indigenous autonomy and haughtily insist on maintaining their ethnic difference on which both reciprocal and autonomous models are predicated. At the same time, their mestizo

⁴³ Although as a member of the two non-lost tribes of Israel, I may identify with Indians as culturally marginalized people with a rich esoteric tradition and intellectually nuanced critique of the dominant, I never claimed to be indigenous.

interlocutors seek to restrict Huichol territoriality, appropriate the cultural difference through spectacle and efface it through an identity politics that would make some mestizos into Indians. More generally, the situated discourses on both sides of the ethnic divide point to the unevenly contested nature of both *lo mestizo* and *lo indio* in contemporary Mexico.

3. CLASSROOMS: TATUTSI MAXAKWAXI

The previous two sections of this chapter have examined conflicts over agrarian territory linked to the colonial titles and in its broader sense as part of the preshipanic kiekari. This section describes the foundational meetings of a pedagogically-based movement called Tatutsi Maxakwaxi (Our Greatgrandfather Deertail, a primordial shaman-guide). It is dedicated not to reclaiming specific territories or places but to reviving a sense of the intrinsic importance of all Wixarika territory to collective survival. In these meetings, held in the comunidad indígena of San Andrés Cohamiata in the village of San Miguel Huaixtita, several dozen Huichols sought to arrive at a collective public agreement about their culture's territorial basis by formally defining what kiekari means. Corresponding to the expanded scale of territoriality being addressed in this movement, the range of non-indigenous actors opposed to it was also far wider: the statewide PAN leadership and the Catholic Church (Liffman 1995). Following this tendency, the next chapter describes an even wider-scale collision over Huichol territoriality, although of course historically the gravest and most acute violence has involved the type of agrarian conflict described in the first section of this chapter.

At the very least, this section like the last one deals with a complex regional dynamic and includes some of the same actors: 1) the new Huichol leadership identified in part with the regional organization (UCIH-J) that has sought to exercise some para-governmental functions in the region; 2) some *kawiterutsixi*, who in effect constitute the traditional Wixarika spiritual leadership;

3) the state university's indigenous affairs agency (CUACI); and 4) the PANista government, now of the state of Jalisco rather than just one *municipio*. In addition to these groups of actors, there were: 5) people with specifically educational interests linked to the same NGO (AJAGI) as well as another, private university –this one with progressive Jesuit elements (the ITESO, Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores, Occidente); 6) the Franciscan mission, whose most recent attempt to evangelize the Huichols dates to the 1950s (Yáñez 2000; R Rojas 2000); and 7) the young Wixaritari who are likely to be future leaders of the *comisariado de bienes comunales* and of the UCIH-J, who come from the immediate area of this same village –San Miguel— as many of the current new elites.

Aside from the convergence of diverse, powerful regional actors on one tiny village in the heart of the Sierra Madre Occidental, the most defining features of this cultural revival project is that it takes place precisely in one of the most heterodox areas of the Sierra Huichol. San Miguel has a low index of ceremonial participation and a high degree of literacy, bilingualism, and integration into the monetized economy of livestock and other activities. At the same time that the cultural revival movement centered around the school takes on much of its meaning by opposing the assimilating effects of regional economic modernization, it is also profoundly antagonistic to two other prominent regional influences: Franciscan and Protestant evangelization.

These competing Christian religious movements have diametrically opposed forms of hybridity: mestizo Fransciscan missionaries explicitly appropriate markedly "traditional" Wixarika elements in order to achieve a

convergence between the two religions despite their radically different premises (Liffman 1995). Conversely, Huichol Protestant missionaries want a radical divergence between religions despite their implicit retention of fundamental shared premises and practices (language, maize agriculture and especially a belief in the efficacy of shamanistic sorcerers). It was just this belief in the negative efficacy of shamanism along with the social and medical costs of ceremonies (particularly the drinking) that motivated the converts to distance themselves from such practices in the first place (Otis 1998). Both Christian religions' subversion of cultural boundaries (*i.e.*, by outsiders wanting in and insiders wanting out) is what makes them so inimical to the partisans of Tatutsi Maxakwaxi.⁴⁴

Adolfo García, the Baptist missionary pilot from Zacatecas who drops the radios, expressed deep contempt and fear of what he called indigenous witchcraft and bloodletting. According to the NPR story, recalcitrant heretics have been placed in the *cepo* (stocks) by communal authorities of Tuapurie, and some authorities (*kawiterutsixi*, one assumes) at the *tuki* of Keuruwetia Las Latas may force converts to accept *hikuritame* (peyote gathering) *cargos* or face expulsion from the *comunidad*. However, during my fieldwork people in San Andrés told me of similar airdrops and showed me one of the now inoperative devices which had by no means sparked a wave of conversions. Perhaps the same number of people in San Andrés as Santa Catarina have converted as a result of intermittent Protestant missionary efforts since the 1950s, including a Wycliffe bible translation. I have no information on whether or how long

⁴⁴ Listen to the six-minute National Public Radio report of 19 November 2001 on missionaries in the Huichol sierra at www.npr.org. To a surprising degree, this US news story (as well as the newspaper followup in the Boston Globe of 20 January 2002, pA6) adopts the neoorthodox Huichol line (and that of such theorists as David Stoll (1982)). That is, they treat Protestant converts as unwitting, suggestible victims of North American propaganda who pose a severe threat to their communities. In these reports, the conversion of roughly 300 Huichols in the area of Nueva Colonia in the comunidad of Tuapurie Santa Catarina is represented as the direct outcome of missionary efforts since 1998 and specifically as the result of little red shortwave radios preset to a fundamentalist transmitter in Hamilton, Ontario. These have been dropped from airplanes that the news stories treat as a bizarre event in the timeless mountains: "the strange sound of a propeller engine echoing off the canyon walls" (Boston Globe, op. cit.). The saturation airdrops are part of an Israeli-based operation called Galcom International that has distributed 300,000 such radios worldwide since 1988 -and 3,000 in this area of the Sierra Huichol from just two flights. See www.galcom.com to grasp the global reach and technological sophistication of this operation. Billy Graham has denied involvement with the group, which may have claimed to enjoy his endorsement.

As we will see, at its inception these partisans characterized the school as standing for a profound negation of cultural (though not technological or political) hybridity: a revival of "pure", traditional cultural forms combined with political and technological progress. Despite the fact that the Gran Nayar region was under direct albeit intermittent colonial rule by 1722, the speed of recent social change these rivals areas like Papua New Guinea or the Amazon that were only contacted by agents of nation-states for the first time in living memory. The speed with which conflicts have taken shape is matched by the intensity of interests focused on area. Both Franciscans and Huichols were very conscious of the resonance that this cultural-territorial dispute had with the Zapatista revolt in Chiapas, and it generated an agitated statewide and national controversy on broad national questions: the right of Catholic missionaries to maintain property within indigenous communities and of such communities' degree of hegemony and autonomy (Liffman 1995).

Prominent in the process of ideological formation that defined the conflict over Tatutsi Maxakwaxi was the objectification of cultural property in the form of *el costumbre*⁴⁵ and the condemnation of "outside" influences. I argue that

ground-based proselytism by outsiders may have been aimed at Santa Catarina but I suspect conditions in the two *comunidades* are similar. Assuming similar activity has taken place in San Sebastián, given a population of 10-15,000 in the three sierra *comunidades*, the conversion rate is well under 10 percent but this is not to say a millennial shift to a new religious configuration could not occur amid a massive crisis as it did during the conquest of the El Nayar chiefdom in the 18th century (Coyle 1998). For now, the Huichol Protestant preacher Pablo Avila, who is also heard in the NPR story, effectively concurs with Otis's model of converts motivated less by "The gods must be crazy"-style airdrops and more by fear of Huichol witchcraft (as well as bad peyote visions, alcoholism and ritual expenditures). Avila apparently views at least the first of these four as pervasive local causes for conversion.

⁴⁵ Many indigenous peoples use the masculine pronoun with this noun—which is treated as feminine in the standard dialect of Spanish—to mark it as "Indian tradition". In general Huichols apply masculine articles to Spanish terms more frequently than native Spanish

there was a millenial "invention of anti-tradition" that defined certain influences as "external" and then proscribed them in theory if not practice. Although quite unlike the senses of *kiekari* developed in the context of land struggle and ancestral place claims described in the previous two sections, the definitions of *kiekari* that emerged in Tatutsi Maxakwaxi were similar to the others because to an even greater extent it is treated as a bounded, totalizing category.

To varying extents, all three Huichol senses of *kiekari* resemble structural-functionalist models that anthropologists used to construct about the cultures they studied. This may very well reflect the same historical imperatives for systematicity that fostered the 20th century social scientific models. In this case, such highly coherent accounts can be understood as being constructed in part to articulate with NGO development agencies' funding requirements, state legal and administrative categories and Zapatista era autonomy discourses. However, it is evident from the partial indigenization of outside actors and their discourses that the global and local levels shape each other.

As an example of such local discursive agency, a newly emergent concept for development that Huichols have articulated in the context of NGO and university-supported projects is *yirameka*. They translate this term as "recursos naturales" (natural resources), but the Huichol actors have explicitly distinguished this sense of "recursos" from "mercancía" (commodity) and include people as one

speakers do, and by the same token they also tend to feminize Wixarika terms when indexing them in Spanish discourse. The implicit gendered hierarchy is obvious but contradictory: generically "feminine" indigenous practices receive greater status by masculinizing (and collectivizing) it as *el costumbre* but without compromising its indigenous nature.

of its components. A principal connotation is "esencias de la vida" (essences of life).46

Now, to set the stage for Tatutsi Maxakwaxi, in 1964 the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI), Mexico's assimilation and development-oriented bureau of indigenous affairs, had just arrived in San Andrés and began to train the first bilingual *promotores* for various government modernization programs (De la Peña 2001; Rojas 1993). There were still no Huichol *maestros* or primary school graduates. Not many years earlier (1953) the Franciscan order had, for the first time since the revolution, formally reinitiated evangelization in the *comunidad* of San Andrés (Gómez Canedo 1987). Over the next decade they built a mission and school both in Tsikwaita San Miguel and Hauxamayewe Santa Clara.⁴⁷

Forty years after these modernization efforts, graduates of these very mission schools led the organization of a locally run school that insisted on the

⁴⁶ Grimes (1981:134-35) defines the stem *yira* and generalized form *yirariyari* as "retoño" (bud). See the analysis of the metaphor "nanayari" in Chapter 2, Section 4.

⁴⁷ The relationship between such infrastructure development and social change is clear. Santa Clara, approximately 8 kms. north of Tateikie San Andrés village and just a few hundred meters west of the unpaved road leading from Tateikie to the crossroads at Santa Cruz, is like San Miguel in that it has a dirt airstrip long and wide enough to land World War II vintage DC-3s (still the main workhouse planes in the 1990s). Government directed development programs under Plan HUICOT in the 1970s were also predicated on airstrips and roads. First opened in the mid-1970s, the comunidad's main road leads from Tateikie past Santa Clara to Santa Cruz. From that crossroads, it's some six to eight bone-jarring hours north to the mestizo cabecera municipal of Huejuquilla El Alto (where paved roads lead rapidly to Zacatecas), and it's five even more rugged hours west to the government development center in the Cora-mestizo cabecera of Jesús María. The road continues west from Jesús María for roughly 18 hours (perhaps 300kms.) to Ruiz, in the Pacific coastal tobacco fields of Nayarit, thus opening up the entire region to primary exploitation and widespread migratory labor flows. In the mid-1990s a spur road departing from the Tateikie-Santa Cruz road at Tirikie breached the mountainous uplands of San Andrés's principal arroyo before its plunge down to the Chapalgana. It follows the arroyo's high, pine-clad western ridge to San Miguel, where the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi school is located. This was a dialectical moment because the community was now beginning to build its own modern institutions, with much opposition from the government and church that had

expulsion and expropriation of its Franciscan competitors. Thus Tatutsi Maxakwaxi became a forum for resistance and the assertion of indigenous territorial hegemony in a multiethnic region. At the same time that the school project sharpened ethnic lines, the formulation of a discourse about *kiekari* was also an opportunity for different sectors within Wixarika society to manifest their cultural legitimacy before audiences composed of other Wixarika *comuneros*. The discourse centered on a call for orthodox cultural practice, which the three generations represented by *kawiterutsixi*, schoolteachers and students would describe in different ways. In all three cases the most marked distinction was between Huichol culture and the "outside" influences represented by the Franciscan mission, located just steps away from the new school and next to the landing strip that most readily connected San Miguel to the wider world until the recent opening of the highway spur to the Jesús María/Huejuquilla road.

Especially in discourse, the other marked distinction was to the growing number of Huichol Protestants, whom the new leadership would either forcibly integrate, marginalize or even expel from the *comunidad*. Like the Huichol discursive strategy that we saw in the last section, in which aspiring community leaders claim legitimacy when they publicly marginalize interlocutors with ambiguous indigenous identities (or simply exclude obvious outsiders), this anti-Protestant crusade can be seen as the most recent instance of a very old form of ethnogenesis. People construct markedly Wixarika identities in contradistinction to others, even as the Protestant others may not want to cease thinking of themselves as Wixaritari. The data presented in the following subsection

introduced their prototypes.

indicates, among other things, that it is easier for Huichols to differentiate themselves from regional mestizo cultural identity and material culture than it is to reject capitalist technology and relations of production or consumption. This tension between simultaneous rejection and integration is especially acute in San Miguel, with its deep implication in the regional economy since the revolution and its explicitly stated desire to select elements of it for the higher aims of Wixarika social reproduction.

3.1 TATUTSI MAXAKWAXI

The Escuela Técnica Secundaria Tatutsi Maxakwaxi has been giving classes to Huichol teenagers in Tsikwaita San Miguel Huaixtita since 1996. Tsikwaita is located on a warm, rich, tilted little plain measuring several hundred hectares and perched at 1300 meters above sea level at the edge of the Chapalagana River canyon, a few hours' walk up from where the US journalist Philip True met his notoriously contested death in 1998 (see Chapter 4). Standing almost anywhere in San Miguel, the canyon falls away over 3000 feet right before your eyes, but especially when you're flung out over it in a small one-engine plane that's still trying to gain altitude after kicking off the end of the short, downwardly sloping airstrip. Standing anywhere near the school, a vast panorama of broken, steeply inclined hills and fields instantly opens up before your gaze as it sweeps from the north to the east over hundreds of square kilometers of the main San Andrés tributary watershed of the Chapalagana, right up to the colossal stepped flanks of the opposite canyon wall many miles to the south.

This comparatively wealthy village is near the southwestern edge of the officially recognized territory of San Andrés Cohamiata, "just across the canyon" from what Tateikietari characterize as the now almost completely amestizado anexo-cum-independent community of Xatsitsarie (Guadalupe Ocotán, Municipio La Yesca, Nayarit). Typifying the Sierra Madre's monumental topography, Xatsitsarie is located only about twenty kilometers to the south of Tsikwaita as the bird flies but it takes a long, long day on foot for an average Wixarika (and nearly two for a reasonably fit gringo) to traverse the thousand meter deep canyon that created this awesome panorama.

Because of its natural wealth and nearness to the bicultural village of Xatsitsarie and the larger mestizo market centers of Puente de Camotlán, La Yesca and Huajimic, Nayarit, San Miguel has been an especially prosperous and culturally heterodox cattle-ranching zone within the boundaries of San Andrés ever since it gained prominence in the 1930s (cf. González Martínez 1987). By the same token, it has also been somewhat geographically and politically independent of the *cabecera* village of Tateikie. In recent years San Miguel has tended to play an important role in the UCIH-J and other regionally oriented parts of *comunidad* governance (*i.e.*, the *comisariado de bienes comunales*, the schools and the INI).

Although to a lesser extent than San Andrés's neighboring *comunidad* of Tuapurie, San Miguel also plays a leading role in the generally still modest amount of Huichol international labor migration.⁴⁸ Indeed, the progressive

⁴⁸ In the early 1990s I only knew of one San Miguel family that had established a permanent base in the US. Los "González" had worked in agriculture in Delta, Colorado, for

Guadalajara co-organizers of the school were quietly appalled that some of the young men studying at Tatutsi Maxakwaxi want English to be taught there. This suggested that Wixarika-speaking, more-or-less traditionally clad people are in some ways as close culturally to the globalized mestizo peasantry of the region as they are to the befeathered *cargo* holders presiding over the ceremonial plaza of San Andrés.

The notion shared by these organizers, the senior Wixarika members of the school board and the staff was for Tatutsi Maxakwaxi to function both as a trade school and cultural revival center. Consequently, the methodically elaborated pedagogy was looking in two cultural directions at once in order to synthesize them on terms favorable to the reproduction of Wixarika society as an ethnically bounded unit within an increasingly technological society. As we will see momentarily, the school's mission statement and pedagogy amount to an ideology of Huichol culture. Again, this emerged from meetings, workshop discussions and seminars where social psychologists, university students, traditional elders, bilingual Huichol teachers and Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students

over a decade and had begun to raise a generation of trilingual children, but it is entirely possible that seasonal labor migration to the US could have begun during the revolution. On the other hand I know several Huichol men who have made brief forays to the US to sell artesanía (ethnic art) or just to work in the same industries as other undocumented Mexicans. There are also accounts of hybrid journeys in which Huichols combine art exhibits in places like Santa Fe and San Francisco (Negrín 1975, which portrays new territorial visions to come out of one such foray); curing sessions for upscale, generally Anglo consumers; personal labor for the cultural impresarios who brought them there; cultural workshops and solidary labor on US Indian reservations; and temporary wage labor elsewhere. There are also strong indications of rapidly expanding Huichol migration since the economic collapse of the mid-1990s, as evidenced by the growing presence of resident and transient Huichol artisan street vendors in major regional urban centers like Zacatecas and Guadalajara and no doubt beyond (Martínez Casas 2000). As of this writing, I know of no Huichol migrants in Chicago but mestizos from the immediate region –as near as the crossroads at Sta. Cruz— are common. The mythical visions of the ocean (Haramara) at San Francisco depicted by one Huichol artist in Negrín 1975 may suggest broader poetic possibilities for the immigrant experience (cf. Geist 1996).

themselves engaged in a formal public dialogue that employed the written word and discursive turns that evoke both fin-de-siècle Mexico and Habermas's idealized vision of a rational bourgeois public sphere.

To understand one classical set of personal antecedents for this new hybrid cultural pedagogy, like Catarino De la Cruz, the agrarian leader in Xapatia (Section 1), the key local bilingual teacher in San Miguel had previously lived for some time in Mexico City and flirted with Protestantism. He was now in effect a born-again Wixarika. Also like Catarino, three of the teachers were orphans, indicating the marginality (and probable disconnection from traditional family-based exchange patterns) that preceded their attaining such powerful positions in the community. The fluidity of identity politics is such that these economically elite local intellectuals have followed a path from traditionalism to heterodoxy to anomie to Protestant ranchero capitalist entrepreneurship to anti-Protestant, neotraditional Zapatista-inflected cultural and political brokerage. In short there is a historical logic to the decision to set up a cultural revival trade school in this place: to have such a revival, you need people with the notion that there is a culture to lose and that it had in fact lost ground in their personal experience. Such "internal articulatory intellectuals" (Lomnitz 1992) become classic Wolfian brokers through their discursive mastery as well as class positions.

Some of these Huichol elites' mestizo allies in the NGO world of Guadalajara as well as some of their counterparts in national and international funding agencies fear and loathe Huichol cultural assimilation into conformist mainstream mestizo Mexico, to say nothing of the international workforce (as

already indicated by their aversion to ESL instruction) and globalized Protestantism. Cultural hybridity may be as troublesome to these dedicated non-indigenous supporters as it is to the emergent Huichol leadership because it blurs the cultural boundaries that ostensibly distinguish Huichol problems from the more general structural problems they share with other poor people in Mexico and the Third World. Hybridity threatens to dissolve the subject of a sustainable development project identified with an intensely ceremonial relationship to the land. As survivors of the political catastrophe of 1968 in Mexico, this generation of urban mestizo activists (like their pro-Zapatista children) despairs of a total capitalist transformation of Mexican society but no longer addresses it primarily in terms of class.⁴⁹ Consequently their strategies center around a territorially and culturally bounded Wixarika society with alternate global connections all the way to Chiapas and the European Union, far beyond either the Wixaritari's trans-Tarascan and Chichimecan desert exchange spheres or their discourse of regional reciprocity.

A cynic might argue that the San Migueleños are simply playing progressive urban mestizos for money, cultural capital and political *palanca* (leverage) because their future in the region depends on reinventing themselves as emblematic Huichols for outside audiences and as defenders of the faith and the territory for those on the inside. However, these people's often traumatic

⁴⁹ Most important among them was an educational psychologist and former nurse who had lived and worked in the community since the early days of the Plan HUICOT in the early 1970s. She and her physician husband first arrived as idealistic young employees of the *comunidad's* sole government-funded clinic, influenced by the post-1968 liberation theology call to join with the oppressed, and –in a frequent variant of that conjuncture for Mexicans— to *convivir* (share life) with a famously mystical people.

personal encounters with global modernity (e.g., getting rolled by Houston cops, scapegoated by corrupt Mexican military officers, poisoned by imported pesticides in the Nayarit tobacco fields) or just being routinely assaulted, exploited, cheated, ridiculed and robbed by their countrymen have galvanized them to renew Huichol tradition and their personal commitment to working in their home communities.

Indeed, the process of defining the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi school project was part of a larger project of identity construction for people on both sides of the ethnic divide. Growing ceremonial knowledge is a product of the political process for heterodox Huichols, as the activist Catarino de la Cruz demonstrated to me with his gift of obsidian acquired on the *kawiterutsixi's* survey of a nearly forgotten geography (Section 1). For mestizo activists, ceremonial participation and other kinds of identification with Wixaritari through ceremonial participation (including *compadrazgo* ceremonies) are honors that they cherish. Even more superficial wardrobe (woven belts, local-style huaraches, skirts and shoulder bags) and linguistic appropriations (greetings, names of sacred plants and animals) index a general desire to bridge, if not blur, cultural difference.

In view of all this, it is worthwhile to describe a key series of workshops to which I was invited in May 1996, in order to understand the selection of "traditional" cultural elements for the school's pedagogical goals. It is a way of witnessing first hand a contemporary version of how for centuries Wixaritari have transformed their culture in order to keep it meaningful as a system of difference under their own control through religiously inspired cultural syntheses. Just as Protestants embrace a Christian identity and an egalitarian,

individualistic approach to economic endeavor, the actors behind the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi revival and training center point toward a more consciously Indian identity and a hierarchical, collective approach to new forms of production and political power. In coming years many Wixaritari may find themselves choosing between or even combining these alternatives to the hierarchical but dispersed, increasingly precarious, and not very ethnically conscious, slash-and-burn based rural subsistence life.

3.2 THE REBIRTH OF KIEKARI

The setting for most of these discussions was in and around the nearly completed first classroom building of the planned Tatutsi Maxakwaxi campus. It lies right next to the much older but still-partially occupied Franciscan mission complex; both are located alongside San Miguel's short dirt airstrip, which terminates at the yawning fringe of the expansive canyon. The approximately 5x9 meter classroom structure was itself hybrid: a conventional, neat modern Mexican rural schoolhouse built with local labor, adobe, carpentry and –as the young Huichol builders were proud to point out—a homemade red ochre mineral pigment for the stucco plastered on the outside of the adobe. At the same time, it has airlifted corrugated zinc roofing and conceptual impetus and guidance from a group of educational theorists and teachers associated with AJAGI and ITESO. Along with the literal incorporation of local color into the red schoolhouse, the large, student-tended vegetable garden was another proud symbol of the fledgling school's ideology of Wixarika self-sufficiency. The teachers' offices were located in older stone structures that already had been

successfully expropriated from the Franciscan complex. The intransigent silence of the sturdily handsome, even fortress-like main mission buildings still under Franciscan control, with their seemingly invisible inhabitants, formed a heavy backdrop to the energetic new school.

A key episode in the pedagogical workshop was dedicated to defining the term *kiekari* as an expression of the communal territory and lifeways that the school was established to defend. The most striking fact about the process was that people simultaneously invoked global discursive categories about autonomous indigenous development and orthodox local notions of cultural purity. These varied significantly according to generation, which is to say degree or type of regional cultural integration.

This session included members of all three principal generations of Huichols—teenage students, middle-aged bilingual teachers and community elders (*kawiterutsixi*), as well as the crew of Guadalajara advisors and several guests including AJAGI's director Carlos Chávez, its main attorney Angeles Arcos and me. Using marking pens and large sheets of paper hung on the wall to publicly display in a more or less open and unedited manner the range of all participants' opinions, the session was intended to collectively brainstorm and arrive at decisions democratically. In this sense it was a classically staged Habermasian attempt to create a "public sphere".

As students, teachers and ceremonial elders constructed a discursive bridge between the ceremonial practice and the school project in its most totalizing sense, *kiekari* came to include "espacio, gobierno, cosmovisión, el todo donde pertenecemos" ("space, traditional government, world view and the wholeness

where we belong"). They thus posited territory, the *kawiterutsixi* and knowledge as the satisfactory basis for life.⁵⁰ The organizers of Tatutsi Maxakwaxi conceive of the school as a subset of the *kiekari* that is designed to help "it" survive. Here then, *kiekari* is an already constituted object of social action rather than the ensemble of social relations and actions itself. This sense of *kiekari* closely resembles another recurring term: *cultura*, which is often defined in this context as any number of objectified cultural properties, forms and differences that contrast with those of the *teiwarixi* (non-Indians).

After much discussion, primarily directed by the teachers with occasional long disquisitions by the shaman-elders, the following categories were determined to constitute the basic elements of *kiekari*:

⁵⁰ "Cosmovisión" has a strong anthropological flavor but is not attributable to me; instead, it derives from Zapatista-era autonomista discourses.

```
'its\(\frac{1}{2}\)kiekaritari (habitantes)\(^{52}\)
taniuki\(^{53}\)
(tukipa)\(^{55}\)
kaka\(\frac{1}{2}\)yarita (lugar sagrado)\(^{56}\)
kaka\(\frac{1}{2}\)yarixi\(^{57}\)
kwie\(^{58}\)
```

The thrust of the discussion was to elaborate the contents of each category, and translate them into Spanish for the sake of the advisoradministrators. At times the categories were effectively duplicated by listing overlapping terms. When this happened, the Guadalajara advisors who were writing everything down on the large sheets of paper would make parentheses and draw lines (as with "kakaiyarita", "kakaiyarixi" and "tukipa") to impose a hierarchical relationship between elements —to construct a cohesive discourse. Some of the Spanish translations for the term intersected with national-level

^{51 &#}x27;itsikame = "traditional authority", literally "brazilwood staff bearer", "autoridad tradicional"; e.g., the tatuwani (gobernador), etc.

⁵² In this column, the Spanish glosses were written out explicitly. *Kiekaritari* could also be translated more actively as "citizens" or "those who constitute and belong to the *kiekari*".

^{53 &}quot;Our language"

⁵⁴ Literally, "belongings", but "Aquiles", a Wixarika linguistics consultant from the area commented that pinitiarika can be taken to refer more specifically to "recursos naturales", "fauna" and "patrimonio".

⁵⁵ Space of the temple, its specific locale and the more general territory and families contained within its reach.

⁵⁶ Divine ancestral place.

⁵⁷ Divine ancestors; i.e., "dioses".

⁵⁸ Land.

discursive categories; much of the thrust of the session seemed to be to "mainstream" traditional local discourse into a more general one. For instance, after this collective list was composed, the Huichol *maestros* complained that it was too broad but the head of AJAGI (Carlos Chávez) countered that a broad framework is what the students need (perhaps because it was totalizing enough to impart an ethnic dimension to local social organization, propitious for a discourse based on autonomy). Such episodes suggested the discursive underpinnings of the NGO's more encompassing agenda of articulating Huichols with other *indianista* movements in the Zapatista conjuncture.

It was notable that people had problems arriving at specific definitions of kiekari's intrinsic traits: San Miguel is so integrated into its regional economic context that defining Huichol territoriality in terms of a traditional mode of production (e.g., maize horticulture) would not be plausible (but see the idealized visual image of "Kiekari" by students). Indeed the whole purpose of an escuela técnica like Tatutsi Maxakwaxi is to appropriate elements of modern agricultural technique and general mechanical skills for the benefit of a distinct cultural community, so they turned instead to more abstract or essential culture traits to characterize the project and their ethnic identity. Again, this context helps explain why the organizers of the school have recently become quite involved in Tateikie's traditional religious system and are in sharp conflict with the Protestants and San Miguel's last Franciscan missionary and her assistants. Thus the nearness of the mission was felicitious if not happy, as dozens of prominent San Migueleños were vociferously struggling to define territory, community membership and Huichol ethnicity partly in terms of the religious distinction

between Christianity and traditionalism. It is as if the San Miguel actors' insistence on their undiluted traditionalism were not sufficient, so the Franciscan *misioneros* and the Protestant *sectas* became key points of demarcation.⁵⁹

The Manichaean mode became so pervasive that by the end of the day, "kiekari" had been marked simply as "non-Christian practice" within a certain territorial space. This was furthered by the leading set of questions that the promoters and maestros bilingües had framed to structure the overall discussion:

"¿Qué me hace pertenecer a takiekari?"
("What makes me belong to our kiekari?")
"¿Qué NO me hace pertenecer a takiekari?"
("What does NOT make me belong to our kiekari?")
"¿Por qué pertenezco a takiekari?"
("Why do I belong to our kiekari?")

Hence, in a cultural power play, a new constellation of Wixarika actors was beginning to create a new orthodoxy or hegemonic discourse that marks everyday traditional conceptions and practices –Wixarika doxa— as strategic resources or a form of cultural property (Brown 1998). This is indexed both by the repeated use of the Spanish verb *pertenecer* (to belong) and the Wixarika possessive *ta*- (our). Ownership of cultural property is a basis of identity; Wixaritari create it by circumscribing places through ritual (described in the previous chapter) and by demarcating territory through discourse (analyzed here) (cf. Strathern 1996). However, as the following description of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi movement's founding discourse demonstrates, the broader territorial scheme is both more diffuse and rigid than the underlying, esoteric

⁵⁹ At the same time, San Miguel has a reputation elsewhere in the comunidad of San Andrés as being most *amestizado* (assimilated, deindianized). Fro these *comuneros*, San Miguel

tradition that it indexes. In the next subsections we examine in more detail the particular narratives and incipient discourses of the three generational cohorts participating in this discussion.

is a point of reference for other Wixaritari to affirm their own traditionalism (or identify where it may be headed).

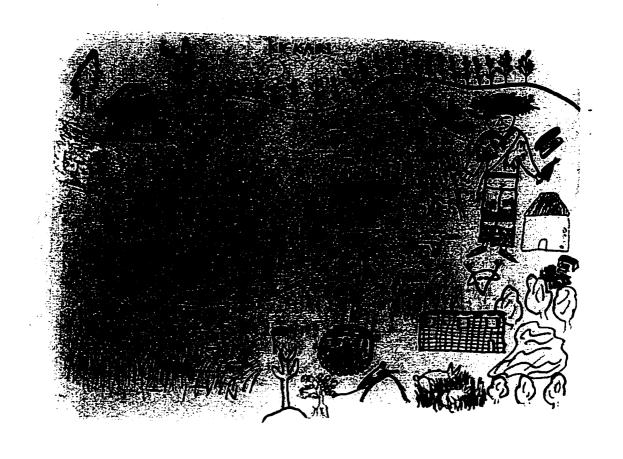


FIGURE 22. Kiekari. Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students' representation of Huichol territoriality, 1995.

3.3 DISCOURSE OF THE STUDENTS

Historically *kiekari* (in the processual sense of creating cultural territory rather than as a synonym for land per se) has been an implicit product of quotidian practice as people hunt, gather, plant, build houses and families, and inscribe these practices in ritual. In San Miguel Huaixtita *kiekari* is also emerging as a signifier in Huichol identity politics. At Tatutsi Maxakwaxi *secundaria* school, the mass blessing by *mara'akate* of the first class of *secundaria* graduates, decked out in luxurious *kamixa*⁶⁰ (*Span.: traje*, markedly Indian clothing) heavily embroidered with both traditional and mestizo design elements represented a dramatic historical shift. In a community with an already somewhat moribund ceremonial life, they were transforming *costumbre* into a sign of ethnic solidarity. Since the local population doesn't do ceremony very much, for these kids "Huicholness" is not so markedly identified with the fulfillment of ceremonial *cargos* as it is for most other Wixaritari. Common wisdom holds that

Tsepa wixarikaki pemuniuka, xika yeiyari peka'uweiyani, naime keneu'ayawa Although you speak Wixarika, if you do not do ceremony, you should leave everything.

However, when pressed to define their identity in short discursive fragments for a formal declaration of communal goals, the students moved in just the opposite direction. Starting precisely from language, they selected increasingly artifactual traits like clothing and finally that most artifactual of markers, *xuriya* or *sangre* (blood).

⁶⁰ Tellingly, this most general term for clothing is clearly based on the Spanish *camisa* (shirt): the reindigenization of the colonization of the indigenous (cf. Friedlander 1975).

These neotraditional discursive constructions set up advantageous terms for organizing political, social and economic progress. In NGO-based workshops students along with their teachers and the *kawiterutsixi* idealized a premodern past. This discourse shared some premises with government *indigenista* assimilationists, the more recent autonomous *indianista* propositions about the essential nature of Indian identity (De la Peña 1995),⁶¹ and a more properly Wixarika discourse of cultural reproduction through ceremonial practice. At the same time, outside this discourse of Huichol purity menaced by *teiwari* (non-Indian) influence, students freely mix mestizo clothing elements with *kamixa* (traditional clothing, Sp. *traje*), want to study English and train for careers that may well take them to other parts of the continent. This was poignant because the hybrid modernity that emerged from these foundational workshops spoke to a pervasive cultural transformation in Wixarika society and many traditional societies in the world.

Penélope Iturriaga, the NGO worker who could be called the founding mother of the school project, is a long-time solidary urban mestiza who had lived and visited the sierra since the early 1970s. Like the anthropologist Rojas (1998), she hoped that the ethnification of knowledge and the formal cultural instruction might keep students in their community for the long run. The vision was of modernization *in situ* as a counterweight to the deterritorialized, globalized Mexican Indian life in the twilight of the PRI.

⁶¹ De la Peña's distinction refers to the breakdown of assimilationism as an official policy of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) since the 1970s and the emergence of autonomous identity discourses among a spectrum of Indian social movements.

In general, there was a formulaic and distinctly orthodox quality to the students' resolutions: "no olvidarnos de nuestras autoridades y tradiciones" ("not to forget our authorities and traditions") and "no perdiendo nuestro dialecto o lengua" ("not losing our dialect or language", here invoking both the popular mestizo reference to indigenous languages as mere "dialects" and the higher status provided by linguistics and Zapatista era discourses). This kind of formula may reflect the constraints of schoolroom performance in Spanish, the organizers' expectations and in turn those of some of the NGOs and their funding agencies.

The students stressed more the material and practical everyday aspects of territoriality, like animals, houses and *mara'akate: "el territorio es donde sembramos, donde vivimos"* ("the territory is where we plant, where we live"), with "where we live" being the most frequent definition. There was no clear reference here to the broader sense of *kiekari* as the 90,000 square kilometer historical-ceremonial territory.

On the contrary, for the Wixarika adolescents of San Miguel, *kiekari* was most embodied in the extended family *kie* or micro-regional *tukipa*. These young people from the most entrereneurial area of the extensive *comunidad* of San Andrés did not have much to say about the ancestral domain, traditional governance or other integrative institutions, which for them may either be too obvious to mark or too far from their experience to consider relevant at this point in their lives. One drawing they made did take the ancestral domain into account, but again in a fairly generalized sense: it showed a generic sacred place (*lugar sagrado*), the Ur-mother Nakawé and one student defined *kiekari* as the space

en donde nosotros andamos⁶²...personas, animales, plantas o el que nos da de comer...llueve y hay agua, takiekari es muy bonito porque hay todos...[pause, almost an afterthought] lugares sagrados y autoridades tradicionales y civiles. (wherein we move around...people, animals, plants or that which feeds us...it rains and there is water, our kiekari is very beautiful because there are all...the sacred places and traditional and civil authorities.)

The focus was particular and familistic; to the extent that the students mentioned higher level communal integration, they spoke in the abstract about being "organizados en una comunidad" ("organized in a community") rather than in terms of the intervening exhanges enacted at family shrines and eight or so major temples within the comunidad. The teachers coaxed out general categorical references to cultura, flora, fauna, agricultura, ganadería, lugares sagrados (aside from the rivers, which the students almost always took into account without prompting), familia, montañas, territorio, organización and autoridades. The latter category lumped together shamans, temple elders and legislators or congressmen). The students' cluster of marked characteristics of kiekari around nature, domestic production and the community indicates disjunctures or at least different emphases between the discourses of different age sets, classes or cultural sectors who all nevertheless enunciate an ideology of kiekari in different social settings.

The Guadalajara advisors and promotors remained silent during this phase of the process; their power was in setting up the framework for this nascent public sphere based on written pronouncements. To be more specific, the students broke up into three groups of about eight or 10 each and made

⁶² The use of this verb *andar* should probably be understood as a calque of the Wixarika *yeiya* (to move, to live).

attractive drawings and written lists to define *takiekari* (our territory) with magic markers (*plumones*) on large white sheets of paper:

I animales, plantas, personas huicholes, nuestra tierra, naturaleza (animals, plants, Huichol people, our land, nature).

II una comunidad, organización donde vivimos, hacer fiesta, familias, labor cooperativa, la participación de las autoridades (a community, the organization where we live, do ceremonies, families, cooperative labor, the participation of the authorities).

III sol, nubes, casas, río, gallinas, venado...(sun, clouds, houses, chickens, deer...).

At a later point in the workshops another session arrived at the following reasons for concluding that they belong to the *kiekari*:

```
"porque nacimos en ella" ("because we were born in it")
"porque soy huichol" ("because I'm Huichol")
"porque vivo en ella" ("because I live in it")
"porque me identifico por nekiekari, mi traje" ("because I identify myself by my kiekari, [and by] my traditional clothing")
```

The more positive reasons for people to consider themselves part of the *kiekari* seemed related to very specific biological and very general ethnic ties— to the immediacy of the house and the most embracing sense of *kiekari* as the six-directional cosmos defined by the five cardinal places and the sun's celestial and underworld path along the east-west vertical axis defined by Wirikuta and Haramaratsie (Neurath 1998). But again, the broader senses of kiekari seemed schematic because these young people had not participated very much in the territorially extensive systems of ceremonial exchanges. Still, students said that they may one day fulfill *cargos* in the *tuki*, attend community meetings and counsel others to do the same,

"porque nosotros los indígenas huicholes somos cien porciento que hemos conservado nuestro costumbre" and "conservamos los límites territoriales, el modo de sistema [sic] de organización, de nuestro modo de ser".

("because we the Huichol Indians are 100 percent those who have conserved our customs" and "we conserve the territorial boundaries, the way of the system of organization [sic], of our way of being".)

In general the students identified with their territory because they are Wixaritari who were born, grew up and continue to live in a bounded territory and continue living, dressing and participating as such in a pure, traditional manner which they endow with a great deal of systematicity and local immediacy but little sense of historical variability or extension into the prehispanic exchange sphere their elders still treat as ceremonial *kiekari*.

3.4 DISCOURSE OF THE KAWITERUTSIXI

In contrast to the students' all-embracing but diffuse and domestically oriented definition of *kiekari*, the old *kawiterutsixi* insisted on minutely listing each *cargo* in the *comunidad's* civil and religious hierarchies ('itsikate and xaturixi) as well as the *tuki* hierarchy of xukuri'ikate. This focus on ceremonial office may be seen as a kind of metonymic shorthand for the fact that Wixaritari take on ceremonial *cargos* to ground their relationships with the ancestors who inhabit specific places in the territory. In general they emphasized the higher level, integrative communal institutions of Tateikie (San Andrés), even though these in fact generally only exert centralizing authority on ritual occasions. It is as if they were seeking to extend the idealized, patriarchically-dominated hierachical integration of society that takes place in ritual into the everyday world. Such flourishings of the hierarchical Mesoamerican cultural imaginary and of actual centralized political leadership has historically been associated with war (*e.g.*, the Mixton revolt of the conquest period, the colonial era Tonatí chiefdom, the Reforma era Lozada movement and the revolutionary caciques).

As in those past instances, in the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival the *kawiterutsixi* who participated in the San Miguel workshops complained how their authority had decayed in recent decades. Indeed, perhaps "recent centuries" would be more accurate: the *tuki* authorities, who may be the inheritors of *kalpulli*-like hierarchically integrated landholding social units, have been successively subsumed by colonial *comunidad* authorities, revolutionary *comisariados de bienes comunales* and the post-revolutionary UCIH-J, all of whom

now have successively more extensive territorial-administrative control (Weigand 2000). Specifically the *kawiterutsixi* seemed to lament a loss of material efficacy in their positions, a historical decline that may date back to the prehispanic states in which their predecessors served as tributary lords or at least to the early colonial period in which they were still the paramount "cabilderos" of their respective *tukipa* districts (*ibid.*).

Now they no longer can administer Aztecan human sacrifices or even Spanish-inspired floggings before the long, split treetrunk that constitutes the *mesa* of authority in the San Andrés plaza. Instead, they preside over the symbolically equivalent animal sacrifices still carried out at that same whipping post. They considered this loss of disciplinary authority to be a cause of communal disorganization: "hiki pukatihete" or "ya no hay respeto" ("now nothing is heavy" or "there is no more respect") is the formula for describing the collapse of traditional patriarchy and sacrificially based exchange as the main principle of sociality (cf. Coyle 2001).

Other indices of decadence highlighted by the *kawiterutsixi* include the fact that entire ceremonial *cargos* (or "gourd bowls", to use the traditional metonymy between ritual object of *tuki* office and officeholder) have ceased to function. They also lamented that many people no longer make *soyate* sombreros (but instead buy *tejanos*) and have stopped making and embroidering their own clothes. The students also selected cowboy hats as one of the "causes" of the community's problems. Despite the fact most males over 14 wear them every day, they publicly concede that *tejanos* embody the substitution of relatively anonymous global commodities for locally produced objects inscribed with

ceremonial status markers.⁶³ The *kawiterutsixi* particularly signalled the declining usage of *tuwaxa* (the striking, red-fringed men's ceremonial capes) as a sign of decay.

Other ceremonial objects they claimed were disappearing include the handmade musical instruments (xaweri, kanari, tepu) and the three-legged clay incense-burners (putsi); long oval sardine cans with their jagged, half-removed tops bent back as handles seem to be a popular but surely less esthetic or meaningful substitute. In a burst of hyperbole they exclaimed that people are not even wearing kakai (huaraches) any more. In fact lace-up shoes are still fairly rare. The vast majority of both sexes still walk the mountain trails with only the simplest separation between calloused, muscular bare feet and the earth. Poorer, more traditional and older people often wear only a homemade strip of leather with three holes punched in it, tightly lashed to the foot and ankle with a long rawhide thong (indeed, long enough for an alarming number of despairing lovers and jilted spouses to hang themselves with). People who want to buy more high-tech, urban-produced huaraches prefer the patriotically colored green, white and red "Franciscan" model, with the leather nailed to a slab of car tire rubber and held to the foot with a decorative lattice of rawhide strips. Both variants are not only ethnic markers but a fundamental source of personal identity, embodying the essential practice and implements of yeiyari as

Nevertheless, people rapidly appropriate mass-produced men's hats in personal ways with custom creasings of the brim and crown to optimize sun shading, pluvial runoff and macho rakishness; pop culture decals, sweat and dirt; and novel shapings effected by inadvertent soakings in the rain, misplaced footsteps of man and beast in darkened, drunken plazas and less cataclysmic wear and tear.

movement. The *kawiteru* critique indicates the deep values placed on traditional walking more than a high incidence of shoes per se.

More generally taking changes in material artifacts as indices of deeper cultural disruption, "nuestras casas se están cambiando; casi no hay venados ni se siembra amaranto" ("our houses are changing; there are scarcely any deer nor is amaranth planted"). By this the kawiterutsixi were referring to the growing frequency of tinroofed adobe or even brick and mortar houses with cement floors compared to thatched bamboo kaxetuni on stilts, even though adobe and stone houses have been built for a very long time.

They associated the purportedly declining production of wawe (amaranth, the ritually important primordial grain) and ya (native tobacco, Span. macuche) in the little ceremonial plots next to the kie patio with the Huichols' virtual extinction of deer populations in the vicinity since they started getting .22 rifles in the 1950s. Other animals said to be disappearing were 'aru (wild turkey), kawari [?], ketsi (river fish) and falcon [witse?; kwixi?]. These men attributed the decline to weapons "que vienen de afuera" ("that come from outside"), when in fact the weapons are not animate; these very men are the ones who bring weapons in but they seem to sense a contradiction in terms of control over cultural reproduction. So they now mark rifles, like alcohol, as alien and active agents of cultural disorder that have invaded the community —despite the fact they have been incorporated in some form for centuries. At the same time, it is true that firearms have become much more prevalent since the 1950s and commercial alcohol is as available as Coca-Cola since the opening of the road in the 1970s. The elders also pointed to pasture, forest and water as endangered resources,

tacit recognition of both expanding human population and monetized timber and livestock activity.

In short, as in the last section, we see an emergent, conflicted local anthropology marking symbolic places and practices as indices of an endangered culture (which not coincidentally) has been stringently demarcated as a bounded unit. Interestingly, many of the teenagers at the school expressed some of the same views as their elders about "porque se pierde cultura" ("why culture is lost"). Here cultura appears as a quantifiable resource lost when certain practices cease to be carried out. This was the implicit claim when the question was answered in terms of a set of processes that people fail to carry out nowadays:

"no hacen fiesta" ("they don't do ceremonies")
"no tocan xaweri" ("they don't play ritual violin/music")
"no van a Wirikuta con ofrenda" ("they don't go to Wirikuta with offering[s]") (here indexing one ancestral place to stand for the entire interconnected scheme of ceremonial obligations)
"alcoholismo 64"

Without entering into the highly contested issue of alcoholism in Huichol and other Native American communities in general, the deep Huichol contradiction between central order and peripheral profligacy is nowhere clearer than in the intersection between ritual and non-ritual use of alcohol and tobacco. Periodic rituals are associated with ceremonial music (xaweri), homemade corn beer (nawa, Span. tejuino) and homegrown tobacco (ya, Span. macuche). Post-ritual borracheras (binges) are seen as different but they are an outgrowth of the drinking that has always ended ceremonies.

Aside from the vastly outnumbered and less than zealous tupiritsixi (topiles, ritual police), the gerontocratic order is nowhere in sight as adulterous couples head for the woods, fights break out on the dark edges of the village, and the plaza is taken over by small strolling groups of increasingly lugubrious people drinking Modelo Especial beer by the 12-pack, smoking store-bought cigarettes and accompanying local conjuntos as they play old-style country mariachi and ranchera music on manufactured standup bass, violin, guitar and guitarrón.

Often the *conjuntos* are substituted (or overlaid) by one or more boomboxes recording the live performance or blaring widely circulated cassettes with some of the same songs or pop *mojado narco-corridos* performed by local and regional bands. In either case, the scene is marked by increasingly heavy consumption of manufactured drinks and cigarettes with frequently rough consequences and huge expense. In short, mariachi music and beer after the ritual complements the *xaweri* music and peyote during it, a structural opposition mediated by nawá and tobacco. As shamans told me, tobacco is not to be consumed too early in the ceremony

Along the same lines, other aspects of *yeiyari* are seen as being in decline, as noted above: certain *cargos* are no longer fulfilled and "no conocemos los lugares sagrados...casi no se lleva ofrenda" ("we don't know the sacred places...offerings are almost not taken [any more]"). Beyond that was the more dramatic claim that "Ya no hay mara'akames. No sabemos como se hace uno" ("Now there are no shamans. We don't know how to become one"). That is, the old men claimed that traditional knowledge (of which they are the prime guardians) is disappearing. This is at once a universal lament of the elderly and a historically verifiable proposition, or rather a balance of referential and pragmatic functions reflecting objective forces and personal agendas. The sheer volume of such statements was striking.

"Las fiestas ya no son como antes. Ahora hay cerveza y por eso hay pleitos...y también fiestas de mestizo" ("The ceremonies now are not like before. Now there's beer and that's why there are fights...and also mestizo fiestas" ("55). Along with the decline of ceremonial knowledge, unregulated commercial alcohol consumption is to blame for the episodic violence at ceremonies (usually during their drunken denouements); yet violence (political and otherwise) has been associated with drinking, ceremony and political disruption throughout Indian Mexico for centuries (Taylor 1979). The kawiterutsixi now point to cultural hybridization as a cause for problems, even though mestizo music has been part of the ceremonies for at least most of the 20th century (to say nothing of the 17th century European-

(or in everyday life), but it must be consumed if one is to be true to the ceremony.

⁶⁵ I have given two different translations for the single word "fiestas" used by a speaker with fairly rudimentary control of Spanish to impart the contrasting connotations the two kinds of gathering had for him.

based ceremonial violin [xaweri] and guitar [kanari]), and a more profound syncretism has characterized the culture for a millenium. Clearly, the decline and fall of Huichol culture is simultaneously rhetorical, relative and substantial. This is not the first time critical historical moments have given rise to millennial cultural shifts in the region that feature calls for purification of "outside" influences (Coyle 1998: ff4). What may be unique in this case is the institutional context and the context of performance for such calls.

These rueful comments all lead to the general observation that in the rhetoric of the *kawiterutsixi*, Wixarika institutions are in decay or are changing for the worse (and require more cultural boundaries as well as better territorial ones). With respect to the broader marking of cultural boundaries rather than specific lands, objects or institutions, they made a point of criticizing the changes in the Cambio de Varas (change of staffs) ritual held each year in San Andrés on or around 6 January (Epiphany, or *el Día de los Reyes*—the Day of the Magi) to install the new *tatuwani* (*gobernador*) and other communal authorities.⁶⁷

Ganta Teresa about a girl who had a vision of the Ur-mother Virgen de Guadalupe in the neighboring Tepehuan community of Santa María Ocotán in 1956. She (and many other young people of student age thereafter) called for a revival of ceremonialism and the rejection of tiretread huaraches, store-bought hats, industrial textiles and the commodification of maize in order to avoid a cataclysm (cf. Riley & Hobgood 1959). Rojas, Trujillo & Rojas (2000) report on a violent mass hysteria and spirit possession in an albergue (rural indigenous boarding school in Tuapurie Santa Catarina) as another manifestation of "conscience collective" amid social crisis. This time it was associated most directly with witchcraft (and possibly sexual abuse) rather than the collective menace of land invasion and commodification of culture but these factors are clearly in the background of the case.

⁶⁷ The use of the Nahuatl loan word *tatuwani* (from *tlatoani*, Speaker) for this office suggests its origins or at least major refunctionalization in the Tlaxcaltecan period, when *comunidades* and civil *cargo* hierarchies were first organized. The same can be said of the *kawiterutsixi* (from Renaissance Spanish *cabildero*, town councilman).

Presumably ever since the first-ever Tlaxcaltecan colony and regional administrative center was established in nearby Colotlán in 1591 until its political eclipse following independence in the 19th century, indigenous communities in the vast area under the tutelage of these central Mexican military colonists have had to present their new authorities for review (Velázquez 1961; Frye 1996). In the case of San Andrés Cohamiata, one can assume that from the mid-17th century establishment of a *república de indios* with that name until the reorganization of *municipios* following the 1910 revolution, every year around New Year's day the outgoing and incoming authorities walked together approximately three days east to Colotlán to petition the Hispanic authorities for their imprimatur on the Wixaritari's internal transfer of power. Now they only go to the *cabecera municipal* of Mezquitic⁶⁸ and often that two-day "walk" is by truck [but see my description of this ritual], so the visits to the *kakaiyarita* (ancestral places) en route have fallen by the wayside.⁶⁹

And since in Mezquitic they sometimes must wait for days to be received —until the officials there have finally concluded their Christmas-New Year's holidays— the *kawiterutsixi* now argue that it would be better to sever regional ties and just conduct the entire transfer of power in San Andrés from now on. Why should the state have any say about who the *tatuwani* is? One could argue that since the *tatuwani* no longer controls major resources, dispensing with state legitimation would not affect the *comunidad's* economic viability. However, the

⁶⁸ It was mentioned that for a time the authorities also went to Tlaquepaque, a *municipio* now part of greater Guadalajara.

⁶⁹ In other contexts, the same is said about the motorized peyote treks [cf. ch. 2, ff. #24.

symbolic power of the office and with it, the old, caste-like model of regional reciprocity seem to be premised on a sacralized relation with the state(s) surrounding the Huichols. Thus ceremonial autonomy could radically reshape the meaning of the Cambio de Varas ceremony (cf. Anguiano 1974 and my sketch in Chapter 2, Section 2.2) –a type of cultural involution. Finally, as if to confound the autonomous premises of the foregoing protest, the *kawiterutsixi* also complained that Wixaritari have a hard time getting mestizo authorities to assure access to ancestral places. How does this complaint relate to the previous call for ceremonial autonomy? How can the regional authorities be obliged to provide material protection and resources despite a breakdown in communication with them?

In their sense of despair and call for greater purity and autonomy, it moved me (as a romantic anthropologist operating in a much more guarded cultural field than his Malinowskian predecessors) how the *kawiterutsixi* were nostalgic for the "tradiciones de antes" ("traditions of old"). It also struck me as shrewd how they defined cultural hybridity and the lack of ceremonial compliance (both of which have in fact characterized Wixarika culture for centuries if not millenia) as the root of all evil. The unabashed sense of loss in this ethnic discourse is the reverse of the more ironic, fatalistic, self-deprecating and humorous ritual stance of the *hikuritamete* and *tsikwaki* (peyote trekkers and ritual jester), which resembles that of the opening scene in *As You Like It*.

The melancholy *viejitos* at Tatutsi Maxakwaxi reflected at great length on the cause of their eclipse: "Nuestra cultura empezó a perder con los franciscanos,

In general, a discourse of loss mobilizes sentiments of cultural conservation.

decian que nuestras fiestas eran de diablo..." ("Our culture began to lose it with the Franciscans; they said that our ceremonies were diabolical"...). It is as if the five hundred year campaign against indigenous religion had begun to bear fruit in the Wixarika kiekari from an early point, despite the tradition's perseverance until now, of which these very men are its living proof. This apparent inconsistency can be best understood in terms of the periodic crises when people foreground the erosion of Wixarika cultural and institutional hegemony in order to reconfigure it.

Other observations put blame for "culture loss" less on the introduction of culturally alien elements and more squarely on Wixaritari individuals themselves. For instance, the elders commented on the stark fact that "a muchos ya no les gusta el costumbre" ("many people no longer like Indian tradition"). They also attributed the region's poverty to a purported lack of income from mineral resources "que no se aprovecha por falta de conocimiento" ("which is not exploited for lack of knowledge"). Another critique referred more strictly to deviance. The livestock is skinny because of lack of attention to the pasture, lack of cooperation among community members and rustling. This suggests that for Wixaritari envy wastes the life of one's important possession-attributes (tewâ)

⁷⁰ It is unclear whether this is scientific, technical knowledge or the shamanistic knowledge that the previously cited *kawiteru* claimed was disappearing, since wealth is in fact won by performing sacrifices organized by ritual divination. A deeper ambiguity lies in the assumption embedded in the *kawiterutsixi's* admonition here: there are minerals worth extracting. This may reflect the mythical paradigm in which the "elder brother" (*matsima*) Wixaritari identified with the morning star (or Santiago/San Miguel) sacrificed themselves as shamans for the good of the region, and their "younger brother" mestizos took over the wealth once controlled by the autochthons.

and more generally points again to reciprocity as a basic value.⁷¹ Signalling sacrificial reciprocity in a more classical way, they claimed that poor agricultural productivity is due to insufficient offerings of water from ancestral sources. Speakers called this water "agua bendita", appropriating the Catholic term for "holy water" to affirm the legitimacy of a Wixarika practice to a bilingual audience. (This nominal christianization of Wixarika ritual is precisely the inverse of Horacio Morales's characterization of Catholic masses as "ceremonia" in the previous section).⁷² The government is also to blame for its "falta de apoyo" (lack of support). While part of the same logic of reciprocity described in Section 2 of this chapter, this also may be an admission of dependency or at least a request for patronage that presupposes that the state should be responsible for Wixarika cultural reproduction.

As in the earlier historical examples cited by Coyle (1998), the strongest form of this millenarian shamanistic discourse admonishes people to fulfill sacrificial responsibilities. For instance, at another meeting held in the same

⁷¹ *Tewá* refers to valuable "animate" possessions like livestock or trucks and more fundamentally to one's name (Paula Gómez, pers. com.); "personal attribute" is the unmarked meaning of the term: "kepetitewá?" ("what is your name?").

This question of the ontological relation between indigenous divinities and the Christian devil or (later on in history) the Christian santos is the oldest one in Mesoamerican ethnology (e.g., Durán 1971[1530s]). In the Huichol case, the interpretations range from viewing the santos as Catholic aliases for the "true" Wixarika gods (or vice versa on the part of the recent Franciscans who see Christology within pagan tradition), to parallel equivalence between two sets of signifiers, to the rejection –by the most orthodox on both sides— of any possible connection between the two sets. The only other contender for the Most Ancient Problem in Mesoamerican Ethnology is the related issue of native Americans' own ontological status; see Pagden 1982 for the classical early colonial debate and Chapter 4 of this work for a contemporary manifestation involving Huichols implicated in the death of an American adventurer. To cover all the cases, speakers who address the question of their divinities' identity select from a range of potential signifiers in a dense, polysemic field according to the social criteria embedded in the conjuncture rather than have one single fundamental status for their divinities in mind.

place, Tsikwaita, a few weeks earlier on 5 April 1996, the elders framed their reflections on the school's territorially-based pedagogy in terms of the great 5kg ritual candles which their fathers had placed to mark the "esquinas" ("corners" or cardinal points) of the Sierra Huichol. These places, like a xiriki patio or tuki plaza, have tenari (subterranean offering chambers topped off with a tepari disk) where such offerings are buried. These particular candles have probably not been replaced in a ceremony at the actual boundary markers since the end of the Cristero wars and the filing of agrarian claims in the 1930s.

As such these five regional "corners" are icons of the greater *kiekari* with its five cardinal places and the candles are metonyms of the whole system's vitality. Or as one *kawiteru* put it, "*la esquina es el mundo*" (the corner is the world). At that time, according to the precise memory of another *kawiteru*, many people including the *ingeniero* who conducted the land survey brought a three-and-a-half year old black bull with a white foot and sacrificed it at the *esquina*. They also hunted for deer and got a doe and a buck with a big rack. They cut a cross into a *tepari* disk and covered an offering chamber with the huge candles, gourd bowls and blood for the ancestral owners of the place to consume. In the *kawiterutsixi's* mythological speech register, those candles' "original" equivalents –symbols of life itself– in the "houses of the ancestors"

These esquinas are at the edge of the Tepehuan comunidad of Santa María Ocotán (NW); Tenzompa, a mestizo community that was part of Tuapurie Santa Catarina Cuexcomatitlán until the 19th century disentailment of communal lands (NE); Tuxpan de Bolaños, the anexo of Wautia San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán (SE); Xatsitsarie Guadalupe Ocotán, the ex-anexo of San Andrés (SW); and Santa Cruz mountain, the boundary between Tateikie San Andrés, Tuapurie Sta. Catarina and Wautia San Sebastián (Center). As such, they are iconic equivalents of the cosmological boundaries at Hauxa Manaka (N), Wirikuta (E), Xapawiyemeta (S), Haramaratsie (W) and Teekata (C), respectively.

(*kakaiyarita*; *i.e.*, ancestral places) are burning out.⁷⁴ Since these "houses" constitute the "corners" and nodes of Huichol territoriality, this quintessentially orthodox declaration is tantamout to announcing that the cosmos is nearing an end. Therefore in Holy Week strong winds arise and people are becoming ill.⁷⁵

Indeed, a few days earlier in Tateikie San Andrés a shaman and extatuwani had told me quite simply that lack of ceremonial compliance is the cause of all land loss. This declaration implicitly situates the speaker (a leading ceremonial manager) in the position of being best qualified to save the communal lands, even as it seems to diminish the importance of ethnic or historical forces as determinants of the land problem. But to save the land, he went on, people must renew their offerings at the mojoneras (boundary markers) that define the "corners" of the comunidad of San Andrés and overcome their fear of mestizos. In San Sebastián, under the leadership of the kawiteru and former agrarian insurgent Pedro de Haro, just such a "limpia de mojoneras" (purification of boundary markers) was being undertaken (Ramón Longoria, pers. com). We see in all thse examples of kawiteru political discourse that the trope of cultural loss engendered by contamination and ceremonial non-compliance is a millennial register that historically has led to demands for military mobilization and cultural restructuring.

⁷⁴ An identical logic applies to the extended family *kie*. See the discussion of the *kie's* gift of a large candle to the *tuki* in Section 4 of Chapter 2.

⁷⁵ To pick just one daily news item that illustrates the generality of this trope, a story in the *New York Times* (11-14-01) points out that in the current escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine, ultra-Orthodox Jews interpret Israeli deaths at Palestinian hands as Jahweh's punishment for sin and lack of ceremonial observance. American clerics' admonition that AIDS is another divine punishment shares the same register if not the same goals as the other claims.

The *kawiterutsixi* also emphasized the importance of including the history of mestizo land invasions into the school curriculum. So, the *kawiterutsixi* historicized the land problem in terms of missionary repression, ethnic conflict and a decline in ceremonial compliance (and concomitantly their own authority). They linked ceremonial compliance to more conventional political action as well: they insisted that the school teach the concept of *kiekari* and the concrete borders of Huichol territory (*kwiepa*; lit. "land-place") because traditional practices (*yeiyari*, "the path" or, more exactly, "movement") depend on such ceremonial knowledge: "sin saber kiekari, no se sabe defender yeiyari" (without knowing territoriality, one doesn't know how to defend cultural tradition). This brings the ceremonial production of territoriality described in the last chapter full circle: formal knowledge of the territoriality that has resulted from ritual practice is necessary to defend the culture that produces such rituals and attains its objectified institutional form through them. The *kawiterutsixi* are materialists in the last instance.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ To expand on an Aristotelian framework adumbrated by Paul Friedrich, in this dissertation the ceremonial practice of *kiekari* figures as the material cause of territoriality; the ideology drawn from indigenous movements and the theoretical literature its formal cause; legal, political and armed action against outsiders the efficient cause; and the sacrificial requirements of the divine ancestors the final cause.

3.5 ARTICULATING DISCOURSES: LOS MAESTROS BILINGÜES

This nascent public sphere in which different actors seek to define territoriality as the collective basis for a cultural revival remains uncertain and tentative. In these foundational meetings, key bilingual actors like the teacher "Rufino Blanco" and the linguistic consultant "Aquiles Rivera" mediated between the children's generation of students and the grandfather *kawiterutsixi*, and between all Huichols and their mestizo allies. As noted above, within the nascent Tatutsi Maxakwaxi campus, the public spaces for constructing this discourse were most elementally provided by roughly 17x34" sheets of blank white paper taped over the blackboards and bearing headings like "concepto del kiekari". The NGO organizers wanted to fill these literal discursive spaces of an emergent Huichol public sphere with democratic input from the people in attendance but some of the topics left people looking bored or confused, while others provoked vigorous discussion.

Rufino questioned the students on what they meant by "kiekari" socratically, "Oh, by 'culture' do you mean that 'in the beginning the world was dark'...?" This biblical reference was roundly rejected but the participants were undecided as to which language they should use to define all these newly objectified categories. "Aquiles" the linguist opted for a Spanish formula that resonates with the rhetoric of other indigenous movements in Latin America (as well as the New Agey imagery of the predominately mestizo Nueva Mexicanidad movement):

"Matiari kiekari es nuestra Madre Tierra donde ha florecido nuestra cultura milenaria que se ha venido transmitiendo de generación en generación desde nuestros antepasados hasta nuestros días."

("Matiari kiekari is our Mother Earth where our millenial culture has flourished and been transmitted from generation to generation from our ancestors to our times.")

This formulation from the middle generation, the one most closely linked to the NGO, other indigenous movements and their globalized indigenous rights discourses, was part of an emergent and widespread trend of the 1980s and 90s in Mexico and other neoliberal, post-assimilationist states. De la Peña (1995) has called this kind of movement —which he traces back to indigenous congresses of the 1970s—indianismo to juxtapose it to assimilationist indigenismo. However, in this instance Aquiles's formulation seemed to have little resonance with either elders or youths. Indeed, while there was dialogue across generations, there was also considerable heterogeneity between them, not to mention the Guadalajara NGO promoters and the anthropological observer, who nevertheless remained silent throughout. After lengthy disquisitions by the kawiterutsixi, the group agreed to a cohesive Wixarika-language synthesis of the discussion that rested on a somewhat circular definition of ancestrality as the singular trait of kiekari: "Tatutsima tiwapini takiekaritsie memite'uwa" ("Our greatgrandfathers' [i.e., divine ancestors'] belongings live in our territory").

Near the conclusion of this foundational discursive construction of Huichol ethnic identity around the concept of *kiekari*, the *maestros* made a set of formal *testamentos* (wills) that they wanted to have remembered as if it were a shaman or *kawiteru's 'ixatsikayari* (formal counsel) at a rite of passage ceremony.

1. Hijos, sigan a las costumbres tradicionales, conserve tu [sic] sangre pura. ("Children, follow the traditional customs; keep your blood pure.") [Here the two adjectives —"traditional" and "pure"— speak volumes about the Wixarika cultural revival: it begins by demarcating an essentially uncompromised culture, as symbolized in the strong

prohibition against *mestizaje* in its sense as miscegenation with *teiwarixi*. In fact, intermarriage is extremely rare in the sierra *comunidades* if not in the lowland migrant communities and poor urban *barrios*.]

2. Participa a [sic] las reuniones comunales, cumpla como comunero. ("Participate in communal meetings, comply as a member of the comunidad indígena".)

[Here is an implicit recognition of growing apathy toward communal political processes even though San Miguel plays a disproportionate role in them due to its concentrated economic interests and regional orientation.]

3. No traiciones a tu comunidad, defiendas tus linderos[,] qué pertenezca[s] a tu Pueblo. ("Don't betray your community, defend your boundaries, belong to your People.")

[Here the concept of "treason" suggests the seemingly unavoidable problem of economic and social links across ethnic lines so important to the reproduction of many Huichol families. Perhaps it also marks Protestantism as an internal otherness contrary to Huichol cultural survival. It is recognized that these very links undermine the communal movement to regain control over the boundaries established by the 1965 Resolución Presidencial if not the founding colonial titles.]

4. Prepárate y orienta a tus hijos. ("Educate yourself and guide your children.")

[Here the importance of formal education and extra moral or ethical guidance is stressed in an era of increasing regional economic integration.]

As a result of these general admonitions and the sentiments that motivated them, it was agreed almost in the form of legislative resolutions that in order to "conservar costumbre y lugares sagrados" ("conserve customs and sacred places"), the young people should "saber orar en huichol" ("know how to pray in Huichol"). The very fact that this should be stated as a formal, orthodox goal indicates its distance from habitual practice. A second, even more specifically prescriptive resolution was to "vestirse como huichol [en] trajes bordados con figuras tradicionales y sombreros adornados con plumas de águila" ("dress as a Huichol [in] Indian clothes embroidered with traditional figures and hats decorated with eagle feathers"). Embedded messages in such admonitions include the establishment of discursive authority and ethnic pride since requiring

ceremonial splendor for everyday living is unrealistic, especially to a Wixarika (cf. Díaz Romo's 1994 video opening with a Huichol man in full ceremonial regalia applying pesticide to a coastal tobacco field). Similarly, the call for eagle feathers disregards the specific ritual conditions under which a man would wear them.

By comparison, the resolutions for local economic development and conserving "natural resources" seemed more specific and practical. Still, the program was largely confined to prescriptions reminiscent of government public relations campaigns: avoid forest fires, plant trees, care for wild animals, conserve water, collect garbage. This struck me as ironic, since the Wixarika subsistence base of hunting and slash/burn agriculture is predicated on killing animals and burning swatches of forest, water is used very parsimoniously anyway and there is in fact a rather small amount of garbage or places to dispose of it. The economic development proposals emphasized objectifying tradition and rationally organizing the production of objects that serve and represent it: "fomentar talleres de artesanía, tanto comercial, votiva, religiosa" ("promote ethnic art workshops, both commercial and votive or religious"). Artistic skills have always been acquired within families and involve shamanistic apprenticeship to a tutelary animal like the 'imukwi (cf. Schaefer 1990). In contrast, here the proposal is to institutionalize those practices and the visionary knowledge on which they draw. This resembles the lowland maquiladoras that commercialize Huichol art

⁷⁷ The valiant attempt by the pioneering grassroots development organizer (and important Huichol art collector) Juan Negrín to set up local textile and woodworking production coops in the 1970s faced numerous difficulties. They had all folded by 1990, when I began my

on a mass scale. Specific goods suggested for this new productive regime (at least in the sierra *comunidades* if not in the lowland *maquiladoras*) included *kitsiuri* (woven and/or embroidered shoulder bags, otherwise considered too labor intensive to be profitable as a commodity any more except on the lowest level of tiny souvenir objects) and *takwatsi* (woven palm cases for shamans' wands and other implements, scarcely suitable for commodification on a mass scale at all).

A second set of economic proposals seemed most compatible with the conventional goals of an escuela secundaria técnica, the official category under which Tatutsi Maxakwaxi was being postulated: "conocer agronomía, horticultura, pecuaria, talleres de mecánicos, huarachería, eléctrica, herrería, carpintería" ("knowledge about agronomy, horticulture, animal husbandry, mechanical workshops, sandalmaking, electrical [sic], blacksmithing and carpentry").

The general directives for territoriality also focused on concrete bureaucratic practices that conform more to a practical logic than the orthodox strictures clustered around the idea of "conservar costumbre" discussed above did: "conocer linderos, derechos, leyes..." (knowledge of boundaries, rights, laws...). Such a transmission of traditional territorial knowledge in school may be essential since most older men have detailed knowledge of the comunidad's mojoneras (colonial boundary markers), at least those near to where they live if not for the whole comunidad, as was the case of the late Antonio Carrillo and other unlettered agrarian activists (Arcos 1993, 1998). This knowledge had been transmitted through ritual narrative and the concrete practice of walking and working the land, both of which could be called departments of yeiyari, but it has

fieldwork. The notion of workshops for votive or religious objects seems antithetical to the

not been trickling down to the young generation. This disruption in the flow of knowledge may be due to the increasingly long periods of time spent away from the *comunidad* in migrant labor jobs, thus interrupting dry season ritual cycles.

As suggested above, the teachers' formulations seemed to reflect the register common to the methodology of AJAGI-led organizational workshops in the sierra:

qué estudiemos para conocer el problema territorial, concientizar y promover sobre la cultura en diferentes ramas (animales, lugares sagrados, etc.). Formar líderes para defender la forma de organización de takiekari. Vincular la comunidad y la escuela mutuamente para su mejor funcionamiento. ("that we study for knowledge about the territorial problem, raise awareness and promote in different branches of the culture (animals, sacred places, etc.). Train leaders to defend the form of organization of our territory. Mutually link the community and the school to function better.")⁷⁸

With regard to the school in general, the proposals centered around the objectification and codification of knowledge⁷⁹ and the institutionalization of offices founded in the school to use that knowledge for the *comunidad*. Of these more abstract proposals, perhaps the most ambitious (and unprecedented in terms of traditional social reproduction) was that *kawiterutsixi* should be integrated into the school (as counselors, presumably) and that by the same token, the students be integrated into ritual activity "como observantes o participantes".

familistic organization of ritual.

⁷⁸ The first part of this last proposal would specifically involve me as an information resource but because of the incipient nature of the proposal and my imminent return to the US for nearly a year, this was not followed up.

⁷⁹ Among the specific proposals was the until recently impossible "fomentar lectura wixarikaki, igual que español" since published Wixarika literature other than bilingual primers and the Bible only came into existence in the 1990s.

Specifically, in addition to participating more in their cultural traditions, students should research (*investigar*) them by interviewing elders, studying land tenure since the colonial period (again calling on me as an advisor in this most thesis-like of projects), and more specifically investigating the founding of San Miguel and its "servicios públicos" (public services) to serve as a basis for reflection on the communal defense. This proposition's resemblance to an anthropological grant proposal like the one that brought me to Mexico is hard to miss.

Does this appropriation of the social scientific lexicon that I embodied for them imply that these students are so far from engaging in actual ritual practice and traditional doxa that they can be best "integrated" into it as semi-detached "participant observers"? On the contrary, does it suggest that as a result of AJAGI's until then successful peritaje antropológico (expert testimony), Huichols thought that anthropological knowledge might be usefully deployed within their community as an adjunct to traditional knowledge? Would this internal anthropology conflict with the more prevalent calls for a new orthodox regime of cultural practice? If such orthodoxy were to be implemented, how would Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students fit into it? Would they become more involved in their family kiete or would the school itself become a kind of meta-kie? This last question may have received a partial answer in 1997 when it was decided to build a xiriki at the school, formally integrating it into the kie-tuki hierarchy of sacrificial and labor exchange.

3.6 MINOR CODA: INTERNAL SPECTACLE

As if to exemplify the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi project's objectification of tradition, on 10 April 1996 the *secundaria* students staged a "presentación folklórica". A key difference between ritual and spectacle is that spectacles have an audience of pure observers whereas rituals have only participants. According to this criterion the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students' presentación was somewhere between these ideal types: it began with a traditional dance performed outside of any ritual context in which most of the audience was composed of Wixarika people from San Miguel, so the young participants were in some sense exhibiting their cultural competence to their elders (as well as to the non-indigenous guests). More obviously spectacular (and erotic-scatological) episodes peppered the rest of the presentation.

For instance, one episode subverted two principal artifacts of Mexican rural education: a boy tied a Bic ballpoint pen with 30cms of string to the back of his cloth belt and he sought to squat the dangling implement into the open mouth of an upright Coke bottle. In another, boy students in standard male attire danced suggestively to *ranchera* music with others who were cross-dressed for the occasion. This both burlesqued and aggravated widespread fears of lasciviousness in the mestizo-influenced drunken denouement to Wixarika ceremonies as well as in the relatively unsupervised school dormitories and the deep, secluded ravines nearby.

The central and most ambiguous, even ambivalent event of this cultural spectacle was a student burlesque of a shamanistic cure. The actor wore a cheap tourist sombrero with its hatband proclaiming "Viva México" and battered

feathers from some miserable bird —probably a chicken— inserted to suggest a very pathetic shaman. He proceeded to carry out a sucking cure on another student but in classic Bakhtinian fashion kept coming up with increasingly improbable, disgusting and oversized foreign objects. The audience —which was generally convulsed with laughter— included the *kanareru* (ritual guitarist) who had accompanied the preceding traditional dance exhibition. A bit later a cross-dressed boy with a bundle of clothes under his skirt to suggest advanced pregnancy was helped by a "mestizo doctor" and "nurse" to violently birth a little dog (thus reversing the Wixarika people's mythical origins from a dogwoman). The dog was followed by knives and god knows what else in a growing heap of debris. This representation of a chaotic birth suggested to me an edgy rapprochement between what for these young Huichols is an uncertain process of local cultural reproduction and the excess and violence of national society.

In both of these little episodes the actors burlesqued traditional and Western medical procedures with Rabelaisian hyperbole: questionable practitioners (a cheesy, culturally compromised shaman and a pair of generally distrusted mestizo clinicians) extracted grotesque objects from people's bodies. In the first episode a Wixarika patient violated a Wixarika curer by being so polluted that the shaman was obliged to undertake a massive salvage operation. In the second, non-Wixarika curers violated an equally polluted Wixarika patient (revealing some of the disruption attendant to the generalized feminization of Indians, cf. ff. #45). Both Wixarika patients were ironically celebrated for their funky contamination, and in both cases it was a Wixarika —not a *teiwari*—who

bore the brunt of that excess. The task of Tatutsi Maxakwaxi will be to address this sense of inherent, profound contamination in the ambivalent border region with national space.

4. MAJOR CODA: BEYOND REGIONAL CLAIMS TO INTERNAL CONFLICT

The totalizing and ideological character given to *kiekari* in the context of interethnic agrarian struggle is foregrounded by growing territorial conflicts within the *comunidades* (to say nothing of conflicts between Huichol communities, which can also be serious). Although it is formally constituted as a *comunidad indígena*, as Section 3 of the previous chapter showed, the lands of San Andrés Cohamiata and the other Wixarika *comunidades* are divided up among bilateral "houses" of kin and affines that can include several *kiete*, hundreds of people and thousands of hectares of the landscape. These sets of *kiete* constitute the level of social organization most coterminous with the *tukipa* districts because they are directly represented in the *cargo* hierarchies of those districts' ceremonial centers (*tukite*). Different *tukipa* may entail widely varying amounts of land, degrees of internal organizational coherence, types of economic activity and access to capital and political power –both within the community and in the wider region from alliances with mestizo merchants and politicians.

⁸⁰ I do not take a position on these ongoing conflicts because they are politically sensitive and divide the people this book seeks to support. Suffice it to say that like postwar eastern Europe, since the revolution land pressure from the east has generally shifted Huichol populations and their respective communal boundaries to the west, although the present case illustrates the eastward pressure from Nayarit ranchers as well. The notable coherence, reciprocity and hierarchy foregrounded in many of the regional formulations of *kiekari* that I discuss in this chapter are partly inverted ideological reflections of horizontal competition and other non-reciprocal practices in everyday life. But, as the previous chapter showed, they are also accurate representations of the social and cultural articulation achieved by temple groups representing hundreds of people as they reproduce the Wixarika world.

A key regional contradiction is due to the fact that some of these mestizo patrones have appropriated lands from other Wixaritari in agrarian units like Santa Rosa, San Juan Peyotán and Bancos de Calítique when they took over the flanks of the reduced original comunidades. Conversely, the alliance described throughout this chapter between Huichols and the progressive mestizos of AJAGI and its international backers seeks to promote the return of indigenous land and autonomy. As described in the first section of this chapter, the problematic of "fences" embodies a half-millenium old Latin American conflict over forms of production -maize vs. cattle- and over land tenure in general that is generally cast as an ethnic problem in which Indians are to maize as mestizos are to cattle. However this same problem is ever more acute among different sets of Wixarika kiete themselves, as they accuse each other of expansionism, particularly in the case of several powerful commercial or professional families said to be fencing off vast tracts of common land for their private livestock operations –a classic case of enclosure as the genesis of capitalism (Marx Capital I).81

As a result, communal authorities sometimes have to adjudicate these conflicts even though these men may belong to one or other of the kin groups involved. In these internal conflicts, the litigants' *kiekari* claims must be more finegrained than the ideological models invoked in interethnic situations like those discussed in the previous three sections of this chapter. Here they make

⁸¹ This problem was first suggested by Weigand (1978), who considered that the two most significant modern technological innovations in Huichol economic life were cattle vaccines and barbed wire because these permit the stabilization of heritable wealth, and with it local class formation.

distinctions based on their extended families' length of occupation in particular areas of the *comunidad* and the type of tenure to which they are entitled, according to the type of land use.⁸²

For example, tenure for orchards and plowable, mesa-top fields is more permanent due to the relatively longlasting fertility of flat land and to the many years of rich fruit produced by plum, mango and papaya trees, and irrigated cane gardens. In contrast, wild food sources like *yeri* (*camote del monte*), *haxi* (*guaje*) and *karimutsi* fruit are not subject to claims. The location of cattle pasture or slash and burn plots changes every few years (depending on soil quality, slope, rainfall, etc.) but such plots are supposed to remain within a *kie*'s historically recognized estate, since periodic rotation requires a land reserve many times bigger than the area actually used at any one time (cf. Chapter 1, p63). However, the extensiveness of increased cattle grazing in the sierra tends to breach these boundaries, and the bolder, more powerful Wixarika cattlemen attempt to consolidate new pasture boundaries by putting up barbed wire fences. Thus even as fences may stabilize wealth, they may destabilize communal territoriality.

Ironically enough, the prospect of a sudden massive return of longalienated *comunidad* lands is even more potentially destabilizing to communal territoriality. Wixaritari who are suddenly receiving huge tracts of land long

⁸² Although distinctions among types of land use are part of the interethnic conflicts over ancestral places described in Section 2, these entail totally different kinds of tenure. Huichols claim exclusive dominion only over lands where *comuneros* live, whereas they want shared use in the form of ceremonial hunting and gathering on territories outside the community. Outside the *wixarika kwiepa* (Huichol lands in the sierra) they have thus far

alienated from them may enter into conflict with one another as they seek to define traditional land tenure in the area or impose one version over another. Since the late 1990s, the *comunidad* of San Sebastián has faced the return of 22,000 hectares invaded and occupied by mestizos since the Cristero phase of the revolution (Carlos Chávez, pers. com.). There is now a potential for intra-ethnic conflicts comparable to the previous inter-ethnic struggle in an area where social memory of *kie* boundaries has disappeared or ceased to be functional.

In conflicts within Huichol *comunidades*, litigants are not differentiated in terms of their ethnic identity but contrasting Huichol communal identities are marked near the borders between *comunidades*. That is, in San Andrés in the mid-1990s there was little internal ethnic differentiation; in fact I knew of only one important family of non-Huichol ranchers —Rito Rodríguez. However, there is a sharp dispute between San Andrés and Santa Catarina over lands to the west of the Chapalagana River, the colonial border between these two *comunidades*. In contrast to both Santa Catarina and San Andrés, in San Sebastián renting communal lands to mestizo ranchers has been a widespread but highly conflictual practice since the end of the Mexican revolution, blurring identities and loyalties to a poisonous extent (see Exp. CNDH 122/91/jal/co 4092.001 lodged with the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos).⁸³

requested exclusive dominion to extremely circumscribed little shrine structures and emergence points of a few square meters extension at cardinal places.

⁸³ "Pedro Morales" was a larger than life example of how a Wixarika can be empowered by interethnic clientelism and go on to expand land and political claims within the *comunidad* of San Sebastián. He was the stuff of which *corridos* are made. When I met him on my first student foray into the Huichol world in early January 1981, his mercurial career was at its peak. Through powerful family relations in Tuxpan de Bolaños (los Morales are a leading family of shamans, *kawiterutsixi* and politicians), he had reputedly amassed control over

In the interethnic conflicts, the role of the government is more complicated due to the fact that mestizo ranchers frequently identify with the state of Nayarit (and its claims on where to place the state border), while the Huichol agriculturalists tend to identify with Jalisco. In the zona de conflicto where land disputes are most acute, many identities are blurred amid a variety of interethnic relations ranging from compadrazgo and clientelism to occasional marriages and more frequent sexual liaisons and rape.⁸⁴ While in theory state

three tracts of land totaling at least 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres), a large amount of export-oriented marijuana production, hundreds of head of cattle, upwards of 16 wives and one of the highest "civil" cargos: he was about to be invested as juez in the Cambio de Varas ceremony the day a bush pilot dropped me off on the grassy airstrip and pointed me toward the village store where I could go to introduce myself to people and find a place to stay. Soon after meeting the brash, garrulous cacique, he expansively invited me to accompany him on horseback across much of the territory of Tuxpan de Bolaños.

We rode all day, dropping in at *kiete* belonging to his wives and kin, where he collected ceremonial paraphernalia and gifts (including heavy bundles of fresh green sugarcane) for the outgoing *juez* at the upcoming change of *cargos* ceremony. On the trail he twisted back on his saddle to face me as we rode back up a vertiginous canyon trail to his house in Tutsipa and suggested that I arrange a large-scale Huichol folkloric exhibition in Chicago to make him about US\$5,000. He was clearly tying cultural brokerage to the other forms of power in his grasp; I was struck by the apparent gap between Pedro and his reflective shaman father, who introduced me to smoking native tobacco at sunset.

A few years later, as the Jalisco narco boom under Rafael Caro Quintero fragmented following the killing of US-DEA agent Enrique Camarena Salazar, judiciales apprehended Pedro for his illicit agricultural brokerage activities, savagely beat him in the Tuxpan village plaza for all to watch and imprisoned him for a time in Guadalajara. In the early 1990s, as I was undertaking my principal fieldwork Morales was again powerful (in quieter, possibly less illegal ways) and nearly as prolific as Pedro Páramo (Rulfo 1955): he was now said to have over 60 children by his many wives.

In the final account I heard of him, Morales was routinely going around to collect overdue rent (and perhaps loans) from the houses of mestizo ranchers for residing and grazing cattle on communal lands. One client asked Pedro to wait outside while he went inside for the money, came out holding a .38 or .357 Magnum pistol, quickly announced "Now I'll pay you back" ("Ahora te las voy a pagar"), shot him four times and disappeared to El Norte to avoid murder charges. The compromised moral topography of the community and of the international border in this dramatic vignette is the inverse of the multiple accounts of a North American interloper reputedly killed by community members in defense of their territoriality, as the next chapter will show (cf. Hill 1995).

⁸⁴ I have heard of at least three accounts of savage rapes of Huichol women involving the use of pistols; most recently a Wixarika girl working in the mestizo cabecera of Huejuquilla El Alto was raped and then shot.

political matters are formally separate from agrarian court proceedings (which are all under federal jurisdiction), in practice, given the exigencies of being a judge in Mexico, they are not. All of this continues to give importance to winning the patronage of vertical mediators including federal agrarian judges, a classical form of power brokerage (cf. Wolf 1956, 1957). In short, Huichol political identities and class relations are increasingly complex since various Wixarika ranchers have hundreds of head of cattle and some sets of *kiete* include wealthy Wixarika merchants with heavy capital investments in three or even eight ton trucks, stores and merchandise (above all the sale of alcohol, itself an increasingly contentious issue within a community increasingly aware of growing drinking-related abuse and tragedy). The situation may soon come to resemble that in the highlands of Chiapas during the mid-20th century (e.g., Cancian 1965; Rus 1994). Wealthy Huichol merchants remain highly committed to ceremonialism and plow large amounts of wealth into increasingly elaborate rituals, suggesting a potential takeover of the *cargo* system by new elites.

Such powerful Wixaritari often have asymmetrical *compadrazgo* and other kinds of clientelistic relations with mestizos in the region. These ambiguous and ambivalent connections between patronage, class and local territoriality across ethnic and community lines have not been formulated in such consistent ideological terms as the more visible land conflict between entire Indian and mestizo communities. That is, people speak more in terms of ethnicity than class, but the growing power of the wealthy (*memixiku* —revealingly, a loan from the Spanish *rico*) could become the next step in the growing discursivization of territoriality in the region.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has interpreted the meanings Huichols give to *kiekari* (territoriality) in the context of agrarian struggle, sacralized place claims and an alternative secondary school project. These meanings emerge in public discourses and other performances that seek to reshape regional political relationships by differentially marking and ranking ceremonial organizations, ritual treks and other social practices. More precisely, the new meanings of kiekari emerge in the context of: 1) culturally informed legal claims for exclusive communal land rights in the agrarian courts (tribunales agrarios) on the basis of the expanded constitutional recognition of indigenous "usages and customs" under Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization and Article 4 of the Mexican constitution; 2) meetings and demonstrations for rights to sacred places (lugares sagrados) outside the boundaries of a comunidad, also pursuant to Article 4 and Convention 169; and 3) the discourses produced during the foundational meetings of an experimental, community-controlled secundaria school. This school, called Tatutsi Maxakwaxi (Our Grandfather Deertail, the primordial guide to Wixarika territory), is dedicated to a Wixarika cultural revival in the most modernizing and heterodox area of the comunidad indígena of San Andrés Cohamiata, Jalisco. Unlike the first two kinds of claims, this one does not primarily seek to bound a specific physical territory but to use untraditional means to diffuse traditional knowledge about kiekari in general to a new generation of Huichols. More generally it formalizes the meaning of kiekari as a

cultural sense of place and in the process is beginning to make it into a form of cultural property.

In the three iconic episodes of interethnic conflict over Huichol territory and culture described in Chapter 3, there is a common but significantly varied configuration of actors on the regional and international levels. They promote diverse projects with significantly different visions of just what *kiekari* is all about. In the first episode, a neoliberal era agrarian movement attempted to mobilize the newly expanded legal recognition of indigenousness to recover land from rival peasants allied with a rival state government. This effort gained momentum with the help of legal resources contributed by the direct involvement of a pro-Indian NGO and its anthropological consultants. This struggle led some Huichols to enunciate a hierarchical vision of local territory articulated in terms of a ceremonially based social structure.

In the second episode, the new culturally hybrid leadership sought to bound off the unused center of a tourist island from the national space as a communal ancestral place. This effort resulted from an alliance between young Huichol politicians, *kawiterutsixi*, NGOs, the local US leisure population and progressive elements of the state (in particular, the university, citing general federal commitments to indigenous people). In comparison to the first struggle, this one was more site-specific but the claim on that one site was predicated on a far more encompassing vision of *kiekari* that went beyond any historically recognized agrarian boundaries or local *kie-tuki* hierarchy to the edges of the prehispanic exchange sphere.

In the third episode, the establishment of a new secondary school controlled by a similar alliance was more directly opposed to the church and the state government. This struggle may enunciate the most detailed material senses of territoriality, but it does not deal with any place in particular and its global vision is also less elaborated.

In all three episodes, Huichol political actors stand opposed to certain government bodies allied with regional, non-Indian economic interests and, less directly the Franciscan wing of the Catholic church. In contrast to these three cases, internal territorial conflict among Wixaritari involves a less diverse cast of actors but the stakes for communal survival may be higher because internecine competition seems to challenge the very notion of *kiekari* as a coherent territorial regime. Just like the parties who claim ancestral places most distant from the area of Wixarika habitation, local rivals may have vertical contacts with many of the same regional interests —mestizo commercial capital and political authority. That is, local conflict entails the intromission of regional forces, just as regional conflicts project local differences. This is an awkward way of describing the fact that diverse levels of power converge on particular places throughout the region.

Still, those three interethnic claims, despite their different leaderships and goals, have managed to unite in part under the rubric of a discursive category that highlights a common ethnic identity based in the land: *kiekari*. This has been made possible in large part by the legal opening created by Mexico's adherence to Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization and the incipient (but still underspecified) amendments of the articles of the constitution that address

the legal status of indigenous peoples and their lands. It remains to be seen how this enhanced sense of Indian identity will stand up under accelerating class and status differentiation within indigenous communities and the countervailing expansion of land markets brought on by neoliberal structural reforms undertaken during the Salinas-Zedillo *denouement* to the Mexican Revolution.

Wixarika culture has historically been reproduced through *practice* more than codified knowledge or discourse, but now like other indigenous people in Mexico, progressive Huichols are identifying themselves as an ethnic unit and consolidating power by claiming to revive tradition. This is part of a widespread reassertion of indigenousness in response to the neoliberal diaspora of formerly bounded territorial units: dense local relationships are being replaced with more freefloating sets of connections as big distances—whether or spatial or cultural—open up. Now urban migrants may bring money back home because they feel more connected by a sense of kinship, religion nationality or culture in diasporic settings, and they link an orthodox version of tradition to an alternative development strategy.

In a provocative article called "Can culture be copyrighted?" Michael Brown (1998) argues for a liberal democratic defense of the public domain as the best space for defending minority rights, and he opposes moves by indigenous people to totalize, formalize, rationalize, codify or catalogue culturally specific knowledge, practices and objects into a species of legal property. He sees such moves as an indefensible reification of fluid cultural boundaries across which both indigenous and non-indigenous people freely appropriate ideas, practices and objects all the time. For Brown, "copyrighting culture" is a dangerous

endorsement of commoditized ideas that coincides tragically with the proprietary strategies of global corporations. Particularly in the third section of this chapter we saw how Huichol actors are beginning to redefine *kiekari* as a relatively fixed type of cultural property.

I was persuaded by one of Brown's critics (Barnes in *ibid*.:206), who questions the implicit definition of (indigenous) knowledge as a form of information or enlightenment that should be universally accessible –as opposed to a form of collective power or property to be respected and circumscribed. In this case, the elaboration of *kiekari* as a fixed, hierarchical organization of the material and cultural features of everyday regional life under Huichol institutional control is inextricably linked to a historical struggle for ethnic autonomy. This vision of *kiekari* is a tacit claim on power as much as it is a literal assertion of culture as property or a purely formal proposition in the disinterested discourse of enlightenment. Such strategies can be taken as a sign that Wixaritari are trying to codify their spatialization of power, like any other political-territorial organization. This classic ideological construction makes power all the more effective: "The presumption that spaces are autonomous has enabled the power of topography to conceal successfully the topography of power" (Gupta & Ferguson 1992:8).

One of the implicit issues raised by this dissertation is whether such power strategies are more defensible when undertaken by subaltern peoples. When the state engages such strategies, the results can be sinister:

The topographical ideas of [Heidegger's] "Building Dwelling Thinking" would authorize only the monolithic, once-fold, culture of a people (ein Volk) sharing the same language, laws and customs, and dwelling in one

particular place. In that place their building has admitted or installed a single, unified landscape of hills, fields, and rivers, buildings, bridges, roads, and horizons. Beyond that horizon no other authentic culture may be conceived to exist. Such topographical assumptions would underwrite a uni-cultural nationalism. They could be used to justify the expulsion or extinction of all those who do not share that single language and culture. It is a little scandalous that Heidegger was imperturbably asserting these ideas six years after the end of the war and after the end of the thousand-year Reich's ambitions (Miller 1995:253-254).

However, despite the fact that in the next chapter we will see just how such a logic was also asserted by two criminal suspects in the Sierra Huichol, perhaps a different standard should apply to the strategic essentialism undertaken by legitimate authorities of subordinate groups trying to re-assert territorial control after centuries of systematic subjection.

In particular, the objectification of "el costumbre" as a cultural property emerges from a long struggle against outside appropriation of "historia" (ancestral knowledge), particularly coffee table photography books and sensationalized treatments of their culture (hacer libro). In the Wixarika view, such libros contain reproductions of ancestral places and practices that dilute their efficacy and enrich the authors. So Wixaritari are now reappropriating costumbre as an objectified value from the outsiders who first made it into one. This politicized sense of cultural property has little to do with the widespread commodification of Wixarika esthetic styles and religious symbols in art, which Huichols tend to classify simply as labor or work ('uximaya). Instead, costumbre is a new political category that reifies older, everyday cultural relations and some of the same symbols that appear in art, but in a very different practical context.

Another of Brown's critics makes a similar point. Karlsson (comment in Brown *op. cit.*:210-211) quotes Rosemary Coombe (1997:93) to point out that

constructivist, anti-essentialist analyses like Brown's do not take indigenous actors' historical experience into account: "How does this claim sound in the struggles of those for whom 'culture' may be the last legitimate ground for political autonomy and self-determination?" Karlsson rightly suspects that for people like the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi students and teachers,

what they insist on is not "cultural purity" as such "but the preservation of a particular historical trajectory of their own". It then becomes crucial to ask why indigenous peoples increasingly feel obliged to claim control over what they see as their culture. What is the social and historical context for such assertions? (Karlsson, paraphrasing Dirlik 1996:18)

In this chapter I have tried in effect to satisfy Karlsson's request to consider the social and historical context that motivates Huichol cultural claims. However, I would still question how legitimate it is for all Wixaritari when one group of "internal-articulatory intellectuals" claims to represent the culture in some generic sense. Or, as a third critic asked so plainly, "Who gets to speak for 'the tribe'?" (Tuzin in Brown 1998:217). In the end I am most convinced by Brown's opposition to the privatization of culture for a reason he himself does not seem to advance: the problem of who represents the presumably collective interests of so-called "communitarian societies" (*ibid.*). As Rosemary Coombe herself commented,

It is precisely in such contexts that property claims become compelling as ideological vehicles with which to assert other interests and voice other concerns. We should, however, bear in mind the political positioning of those who articulate social needs in the idiom of rights and the imperative of making concerns known in authoritative, discursive forms (ibid.:207).

We have seen that the hamlet of San Miguel Huaixtita, the center of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival, has long been a particularly heterodox community in terms of both class and culture. Therefore, while transforming

kiekari into cultural property may be part of a crucial political project, this project is not necessarily coterminous with the interests of everyone who shares the Wixarika discursive space. There is some question as to which elements of the comunidad are respecting local differences and those as much as one would hope that outsiders would respect the differences between Huichol society and the national mestizo or more global contexts.

The next chapter will examine the disturbing death of an American visitor to the Huichol sierra as an episode that both invoked and threw into doubt Huichol and other Mexican indigenous claims about their territory as coherent cultural spaces deserving of autonomy. This occurred as interested commentators and state actors from both Mexico and the US weighed in on the nature of the always provocative, half-imagined nature of Indian territory and culture. As such it opens the way to the partial deconstruction of Huichol territoriality because a wider international set of discourses about indigenous identity has questioned the very legitimacy of the system traced up to this point.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCURSIVE AVALANCHE IN THE SIERRA MADRE: HUICHOL INDIANS AND THE DEATH OF PHILIP TRUE¹

0. INTRODUCTION

"There is something about this story that goes far beyond the realm of an unsolvable mystery. This is a story about myths - myths about journalists, about Indians, about gringos, myths about wilderness and solitude, and myths about drugs - the all-purpose cultural, economic and political myth about 'civilization' at the close of the millenium".

-Barbara Belejack, "True Stories"

("The heart of darkness is an excellent metaphor for pointing to that knot inside Latin American societies which binds the solitude of their savage founding to the anxiety caused by the ills of civilization and modernity".)

- Roger Bartra, "Sangre y tinta del kitsch tropical"

In previous chapters I have discussed the ceremonial reproduction and political representation of relations to *kiekari*, a territory woven together with *nanayari* trails of ceremonial kinship ties to the land. In the analysis of *kiekari* in Chapter 2 I described a coherent local scheme of practices and Wixarika people's totalizing anthropological model of a cultural landscape founded on hierarchical ceremonial exchange between themselves and their divine ancestors (*kakaiyarixi*). In Chapter 3 I examined iconic episodes of broader struggles in which Huichols have projected this scheme on regional and international discursive stages.

Here in Chapter 4 I map a notably incoherent, regional collage of unstable, contradictory popular and journalistic images about the death of the American journalist-adventurer Philip True in December 1998 onto Huichol cultural space.

[&]quot;El corazón de las tinieblas es una excelente metáfora para señalar ese nudo interior que en las sociedades latinoamericanas ata la soledad salvaje originaria con la ansiedad ocasionada por los males de la civilización y la modernidad."

¹ I am grateful to Bernard Bate, Barbara Belejack, Robin Derby, Carlos Chávez Reyes, Philip Coyle, Daniel Goldstein, Humberto González, Paul Friedrich, Mauricio Maldonado Aldana, Stuart Rockefeller and Elizabeth Vann for their comments, information and material on

In particular, building on Barbara Belejack's feature news story quoted in the epigraph to this chapter, I point to the avalanche of contradictions organized around notions of the "wilderness" landscape, Indian and Gringo human nature, drugs, crime and political resistance as signal discourses for constructing and deconstructing ethnic territoriality in western Mexico.

Kiekari as a locally coherent scheme and the avalanche of conflicting images that have fanned out across it in the wake of a violent breeching of cultural boundaries have something in common. They are both constructions of persons, cultures and geographies that have emerged in crises of ethnic dispute and resistance. They exemplify how in Mexico as elsewhere, cultural identities sometimes attain their clearest expression amid lethal conflict. Or as Walter Benjamin put it, "where thinking suddenly stops in a configuration pregnant with tension, it gives that configuration a shock, by which it crystallizes into a monad" (1977[1968]:262-3). Consequently, the specific goal of the following discussion is to outline a set of attitudes about Wixarika space and look at how in an illuminating, cataclysmic historical moment, they collided and recombined, jumbling the conventional fields of imagery and discourse in which they had been segregated.

Apart from the starkly contrasting viewpoints about Philip True, his alleged Huichol killers, and indigenous peoples in general, the case is fascinating and important because of the particular positions that a number of actors on the national and international stages adopted. Even more elementally, the social

this case and its background. An earlier version of this chapter was a paper presented at the Central States Anthropological Association Meetings in Chicago on 17 April 1999.

drama around Philip True is important because of the fact that people felt compelled to adopt *public* positionings in the first place, as if the Zapatista-era public sphere depended on them.

These actors included: 1) Philip True himself; 2) the two Wixarika men who were arrested for killing the American adventurer-journalist, issued a bewildering series of culturally and sexually based exculpations that invoked different types of territorial defense, were convicted of murder, provisionally exonerated after 30 months of imprisonment (thanks to the legal support of another romantic American expatriate convinced of their innocent natures), and then 10 months later (on 30 May 2002) reconvicted and sentenced to 13 years; 3) the local Wixarika authorities who, unlike the defendants, were forced to insist in the national press that they welcome outsiders into their territory when as a matter of fact and with good reason they often do not; 4) the mestizo authorities from surrounding communities that frequently dispute Huichol land and cultural claims; 5) the army, which conducted what can only be called a tour de force and post-Zapatista object lesson in the area of True's disappearance; 6) the President of Mexico, who emphasized his deep respect for the rights of US if not Mexican journalists and at the same time sought to avoid the scandal of publicizing drug production and Indian violence; and 7) national and foreign journalists, social commentators and anthropologists and their corresponding publics.

I approach this jumbled and as yet still shifting discursive landscape by looking in particular at the imagery produced by and about the two major sets of protagonists in the drama: the "romantic" (or "insidious") journalist and the

"victimized" (or "corrupted") Indians who were said to have murdered him.

Then I will rapidly point to some of the discursive field's broader coordinates in hopes of laying the groundwork for a regional ethnography of images about Indian country.

More elementally, this chapter examines how in 1998-99 the regional and international media rediscovered –or reinvented—what Roger Bartra in his epigraph to this chapter called the "savage founding" violence between Indians and white men in the Sierra Huichol. The media and other regional interlocutors then went on to bind that violence to multiple mythologies about Indians in general and Huichols in particular. Therefore I now map a radically different, emergent set of meanings than those described in the previous chapters. What then is the connection between ceremonial territoriality, the discursive claims based on that set of practices and the death of a misguided American?

This chapter shows that beyond the agrarian struggle over Huichols' historical lands and ancestral places is a more complex battle over the meaning of Wixarika cultural space and indigenousness more generally. On a micro scale this is acutely felt in the ritual authorities' attempts to circumscribe outsiders' access to ritual precincts, substances, actions and meanings during the major ceremonies. On a wider scale, the landscape as a whole is a repository of ancestral signification. As such it too is susceptible to ethnic struggles over access and meaning, especially as some romantic tourists not only want access to ritual spaces but immersion in the timeless landscape that houses those spaces and provides their raison d'etre. Or as a landmark article on territoriality put it,

...a single physical landscape can be multilocal in the sense that it shapes and expresses polysemic meanings of place for different users. This is more accurately a multivocal dimension of place, but multilocality conveys the idea that a single place may be experienced quite differently (Rodman 1992:647).

As we will see, in some situations this is a bit of an understatement.

Arjun Appadurai, in his general formulation of "ethnoscapes", aptly described where such "multilocality" has often led in the violent history of developing "untouched" Mexican tourist destinations like the Sierra Huichol:

The ethnography of these tourist locations is just beginning to be written in detail, but what little we do know suggests that many such locations create complex conditions for the production and reproduction of locality, in which ties of marriage, work, business, and leisure weave together various circulating populations with kinds of locals to create neighborhoods that belong in one sense to particular nation-states, but that are from another point of view what me might call *translocalities*. The challenge to producing a neighborhood in these settings derives from the inherent instability of social relationships, the powerful tendency for local subjectivity itself to be commoditized, and the tendencies for nation-states, which sometimes obtain significant revenues from such sites, to erase internal, local dynamics through externally imposed modes of regulation, credentialization, and image production (1996:192).

Huichols have become conscious of this potential trajectory for their homeland in visits to places like the cardinal ancestral emergence site of Haramaratsie, just outside the major colonial port and current naval base, brothel and hippie *turista* enclave of San Blas, Nayarit. It was even more acute to Huichols in the betrayal of their earlier receptiveness to hippie *turistas* in their own communities.

By the 1980s trust had given way to intense suspicion after numerous abominations by drug-crazed visitors to ritual places, particularly during the Holy Week ceremonial cycle and on *hikuritame* treks to Wirikuta. Since then Wixaritari have often vigorously impeded or circumscribed outsiders in their home communities in order to maintain the coherence of *yeiyari* (ceremony) and

therefore the crucial reciprocal relationship with divine ancestors upon whom territoriality (*kiekari*) depends. Tragically, this sincere collective effort to safeguard not only lands but also cultural practices seemingly turned lethal in the case of Philip True. At the least it raises questions about who is authorized to invoke ceremonial discourses about *kiekari* and use them to justify violence.

A basic assumption of this whole dissertation is that an important part of contemporary Wixarika politics is based on contrasting appropriations of the traditional forms of knowledge and practice or "doxa" by a number of competing "heterodox" and "orthodox" voices (Bourdieu 1977; Merrill 1993). These voices claim to represent, even personify the indigenous people and culture originally recognized by Hispanic society in three royal titles issued about 1725 to 5,000 square kilometers of the Sierra Madre Occidental (not to mention the preceding century and a half of representations by ecclesiastical and military reporters). I have called this process of defining "Huichol property"—rights to political, religious and artistic representation of persons, land and tradition both within and beyond the physical limits of the three communities—"cultural territoriality". Now, as history would have it, defense of this territoriality turned out to be the heart of two alleged killers' so-called confessions.

1. DISCUSSION

A macabre embodiment of the contested regional ethnic collage in the Gran Nayar emerged from the highly publicized disappearance and death of the San Antonio Express-News journalist Philip True in the Hatia (Chapalagana River) canyon in December 1998. His body was found near the boundary of the Huichol comunidades indígenas of San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán and San Andrés Cohamiata, several hours' walk down from the village of Tsikwaita (San Miguel Huaistita), the site of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival school described in the previous chapter. The discursive avalanche provoked by this tragic set of events exposed broad fault lines and symbolically charged features in the strikingly diverse topography of the Mexican cultural landscape. In other words, this case reveals that the revolutionary Mexican nationalist ideal of mestizaje -an overarching project to span the many disjunctures between the indigenous and the European- has been a partial success at best. At the same time, the new legal forms that facilitated the novel Huichol claims for land and territorial rights discussed in the previous chapter also provided a discursive bridge for the two Wixarika defendants in this case to make new exculpatory claims about criminal behavior to mestizo jurists. This chapter, then, takes the performative extension of Wixarika ceremonial practice to its potential breaking point —a crisis of legitimate representation.

By the same token, Roger Bartra (1998:19) suggested in the controversial article cited in the epigraph to this chapter that the Zapatista rebellion has provoked a crisis of legitimacy for the Mexican state, the ideal of a mestizo cultural identity and with it the image of urban-rural integration. This has made

Mexican Indians in general into a far more unstable cultural category than they were during the 1940s-60s —the boom years for offical *indigenista* integration and assimilation. And of all these indigenous groups, the True case proves that the Huichols continue to be among the most tropogenic of Indians in Mexico.

Already for centuries Wixaritari, like other Indians, have collectively evoked emotions ranging from nostalgia and desire to disgust and terror, not only for Philip True and other journalists, but for many kinds of people. These include missionaries, anthropologists, soldiers, tourists and even Mexican Presidents in search of colorful photographs identifying them with the traditional sector of society. Here a gruesome murder was said to occur in the very heart of that traditional culture, an anomaly which in turn destabilized the always problematic category of the gringo adventurer as well. Let me begin with Philip True himself and his romantic construction of what turned out to be a tragic journey.

1.1 TRUE'S STORY

Like so many of the conflicting images in the discursive avalanche that engulfed him, True's story was a parable –an iconic instance of broader cultural practices and moral narratives. At the very end of the 20th century he was a still youthful, resilient 50 year-old ex-hippie adventurer recently arrived to professional and family stability as the Mexican correspondent for the San Antonio Express-News, the principal newspaper in a city with the second or third largest Mexican population in the US. But in effect True imagined himself to be a 19th century

explorer in the manner of the pioneering anthropologist-collector Carl Lumholtz (1902).

Philip True had emerged from a difficult childhood, cut himself off from his family, and grew to manhood in the exoticist, *On the Road* California counterculture of the Vietnam War era. He became a transcontinental backpacker, cyclist, hitchhiker, and later a union organizer and FSLN/FMLN solidarity visitor to Central America –in touch with a far less bucolic side of Latin America than he imagined in the Sierra Huichol (Newsweek 22 March 1999). Inasmuch as the Mexican national project of *mestizaje* sought to encompass a strikingly contrastive geographical, ethnic and class space, his life had also embodied some of the same universalizing notions as that project.² Perhaps this gritty cosmopolitanism explains the grudging admiration that foreign anthropologists sometimes receive from everyday people in Mexico (but see Lomnitz 2001, ch. 3 on José Vasconcelos's suspicion of gringo romantics who would split Indians off from the national whole).

As an ostensibly intrepid, independent adventurer, True set off in an individualistic manner characteristic of many metropolitan visitors to the Huichol sierra since the last quarter of the 19th century and especially since 1970. I draw the analogy to Lumholtz from the fact that True's trek and especially the

² While much has been made of the disavowed kinship between anthropologists, tourists and missionaries, much less has been said about journalists (but see Carlos Fuentes's *El gringo viejo* [1985]; Malcolm Lowry's self-destructive vice-consul in *Under the Volcano* also fits into this sub-genre). In any case, the parallel between fin-de-siècle journalists like True who venture into Indian country and fin-de-siècle white male anthropologists like me is patent: my sensibilities were shaped when the interpretive paradigms of Chicago symbolic anthropology collided with the 1980s Central American wars (as well as in boyhood German romantic hikes in the mountains).

story proposal that he wrote to his editors to justify it fit into a longstanding Western literary-cultural project (*San Antonio Express-News* 27 Dec 1998; see Appendix 2).³ True proposed to traverse alone and on foot steep, rocky, dusty trails across 100 miles of some of the deepest canyon country in North America.

He characterized this landscape as "Mexico's last great wilderness...John Huston country...of big-boned mountains". While one could argue that men are just as capable of women as being "big-boned", I take this to be a feminine image the walker had longed for some time to complete with his own presence. The project of personally entering a feminized Indian territory and going through it from "beginning" to "end" seems laden with notions of penetration and consummation, narrative and otherwise. True's allusion to John Huston's Treasure of the Sierra Madre (1948), in which the Bogart character's singleminded pursuit of personal enrichment led to his undoing by bandits, is only one of several strangely prophetic foreshadowings and refigurings of literary and historical texts in this extraordinarily intertextual event. It is particularly ironic that the two books True took with him to read on his trip were Tom Wolfe's (1979) The right stuff (a semi-satiric tribute to the American argonauts of the early 60s space program, who also ventured alone into a different kind of "wilderness") and Truman Capote's (1965) In cold blood (a stark account of two murderers in a different American rural setting).

In tragic contrast to Huichol country's stormy cultural and political backdrop, True conceived of his trek as an opportunity to get a "wonderfully

³ True's story proposal was not approved by the *Express-News*; instead he used his vacation time for the trek and hoped to sell the story freelance.

visual piece" on a joyful, welcoming people with "accessible", "public" ceremonies. It is worth italicizing this misperception of Uto-Aztecan ritual in terms of the urban, western, rational discursive space; Huichol ceremonies are public in only the most conflicted way. True in effect excised the criminal danger, political resistance and history he had known first-hand over the previous decades from his image of an unspoiled Huichol sierra. Instead he explicitly juxtaposed a Gauguin-like picture of idyllic Wixaritari to the supposedly equally traditional and *traje*-clad but surly Maya of highland Chiapas.

Unlike the highland Maya, the Huicholes have retained a certain joy in their life. A day near a Huichol community is marked by the near constant sound of children laughing and playing. ... This kind of joy gives them a certain integrity in their being that allows them to welcome in strangers, something the Maya are usually loath to do.

True, like many nostalgic *indigenistas*, also argued that the Huichols have great value as journalistic or ethnographic subjects because they are metonyms for Mexico's vanishing Indian cultures confronting a sudden "influx of modernity". Indeed, in their own post-*indigenista* mode, Wixarika activists have made the same claim of cultural uniqueness - as being one of the Top Ten traditional peoples of the hemisphere.

True's specifically journalistic proposal was to do a human interest feature on the drama of these joyful, magical Indians on "the cusp of history". But then in early December 1998, instead of the Indians vanishing into history, he did. For two weeks an air of foreboding filled the international press coverage of his ongoing failure to turn up. Sadly, Philip True died on his hike to San Miguel Huaixtita. This is about all that is generally agreed upon.

According to the divergent confessions produced by the defendants in the case, he died about 6 December either an hour's strenuous hike up from the bottom of the 3,000 foot deep Chapalagana River canyon on the San Andrés Cohamiata side or further back on the opposite, San Sebastián side of the canyon at a rancho called Yuata/Yɨata[?], located near a hamlet called Almotita (Público 2 Jan 99:17). In the second account he did not die on his own in a hiking accident or as the result of a premeditated murder, but instead in a foiled home invasion of which he was the aggressor. In either case, he was approaching the end of his attempt to traverse the Sierra Huichol on foot from Tuxpan de Bolaños in the comunidad of San Sebastián in the southeast, where he set out on 27 November. His goal was San Miguel Huaistita (Tsikwaita) in the comunidad of San Andrés in the northwest. From there he planned to catch a bush plane on December 10 to take him back to the lowlands and from there to his home in Mexico City. However, when True's alarmed wife did not hear from him on 10 December she alerted the authorities.

As described in the previous chapter, True's destination of San Miguel (Tsikwaita) is the wealthiest and second-largest village in the nearly 750 square kilometers (75,000 hectares or 185,000 acres) of the *comunidad indígena* of San Andrés Cohamiata. It is also a scene of sharp conflict between community members, who seek to promote a politicized cultural revival under their control, and Franciscan missionaries from the order's sprawling province of Jesús María, who see themselves promoting a Huicholized version of Catholicism. Three years after the opening of the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi school they were still heatedly disputing each other's rights to the valuable mission complex constructed under

Franciscan direction in the 1950s. Although for present purposes, this ongoing conflict in Tsikwaita may seem like "another story", its place in the general history of opposition to outsiders will become apparent as the story unfolds, especially in light of the alleged killers' own hybrid, contradictory cultural identities. At the very least it must be seen as part of the cultural landscape in which True died and in which the people who found him live.

Even before the death of the American journalist was confirmed, President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León was understandably concerned about the effect on Mexico's international human rights image of a foreign journalist's disappearance in what some people assume to be drug country as well as Indian country. Zedillo hoped to demonstrate the government's concern and find True alive and well, so he almost immediately ordered that federal troops and police enter the sierra in "rescue operation" which, however, was described by some as an invasion. A Guadalajara newspaper that covered the story extensively described the sierra as being under "a virtual state of siege because of the constant flights of helicopters overhead with soldiers and state police aboard.the investigations have the Huichols' fear as their principle obstacle" (*Público* 22 Dec 1998:5).

As the news avalanche began to gain speed, a Mexican journalists' association alleged that the government was involved in the disappearance of

⁴ As with so many other aspects of this social drama, representations vary wildly: estimates of the number of troops involved in the operation range from as many as 2,000, according to reports from the *Toronto Star* and terrified local people [C. Chávez, pers. com.], to as few as 60, according to official sources. Even 60 still would be an exceptional number of heavily armed outsiders for this thinly settled mountainous area.

True as well as five other journalists in recent months.⁵ This is only the first set of examples of the fact that since True's state was apparently inaccessible to definitive empirical description, it became an opportunity for commentators to attack what they characterized as the insidious interests behind their counterparts' representations of the event.

Finally, despite the "rescue operation", a lone Wixarika named Margarito Díaz from the ranchería of Popotita, some five hours' walk above the river and two hours below San Miguel, stumbled on the lost man on 14 December. He was alerted by a flock of zopilotes (buzzards) circling above a trail near where he was walking in a side canyon of the Chapalagana River. He followed them to discover a decomposing, partially eaten body propped up against a rock at the base of a cliff. Díaz claimed that despite True's great height (6'3") he could not initially identify this dead person except as a man, since in fact not all Huichols wear distinctive Wixarika traje and the occasional outsider could pass this way. However, since there was much clamor about the missing gringo, he could not have been in doubt for long. Already the stereotype implicit in both romantic anthropology and indigenous irredentist claims that the Sierra Huichol is a generically indigenous space had been ruptured.

When Díaz returned with military and police personnel two days later on 16 Dec, the body had vanished but a macabre trail of blood, down sleeping bag

⁵ The Sociedad de Periodistas, A.C., and the US Committee for the Protection of Journalists sent messages of concern to Zedillo and Jorge Madrazo Cuéllar, the attorney general, referring to the "climate of violence and hostility which constitutes an obstacle to freedom of information in Mexico". In particular, the US organization claimed that the "circumstances of the crime raise the fear that it was in reprisal for his journalistic work" (my re-translation, *Público* 18

fill and disturbed ground led a hunting dog and the search party to a shallow grave beneath a cairn of rocks several hundred meters down-canyon, near the Chapalagana (*Texas Monthly*, December 2001). In the account of Martín Chivarra, one of the accused men's younger brother, the alleged killers had pushed True off the trail onto the rocks. The other accused man's wife (Martín's sister) was at the scene along this part of the trail and claimed that she had been told beforehand to walk straight ahead and not look at anything.

1.2 SACRIFICE AND HOMICIDE

In this subsection, insofar as it is possible I assemble elements from disparate, juxtaposed versions of events (Chivarra and Hernández's confessions, True's story proposal and police evidence) into a tentative narrative. Juan Chivarra had first met Philip True walking on the San Sebastián side of the canyon on 4 Dec 1998, when the journalist asked for directions to Tsikwaita. For his part, Chivarra later contended that he only ran and hid when he saw True trying to take a picture of him. Chivarra then went to his family *kie*, Yuata/Yɨata, near Almotita for a couple days. This encounter also appears in True's field journal (which only resurfaced from the police locker three months later, in March 1999).6 In the entry on page 20, True wrote that someone named Juan [Chivarra?] had reprimanded him for taking a photograph of the dawn light

Dec 98, Sucesos section). However, the US consulate issued a message thanking the Mexican government and media for their "impressive support" (*ibid.*).

⁶ Apparently the authorities, citing lack of funds, developed only one of True's nine rolls of exposed film. Along with his journal, True's camera also remained in the Almacén de Objetos Consignados of the Puente Grande penitentiary (*Público* 17 Mar 99:26). It is as if the government wished to keep the empirical field clear for speculation.

between two mountains without official permission from the authorities of San Sebastián, told him that he should return to "Juan's" *ranchería*, from where he would be sent with some other men, possibly to be jailed in San Sebastián (*Público* 16 Mar 99; *Newsweek* 22 March 99).⁷

Whether out of fear or respect for a community member, True apparently complied. His submission may have seemed wise or even inevitable at the time but could also have performatively legitimized Chivarra's sense of power if not authority. Chivarra, who by no account held a communal office, was proposing a simulacrum of legitimate authority over the *kiekari*; he presented himself as a representative who mobilizes other men linked to the *kiekari* by their collective *nanayari* links to the *comunidad's cabecera*. But this return trip never happened. At least according to the most widely accepted version of events, if in fact he did go back to Chivarra's *kie*, True was able to leave again for his destination on the other side of the Chapalagana canyon.

Then on 6 December, he wrote, revealing a surprising degree of intimacy with the accused killers,

Juan [Chivarra]...with his brother in law Miguel [Hernández] and his sister Yolanda, decided to go to Mesa del Nayar to fulfill a religious obligation (to take offerings of clay adorned with colored yarn and deposit them in a waterfall).8

⁷ The field journal entry citing "Juan" reads "We are in San Sebastián and you must get the governor's permission. I am going to my ranch and I will send some guys to get your pack. [They] will take you back to San Sebastián and maybe put you in jail. You can't come on the Huichol land without permission....It looks a bit bad." He then quotes himself asking "Juan", "If I take no pictures, can I pass on?" "Juan" replies, "Yes, follow me to my ranch" (Newsweek, ibid.). True noted with heartbreaking prescience, "a bad moment".

⁸ Usually such clay offerings represent animal figures, especially bulls like the ones Chivarra had been treating for parasites just before setting off on their pilgrimage. People take these elegantly simple little sculptures to places associated with these animals' supernatural

According to their later confessions, now Chivarra and Hernández saw True a second time as they were bathing in the river at the outset of their pilgrimage. Now, as the journalistic account has it, "Miguel said to his brother-in-law: 'this guy, what might he be looking for around here, might he not try to hurt us?' This is when the idea of killing him came up." (*Público* 31 Dec 1998:19; my trans.).

They initially confessed to killing him defensively, preemptively, and with premeditation. They then set up his body next to the big rock where Margarito Díaz first found him. They then went on to perform their ceremonial obligations 50 miles on past Tsikwaita in Nayarit (two day's walk for most Wixaritari). A week later on 13 December, on their way back from the former Cora capital, they observed the now decaying body in the same place and did nothing. However, two days later airplanes and helicopters began to swarm above them and xeroxes of the missing journalist's face began to circulate in the community. Now, they supposedly wrapped True's corpse in his groundsheet and sleeping bag, dragged him down the bottom of the side-canyon for an hour and buried him beneath sand and stones.

Further evidence for the ceremonial context to this event comes in a newspaper interview published less than a week after Chivarra's arrest. In it, he said that after burying True, someone (a relative or ceremonial authority?) brought him a gift of water from near Guazamota, Durango. It is likely that this water came from the ancestral caves and springs at 'ututawita (Bernalejo,

patrons in order to secure their health and fertility. Another such site is Ni'ariwameta, near Santa Catarina. In this case it is notable that they were journeying to principal Cora ancestral places in

Durango; see Chapter 2, Section 1, p. 142 and Section 4, ff. 52, p. 197). This is a major ancestral place associated with the peyote trek to Wirikuta (a crowning ceremonial obligation Chivarra had not yet undertaken). Such a gift obligates the recipient to help the relatives or ceremonial *compadres* who gave it to him to complete a series of long and expensive trips. One version of this episode is that Chivarra already had confessed his crime to a *mara'akame*, who prescribed that he carry out the trek as penance and a means of healing his character. Chivarra was now required to hunt for a deer in order to complete his obligation but he later complained that despite days in the wilderness he was unable to find one (*Público* 30 Dec 98:21).9 In another account, both defendants had been hunting (*Público* 10 Jan 99:26).

1.3 RECENT HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

All but the horrific end of Philip True's journey took place across the Chapalagana River from Tsikwaita and Popotita in the *comunidad indígena* of San Sebastián Teponahuaxtlán. This *comunidad* barely survived the most violent invasion of Huichol territory by outsiders in the 20th century. In fact, during the 1920s and 30s San Sebastián was virtually dismembered by non-indigenous Cristero ranchers who took advantage of the volatile military situation in the region to carve up much of the community's 240,000 hectares (600,000 acres or

Nayarit nearly as distant from their home as the trajectory True had planned to walk: two very different kinds of 100-mile treks.

⁹ The hermeneutics of sacrificial hunting would hold that this failure to attract a deer implies deep spiritual impurity, a piece of indirect evidence for the murder charge, particularly if the hunt had been ordered to remedy such an impurity in the first place.

935 square miles) of land into private ranches (Weigand 1981). During that period many people were literally forced into the arms of their ancestors because the invading mestizo Cristeros compelled them to seek permanent shelter in burial caves in the sides of mountains and canyons –if they weren't killed outright or driven from the sierra into the lowlands.

After a subsequent military occupation in the 1940s followed by a heroic armed uprising and grueling legal battle in the 1950s, the resurgent Wixaritari won federal recognition if not full control of their colonial title to this entire area (Weigand 1969). Living through and narrating this history has reproduced a strong communal ethos of ethnic resistance reiterated in ceremonial knowledge, family oral tradition and stringently enforced *comunidad*-level norms against unregulated outsiders to an even greater degree than the other Huichol *comunidades*. Basically the *comunidad* has been closed since the revolutionary period. At the very least, visitors to the *comunidad* are subject to serious scrutiny and must have official permission or significant local sponsorship before they can travel freely within its boundaries. Even unknown Huichols are viewed with suspicion traveling great distances on lonely trails anywhere in the sierra. At the same time, since the 1980s the *cabecera* (but not the outlying *kiete*) of San

¹⁰ As in San Andrés, would-be visitors must present themselves to the comisariado de bienes comunales and/or to the tatuwani (gobernador tradicional), the segundo gobernador (the tatuwani's assistant for external relations) and perhaps the entire mesa of traditional authorities, a potentially severe hearing without a routinely predictable outcome by any stretch. The two most famous anthropological exceptions to the generally blanket rule against outsiders residing in San Sebastián were Robert Zingg (who managed to carry out ostensibly ahistorical fieldwork on ritual and myth in 1934, before it was imposed, the period of greatest communal disorganization and dislocation following the Cristiada) and Phil Weigand (who worked there on social organization and ethnohistory through much of the HUICOT development boom of the 1960s and 70s). More recently, presenting oneself to the UCIH at an asamblea general of the comunidad

Sebastián's semi-independent, at times separatist *anexo* of Tuxpan de Bolaños (where True set off on his walk) has become virtually a mestizo town and is also an administrative center for the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI).

Now, the federal government's expanded construction of roads in the Huichol-Cora-Tepehuán (HUICOT) development zone of Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango and Zacatecas in the 1970s (and again since the mid-1990s) became the main infrastructure for the current invasion by non-indigenous rancheros, loggers, drug barons, and soldiers. A massive electrification and road construction project that may traverse the central ancestral complex of Teekata near Santa Catarina as well as numerous archaeological sites and other ancestral places is the most recent of these top-down development initiatives. Not only cattle, timber, marijuana and opium motivate the current invasions. Airplane landings or airdrops by uninvited Christian missionaries from Mexico and the US seek souls; tourists seek psychedelic images, objects and experiences; and military roadblocks (retenes) and regular incursions by both land and air (ostensibly seeking drugs or lost gringos) also make metapragmatic statements about government authority over indigenous territory. Such is conflicted nature of the kiekari in which True and his accused killers were walking.

This historical background coincides with ongoing everyday violence.

Huichols confront it living as migrant ethnic art workers in the squalid, stifling peripheral *barrios* of Guadalajara and Tepic. Even more violence and abuse faces them as migrant agricultural workers doing piecework tobacco and vegetable

has also become required or recommended for most researchers, but there is as yet no universal bureaucratic grid through which all must pass.

cutting amid pesticides alongside other Indians and poor mestizos on the infernal coastal plantations of Nayarit during the long dry season. In the stifling fields and sullen, swaggering towns like Santiago Ixcuintla where they go to buy their food and to drink on weekends, Indians are the victims of beatings, robberies, rapes, knifings and shootings by townsmen, cowboys and cops. And the legacy of violence has also operated in the other direction. Explosions of rage, although rarely homicidal, are frequent enough in the drunken aftermath of Wixarika ceremonies. In the background is the legacy of intermittent armed violence against Spanish and mestizo invaders since the colonial period, itself an extension of the sanguinary hunter-warrior traditions of Mesoamerica's northern periphery.

The accused killers of Philip True were apparently quite aware of their historical legacy. They had participated in it as migrant workers, and were involved in the economic, ceremonial and domestic life of the community to varying degrees, even as they were reportedly insubordinate to that communal order on repeated occasions. They lived with their little extended family at the rancho or kie of Yuata/Yiata by Almotita, near the geographic center of Wixarika territory. Such is the tortured historical backdrop and conflicted modern consciousness that makes sense of the strange confession I describe in the next section.

1.4 CONFLICTED INDIANS

I have broken off the basic narrative of the case and introduced the historical context of ethnic conflict in order to make more sense of the confessions (both

legal and journalistic) that I examine in this subsection. Next in the narrative of events, in fulfillment of her promise to whomever might find her husband, True's grateful, grieving, pregnant Mexican widow gave the observant Margarito Díaz a reward of M\$10,000 (US\$1,000) for his sad discovery, and True's employers at the San Antonio Express-News gave another M\$10,000 to the government-run health clinic in Tsikwaita. This largesse may be read as an implicit message of solidarity with the good Indian people who True idealized, despite what was immediately (but as we will see, not universally) taken to be reprehensible behavior by individual members of that people. The generosity must be taken as a strategic countermove in the discursive battle that already was being waged over the Wixaritari. By this point the indigenous authorities and the reputation of Wixarika culture as a whole were already assailed by accusations and negative images of conspiracy in the disappearance of Philip True. The avalanche was composed in part of specifically dyadic conflicts between the government and journalists, mestizos and Indians, nationalist apologists and Mexico-bashers.

At the same time, although squads of *militares* and *policías judiciales* had been unable to locate the missing person, according to human rights advocates and local people, they did succeed in torturing Francisco Chivarra, the father of one of the suspects, and Isidro López Díaz, the *tatuwani* (*gobernador tradicional*) of San Sebastián. Reportedly the *tatuwani* was tied to a tree for 12 hours and periodically beaten until he provided information about the suspects as well as

¹¹ See the portrait of True's editor Robert Rivard posing next to the partially disinterred corpse on the front cover of the *Texas Monthly* (December 2001).

drug cultivation throughout the area (*Público* 8 Jan 99:26). Then, on 24 Dec authorities (possibly federal troops out of uniform) detained the two brothers-in-law, Miguel Hernández de la Cruz (24 years old) and Juan Chivarra de la Cruz (28). Whether or not they committed any crime, they seemed like "usual suspects" because they were reputed to be marginal persons and troublemakers who had both been forced to change residence within San Sebastián several times because of conflicts with other *comuneros*.

Chivarra, like True, was in some sense cut off from the people to whom he was born, a family of long distance *raicilla* (mezcal) traders. Then at 17 (ca. 1987) he married a classificatory aunt (*tei*). Marrying a parent's parent's sibling's daughter and having that woman's brother –whom Chivarra called his only friend—marry your sister suggests a rather restricted if not incestuous social universe (cf. Palafox Vargas 1985). This made the two men *kemama* (brothers-in-law); being *amigos de confianza* as well, they were as close as *compadres*, first cousins or even brothers…a dense, potentially contradictory layering of affective relationships in one small household.

Fathers playfully use the term *nekema* (my brother-in-law) to address their oldest sons. This ironizes the primal intimacy of the father-son relationship by contrasting it to the potential strains associated with in-marrying, ostensibly subordinate men who may eventually make rival claims on the sons' inheritance rights within the *kie*. ¹² The instability of such affinal relationships is also

An even more exaggerated irony was in the joking exchange of terms of address between me and a Wixarika colleague who always used the friendly interethnic greegting "ke'aku nehamiku" ("What's up, my friend?"). I upped the ante by addressing him as nekema but he won

suggested by the extremely negative associations of the term for the slightly more distant in-marrying husband of an aunt or resident sister-in-law (neikixiwi, male speaker) (Grimes 1962; cf. Friedrich 1979[1964]). Hence Chivarra's and Hernández's closeness was in some sense anomalous and possibly even undercut by structural strains. To flesh out the fears provoked by affinal, in-marrying males in Wixarika culture, the neikixiwi is associated with sexual rivalry and with scorpions, big cats and other kinds of supernaturally charged and frequently deadly predators of the lowlying canyon where True was killed, a place of infernal heat mitigated only by a roaring wind at the river itself (Grimes 1962; Weigand 1972; 'uxatiki Salvador, pers. com.). 13

At the very least the heavily laden kin relations may complicate the context of the defendants' claim that True had broken into their house and was molesting one of their wives. And the anomalous if not scary associations of the deep, hot canyon may be seen as another kind of appropriate cultural context for violence, sexual misdeeds or generally deviant behavior. In point of fact, barrancas are frequent places of murder (H. Fajardo, pers. com.). Maybe the place was even a kind of provocation in itself, like the blindingly bright beach at the opening of Camus's Stranger.

At the least, community authorities characterized Chivarra as a rustler who threatened his neighbors, but he described himself as refusing to spend his

hands down by calling me *nemune* (my father-in-law), suggesting that I was an 'ukiratsi – the senior male of a territorial unit where he had married my non-existent daughter. He and other Huichols present found this deliciously funny.

¹³ The associations seem pervasive: in my joking self-presentation as an errant traveler, I could provoke general hilarity with community members who knew me if I replied to the

money on alcohol. If it were not for the fact he was engaging in traditional hunting and sacrificial trekking, this would imply that he did not participate in communal ceremonies. At least it would seem that he considered it appropriate under the circumstances to adopt the Protestant characterization of this aspect of costumbre as decadent. He also described himself as chasing people off his land to protect the deer. On the level of surface reference, this utterance seems opaque. There have been virtually no deer left to protect in the sierra comunidades since not long after snares and bows were replaced by .22 rifles -effective at 200 meters or six times the distance of a bowshot. This happened in the 1950s and 60s when motorized transport also began to replace the kakai (huarache) as the means of reaching Wirikuta, the primordial deer place in Huichol mythology, lessening the time dedicated to such centrally meaningful pursuits. However, in contrast to Chivarra's previous statement, this one indicated that he esteemed the ancestral prey and saw it as his responsibility to defend the territory against unwelcome visitors. It was as if he were trying to cover both ends of the discursive spectrum -kiekari traditionalism and aleluya modernism— at the same time.

Two days after their apprehension, Hernández and Chivarra were formally arrested by the proper civilian police authorities.¹⁴ As corroborating

standard greeting "Where are you going?" ("Ke pepeutia?") with "Who knows, somewhere in the canyon" ("'aukí, hatiatsie.").

¹⁴ The ambiguous dates of arrest reflect doubts as to whether the military apprehension took place and if so, whether it was legal. Ramón Longoria, a former Huichol AJAGI land rights lawyer in charge of the Chivarra-Hernández case for Jalisco's Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos (State Human Rights Commission), argued that such an irregular arrest without an orden de aprehensión (arrest warrant) effectively invalidated the subsequent proceedings and that the suspects should have been released immediately (Público 2 Jan 99:17; 6 Jan 99:24; 8 Jan 99:26).

information, rumor within the community had it that the two suspects were flashing True's money at a ceremony in December (probably on 12 December, six or so days after his death). Chivarra and Hernández were also said to be in possession of True's gear when they were arrested, and the typical Mexican police photo, in which accused persons are posed with their alleged weapons, contraband, or –in this case— the victim's stolen property, was widely published.

By all accounts Juan Chivarra, the older of the two defendants, was a frighteningly complex (post-)modern Huichol who disrupts earlier pastoral stereotypes and separations between violence and tradition. Chivarra had worked as an artisan making ixtle-embroidered cowhide belts for merchants in Colotlán (the nationally famous center of *cinturón piteado* production). He was also reputedly a small-time cattle rancher-rustler who used modern pesticides to disinfect his herd, a Wixarika traditionalist engaging in one trek to obtain fertility for his animals and another to hunt deer for divine favor for his extended kin group and the ecosystem in general, an eater of peyote, a believer in the Holy Trinity (*Público* 16 Jan), and a murderer of gringos whose presence he portrayed as a terrifying or offensive invasion and whose property he appropriated. Or as his alleged accomplice Miguel declared at one point to the journalist who asked him whether he thought he did the wrong thing by killing True, "Hice bien" ("I did well").

¹⁵ It is not clear from the accounts I have seen and heard whether this was the *comunidad* ceremony at which the ceremonial elders (*kawiterutsixi*) announce that they have "dreamed" the

In short, the figure of these alleged killers emerges at the intersection of Mexican cultural conflict and American journalistic romanticism. Specifically, images about sacred vs. profane Indians were juxtaposed in precise, deadly counterpoint. Photographed in common mass-produced casual clothes (jeans, T-shirts and a frequently ironized Coca-Cola sweatshirt), their very visages did great damage to the romantic images of Huichol men that mass media consumers are constantly fed. Whether in the leftist *La Jornada* or the consumerist travel magazine *México Desconocido* (after Lumholtz's pioneering *Unknown Mexico* volumes)— we are simultaneously accustomed to and unnerved by those resplendent dark men in their elaborately embroidered white muslin *traje* staring from beyond history and social class with expanded eyes.

In contrast, these industrially clad, semi-proletarian Indians immersed in the regional culture initially claimed in their confessions that their murderous fury had been unleashed by a journalist's unsanctioned photographing of their houses, persons and "sacred river" (a sweeping cultural-territorial claim in itself). These guys would not appear in *México Desconocido*. At the same time Chivarra and Hernández invoked a new kind of heroic imagery of the indigenous. They claimed that they were retaliating against *semiotic* expropriation of the lands their grandfathers had taken up weapons and lawbooks to win back from mestizos who defined themselves as white Spanish defenders of Christian civilization. Here is another juxtaposition then: crime and revolutionary violence.

identity of the new *tatuwani* or at one of the many corn harvest and children's initiation ceremonies (Tatei Neixa) held at extended family ranchos (*kiete*) throughout that season.

Regardless of their true guilt, the very fact that Hernández and Chivarra would advance visual expropriation by an outsider as a plausible provocation for homicide demonstrates the importance and sensitivity of the right to semiotic and other forms of representation in the Sierra Huichol. This logic is now intelligible to broad Mexican and global publics in the wake of the Zapatista uprising and the Wixarika people's own decades-long struggle both within and outside the framework of agrarian law.

1.5 CRIME AND TERRITORIALITY IN POST-INDIGENISTA MEXICO

In the course of the sleep-deprived, possibly torture-filled night of their formal civil arrest (26 December 1998), Chivarra and Hernández confessed to killing True. Indeed, over the next weeks, they confessed repeatedly if not consistently: each time they claimed different motives. In their first confession, they essentially pleaded culturally extenuating circumstances. They had felt rabid rage (coraje) because True, who had been carrying a new and expensive camera, was traversing the territory and appropriating photographic images of a "sacred spring" (Público 30 Dec 1998:20), "sacred objects", their "sacred river" (Colony Reporter, pers. com.) or their own persons. Chivarra and Hernández distinguished between two aspects of True's presumed offense –a crime of commission and a crime of omission. Not only had he supposedly committed these deeds, but he had not gotten permission either from them or the tatuwani to be in the comunidad in the first place. It is unclear whether the robbery to which they also confessed was conceived as "vengeance" for True's supposed misdeeds (Público 27 Dec 98:28).

As the journalistic report framed it, True's inexcusable presence was a classical Mexican incitement to lethal violence, political or otherwise (cf. Friedrich 1962, 1986): "it enraged them (*les dió coraje*) that he was passing through the place, without permission from the traditional *gobernador*...and he [had previously] asked [Juan Chivarra] if he could take a photo of him, which Chivarra refused" (*Público* 31 Dec 98:19; my trans.).

Since the fundamental changes to the Mexican constitution that have permitted the new kind of land claim discussed in the previous chapter, another area of indigenous social life has undergone a significant discursive expansion as well: civil and criminal law. Across Mexico, novel culturally based arguments have been the basis for cases ranging from local land rights to child custody and bigamy to homicide in retaliation for witchcraft. In this subsection we will see one instance of how since 1992, Mexican Indians have attempted to appropriate the legal category of *usos y costumbres* to launch, however tentatively and controversially, a legal defense based on sacred territoriality.

To contextualize Chivarra and Hernández's unusually cultural confession, in the *comunidades* some Wixaritari –particularly rising politicians, as described in Section 2 of the previous chapter— constantly seek to block the visual, tactile, gustatory, linguistic, terpischorean, auditory or neurological access of outsiders (including me at times) to ritual knowledge, instruments, substances or practices. These prohibitions draw on the ancient, ongoing practice of restricting the senses and particularly the pleasures of ritual initiates and of other actors within the

¹⁶ A murder defense based on Huichol shamanism and witchcraft is documented in Gobierno de Nayarit, Poder Judicial, Sección Justicia, Oficio 1007/91, Expediente 111/91.

society. They are also part of the ethnic marking and broader resistance to the cultural and territorial expropriation I have already described in Chapter 3. Many Wixaritari fear that outsiders may actually take over shamanistic powers by participating in rituals or documenting them. As one man asked me while I was taking a family portrait for the shaman who most attended to the needs of the *kie* where I lived, "How many people do you have inside there?" Indeed, considering that the community usually charges outsiders fees of US \$10-20 just to attend major ceremonies, a motto for the local ethos in this regard would be "No representation without taxation".

Moreover, many native people view land as feminine, albeit in a more maternal, less sexualized way than in Philip True's story proposal represented it, so the general notion that outsiders threaten the integrity of Indian land is a widespread and profound incitement to *envidia* (jealousy), *coraje* (rage) and violence (cf. Friedrich 1962, 1986). Although gringos are generally distinguished from Mexican mestizos in this regard, in the historically ethnicized framework of regional conflict in the Sierra del Nayar, gringos and mestizos are all categorically *teiwarixi*. We are often viewed with distrust and haughty

^{17 &}quot;Teiwari" is usually translated as "vecino" into Spanish and -more innocently— as "neighbor" into English. This does not make explicit "vecino's" colonial origins as a social category more appropriately rendered as "white citizen" -a Spaniard with the right to live near indigenous populations and exploit their labor under encomiendas (cf. González Navarro 1953). The current ethnic label in Wixarika is thus a historical trace of rapacious colonial relationships. The colonial meanings live on in tense everyday inter-ethnic interactions and in mythical-historical narratives about the bestial acts of teiwarixi and their animal doubles: the bear (hutse).

However, hutse is more macho (and hairier) than the everyday mestizo, whose gun repeatedly misfires against him. Hutse masquerades as a man and attempts to steal Wixarika women, for which effrontery he is outsmarted and killed. In one account, he kidnaps a girl when she's alone in her family's kie. He takes her to his cave, and after a week becomes pregnant by him. She finally is heard yelling for help and is told by helpful Wixaritari to groom him at the edge of a cliff after letting him groom her. Then with a tremendous downward thrust, she shoves

contempt as a virtually separate species of unclean, rapacious others deserving wary condescension if not outright deceit after four centuries of land theft, violence, exploitation, and general insensitivity. With an anomalous, suspicious, threatening or simply vulnerable outsider alone in the midst of marginal, conflicted Huichols, the categorical distinction between *teiwari* in the unmarked sense and *kɨrinɨku* (*gringo*) *teiwari* as a usually troublesome but basically just silly, lascivious and incompetent subset of the category simply could have collapsed.

In any event, just as Huichol authorities and their legal representatives have maintained, it is crucial to avoid suggesting a false connection between the possibly criminal motives of the individuals convicted of True's death and the official policy of those traditional communal authorities, whose discourses of sacred territoriality, historical struggle and political autonomy Hernández and Chivarra invoked in their confessions. This problem of authorized discourse is a direct result of the True case that I discuss in the following section. Conflating individual desire and collective authority –a tension in Wixarika society as in any other— is another categorical collapse that both outside commentators and indigenous subjects may have perpetrated.

Hernández and Chivarra may have chosen to describe their motives in the way they did because they have become *culturally and historically plausible*, albeit in an attenuated way more credible in the mass media than in their own community. That is, international attention to the Guatemalan civil war of the

him off the edge into the *barranca* with her feet (as if in childbirth). Later she hurls the bear-child off the cliff as well. Intermarriage with *teiwarixi* is generally considered unthinkable and in fact only occurs very rarely, probably even more rarely than with foreigners in the sierra *comunidades*, although such "miscegenation" is more common in lowland settings.

1980s and the Zapatista uprising in the 1990s has validated indigenous struggles for cultural and territorial recognition and the right of legitimately constituted indigenous authorities to exercise political violence as semi-sovereign leaders of their peoples. People like Chivarra and Hernández, who were marginalized into diverse, fragmentary niches of the western Mexican economy and even of the Wixarika communities where they lived, seemingly took this a step further when they adopted the idiom of cultural territoriality to make ostensible sense of their otherwise untenable positions as violent, desperate members of a quasi-incestuous household.

Indeed, the defense of cultural territory has become so widely plausible that it was said the Instituto Nacional Indigenista's (INI) initial legal defense strategy on behalf of the accused men was going to center precisely on the defendants' *molestia* (irritation) at True's photography. This position was supported by the Sub-Procurador de Asuntos Indígenas (Assistant Attorney General for Indigenous Affairs) in Jalisco, Juventino Carrillo (himself Wixarika). Carrillo directly contradicted negative stereotypes of indigenous rapacity with a set of positive, moralistic ones:

The Indian, even if he is dying of hunger is not capable of killing; he is a noble and amiable person, with creative hands. If they put the foreigner to death, it was because something he did seemed wrong to them. Moreover they are very zealous (*celosos*) and it bothers them that people try to violate their traditions (*Público* 17 Jan 99).

Although the public defender ultimately did not adopt this "traditionalist" discourse, at least initially the INI offered to prepare a report on Wixarika usos y costumbres (customary practice) as part of the defense. That is, a federal government agency tentatively considered that it might be a better legal

strategy for the defendants to claim that photography was a mortal offense to them as individuals because it was an offense to their culture than it was to invoke the direct personal threat True supposedly represented to their families. But the latter, more conventional motive had already replaced the first, more "cultural" one in a second confession rendered on 29 December, three days after their their first one and five days after their arrest (*Público* 31 Dec 98; 10 Jan 99).

Still, it is striking that the Mexican bureau of Indian affairs would promote this local discourse of cultural territoriality and resistance to image expropriation for a murder defense because it inverts the normal situation in which Indians would be more likely to adopt a widely shared state discourse than a globally legitimized local one. ¹⁸ If only briefly, here a single indigenous logic spanned widely separated social domains in a way that would have been hard to imagine in the recent, more mestizo-centric *indigenista* past. This is evidence of at least one instance where indigenous logic nearly became state practice. In a broader view, this situation reflects a general process of discursive flow that has long linked seemingly disparate social groups in Mexico (Guardino 1996).

It is striking that not only the INI but also the Guadalajara police investigators in charge of the case adopted this same argument. One of them assured the press that the accused men's first confession was not mere contrived speech but a direct reflection of *doxa*: he claimed that "the two believed they were

¹⁸ Here, I question whether Hernández's and Chivarra's specifically cultural explanation for their homicidal *coraje* necessarily reflects underlying "assumptions about homicide" (Friedrich 1962). It may be safer to regard these expressions as figures or problematic tropes for a more ambiguously motivated or as yet unexplained action. Still, it is indisputable that these defendants invoked indigenous cultural values and assumed that they at least might be intelligible, maybe even convincing, to a mestizo audience.

defending their territory" (*Express-News* 29 Dec 98). Indeed Horacio Vega, the head investigator, also asserted there could be no categorical confusion between higher cultural motives and robbery when he claimed "It wasn't robbery. They thought he was invading sacred territory...They did not like Mr. True taking pictures of the region and the population". Hedging that assertion, Vega suggested that at least "robbery was a secondary motive compared to the Huichols being offended by True's presence on their land". The image of a feminized Indian vulnerable to the depredations of European or African outsiders is as old as the colonial caste system itself (cf. Lewis 1993).

Now, 150 years after the US seized half of Mexico's national territory, the Gringo has taken the Español's place. In this sense, the new indigenous discourse of legitimate violence in the name of territorial defense may dovetail with an old nationalistic discourse of defense against voracious outsiders but not with the as yet unrealized dream of a stable public sphere that extends into Indian country.

A similarly surprising hybridization of discourses is evident in the official statement signed by the agrarian and traditional leaders of San Andrés Cohamiata on 20 December 1998, before Chivarra and Hernández were apprehended (*La Jornada* 12 Jan 99: *Ojarasca* section). This statement (*Oficio* 110/98) by the *comisariado de bienes comunales* (Ernesto Hernández de la Cruz), the *secretario de bienes comunales* (Francisco López Carrillo) and the *tatuwani* (Jesús de la Cruz González) asserted the historical practice of resistance to the invasion of their territory. However, unlike the police investigators and other apologists, these leaders dissociated that tradition from the crime of True's murder,

assuming it was perpetrated by Huichols in the first place. Instead they foregrounded their openness to the Western eye and backgrounded the violent aspects of their "ancestral culture":

We have visits from many anthropological researchers and from both foreign and domestic tourists, and not only have we respected them, we always take care of them, since we know that it is not easy to walk around in these mountains. We demand that justice be done and that whoever turns out to be responsible should be punished, and we ask the press and public opinion to avoid making generalizations that lead one to think that we Huichols are violent; our people has always been and will always be a peaceful one that seeks respect for our ancestral culture, rights and territory in a dignified way. The obviously condemnable criminal act does not in any way mean or justify that it should be utilized to defame our entire people (*ibid.*, my trans.).

The tradition identified with the authorities who signed this document is here redefined to include "territory" and to exclude the "crime" committed against True. This must be seen in context as a dialogical refinement and counterattack against the "savage" stereotypes that right-wing critics had tried to put on "rebellious" or "desperate" Indians in general. I examine this racist dimension in following sections.

1.6 SACRED/VIOLENCE

The ceremonial territoriality invoked in Hernández and Chivarra's early confession not only threatened to confound crime with the political defense of territory. It also threatened to breech a traditional discursive boundary between generalized violence and sacrifice (Girard 1977). Here the rare, innocent, sacred, passive and timelessly vacant "Indio Bueno" became difficult to disentangle from the commonplace, malicious, corrupted, violent and insidiously modern "Indio Malo". According to these two men's confessions, True's death occurred

while they were on a ceremonial trek to leave offerings at ancestral places to the north and west of their homes. These places included Jesús María and Mesa del Nayar, located in the Cora Indian region of Nayarit (*Público* 31 Dec 98). So here the prehispanic religious tradition revered by many Mexicans as their common cultural property becomes tainted by crime, as it was in the original Spanish outlook on pagan religious practice.

Wixaritari themselves are horrified by violence in ceremonial contexts (except for the wide-eyed object of blood sacrifice, which they keen for as a poignant gift to them). People in a culturally and politically conflicted lowland Nayarit Huichol community spoke in quiet, shocked tones about a disturbed young man who had eaten peyote and gotten drunk (itself a kind of pharmacological miscegenation in Wixarika thought), and then beat his mother to death in the midst of his family's Tatei Neixa (Green Corn) ceremony. This for them was a profoundly troubling triple violation of sacraments, ceremony and kinship.

As Friedrich observed of the Naranja Tarascans, "Homicide between parents and children or between siblings is as taboo as sex relations between them, and I do not have a single case on record; interestingly enough, the range of the incest taboo on a female relative is close to isomorphic with that of blood vengeance obligations to the corresponding male relative" (1962:319). The quasi-incestuous closeness of the Chivarra-Hernández household may thus account in part for the aberrant violence against True, assuming that they did commit the crime and that they did so in a ceremonial context. In any case, it was said to be

the first time in over a century that a peaceful visitor to San Andrés had been killed.

As in Russell Banks's novel *Continental Drift* (1985), about the fateful intersection of northward and southward odysseys by an uprooted New Hampshire townsman and Haitian villagers, it also points to the irony of two sets of boundary-crossers on spiritual quests of very different sorts. They intersected and left a human victim because the larger conjuncture was fraught with contradictory motives that canceled each other out.

1.7 NARCOHUICHOLES

In a shocking turn to a story already marked by a violent, lonely death and a military invasion, Jalisco's seasoned state coroner Dr. Mario Rivas Souza declared that the decomposed body he was charged with examining on 17 Dec had been raped and strangled with a *paliacate* (cloth neckerchief). In both the US and Mexico this finding gave rise to speculation that True's death bore the signature symbolic violence of *narcotraficantes*.

At least since the anti-Indian hysteria of the Lozada insurgency (1855-73) and the revolution (1910-40), Wixaritari have not been widely associated with killing. But now it seemed drug traffickers may be present in the region, they may employ Indian *narcopeones* and they may have the capacity to kill foreign journalists. It is less than a secret that Nayarit is a major exporter of marijuana and opium to El Norte, and that this activity is coordinated by a political, legal and criminal network. At the same time, it also now seemed plausible that journalists could be traveling around not to depict a colorful people on the cusp

of history, but to document drug production at harvest time. The death of Philip True also coincided with the annual ritual in Washington, DC, when the US government certifies Mexican government cooperation with drug interdiction efforts. Now, with this autopsy, plausible but conflicting discourses about Indians, drug lords and the state that had long been at or near the surface of popular consciousness suddenly became probable, tangible facts.

Virtually all of the divergent hypotheses about True's death were damaging to the prestige of the federal government. The President of Mexico had already intervened in the case as soon as True disappeared by issuing strong protestations of respect for the well-being of journalists (a sore point in a country where the fourth estate continues to be a high-risk profession) and by ordering a military intervention in the region. Now he intervened again. This time Zedillo (through his attorney general, Jorge Madrazo) mandated a second, federal autopsy to be carried out on 19 December and legitimized by the observation (but not active participation) of an FBI-appointed forensic consultant.

The second autopsy produced far less conclusive findings than the initial one, but it still cast doubt on the first autopsy's determination that True had been strangled with his bandana and raped (9 Jan 99:24). Instead, it declared that True had died of pulmonary edema as a result of blows to the head and back. These were injuries that could very well have been the result of an accidental fall rather than an assault, so the main result of the second study was ambiguity and a hermeneutic founded on the popular assumption that in Mexico all information is under central control: no fact or lack of facts is exempt from an attribution of elite agency and self-interest. In much popular discourse systematic suspicion of

ostensible order and propriety is not considered paranoia and in fact approaches being a collective national endeavor since achieving true knowledge seems impossible to achieve by any other means.

For her part, the FBI observer expressed skepticism about the second autopsy (*Toronto Star* 24 Jan 99: "Murder in the Sierra Madre" by Linda Diebel) and True's editor Robert Rivard at the *Express-News* branded it "disinformation". Dr. Mario Rivas Souza, the old Jalisco forensic expert who had conducted the first autopsy, publicly commented that "If the Federal Attorney General ordered a second autopsy and they say that the causes [of death] were different, they must have their reasons; or perhaps they received orders to say the opposite of what I found" (*Público* 16 Jan 99). However, the staff of the Guadalajara newspaper *Público* took the second autopsy as an indication that the police had coerced the defendants' confession that they had strangled True.

In particular, a significant Heisenberg-like medical fact received scant attention. Whenever an autopsy has already been conducted on a body, the forensic evidence for future study is problematic because the first autopsy blurs the data, even as Rivas Souza averred that the government may have wanted the second one to blur the first. This sector of public opinion was convinced that the second findings were orchestrated to mute the first autopsy's far-flung attributions of agency and character to the symbolically charged cast of Indians, gringos, narcotraficantes and militares. This interpretation gained particular credence in the international context: the second autopsy's findings were released just days before US certification of drug enforcement on the part of a

government already under clouds of doubt with respect to its human rights and corruption practices.

1.8 GRINGO/INDIAN

These autopsies offered the material bases for more diverse narratives bridges between political discourses and an increasingly indeterminate event. Now the accused men changed their stories again. As mentioned above, on 29 December they shifted from a distinctively political, indigenous territorial self-defense to what they or their attorneys may have judged to be more plausible to a general audience: domestic self-defense. This shift was appropriate in two senses. On one hand it neatly projects the aforementioned cultural tensions between corresident, affinally related men onto an anomalous outsider. On the other hand, it displaces the far more massive territorial invasion and multiple household break-ins reportedly carried out by the army and police searching for the missing journalist and his presumed assailants. The accused men now portrayed True as a terrifying drunken figure with blood running down his legs (a bizarre, violent image appropriate to the weight of interests in the case). They now stated that he had walked into their house without a by-your-leave and was probably trying to rape one of their women or steal one of their children.

In a generic sense this type of account resembles Andean *pishtaqu* narratives: inquisitive, rapacious, bloody invaders (Nash 1993[1979], Taussig 1980, Mannheim 1991, Rockefeller 2001). Another version of this account still bore elements of the first confession: True was pursuing Hernández's wife and naked children into their house in order to photograph them despite their

protests. But now he was also violent, entering the house "de cabrón" (brutally) under the influence of "some drug" and kicking Hernández himself in the rear (Público 10 Jan 99:26; 17 Jan 99). The accused man also claimed that True was not even speaking Spanish (much less Wixarika) but "his own language". The fact of his imposing incomprehensible words and anomalous behavior may be seen as another kind of trespass into Huichol sociocultural space. This accusation may have resonated with many Mexicans: the widely despised behavior of drunk, rowdy, wanton US tourists at beach resorts gives such interpretations power at the national level.

According to the *Toronto Star*, the pundits who wanted to shift the blame away from the quintessentially national indigenous suspects and onto the foreigner were numerous in the Mexico City press. They based the plausibility of an "aggressively drunk, culturally insensitive, sexually uncontrolled gringo" on the fact the second autopsy found a 0.26 percent blood alcohol level in the decomposing body —despite the tendency for any decomposing body to generate ethanol and True's personal reputation as a near-teetotaling, culturally respectful, recently married professional with extensive experience as a backcountry hiker. For True's defenders, it was unthinkable that a decent man who had already walked some sixty miles would decide to get plastered on the way up from the bottom of a 3,000-foot deep canyon.

On the other hand, the Mexican skeptics' *Under the Volcano*-like image of version of a suicidally aggressive foreigner in the mountains would resonate with the many half-disgusted, half-comic Wixarika narratives of peyote-crazed foreigners stripping their clothes off, frightening women and children, and

running off into the canyon –that quintessential zone of disorder and danger in the moral topography of the sierra (Lowry 1965; cf. Hill 1995). In such tales the gringo, *francés* or *español* disappears after acting bizarrely on peyote, gets lost in the wilderness and reappears days later, severely dehydrated, sunburned and disoriented.

In sum, at various points the indigenous defendants in effect claimed that True had transgressed Huichol cultural territory on four levels: 1) expropriating images of the people and sacred landscape with his camera; 2) invading the physical and legal space of the community by failing to ask permission of the San Sebastián authorities to be there; 3) violating the linguistic and social space created by a shared language and norms of physical approachability; and 4) threatening the physical integrity of a house, woman and children.

1.9 COMMON CRIME: ROBBERY AND DRUGS

In a very different discourse, unsympathetic to the alleged killers if not to Indians in general and far more attuned to a commonplace, brutal logic of individualistic self-interest, it was argued that Chivarra's and Hernández's claims were a mere pretext for a common robbery. After all it was reported (and portrayed in luridly staged police photos) that Hernández and Chivarra were arrested with True's camera, clothes, boots, tent, first-aid kit, passport and other documents, as well as 4,000 pesos (US\$400) in cash (*Público* 27 Dec 98:28; *Express-News* 18 December 98). However, this commonplace criminal logic was contradicted by the fact noone took True's gold wedding ring or watch. According to one report, the accused men excepted these objects from what

could be called "legitimately stealable property". Apparently Chivarra and Hernández stated that True had a personal claim to these objects, whereas the camera was presumably an instrument of expropriation like a weapon and the money was a free-floating commodity, both of which are always fair game.

On the other hand, one wonders what Indians who generally wear size 5 to 8 men's shoes would want with a 6'3" American's footwear (to prevent his spirit from being able to follow them?). And why would they not want a watch? In either case, here a radically different kind of Indian from True's innocent Huichols or even his surly Mayas emerges. These robbers are not easily reconcilable with the murderous but in some sense culturally stalwart defenders of land and images or even with the threatened albeit over-reacting victims against a gringo home invasion.

The foregoing accounts of True, Hernández and Chivarra's tragic conjuncture were based on the two suspects' desire for property; these accounts were counterposed to True's possibly drunken desire for photographic images or sex. Between these two genres lies the chaotic domain of "drugs", a category to which both Huichols and Gringos are linked in various, discordant discourses in which rational motivations are hazy. There were suggestions in some news stories that True had consumed both alcohol and "drugs" in the last hours of his life. The effects of these substances, they said, provoked the fatal assault on him or compounded a "simple accident", caused his fatal injuries to occur, or simply led to hypothermia (*Público* 20 Dec 99: 31; 22 Dec: 4; 23 Dec: 23).

This assertion could be connected to the allegations of gringo aggression or sexual dementia and to the widely felt popular belief in the dangers of peyote

for gringos, mestizos and Indians alike —a belief enshrined, albeit ambiguously in the case of Indians, in the federal criminal code. The *Express-News* report following the arrest of Chivarra and Hernández commented with faint praise for Huichol religion that "By all accounts the two weren't hallucinating on peyote" (29 Dec 98). Also, one of the police investigators who upheld the accused men's cultural territorial defense discarded the possibility that they could have killed while deranged on peyote. Both these reports thus indirectly addressed the widespread fear that peyote would erase cultural knowledge and itself be a motivation for violence—quite the opposite of the Wixarika understanding of peyote as a medium for ancestral vision and knowledge. The killing became a pretext for some commentators to get in a brief volley in the war on drugs, and reason for Huichol authorities to denounce the ongoing war against their ceremonial use of a visionary plant.

Aside from the generally diabolical light into which certain representations of the case cast Wixarika ceremonial practice and American recreational drug use, both American and Mexican commentators hypothesized that the killing could also be a signature message from mestizo land invaders, for whom Chivarra and Hernández were mere fall guys (*Express-News* 17 Dec 98). Specifically, the violent form of Philip True's death was taken to be a warning to outsiders (like me) who take the Wixarika side of the land question to keep away. In this genre True's murder was a drug-related case of mistaken identity and *narcotraficante* symbolic violence. After all it is no secret that marijuana and opium are planted not far away from where he died in the steep, sinewy canyon, it was harvesting season, and along comes an American with a camera.

In one discourse triggered by accounts of this case, True could have been like the undercover DEA agent Enrique Camarena Salazar, who was murdered in Jalisco in the 1980s. The case had long been made famous to Huichols and all Mexicans through the taped and frequently sung *narcocorridos* about him and his killer, Rafael Caro Quintero. Caro Quintero became a popular *narcotraficante* folk hero as he evaded the law to be with his teenage girlfriend before finally getting arrested for the crime. Surely Chivarra and Hernández had heard these ballads. In this discourse, True, like Camarena, was working undercover; journalism or personal adventure were sheer fabrications for a more sinister intent.

This fits with a much broader pair of discourses: like the Indio Bueno vs. Indio Malo, the disingenuous vs. naïve gringo are sharply divergent but common stereotypes in Mexico, 19 and like so many others, they were both manifest in this particular, lightning rod case. This whole set of representations of an illegal Indian drug culture stands in sharp relief to both the Wixarika view of their own ceremonial practice and the "magical" peyote culture that True depicted in his story proposal. The latter type of account has shaped the romantic images of Huichol culture that motivate many travelers to undergo dust, disdain and bad water on their uninvited visits to Wixarika communities.

One variant of the hypotheses that link True's death to narcotraficantes holds that the persons who, according to the first of the two autopsies, supposedly inflicted the terrible signs of symbolic violence on True's body could not have been Indians and particularly not Huichols. It was held that sadistic

¹⁹ Actually the two stereotypes share a common root: naïve gringo/as cannot perceive Mexican intentions; the disingenous gringo/as make it hard for most Mexicans to detect theirs.

violence (if not homicide itself) is incommensurable with Huichols' direct, uncomplicated natures because it is not the "Indian way of killing", because of the "passive behavior of the Huichols, who would have committed the deed" (*Público* 23 Dec 98:23), or as True himself might have said, because good Indians like the Huichols are constitutionally incapable of committing such violence...even when in the employ of drug producers.²⁰

Ironically, this same Rousseauian belief in gentle primitiveness seems to have been the attitude of Miguel Gaitins, the American expatriate in Guadalajara who personally financed the legal defense that led to Chivarra and Hernández's provisional exoneration in August 2001.²¹ Gaitins is the son of a former French prisoner of the Germans who moved to Louisiana after the war and impressed his young son by showing small kindnesses to chain-gang inmates he saw

²⁰ Huichols, like other indigenous people, are sometimes arrested as peons in the international chain of drug production and distribution. Chivarra in particular may have been such a worker among his various professions. This could explain his alarm at True's presence with a camera. Such *narcopeones* tend the marijuana or opium patches of mestizo *patrones* out of desperate poverty, simple greed or fear of refusing the request. These peons are easily pounced on by federal helicopters or ground patrols and sentenced to long jail terms in regional penitentiaries. Most Wixaritari want nothing to do with any kind of illegal drugs.

However, the federal government persists in classifying their sacramental peyote as a narcotic. This makes it possible for authorities to seize it from ceremonial trekkers on occasion. While the government has pursued several highly visible prosecutions against non-Huichol Mexicans and foreign fellow-travelers found in possession of peyote, Huichols themselves are rarely jailed for it. Drawing a sharp ethnic line around peyote (and associating its use by outsiders with international drug trafficking) maintains both disciplinary order for national and US interests as well as a symbolically useful distancing of esoteric indigenousness.

²¹ A three judge board unanimously accepted the state prosecutor's appeal of this verdict on 30 May 2002 and in response to his request for a sentence of 40 years gave them 13 years for "simple homicide" but dismissed the charge of robbery (*Público* 31 May 2002; Gaitins pers. com.). The attorney representing True's widow reflected the continuing ambiguity as to the defendants' motives: "quizá [True] vió algo que no tenía que ver o por cuestiones culturales sagradas" ("maybe [True] saw something he shouldn't have seen or because of sacred cultural issues"), so either Chivarra and Hernández were narcopeones or zealously religious. However, in the former case the sentence would seem too light and in the latter case the verdict itself would be debatable.

laboring on southern roadways. He cites this as an inspiration for his intervention in the case.

More pragmatic exculpations also based on the belief in Indian vulnerability held that two little Indians could not kill a 1.9 meter gringo "giant" or finally (although less commonly) because the facts of the case ere simply impossible to determine. Yet another pragmatic school of thought (as enunciated by the mayor of the mestizo town of Bolaños, which borders on Wixarika territory) sought to exculpate drug traffickers from the incident. According to this official, narcos would not strangle a victim as the first autopsy showed; they would just shoot him (*Público* 18 Dec 98), so the stranglers could very well have been amoral, hungry Indians. With the shocking reports of narcosatánico sacrifices on the US border coming out during that period, this businesslike characterization of drug cultivators' homicidal methods may reflect the authorities' own attitudes to the trade more than narcos' actual practice. At the same time, another, less nuanced variant put both the accusations of a "straightforward" murder-theft and narcotraficante torture on the selfsame Indian suspects and saw these crimes as representative of Indian country in general. I take up these representations of the Huichols and Mexican Indians in general in the next section.

1.10 COLLECTIVE CRIMINALITY AND POLITICAL AUTONOMY: NARCOTRAFICANTES AND ZAPATISTAS

Beyond the speculations about whether the two suspects were engaging in territorial defense or common criminality, there was another, more ominous

response to the "facts" of the case. Some commentators supposed the two defendants' guilt in the death was probable, and took it as an index of bad indigenous character in general ("El Indio Malo"). Others went a step further and concluded that this indigenous criminality proved the folly of acceding to the demand by the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) for indigenous regional autonomy throughout Mexico. Conflating the largely rhetorical threat of Zapatista-style indigenous insurgency in the Sierra Huichol with narcotraficantes is a common trope in the yellow journalism of mestizo centers like Tepic, which has a history of fearing indigenous radicalism that dates back to Manuel Lozada (e.g., front page story, Nayarit Opina 13.VI.95).

Indeed by the mid-1990s a permanent detachment of policía preventiva was installed in the presidencia de bienes comunales in San Andrés and in mid-1995 a large detachment of federal troops (120 soldiers, according to a Huichol account) was camped around Tirikie, the highest peak in the region. As if to confirm the news story, they were ostensibly on a mission to confiscate drugs and weapons (of which there are very few in the comunidad), and a permanent roadblock was installed at the foot of the Sierra Huichol not far from the mestizo cabecera municipal of Huejuquilla El Alto. Troops there once challenged me by asking if I wasn't a Zapatista, if only because I and most of my Huichol colleagues who were riding in the back of the pickup truck wore paliacates around our faces to filter some of the choking dust.

Perhaps noone was so forthright about the generally bad character of Indians as the non-indigenous mayors (*alcaldes*) and county commissioners (*presidentes municipales*) of Villa Guerrero, Huejuquilla El Alto, Bolaños and

Mezquitic, which all contain sizable Huichol or other Indian populations. This was not entirely coincidental because for 70 years ranchers of these *municipios* have violently expropriated land from the three Wixarika *comunidades*. It is ironic that these mestizo authorities who were linked in some cases to the very agents of Huichol land loss should claim that True had to have been the victim of a robbery by Indians, as if Indian country were a moral as well as economic vacuum in the national space. According to one *alcalde*, "San Miguel Huaixtita", where the body was found, "is a place of extreme poverty and the Indians are capable of killing even to get a few pesos to buy food" (*Público* 18 Dec 98: *Sucesos* section). It is also ironic that True had previously interviewed one of these *alcaldes*, Maclovio Curiel Mayorga of Bolaños, before writing his story proposal and deemed him to be "that rarest of things, a decent PRI politician. He has a hatful of ambitious schemes to try to bring further prosperity to Bolaños and the Huichol country" (*Express-News* 27 Dec 98).

A milder, less accusatory, but no less dehumanizing type of anti-Indian imagery appeared in a report by two other correspondents (Jorge Zamora and Mario Mercurí) in the Guadalajara daily *Público*. They published a surreal dispatch reminiscent of Buñuel's Swiftian documentary *Las Hurdes: Tierra sin pan* (1932).²² In it they portrayed the Huichols who inhabit Margarito Díaz's hamlet of Popotita as living in an otherworldly, abysmal poverty. For Zamora and Mercurí, in a distinctly unromantic landscape where

²² True's editor Robert Rivard tied other aspects of the report to what he characterized as a "misinformation campaign in Mexico suggesting True died of exposure" (*Express- News* 26 Dec 98).

cliffs drop off abruptly and trails border between the mountain and emptiness...poverty is a disease that infected everyone....There are 10 or 12 huts that appear to sink into the land, crushed by misery. Skinny dogs and even skinnier children fight for the water from a single faucet....The little girl looks with curiosity, bites and lights up in smiles. She is nine years old and it is the first time she has eaten bread....There the word "nearby" lacks meaning. Everything is far away...and the year 2000 appears to have remained several centuries from this place (my trans.).

Perhaps the correspondents' sense of distance reflects the fact that even very young, old or fat Wixaritari are more deft than bread-eating urban visitors at steadily covering those distances on the rocky paths that knit the sierra together, and the gulf in time is also far less than they supposed. In the late 1990s many Huichols, inspired by Christian apocalyptic prophecy, were quite apprehensive about the fast-approaching millennium signaled by the great comet of 1999.

Some days later, the Huichol rights advocates at the Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas (AJAGI) sought to disentangle these blanket, essentialist characterizations of Indians by distinguishing the presumed crime of True's homicide from a general characterization of the Wixarika ethnic group:

[AJAGI attorney Angeles] Arcos pointed out the need to not create an accusatory tendency against the Huichol people since we are dealing with a peaceful ethnic group that is respectful of the law (*Público* 31 Dec 1998:19; my trans.).

Or, as Arcos herself wrote in the Mexico City daily, *La Jornada*, some days later, such characterizations of Huichols may be linked to a broader political agenda:

...let us avoid attempts to use unacceptable racist arguments to reverse the process of dialogue and the construction of a multicultural country respectful of the rights of persons and collectivities (*La Jornada* 8 Jan 99: Letters to the Editor; my trans.).

Turning to the more politically subversive of the two "Indio Malo" constructions, several commentators seized upon Philip True's death as

isomorphic with the indigenous autonomy issue that the EZLN had raised to national prominence with its 1994 rebellion. In particular, the heated polemic between Ramón Vera Herrera of *La Jornada* and the former *proletarista*, now postmodern political anthropologist Roger Bartra brought the Wixaritari into the theoretical spotlight of Mexican anthropology. Such national anthropological attention may have been unprecedented since the oddly parallel moment 60 years earlier when Robert Zingg attempted to make the Huichols into exemplars of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's theory that tribal religious practice is not metaphorical, but a form of "primitive participation" in cultural categories.

Previous to True's disappearance, Bartra (1998) criticized the kind of indigenous cultural and political autonomy being proposed by the Zapatistas and such neo-Marxist anthropologists as Héctor Díaz Polanco (whom he did not mention by name because he did not need to). This model of autonomy would recognize customary law (*ley consuetudinaria* or, more popularly, *usos y costumbres*) as a valid subset of national law. For Bartra *usos y costumbres* are little more than a culturalized relic of colonial domination symptomatic of the country's lack of embracing democratic institutions.²³ And "autonomy" is not the road to a new, more democratic future, but a fundamentalist, neo-medieval revival of patrimonial society, symptomatic of the collapse of modernism. Bartra claimed that the Zapatistas would revive premodern forms of patriarchal, sectarian domination on the periphery of Mexican society (Bartra 1998:23). Such

²³ In one sense, this universalizing position echoed his previous incarnation as a *proletarista* Marxist anthropologist in the 1970s, a tendency that saw assimilation into the working class as the only salvation for the peasantry.

autonomy would come at the expense of women and religious minorities within the indigenous collectivities, not to mention other universal humanist values. It would hardly be an improvement over the corrupt, crumbling experiment in liberal social integration known as *mestizaje*.

For his part, Ramón Vera –in accord with Angeles Arcos above— claimed that Bartra's position in effect accused traditional authorities of sanctioning True's death in the name of the usos y costumbres and sacred geography that they embody and administer. For Vera, Bartra had identified Miguel Hernández and Juan Chivarra's claim that they killed True in cultural self-defense as a logical consequence of "traditional forms" of indigenous power. Indeed, in an interview excerpted in the newspaper *Reforma* Bartra stated that

The True case reveals the existence of an old problem that people are now trying to formulate with that term "usos y costumbres". This refers to the illegal acts carried out by cacicazgos [despotic regimes] in rural territories where the laws did not operate, so that to enter those territories one required the permission of the cacique [despot] or priest. The relativization of violence and, therefore, the risky legitimation of the exercise of physical force is one of the grave problems and dangers entailed in the proposals for indigenous autonomy; if permitted and enforced, it would be a source for the use and abuse of violence.

Curiously, this argument conflates the same two facts that Hernández and Chivarra did, although for very different reasons: Wixarika authorities routinely require visitors to request permission to be in the community, and True's accused killers invoked communal authorities' historical claim on legitimate violence for territorial defense. Bartra condemned such violence rather than excused it, but the identification of "legitimate" communal violence with crime is the same. Bartra went on to argue that letting people like Chivarra and

Hernández relativize legitimate violence would be like letting Mexico City slum dwellers mug passers-by because it is part of their usos y costumbres.

Not only did these arguments fail to distinguish between legitimate indigenous authorities and any individual who invokes indigenous territoriality for their own ends, they questioned the legitimacy of indigenous authority in the first place. Bartra dismissed traditional authorities as linked primarily to the INI and the PRI (but see Chapter 2 for an argument on the representativeness and legitimation of traditional Wixarika political authority). To draw a different kind of analogy between Huichol territory and Mexico City, Bartra might also discard the legitimacy and institutional autonomy of the Church if a mugger claimed that he robbed for Jesus. Others have apparently suggested in print that it would be a terrible idea to grant regional autonomy to such savages as these Huichols and their cousins in Chiapas.

A different, albeit well-meaning imprecision with regard to the social positioning and representativeness of people who invoke traditional custom appeared in a paid announcement by the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS) in Guadalajara (the institution which generously provided me with official credentials and office space while I did my fieldwork). Admirably, the statement began by pointing out that Huichols have never attacked any of the countless anthropologists (like me) who have worked in the sierra (Alonso 1999). It was also admirable that in order to avoid "grave implications for ethnic rights, for the relationship of indigenous communities with other sectors of Mexican society [i.e., mestizos] and also for continued anthropological investigation in the area", the declaration called for a

thorough revision of the methods used by the police, military and other state agencies when they detained suspects and analyzed forensic and other evidence.

However, this declaration also demanded that a commission composed of researchers from CIESAS, the INI and the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) evaluate "the pertinence and coherence" of True's project, as if this might have some bearing on the legitimacy of killing him. It then called for determining whether True had in fact violated the "usos y costumbres" of the Huichol communities, "specifically if the journalist requested and obtained the corresponding permission from the respective gobernadores tradicionales to traverse, study and photograph the Indians" as if cultural trespassing might be a mitigating circumstance in a homicide case. The statement seemed to presuppose a univocal "uso y costumbre" with regard to the practices of ethnography and photography, and to tacitly agree with the argument of Chivarra and Hernández that they attacked True because he had violated it.

Whether in this cultural framework or those of Bartra and of Chivarra and Hernández themselves, it would be troubling to imply that the violence perpetrated against True would have been justified through a natural delegation of authority emanating from the *gobernadores* down to any member of the community who felt that his moral order had been mortally offended, or indeed that indigenous communities are in some sense private property (cf. Brown 1998, discussed in the conclusion to the previous chapter). Elsewhere, a similar homogenizing organicism informs characterizations of political violence: in some popular discourse Zapatista authority and violence are coterminous with the

popular will, a conception that would pose liberal personal rights against collective indigenous rights.

2. CONCLUSIONS

In December 1998 I learned of the death of Philip True, an American journalist, in the Sierra Huichol. It was instantly apparent that this tragedy embodied the problematic intersection of Indians, civil society and the state. I hoped that by starting to sort out the jumble of conflicting claims, accusations, visions, explanations, denials and fears that came crashing down in the days and weeks after True's tragic disappearance, I could help to make some sense of a complex international ethnic conjuncture. The conjuncture was characterized by systematic misrecognition, mistranslation and only intermittently working misunderstanding among the peoples of the region. We have seen how this can get reinscribed in novel ways through the mass media and popular culture.

This avalanche became an historical event that redefined the region for its residents and observers. Among the key features of this particular defining event, Indian and gringo character, morality and interests were reinterpreted if not invented anew. Outsiders' stereotypes and visions about the territory, its inhabitants and visitors impugned, appropriated, mingled with and denied local people's understandings of themselves and their territory. As such it is a signal episode that condenses international, regional and local viewpoints –a flashpoint that illuminates and articulates free-floating discourses in new arrangements that startle because of their vehemence and strange juxtapositions (cf. Benjamin 1977:262). It was a mass-mediated ethnographic episode that fused images and crystallized attitudes in regional and international discourse. In that process of reinscription a plethora of representations about Huichols and their *costumbre*,

gringos and drug cultivation crashed down from Mexican army helicopters and the attendant worldwide media coverage. Now let me explain more exactly what I mean by the term "discursive avalanche" in the title of this chapter.

The events leading up to and surrounding this highly evocative event gained their semiotic, indeed mythical power from the fact that as is so often the case in Mexico, there was no authoritative interpretation or even certain empirical knowledge on which to base a definitive version of events. Many Mexicans feel that true knowledge is concealed within a hermetic field of power. As a mestizo peasant told me of Mexico's many high-profile killings or kidnappings of political, religious and economic elites during the 1990s, "Está entre ellos, por eso no se sabe" ("It's between them, that's why one doesn't know"). He might agree that centralized control over information, lack of political accountability and politically motivated accounts that do appear make it difficult to establish the conditions for knowledge.

Inevitably paranoia (or the assiduous denial that anyone is paranoid) becomes a national pasttime, and not only for the intelligentsia. Joan Didion (1983) described a similar state of disinformation in her book on the Salvadoran civil war of the early 1980s (*Salvador*). Or as Barbara Belejack said in her article in the *The Texas Observer*, the Philip True case is part of "*la novela nacional* [the national soap opera], endless turns of plot which ensure that no story – particularly no major crime story – will have a beginning, a middle, and most important, an end." I do not claim to have a definitive version of what "really happened" either, but like everyone else I harbor suspicions, desires and so-called commonsense hunches about the matter. Even if I repeated local reports

on the events underlying this ongoing case, it would do little to alter the shifting, seemingly improvised quality of the facts, and might just muddy the waters.

Instead, I have focused on the indisputably meaningful fact that in an epistemologically challenged scenario, there was a social drama based on a dead American journalist in "Mexican Indian country". This is a place that has been charged for a long time with irrationality and violence or at least impenetrability and mysticism in the western cultural imagination. Think of B. Traven (1952), Graham Greene (1955), Juan Rulfo (1955), Malcolm Lowry (1965), Carlos Castañeda (1968), Alejandro Jodorowsky (1971), to signal only some famous 20th century literary and screen writers and to say nothing of the colonial and 19th century legacy. I focused on this particular trauma both because it happened on the periphery of a community whose members I worked with for six years and because it provoked an international tropological battle.

At stake were definitions of gringos, "drug cultures", "indigenous autonomy" and especially the Wixaritari. They are whipsawed between two seemingly incommensurable poles: their nearest neighbors exploit them as miserable peasants and despise them as dirty, eccentric savages at the same time that more exotic others view them as gentle inhabitants of a timeless mystical tradition and a repository of indigenous symbols for the entire Mexican nation and for mystical identity movements throughout the world. Such symbols and the narratives in which they are embedded seem to attain their greatest significance when a crisis mobilizes them as ideology. We saw how an

internationally publicized death articulated a geographic and cultural region internally and with its international context in an unprecedented way.

The avalanche of imagery described in this chapter partially buried the coherent hierarchical relationships that emerged from the ceremonial practices and neo-agrarian discourses that are said to constitute *kiekari*, as described in the previous chapters. The jumble of discordant depictions assembled here threatened to dis-figure the coherent features of *kiekari* which remained visible, and it exposed terrifying shapes in the resulting landscape. That is, with the death of an American journalist in San Andrés and the international process of representing Huichols, different kinds of world views were superimposed on *kiekari*. It turned out that among the many tropes manifested in Huichol territory, True's earnest innocence (itself bound up with a headlong flight from a troubled past) trod upon a very different, more conflicted kind of landscape. As in Russell Banks's novel, True's misstep unleashed a flood of dark images of *kiekari* when the northerner crossed paths with other desperate people.

More formally, when two sets of liminal, marginal characters (the victim and his accused killers) share a specific conjuncture and perhaps even strangely parallel motives but precious little discursive articulation, they can easily misrecognize each other. In this case True could not envision evil on his spiritual trek and perhaps his presumed assailants saw no reason to dissociate evil from ceremony on theirs. This created a tragedy in the classical sense: people's assumptions, misunderstandings and character flaws led to disastrous unintended consequences for them all. Therefore, as in the territorial conflicts discussed in the previous chapter, the True tragedy both exemplified and

transformed the regional articulation of practice and discourse across the multiethnic Sierra del Nayar.

This kind of ideologically charged regional communication process points to more enduring connections between Wixaritari and their inter-ethnic context—a notably dysfunctional culture of social relations. It is a set of connections through tropes that people invent about each other as much as more quantifiable, material social relations like production, consumption and migration. It also exemplifies a broader principle of history in the region: social scientists may examine long-term processes and trends, but in everyday consciousness the history of inter-ethnic relations erupts episodically, as much through catastrophic events inscribed in popular memory as a generally invisible, long-term uniformitarianism. This is why I chose the Benjamin-inspired term "avalanche" over "sedimentation" for the title of this chapter: sometimes cataclysm defines a mountain better than erosion or sedimentation.

Even if national images of the indigenous have not permanently shifted toward racist stereotypes or essentialist apologies as a consequence of this case, at the very least there is now a new image and scale of evil attributed to part of the Huichol sierra. Barbara Belejack's *Texas Observer* article quoted Philip True's editor at the *Express-News* comparing this case to James Dickey's portrayal of demonic mountain men in *Deliverance* (Dickey 1982) and the famous screen adaptation based on it. This illustrates how literary tropes informed the US and Mexican press as well as True's personal imagination or my own, to say nothing of Bartra's reference to the *Heart of Darkness* in the opening quote of this chapter, or to *Moby-Dick* in the conclusion of his article.

These incompatible visions of the Sierra Huichol draw on long literary, anthropological, ecclesiastical and popular discursive traditions that were seemingly muted if not reconciled under the post-revolutionary, assimilationist regime of *mestizaje* back when it was at its most convincing. On the other hand, popular culture in the region has long run against the assimilationist grain of *mestizaje*. Oral tradition is striking for its depictions of savage, orgiastic, yet arcanely hierarchical "Coritas" –a term used to include both Coras (Náyari) and Huichols. This was especially the case around Tepic, Nayarit, whose Liberal elites were the object of Manuel Lozada's Indian-peasant insurgency of 1855-73.²⁴

In the traumatic space of this crisis and the broader crisis of *mestizaje* in the Zapatista era these images seem especially disarticulated. They certainly contradict the Wixaritari's own vision of *kiekari* as a unified, hierarchical space based on respectful exchange, as described in previous chapters. At the same time, this chaos has produced new cultural forms, as some actors surprisingly adopted postures from each other or felt compelled to redefine themselves in the heat of severe attacks on each other's integrity. Like little postmodern territories themselves, these discourses have become enclaved and relatively autonomous as they battle ferociously against each other in the uncertainty of a public sphere increasingly defined as much by its competing suspicions as by its solidarities.

²⁴ My kindly little old Guadalajara neighbor doña Lupe (herself a native of Tepic, born ca. 1910, early enough to have vivid memories of the 1926-29 Cristero rebellion) once asked me soberly if it is not true that the highest Indian priests live on the mountain peaks (in a topographically deployed caste system as it were). She also asked if I knew whether maidens collectively dance naked around a prospective spouse to display their reproductive potential to him. The family resemblance of this exchange to the True case is palpable: mestizos figuring their deepest racial and sexual fears to themselves through the figure of the Indians, just as the accused Huichols at one point made parallel accusations against the alien gringo.

Despite the fact that it is difficult to make pronouncements on the truth or falsity of the accusations in an essentially botched murder investigation, a broader conclusion can be drawn from this clearly overheated interpretive field constructed on the contested territory of "Indian country". The tragically opposed modern myths of "hegemony" and "autonomy", "resistance" and "crime", "sacred Indians" and "narcosatánicos", "wilderness" and "savagery", and the "gringo" as oblivious, drug-crazed alien metaphysical tourist or sinister investigator overshadow and skew the plausibility of the facts of the matter. In either of the latter two scenarios, it would seem that the norteamericano operated under the assumption that he or she has the boundless right of access to vision and "knowledge" ... the province of the kawiterutsixi.

The central finding of this chapter is that the logic of "resistance" and "autonomy" which the accused killers partially and tentatively appropriated in their confessions and which the Wixarika people assert in their ongoing war for recognition of their *kiekari* as land and cultural rights is itself subject to ironic, even criminal reappropriation and contradiction. So the ongoing and mutually implicating battles between "magic" and "modernity" or between collective cultural and individual economic interests within Huichol Indian country and beyond it are part of what construct - and deconstruct - Mexico as a nation. And noone was more overwhelmed by these complexities than poor Philip True, whose very name became a grim onomastic irony in the midst of so much structured uncertainty.

In summary then, the death of the US journalist Philip True in the Sierra Huichol unleashed heated controversy and speculation across the international border and the political spectrum. The case demonstrated how in the Zapatista era, when the homogeneous mestizo ideal seems to be disintegrating, Indians - like Gringos - are increasingly powerful, unstable symbols in Mexican culture. Fixed definitions have become increasingly problematic so this chapter has necessarily been a multi-perspectival collage assembled from the points of view of Wixaritari, mestizos, gringos in general and myself in particular as an interlocutor with all the above. As unstable symbols, both Indians and Gringos generate troubling, conflicting images for the mestizos who ambivalently mirror and define themselves in terms of both of these complementary, opposed classes of others.

Like a Rorschach, True became a polysemic sign that fit into many discourses, joined diverse actors in the imagistic space of "Indian country", and rode a flood of emotionally charged stereotypes and metaphors about the slippery categories of "good" and "bad" Indians and Gringos as well as "drugs" and "violence". In this tragic, Rashomon-like episode, people from different class and ethnic positions reshaped, merged, appropriated and juxtaposed very diverse regional and international ethnic discourses that have long structured Mexican political culture as well as foreign views of Mexico. The episode forced people to ponder appearance, expectation and apparently contradictory selves.

The only definitive truth to emerge was the multiple projection of imagery onto the shadowy space of "the Indian" and "the Gringo", but this says more about the narrators and their free-floating discourses waiting for an event to make them "happen" than it does about the topic. This composite account examined journalistic reports, political claims, the accused criminals' confessions

and my own experience near where the death occurred in order to indicate the larger, enduring narratives from the various representations of this particular event. I situated these in terms of Philip True's biography and general cultural context as well as a specifically Huichol cultural and historical context of kinship, ceremonial and economic relationships in which True's accused killers were apparently involved. These all point back to the history of territorial struggle that has in large measure defined Huichols as a people since the colonial period. However, instead of justifying indigenous violence, the ways in which history and culture have been put into play –particularly in the accused men's confessions– only raise the question of who has the authority to use discourses of legitimate violence and to engage in violence itself.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

0. STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

These four chapters can be seen an Aristotelian quadrangle built around the politics of Huichol territoriality: the general theoretical framework in Chapter 1 is a set of eight formal contexts; the four sections in Chapter 2 on ceremonial practices and social structures that constitute *kiekari* are a set of material contexts that embody these formal dimensions; the four sections on regional ethnopolitical conflicts in Chapter 3 and the ten journalistic sketches in Chapter 4 on how territoriality is represented in the media amount to two sets of efficient causes that in turn embody the more pervasive material dimensions. These categories must be seen recursively because the newly globalized semiotic process of culturally representing territoriality is another kind of formal cause that is changing the shape of future material context for Huichol political action. And from the Wixarika point of view, the divine ancestors (*kakaiyarixi*) who need shamans to mediate their messages and to bring sacrifices to the places where they live in order to register Huichol territoriality are the final cause that both created *kiekari* originally and now legitimizes its changing shape.

More specifically, Chapter 1 of this dissertation has outlined a general theory of Mexican indigenous territoriality that frames Huichol history and ethnography in terms of local "senses of place", rural class structure, the changing constitutional definition of indigenousness, government *indigenismo* (ethnic development), and the integration (as well as disintegration) of regional and national space, with autonomy demands as the most important recent

expression of those processes. Chapters 2 and 3 are the central ethnographic analysis. They described Huichols' own theory and practice of territoriality, and they framed this description in terms of how local ceremonial practice is differentially integrated into national and global political institutional contexts. This analysis hinges on an enhanced sense of brokerage as hierarchical mediation that draws connections between the tributary practices of the preconquest period, contemporary shamanism and political brokers more conventionally defined (e.g., Wolf 1956). And the dissertation closed by considering how two comuneros' purported justification of violence against an American visitor as defense of kiekari was taken by the media to represent Huichol territoriality and identity as well as Indian autonomy claims in general (Chapter 4).

Most importantly, this dissertation has contributed insights into what territoriality means "on the ground" in terms of how a historically dominated people nevertheless creates meaningful places and narratives that effectively claim those places as part of a vast, historically deep and interconnected region over which they exercise sacralized governance. The spatially expansive dialectic of narratives and practices that builds such a realm is what I mean by "Huichol territoriality". If nothing else, I have shown how territoriality is more a fluid regional process than a reified local thing, as it is often regarded.

Huichols' territorial practices and representations have spanned a vast range, both geographically and in terms of the groups encompassed in those representations. I have shown that on one extreme people plant, gather, hunt and reproduce those place-based relationships in ceremonies exclusively by and for themselves and their ancestors. These ceremonies also reproduce their

historical memory of ancestral territorial limits for ritual audiences at home and for political audiences in the national space, and they make performative displays and discursive representations of those ceremonies in hybrid legal claims and political demonstrations. That is, they cite ritual relationships to land in novel discursive constructions at pan-ethnic indigenous events, in the press, literature, the courts and other public venues (cf. Van Cott 1996; Harvey 1998; Mattiace 2001; Gow & Rappaport 2000; Stephen 2002).

Huichols' everyday territorial practices and the new discourses built on them in legal, political and cultural struggles not only contain alternative territorial visions to those of the state. They also point to an expanded sense of labor –one which combines rural production and sacrifice and ceremonial treks across the landscape as constitutive of ethnic identity and political ideology (cf. Nugent 1993). This type of sacralized labor process and its discourses encompass not only communal but also regional and national space in a hierarchical cosmological order that generates value from place-based reciprocity instead of deterritorialized self-interest and production in the abstract.

Without always fully appreciating that this model is complementarity to and imbricated in the Hispanic order, Mexicans seeking alternatives to globalism, deterritorialization and loss of national identity often idealize Huichol ceremony because it evokes a rootedness and respect that seem to be vanishing from the national space (e.g., Bonfil 1987). The brokerage of local practice by Huchol intellectuals is key to such a national imaginary. In order to better understand the dynamics and paradoxes of cultural representation in ethnic movements, particularly in Chapter 3 I have examined the increasingly mediated

relationship between the people living on the land and the leaders or intellectuals who represent them in specific territorial struggles and discourses (cf. Jackson 1989, 1995; Lomnitz 1992; Briggs 1996). In short, this is a dissertation about how Indians claim territory before increasingly broad audiences and how those claims are contradicted. While it only may document an ephemeral moment of promise that opened up when the Mexican political system was going through an epochal transformation that permitted indigenous people's ceremonial territoriality to gain the legal potential for enhanced efficacy and salience, such moments may reappear in different guises in the future.

1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1.1 CHAPTER 1

The dissertation opens with an extensive review of the literature on indigenous territoriality in order to situate Huichol claims. It weaves the history of a region often regarded as entirely exceptional for its intense cultural particularity into a comparative perspective founded on the common human experience of "place" and on the experiences of Indians as peasants embedded in rural class structures, regional cultures, national spaces and increasingly international migration circuits. This synthetic approach situates the often apolitical theory of "place" in history and political action, and it brings a particular indigenous perspective on what makes a place sacred into the political field, so as to make more sense of what is at stake in indigenous land struggle.

Key to that history, the Gran Nayar region of the Sierra Madre Occidental (which includes Huichols, Coras, Nahuas, Tepehuanos, Tepecanos and mestizos)

was different from other regions because patchy state and church control made it possible for powerful Cora lineages and their Huichol tributaries to appropriate Spanish culture on relatively independent terms and to repeatedly assert territorial and cultural autonomy against colonial and national regimes. At the same time, like everywhere in Mexico the royal *título primordial* (original land title) was incorporated as a sacralized document and the *comunidad* still bases demands on it today (cf. Gruzinski 1993; Rappaport 1990). The ideological synthesis and performative projection of these two senses of territory is the basis of all subsequent Huichol claims.

More specifically, Chapter 1 is composed of two sets of four theoretical lenses that focus on Huichol ethnography in terms of place, class, law, development, Mexican anthropological theory, region, migration and autonomy. In the latter regard I compare Huichols' position with that of other Indians as subjects of state programs of development-oriented ethnic assimilation and as people who identify with the grievances and aspirations if not all the methods of autonomy movements like the Zapatistas in Chiapas. This theoretical prolegomenon evaluates Huichol ethnography in terms of the intellectual history of anthropological theory about Indians in Mexico since the watershed political year of 1968. Elaborating this incipient framework satisfies a goal to not only put Wixarika ethnography into a more general anthropological perspective and show how Huichols have met history—as the admirable project of Beatriz Rojas (see bib) and Jean Meyer (see bib) has already done to a considerable extent—but also to begin to show how they have might make it theirs.

1.2 CHAPTER 2

Having set up this comparative theoretical and historical framework, the core ethnography in Chapter 2 describes how the roughly 15,000 Huichol people (out of a total of about 20,000) who still live in *rancherías* (*kiete*) spread across about 5,000 square kilometers of the southern Sierra Madre Occidental of Mexico continue to reproduce and extend an extremely expansive and inclusive notion of territoriality (*kiekari*). *Kiekari* is based on ritual narratives of ancestral movement as well as production and exchange relationships encompassing at least 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) across five states (Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango, Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí).

This region was their prehispanic exchange sphere with other peoples (Weigand 1985), and Huichols' narratives and rituals about the movements of divine ancestors among key places have been central to reproducing it in their communal memory into the present. On the level of ceremonial practice, groups of Huichol cargo holders (xukuri'ikate or jicareros in Spanish, quite distinct from the classic "Mesoamerican civil-religious hierarchies" also found in the comunidades) have reproduced their kiekari through dry season sacrificial hunting and gathering treks to those key places, where they renew reciprocal exchanges with their divine owners (cf. Hubert & Mauss 1967; Girard 1977; Bourdieu 1990). One specific implication of this ethnography is that the abstract formulation of sacrificial exchange first laid out by Durkheim's followers in the early 20th century is grounded in a spatial system of signification that shifts in historical time (cf. Munn 1986).

This place-based communal memory (memoria) is multi-layered. In addition to the primordial ancestral narratives (kawitu) that account for kiekari in its widest cosmological sense, historical memory revolves around the mojoneras (boundary markers) that defined the extensive colonial limits of their comunidades. More recent agrarian struggle and the sacrificial pacts that affirmed communal boundaries in the 20th century constitute a third stratum of sacralized memory. This memoria continues to be reshaped through the creative, flexible deployment of mythical narrative and ritual practices that inscribe (registrar) everyday change in settlement patterns into the mythical category of nanayari (rootedness).

The central ethnographic fact in Chapter 2 is that Huichol ideology and practice of territorial articulation invokes a network of "roots" or "rootedness" (nanayari). Nanayari expresses enduring patterns of relatedness through ceremonial exchange and kinship across the ancestral territory. This is a deep, widely shared metaphor underlying ceremonial practice. Insofar as it was foregrounded in political practices like the very conversations that this dissertation is based on, Chapter 2 is an artifact of the current sociolinguistic shift from local ceremonial practice to regional political ideology. The practice and ideology of nanayari synecdochically tie the five places that define the corners and center of the vast 90,000 square kilometer kiekari to the boundaries of the sierra comunidades and to several dozen major aboriginal temples and hundreds of rancherías contained in the relatively small area in the Sierra where most Huichols still live and plant maize. This synecdoche is affirmed on treks that continuously inscribe or "register" the historically shifting ramification of

bilateral family rancherías over time and space into the encompassing hierarchical vision of kiekari.

There are general resemblances between this form of territoriality and other systems in the world. *Kiekari* resembles Australian Aborigines' ancestral dreaming paths because of their narrative construction of landscape as well as ancestral place-based estates (Stanner 1989[1963]). It also resembles the radial systems of asymmetrical tribute relations that articulated premodern Asian polities (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995:391-395) and the Inka empire. In the Inka case, extended family Andean *rancherías* (*ayllus*) were tied to ancestral places (*huacas*) and to the imperial capital in Cuzco through asymmetrical exchanges of goods, persons and divine energy along the kin-based *ceque* meridians. The king secured political legitimacy by embodying this principle of tributary reciprocity by personally traversing *ceques* throughout the realm (T. Cummins, pers. com.).

In precolonial southeast Asian political systems the western notion of geographical boundaries was alien because hegemony depended on controlling labor and tribute from people rather than direct control over the land where the goods and people were produced and housed. Consequently territoriality was conceived as "radial" because lines of tribute connected outlying social groups to the chief or king at the conceptual center, with the space articulated in terms of directionality, paths and ancestral places (Vandergeest and Peluso *op. cit.*).

Second, Huichols also have radial territoriality insofar as *rancherías* are connected to temples with their *cargo* hierarchies and from there to central places of power throughout the *kiekari* (cosmological territory). Also like other systems, Wixarika territory is organized in terms of sunward directionality.

A third parallel is in terms of how this space is represented visually. Stanley Tambiah (1976) points out how the "geographical and topographical formulas" in the religious symbol of the *mandala* is iconic with actual community layouts, much as Wixarika gourd bowls, textile designs and other divine visage (*nierika*) designs are isomorphic with familial, social and cosmological patterns (cf. Schaefer 1990).

Finally, to compare the Wixarika narratives (kawitu) about links to creation places with another Native American system, Basso (1996) describes toponymy as the framework for Western Apache moral, mythological and historical discourse. Like Aborigines, both these American peoples attach overarching meanings to the places where crucial dramas occurred, they understand their histories in place-based rather than abstract structural terms. The Aboriginal dreaming narratives and the Apache system of geographical narrative are apparently less hierarchical than the Wixarika, Andean and Asian systems, but no less densely laden with meanings.

Just as the territory of southeast Asian peoples was not fixed, but instead tended to follow a group's movements through space, the size and location of the extended Wixarika family estate's "root" (nanayari), the community and the kiekari itself change. The main factors are the migration of families and the fluid reconfiguration of bilateral kie kindreds across the landscape, the historic invasions and migrations and government dispositions of land, insofar as these are collectively inscribed through ceremony.

For the Huichols and other indigenous peoples, the radial form of tributary territoriality has now been enclaved within a set of fixed external

boundaries established by the Spanish colonial apparatus and the Mexican nation-states as part of their (post-)colonial condition. The articulation of different historical forms of territoriality is a great cultural achievement of the Huichols. They have integrated these forms into a syncretic cultural ideology, which was only increasing in dynamism during the 1990s.

To put it in more linguistic terms, territorialization –the process of establishing and administering territoriality— parallels Bauman's notion of "traditionalization" as a discursive achievement reconciling source, speaker and audience. As noted in Chapter 1, much of the contemporary literature on territoriality stems from Foucault's notions about the spatialization of power, as expressed through institutional practices more or less articulated with the state, into the most everday details of life. For instance, the signal article cited above (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995) focuses on territorialization in Siam/Thailand in terms of the state's establishment of civil administration, the registration of land titles, and the demarcation of particular pieces of territory for particular purposes.

However, it is precisely by appropriating these same institutional practices from the state and subordinating them to more expansive patterns under their ceremonial control that a subaltern people like the Huichols have made their own claims on power. They have done this by identifying their communal ritual authorities with legitimizing ancestors, by "registering" their places in the land through ceremonial treks across the *kiekari* to a virtual capital in the desert, and by struggling to control the use of territory. They do this both in the larger state-level sense of owning agricultural land and winning access to

ancestral places, and in the smaller, micro-political sense of including and controlling the movements of outsiders in their communities and ritual spaces.

At the most, this hierarchical organization of space, together with the metaphors of power Huichols first appropriated from more powerful indigenous polities and later from the colonial and national governments, implies that they effectively treat *kiekari* as a ceremonial state. At the least, their far-reaching ceremonial organization of kinship and the hierarchical cosmological geography that roots that kinship enriches more bounded understandings of *ranchería*-village societies and regions (cf. Spicer 1980). Either way, this dissertation in effect is an ethnography of indigenous visions of power. In view of their dispersed settlement pattern and still relatively egalitarian social structure outside the ceremonial sphere Huichols' elegant, hierarchical vision of *kiekari* is both patently ideological and a particularly striking attempt to reassert indigenous power in the interstices of a nation that has impoverished them.

This contrast between dispersion and hierarchy evokes key tensions in Huichol ideology, as the prevailing, lascivious, feminine dimension associated with the rainy season, the west, the night and the family rancherías (kiete) where maize production takes place is juxtaposed to the intermittently paramount, ascetic male gerontocracy associated with the dry season, the east, the sun and temple complexes (tukite), where much economic production gets redistributed (Neurath 1998; Fikes 1985). The politics of representing this system in regional forums evokes a second contradiction as some of the same actors who defend the community as a whole use this tradition-based discourse to consolidate power and concentrate land for themselves and their rancherías, thus threatening the

local coherence they proclaim. It is not clear that shamanistic authority can encompass these newer actors, but for now neither shamanistic nor more secular intellectuals can concentrate power and represent culture exclusively for long without being attacked for witchcraft or other forms of *egoismo*.

At the same time, the metaphors of bureaucratic "registration" that Huichols have appropriated from the state for their extensive ceremonial practices also help to resolve the gendered opposition between hierarchy and dispersion because they inscribe changing patterns of schism and demographic growth into the ceremonially governed hierarchical order embodied in *nanayari*—a procreative "female" vine tended by gerontocratic male gardeners. In that regard, this study contributes to a structural understanding of historical process (cf. Liffman 2001b; Sahlins 1981).

An encompassing account of Huichol territoriality that addresses the presumed dichotomy between cosmology and politics is perhaps the most important contribution of that chapter. And again, it also suggests why for many of their non-indigenous supporters, the Huichols' extensive territorial consciousness represents an alternative model for the organization of the national space, one based on reciprocity and the hierarchical integration of space and oriented toward the reproduction of cultural order rather than capital.

1.3 CHAPTER 3

Huichols were recognized by the Spanish crown in the early 18th century as the possessors of three *repúblicas de indios* covering roughly 5,000 square kilometers of the southern Sierra Madre Occidental where they continue to live and grow

their maize and *nanayari* "roots". Acknowledgement of their territory by the Mexican Revolutionary state in the 1950s and 1960s shrank to three *comunidades indígenas* covering about 4,000 square kilometers. Most of the loss occurred in San Andrés Cohamiata, where I did most of my fieldwork. Much of the remainder was broken up into *ejidos* and *comunidades* under non-indigenous control, so agrarian disputes and political mobilizations over that region continue into the present (Weigand 1981; Arcos & González 1992; B Rojas 1993). This chapter shows how Huichols link these contemporary struggles to ongoing ceremonialized forms of territorial organization through a concrete logic of relationship to ancestral places in geographical space.

As mentioned with regard to Chapter 2 as well, such an encompassing and hierarchical model of territory is itself partly an outgrowth of the new phase of agrarian struggle linked to indigenous autonomy demands that has been taking place in Mexico since the 1990s, when I was working in conjunction with a land rights NGO and the *comunidad* of San Andrés Cohamiata. Now *kiekari* itself is an emergent category in regional political discourse. Indeed it has been objectified into a virtual form of cultural property in the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival. But however much the model of *kiekari* discursively undergirds the rise of a new political class, it is still coterminous with centuries-old ceremonial practice as everyday people articulate places with sacrificial goods that embody their social bonds.

The main reason for the emergence of *kiekari* as a coherent, hierarchical ideology was that in the early 1990s the Salinas government made Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization into national law and amended

Article 4 of the Mexican constitution to grant enhanced recognition to indigenous peoples and their *usos y costumbres*, including "traditional" land use patterns (Díaz Polanco 1995). Huichol leaders allied with an incipient indigenous regional authority (the Unión de Comunidades Indígenas Huicholes –UCIH), a non-governmental land rights organization (the Asociación Jalisciense de Apoyo a los Grupos Indígenas –AJAGI), other NGOs and university groups became aware that the government might accept their definition of territory as those places articulated by ceremonially constructed kin "roots" that lead from *rancherías* to temples, and beyond that to primordial emergence places via sacrificial treks, thus making the lands identified with these practices as being eligible for different types of recognition or protection. This gained urgency as the NGO and the Huichol leadership also realized that the government's simultaneous truncation of Article 27 —the cornerstone of revolutionary agrarian reform— had made rural lands more vulnerable to global market forces than at any time since before they won recognition as *comunidades*.

This was the context for the historic, ceremonially-based territorial claims that I saw emerging while I did fieldwork and collaborated with the Huichol-AJAGI alliance as an expert witness in land claims for the *comunidad indígena* of San Andrés Cohamiata (Liffman, Vázquez & Macías 1994, 1995). So far this alliance, which hinges on both shamanistic "traditional intellectuals" and secular "internal-articulatory intellectuals", has developed three types of claims based at least in part on Convention 169 and Article 4. These vary according to the kinds of territoriality entailed, and I examined an "iconic episode" of each:

- 1) augmented agrarian claims in the *tribunales agrarios* for *restitución* of colonial title lands bordering the recognized *comunidades indígenas* and implicated in traditional ceremonial organizations, despite land invasions and concerted legal and political opposition from rival non-indigenous peasants and their government allies (Section 1);
- 2) claims for guarantees from the Congress, state, *municipio* and *ejido* authorities for access, hunting and gathering, and other rights short of outright ownership to ancestral places throughout their entire 90,000 square kilometer prehispanic territory, despite competing government and private economic demands and interference with Huichol ceremonial practices (Section 2); and
- 3) a more generalized cultural revival movement centered on an autonomous *secundaria* school named Tatutsi Maxakwaxi after a primordial shaman, and based on an enhanced sense of *kiekari* as a material embodiment of Huichols' ethnic identity as a *pueblo indio* (Indian people), despite powerful protests from the state government and Catholic church.

These three types of claims each represent *kiekari*, its constitutive places and their mutual relationship in significantly different ways depending on the type of places being claimed and the political context of those claims. As a political ethnography, then, this dissertation contributes to documenting a flourishing discursive field for indigenous claims in the neoliberal conjuncture (cf. Stephen 2002). It also offers a finegrained glimpse at how the semantic content of a cultural category like *kiekari* changes shape in performative contexts as much as its physical form does in the historical process of settling the land.

1.4 CHAPTER 4

Finally, in Chapter 4 I showed how in the mass-mediated international furor over the death of the journalist-adventurer Philip True a few miles downhill from that autonomous *secundaria*, Americans, Mexican mestizos and Huichols themselves produced sharply contrasting representations and appraisals of the legitimacy of indigenous territorial and autonomy claims (as well as of journalist-adventurers). This happened because when two Huichol suspects were first arrested, they justified killing True as a defense of ancestral territory, the same ideology employed by the *comunidad's* collective leadership. The defendants were apparently in the midst of ceremonial treks at the time and claimed that the killing was motivated by a desire to defend their landscape against unwarranted representation of it by a foreigner with a camera. My fascination with this tragedy stems in part from both its avalanche of literary and ethnic tropes as well as an uncomfortably close kinship between the journalistic traveler and the anthropologist who also seeks to make an encompassing representation of communal space, albeit for a purpose more in line with local interests.

The defendants' shifting discourses of cultural defense were pitted against the media's counterclaims that Huichols are merely common criminals or servants of global narco-capitalism, so the "discursive avalanche" seemingly ruptured any coherent scheme of indigenous identity with the land. Opponents of indigenous autonomy seized upon the event to reassert the mestizo state, impugn autonomy and even to revive old fears of Indian savagery. The sharp polarization of perspectives and the evocation of other discourses regarding drugs, violence and Indian human nature took place in a notably indeterminate

field: the physical causes, social reasons and national implications of the death of Philip True were all hotly contested but regardless, a pair of Huichol men were jailed for it for over two years before being provisionally exonerated. If nothing else, the case once again bore witness to the Huichols' symbolic potency in Mexico and beyond.

It also suggested a troubling, unstable Doppelgänger relationship between the heretofore more distinct categories of indigenous ritual and crime, autonomy and barbarism, and Indian and Gringo from a mestizo perspective. Amid the general dissolution of the Revolutionary *mestizaje* project, the True case embodied a more widespread destabilization of Indians as national subjects, as many commentators now represented them as being essentially barbarous and anti-national –a reversion to the 19th century. Finally, the analysis in Chapter 4 also raised questions about the mutually determining relationship between mass-mediated discourses and local "Indian culture" –a theme already implicit in Chapter 3's discussion of how Huichols insert their claims into globalized indigenous rights discourses and Chapter 2's description of political syncretism.

2. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

One contribution of this dissertation is its description of an indigenous ideology of the regional territory and power. I have used the term "appropriation" to describe Huichols' use of Mesoamerican and Hispanic metaphors about governance. However, Huichols themselves would say it is just the other way around: the state has appropriated *their* shamanistic power to affect natural processes and paid them very poorly in the bargain. While this might conform

to the Marxist-positivist notion of "false consciousness", it is also a basis for political action because the potency of the metaphors Huichols use in political discourse is increasingly legitimized by Mexico's amended legal framework and by a popular culture that valorizes indigenousness as a pillar of national identity.

Or as Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent phrased it, the "dialectic of cultural struggle ... entails reciprocal appropriations, expropriations, and transformations" (1994:17). We have seen how both the discourses and practices of the bilingual teachers organizing the Tatutsi Maxakwaxi cultural revival school and of some of the *jicareros* (*xukuri'ikate*) in the temple *cargo* hierarchies are now more widely accepted by both everyday local people, national intellectuals and the state as the basis for certain kinds of land claims. In that sense, these actors have taken on a what Gramsci called a more explicitly "organic" or what Lomnitz (1992:234-241) refers to as "internal-articulatory" intellectual function, evidence of such ideal-typical categories' historical fluidity.

Another way to sum up the general contribution of this work is through an autobiographical note on how the dissertation narrative recapitulates the *longue durée* of my graduate training. As much as Wixarika ceremonial practice and territorial categories bear the traces of historically prior modes of administration, production and exchange, the dissertation bears traces of the main paradigms I've been immersed in since I began reading anthropology: it moves from structure and symbolism to history, practice and discourse. But as the Wixaritari have done, these paradigms have been repositioned in contextually appropriate ways.

That is, the hierarchically recursive model of territorial structure that I describe in Chapter 2 is an *indigenous* construction of social order that emerged in a particular historical conjuncture of agrarian struggle in the western lands of what had been part of the colonial title of San Andrés Cohamiata. The conjuncture was one where the neoliberal Mexican state was seeking to recast itself as open to both global capital and the global discourses of human and indigenous rights. That context revalorized indigenous *usos y costumbres* as a basis for territorial claims, so the global conjuncture partially motivates some of the hierarchical, systematic quality attributed to *kiekari*. Indeed it has situated the Huichol people at the vanguard of post-revolutionary agrarian struggle, insofar as the withering Mexican state can permit such struggles.

I have in turn subsumed this historically positioned vision of structure to the logic of practice. Foremost among these practices are the demographic shifts and ceremonial activities through which Huichols constantly change the shape of *kiekari* if not its underlying synecdochical and iconic disposition to be replicated on different spatial scales. I have also shown how the mass-mediated, discursive representation of these relationships may have the greatest political salience of all, as both indigenous and non-indigenous interlocutors appropriate the notion of "indigenous territoriality" to very diverse ends.

More generally, among the political purposes of this dissertation, two stand out: 1) an attack on the still widespread depictions of indigenous territory and societies in general as unproblematically demarcated, static or impervious to history; and 2) an interrogation of the extent to which indigenous territorial claims are legitimized in increasingly broad discursive fields. Much of the

foregoing discussion in these conclusions has addressed the former point. The latter issue of legitimation begins on the humblest level, as compellingly described by Ingrid Geist (1996:91), who states that in a phenomenological sense every Wixarika with a bundle full of sacrificial objects is at the center of *kiekari*, "a center that moves". However, for this center to really count, it must be legitimized not only in terms of that sole traveler's "sense of place" but also in terms of the *kie-tuki-*creation place hierarchy, the colonial *mojoneras*, the post-revolutionary government's agrarian courts, and globally mass-mediated discourses like those disputed in the True case.

To put all this in a slightly different way, this text like any other has had a number of subtexts, among which are a critical interrogation of at least five fundamental dichotomies that still operate in many anthropological treatments of the Huichols and other indigenous peoples in Latin America. These are the longstanding divides in theoretical approaches to rural people as Indians vs. peasants, their ideological forms as based on myth vs. history, their territorial systems as the expression of cosmology vs. politics and discourse vs. practice, and their political demands as rooted in underlying structure vs. context-dependent performance. These all reflect the basic fact that how people represent a territory differs at times from how it is inhabited.

3. EPILOGUE: HORIZONS

In addition to opening those theoretical Pandora's boxes in order to offer new perspectives on the Huichols, this dissertation also points to several scarcely

touched horizons of discussion. One is linguistic. Future research on Huichols requires paying more attention to how the increasingly stratified, conflictive social fields created by local class formation, regional clientelism and globalized economic relationships inform the language that Huichol leaders use to describe not only the territory where everyday life takes place, but its ceremonial and historical backdrop (Bauman & Briggs 1990; Kroskrity 2000).

Another is historical. This means a closer comparison between contemporary Huichols' political rituals, territorial organization and ideology with published archival materials on these phenomena during ancestral Huichols' powerful military resistance to Hispanic domination and millenarian appropriation of Hispanic symbols in the colonial and independence periods (Weigand & García 1996; Ortega 1996[1754]; Meyer 1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1994; McCarty 1975[1673]; Gálvez 1990[1767]; Castro G. 1988, 1991, 1992, 1996; Castro G., Guedea & Mirafuentes 1992; Coyle 1998; Bugarín 1993[1768]). Elsewhere in Mexico and even in other regions bordering the Gran Nayar, colonial revolts have been viewed as Christian millenarian responses to abuses of colonial authority, even as demands for a more perfect divine kingship from Spain, not for autonomy from state control (Van Young 1986,1989, 2001). Comparing archival materials on spatial organization, political authority and ceremonialism during the Gran Nayar resistance with secondary materials on neighboring parts of colonial Nueva Galicia/Independent western Mexico will illuminate this key aspect of Huichol territoriality and autonomy.

Another is ethnological. In Chapter 1 I have only laid the groundwork for articles that will compare the constellation of material practices, territorial

discourses and emergent ethnic identities surrounding the current land struggles of Huichol people with those of other Mexican peoples whose identities are changing through migration, resettlement and demands for autonomy. What is their relationship to land, how do they represent it discursively, and what kind of autonomy do they want for it? What implications do such autonomous regimes have for indigenous people's other rights as citizens of nation-states (De la Peña 1995; Díaz Polanco 1991)?

One point of departure for such a comparison of indigenous territorialities is in the relationship between "place" and "space" I explored in Chapter 1 — between a multi-perspectival but locally-centered linguistic or experiential approach to the meanings of a territory (e.g., Feld & Basso 1996; Stewart 1996) and larger-scale perspectives on power vectors over and within it (e.g., De Certeau 1984; Vandergeest & Peluso 1995). How do the micro and macro levels combine theoretically and in practice as regional relationships play out in local language and experience? Whose conceptions of territory figure into demands for land and autonomy in key indigenous struggles in contemporary Mexico?

In particular, more finegrained work like that alluded to in Chapter 3 is needed on how indigenous authorities and cultural experts along with their non-indigenous allies in the public sphere craft new political ideologies and images of land. In doing so, how do they reconcile globalized discourses about territorial autonomy, indigenous rights, human rights and intellectual property with regional ethnic identities, local politics and land tenure? Indeed, many of the most cogent ideological formulas and incisive literary images about territoriality may emerge from diasporic communities with highly mediated, even figurative

relations to the land base (Nagengast & Kearney 1990; Pacheco 1993, Kearney 1996). These constructions are formative, emergent phenomena, so special attention must be paid to how they are constantly changing shape as indigenous interlocutors and other theorists entextualize practices and speech in new political and cultural contexts (cf. Bauman *in press*; Briggs 1996; Duranti 1994).

Central among these contexts is ethnic territoriality grounded in "indigenous rights", but sometimes this conflicts with other rights discourses in the public sphere —to say nothing of the discourses of criminality evoked by the True case. For instance, Huichols debate whether communal autonomy (as embodied in their autoridades tradicionales) overrides individual comuneros' human rights in the fields of religion and gender. As we saw in Chapter 4, many Mexicans question how independent the ley consuetudinaria (customary law) exercised by such authorities should be of state control (Liffman 1995; Bartra 1998). Other issues entwined with autonomy debates in the Huichol region include sustainable development, pan-ethnic regional planning, and intellectual property rights over plant medicines, ritual practice and other forms of producing indigenous knowledge (cf. Brush 1993; Bartolomé & Barabas 1998; Escobar 1997; López B. 1996).

A comprehensive approach to the connections among these discourses and practices is only now emerging (e.g., Coombe 1998), and ethnographies of indigenous territoriality on which to base such analyses are scarce. I hope to make stronger links between the literally grounded kind of territoriality described in this dissertation, the discourses of brokers and theoreticians, and the wider discursive fields on which they draw. Such future work may offer

Huichols a resource for anchoring their current claims, a sense of what has changed in their region and images of their ancestors as agents of change.

A final area for future discussion is esthetic. In addition to making deeper comparisons between the Huichol ethnography and anthropological writings on other Mexican Indians' relationship to land, it is important to look more closely at how indigenous literature represents that relationship as well. The burgeoning field of indigenous essayists and fiction writers, Huichol and otherwise, is another field in which territorial visions are emerging and promise to refigure both local and national imaginaries in the future. Another important esthetic field —indeed a virtual parallel universe of public indigenous representation of landscape and territoriality that this dissertation has scarcely mentioned— is plastic art. The famous Huichol fiber artworks ("yarn paintings") have long been esteemed by romantic tourists and art promoters as metonymous with a shamanistic world but they also are precise, situated representations of tradition for a global audience (cf. Maclean 1995). The refiguring of ritual and economic practice into canonical visual representations is an aspect that deserves more attention in the future.

In closing, this dissertation has traced the sometimes broken path that leads from history to territorial practice in sacrifice, kinship and collectively constructed ceremonial hierarchies to ethnic identity discourses produced in globalized contexts of political action in hopes of changing that history. Future work should expand this into a historically grounded comparison of indigenous Mexicans' culture and politics of land for academics, activists and the indigenous people who produce territoriality in the first place.

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APPENDIX 1

MOJONERAS OF THE COLONIAL TITLE OF SAN ANDRES COHAMIATA

The following list is derived from the Acordonamiento de las moh[on]eras de las propiedades indígenas, de los Pueblos unidos San Andrés Cohamiata y Guadalupe Ocotán, del Octavo Cantón, Colotlán. This is a typed transcript of the colonial title signed by the Marqués de Valero April 9-10, 1725. The transcript was first made in 1933. The typed version is dated 4 April 1941 and signed by the following authorities:

Juan Antonio CarrilloGobernador, San AndrésJulio CarrilloGobernador, San AndrésLionisio MuñozGobernador, Guadalupe OcotánGregorio PachecoSecretario

The *kawiteru* José Carrillo Cervantes of Bancos de Calítique (cf. Arcos 1993) and Lic. Héctor Montoya Robles of the Centro de Investigación de Lenguas Indígenas of the Universidad de Guadalajara helped interpret the transcriptions of the Wixarika toponyms. The Spanish names and the numbers, which correspond to the map attached to the original texts, are transcribed here as the appeared in the original. The first eight numbers correspond to the *fundo legal* or central commons and the rest to the limits of the community. I have added a few translating notes and geographical comments that summarize the original document.

TOPONYM	COMMENTS
Tekayiwimepa Pedernal Negro	From Tateikie toward the NE
Kwamiyata tsikwaipa	NE corner of the <i>fundo legal</i> ; 50 cordeles N of the cemetery's Santa Cruz
'iramakawe Paisán Parado	From the NE to the W
Xetakuta Tierra Colorada	NW corner of the fundo legal
Muxata Aborregado	From the NW to the S
Tukamukatsie Arañas	SW corner of the fundo legal
Hatuxamene i pa Agua Zarca	From the SW to the E
	TOPONYM Tekayiwimepa Pedernal Negro Kwamiyata tsikwaipa El Arrayán de Cohamiata 'iramakawe Paisán Parado Xetakuta Tierra Colorada Muxata Aborregado Tukamukatsie Arañas Hatuxameneipa

7	Xaipitsitekia Moscas Paradas	SE corner ¹
8	Maxamu'u	From the SE to the N; connects to #2 ²
Ü	Cabeza de Venado	From the 3L to the 14, connects to #2
9	Metakita	
	Metatita	
10	[no Wixarika toponym]	
	Rancho de Vecinos [mesti	zo ranchl
11	Tepiata	
	Arroyo de Fierros	
12	Kwatapa	
	Huaches	
13	'utamayewe	
	Tapestes	
14	Terikaxitsie	
	En Los Alacranes	Toward the NE ³
	San Vicente	
[no number	15]	
16	Karutsarie	
	Platanillo	
17	Tametsie	
	Picacho del Diente	
18	Nakarite 'akitsie	
	Arroyo de Nopales	
19	'atsiyepa	
	En el Murciélago, La Orde	ña
20	Weuraixipa	
	En Los Palomitos	
21	'uapurixipa	
	Los Amoles	

¹ This marks the eastern entrance to the comunidad; nearby is 'iparimakumane, where the annual ritual investiture of the incoming *tatuwani* begins.

² «De donde dieron principio las mohoneras del fundo legal este Pueblo...se comienza a medir del brazo dicho [drcho?] de la Santa Cruz de Cementerio de la Iglesia, siempre por el mismo rumbo Norte, se midió a línea recta 50 cordeles que puntualmente terminaron en la mohonera cruz esquina Norte Poniente del fundo legal » Note that earlier #2 was referred to as the NE (nord-ouest) and that Xetakuta (no nimber) was the NW. In any event, a cordel is a cord of fixed length, usually 69 varas or 57.8 meters when measuring large tracts (caballerías –approximately 43 hectares or 106 acres, or sitios de ganado mayor – 25 million sq. varas, 1755 has. or 4335 A.) of land (Carrera Stampa 1949).

³ « punto divisorio entre los Pueblos de Oriente, que son Tensompa la Soledad San Nicolás y Huejuquilla el Alto, Mpio. de 8/o Cantón de Colotlán y de Sta Catarina y de San Sebastián que también colindan con este Pueblo y por línea norte con San Andrés Teul y Sta. María Ocotán (Tepehuanes) ».

22	Mayiwitsie En Los Negros	NE corner, border with Tepehuanes; "línea del area del terreno Realengo" From E to W on northern boundary
23	Tsinamak'u El Cedro	From E to W on northern boundary "línea del cabezal norte"
24	'uyurimaye'u Cerro de Cebollita	
25	Mukutuxa Tierra Blanca	
26	Tikakame Terita Cueva del Diablo	
27	Haata El Pozo de Agua	NW corner, border with Tepehuanes ⁴
28	'uyurimaye'u La Cebolleta	Dividing line from NW toward the S
29	Yetemurikanametsetsie Cerro Pelón	
30	Tsuwirikatsie Ventana de los Lirios	
31	Taxaiyemakawe En El Palo Amarillo	
32		Mestizo fell down (into the canyon)]
33	Kwatsaripa En Los Cuervos	Former San Hipólito or Calítique
34	Turanixumaka'u Duraznito	
35	Tunarita Tonalisco	
36	Wirikitsuri Pico del Zopilote	
37	Matsawetsie or Matsawete Piedra China	etekia [spiny aloe?]
38	Kwietsanari Muyumane Hondura del Barbechito	
39	Takwata Patio de Dios	
40	Kixamakaka En La Vocina [clay offering Piedra Herrada	Next to the path to Sta Rosa, belonging g] to Jesús Ma.
41	Tetemakaka Piedra Grande	
42	Hapurimaka'u	

^{4 «} en este lado del camino real que va para Huejuquilla el Alto »

En El Saucillo [aguililla del arroyo]

	_	•
43	Haixapa	
4.4	Ojo de Agua	
44	Tekimayemane	
45	Paderón de Los Ladrillos	
45	Tete'utia	
4.6	Filete de Piedra	
46	Tumuanakatsie	
457	Empolvado	
47	Kwaxatsie	
40	Cerro Sapo; El Capulín	
48	Makawitsaxaya	
	Los Huizaches	
49	Haxikarita	Chapalagana River crossing with fierro
	Agua Caliente	[brand of San Andrés],
50	Tetemukawe	
_	Piedra Gorda	
51	Hakamaka'u	
	El Carrizal	
52	Matsikiimaye'u	
	Las Escobas	
53	Caraipa [sic] [Kauxaipa?]	
	Los Palomitos	
54	Harimunimanama	SW corner, turning toward the E
	Los Barriles	<u>-</u>
55	Hukumayewe	
	En Los Pinos	
56	Tearuta Teu-yecí [sic] [Ter	itayetsie = Offering Cave?]
	Cueva de Bella Vista	
<i>57</i>	Kupiratia	
	Cofradía	
58	Kwatetsie	SE corner. Very high mountain, border
	En El Cuate	with Tuxpan de Bolaños
59	Hamukuxikiriwa	Beginning the return to #14 to close the
	En El Remolino de Agua	boundaries; right angle to the N
60	Kukuruxita [Las Palomas]	
	En Las Barras	
61	Cavinuri-Cachi [sic] [Kawi	xikatsie?l
	En Los Picachitos	,
62	Ayoarirrita Camotana [sic]	['evuanipa?]
	Arroyo de Camotlán	1 t - y t 1
63	Kwaxetsi	
	Uno de Los Dioses	
	Picachitos	Standing rocks said to be gods
64	Yollata [sic] [Yeukata? Yiat	
	f3 f =	• • • • • • • •

65	Arroyo de Sta. Gertrudis Xapatsie El Chalate	Border with San Sebastián; fierro [brand of San Andrés]
66	Wirikitsuri Pico de Zopilote	
67	Maimukaka En El Maguey	
68	'irimuti'u Trozo de Las Flechas	In the river bottom
69	Arita [sic] Alica	Border with Sta. Catarina where the path [camino real?] passes.
70	Kwamiyata 'akiyari Maniy Donde Convoca el Arroyo	veteni Not a <i>mojonera</i> but a cave o de Cohamiata with <i>fierro</i> [brand]
71	Kanarimaka'u En La Guitarra	,
72	Xiirikwaipa Donde Se Para El Gavilán	Taimarita arroyo descends here from [Arroyo de Gavilán] Sta. Catarina.
73	'irimayewe En Las Flechas	Fierro [brand of San Andrés] Little peaks in the form of arrows
74	Tipurimayewe Guajes or Bules	Fierro. Now the fierros leave the river and head north toward #14.

APPENDIX 2

PHILIP TRUE, STORY PROPOSAL

3/24/98 8:30AM

I have come across what I think would make a good story; if not for news side, certainly for one of the Sunday sections.

The Huichol Indians live in Mexico's last true wilderness, the Sierra Madre Occidental of northern Jalisco, Nayarit and Durango. It is John Huston country: a 100-mile wide swath of big-boned mountains and rolling mesas cut by vertical river canyons. In an area of tens of thousands of square miles, there are only a handful of dirt roads. To get anywhere, you most often have to walk or ride horses.

The Huicholes have evolved a cultural expression at least as colorful as the Chiapan Maya. Their white cotton suits are extensively embroidered in red, blue and yellow; they wear beaded necklaces and wristbands; their shamans don hats decked with mirrors, eagle and parrot feathers. Peyote is an integral part of their worship of nativist gods. Their life has been studied by anthropologists for decades.

Unlike the highland Maya, the Huicholes have retained a certain joy in their life. A day near a Huichol community is marked by the nearly constant sound of children laughing and playing. This kind of joy gives them a certain integrity in their being that allows them to welcome in strangers, something the Maya are usually loath to do.

The Huichol lifestyle has been affected by contacts with Mexican mestizo culture, but remains remarkably intact. Outside a handful of small towns, wheels do not exist. A small hand grinder for cornmeal is the usual concession to modernity (although a battery-driven boom box is occasionally seen). Distant communications are still conducted with a column of smoke.

That lifestyle now stands on the cusp of dramatic change. This month, the Mexican government strung electric lines to the town of Tuxpan de Bolaños. After a series of confrontations between Huicholes and mestizo Mexicans living on disputed communal lands last year, other resources (and the government agents that accompany them) are now making their way into the back country. There is a building boom in the 300-person community.

A look at Huichol country as it confronts this influx of modernity would be a fascinating, wonderfully visual piece. The countryside, the people and their ceremonies are breathtaking and accessible. The Huicholes are at once adaptive

and open to change, while representing one of Mexico's vanishing indigenous cultures.

At the same time, the jumping off place for Huichol country, the 16th century mining town of Bolaños, is of interest in its own right. Colonial ruins line the town's cobbled streets. The place was nearly abandoned between 1940 and 1970, when the price of silver brought several mines back into production.

Its mayor is that rarest of things, a decent PRI politician. He has a hatful of ambitious schemes to try to bring further prosperity to Bolaños and the Huichol country, few of which will probably fly in this era of reduced developmental resources from Mexico City. He also eats peyote buttons, of which he had three on a shelf behind his desk when I spoke with him.

There is a beautiful story within all of this. Interested?

San Antonio Express-News, 27 December 1998.