CHILD REARING PRACTICES OF TZUTUHIL
INDIANS IN SANTIAGO ATITLAN,
GUATEMALA, CENTRAL AMERICA

By

ANN RANAE JOHNSON

Bachelor of Science

Utah State University

Logan, Utah

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Thesis Approved:

Josephine Hoffer
Thesis Adviser

Nick Stinnett

James Walters

N Durham
Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A common bond among men of all nations whether black, white, red, or yellow is the responsibility of child rearing. Though practices may vary from one nation to another, all parents are involved in providing their children with the three basic needs of life: food, shelter, and clothing. After these basic needs can be successfully met, then comes the time and the energy for parents to give their children love, guidance, understanding, and acceptance.

We need to be aware of the differences among children that are due to their endowment, for these innate differences are the keystones on which a child's development will be built. Whereas, environment determines how or whether that potential is developed (Jenkins, et al., 1966).

In the following study it is important that the reader keep in mind that an entirely different culture from that in the United States is being observed. This Indian tribe, a primitive type society, has developed methods of child rearing which are best suited to their cultural expectations. The present study was designed to describe the child rearing practices used in a different culture and to discover how the people of this culture have solved some of the age old questions facing parents everywhere.

The Problem and Its Importance

The study is concerned with an Indian group called the Tzutuhil who speak the Tzutuhil dialect. They are located on the shores of Lake Atitlan in Guatemala, Central America along with two other groups of Indians, the "Quiche" and the "Cakchiquel," speaking the same dialect as the name implies but not included in this study.

The research is a study of the child rearing practices of the Tzutuhil Indians living in Santiago Atitlan. It is hoped that this study will provide greater understanding of the role of the child and the child rearing practices of these people and will aid in the understanding of their culture.

The population of Guatemala is made up of approximately 80 percent Indian. These people are the descendants of the Mayans who were conquered by the Spaniards in the 1500's. Since the conquest, these people have settled into a passive existence little noticed by the outside world.

In the past two decades, anthropologists and linguists have been in various Indian villages studying the different aspects of the culture and trying to write the three different dialects spoken by the different groups. A review of the literature published to date shows that very little has been written on the role of the child in the Tzutuhil family.

Purpose

The general purpose of the research was to study and define the child rearing practices of rather primitive people who have little, if any, knowledge of advanced thinking in the area of child development.

It was hoped that this research would show the practices, philosophies, and attitudes that the Tzutuhil held toward shaping the child to become a member of his society.

Specifically, the purposes of this research were:

1. To identify practices related to childbirth and infant care in the areas of: (a) weaning, (b) toilet training, (c) eating, and (d) sleeping.
2. To identify discipline practices employed by parents for children from infancy to 10 years of age.
3. To identify parental expectations of children regarding family duties.
4. To identify the place of play in the child's life in relation to free play and organized games.
5. To identify the education practices.
6. To identify primitive and modern medical practices.

CHAPTER II

METHOD AND SUBJECTS

Method

Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, was the village selected for the study of child rearing practices of the Indians of Guatemala. Santiago Atitlan, one of 11 lake shore villages, is the home of the Tzutuhil Indians. A review of the literature about Guatemala and Lake Atitlan in particular, revealed that a study of these people and their child rearing practices and attitudes would be both interesting and valuable in defining another culture.

The methods used to obtain data were observation and the utilization of a Spanish speaking Indian informant to answer questions that were raised during observations. The women of the village speak only their native dialect. Very little communication was possible between the investigator and the women and children observed. Some conversation was possible if a younger child spoke Spanish or if the Spanish speaking father happened to be at home. However, this was usually not the case as the men work in the fields from early morning to late afternoon.

A day and time were arranged with the consenting families concerning when the observations would begin. The village where the observations were made was reached either by boat or over a dirt road which was often impassable during the rainy season. Since the village could be reached by boat in 15 minutes from the investigator's residence as opposed to one and one-half hours by car, the former form of transportation was used. From the boat dock, it was a short walk into the village square. The street on both sides is occupied by the thatched roof houses of the Tzutuhil. Fences made of black volcanic rocks separate one family compound from another and give some privacy for the family from people walking along the street.

The families visited during the study lived in various parts of the village. The back streets of the village are narrow rocky paths usually only wide enough for two adults. A stranger must watch his step when traveling these paths as they are very rough and rocky. The Tzutuhil move over these paths with such grace and ease that they appear to be almost running. The young children soon learn to move with the same ease as their parents. The women and children are always barefoot and the men are usually barefoot, their feet become hard and calloused after many years of not wearing shoes. It is believed by the investigator that the barefoot makes it much easier to maneuver over the rocky surfaces.

Once the investigator reached the house of the family under observation, she would wait for the parent to come out of the house if they were not already in the yard. Usually, the approaching was announced by the young children of the family as they could see up the path and would inform their parents of the arrival of any visitor. For the observation, a chair or bench to sit on was placed in an inconspicious corner with a view of both the yard and the interior of the house. Soon the adults and children would return to their work and the observation began.

Chronological reports of events were kept in a small notebook in order not to attract too much attention. Usually, the children were curious the first several visits and wanted to see the notebook. They were permitted to see the pen and paper and see how the pen wrote on the paper. This usually satisfied most children, however, a few did want to write and were permitted to do so. Ramon, the son of Thomas, in the third family visited, wanted to write with the pen every visit. After this was established, extra paper and pen were provided for him. On one visit, Ramon brought out an old pencil to show; it was short and had been chewed on by himself or his younger brother. Ramon often spoke in Tzutuhil, even though the investigator could not understand or answer, which was something he did not seem to realize.

The observations usually lasted between four and five hours. The investigator arrived at the house by at least 8:00 a.m. and left about 12:00 noon. During the visit, observations were made of the children in their play, the chores they were asked to do, their relationship with their parents, siblings and peers. During the observation period of a specific family, the investigator tried to find a way into the house to observe how it was arranged and equipped. Several families never extended the invitation, however, enough visits inside houses were made to suggest that they all followed the same general plan.

During the observations, no attempt was made to develop close relationships with the children as it was believed that this would draw their attention away from their activities and this was the purpose in observing. A friendly attitude with the children was maintained but every effort was made not to distract their attention by an outsider's presence.

As the observations progressed, questions would arise that could not be answered by the mother as she could not speak Spanish. This was the language used for communication purposes while in Guatemala. Unanswered questions were kept in a separate notebook to be answered at a later date by an informant. Martin and Concepcion, of the first family observed, were more than willing to talk about their birth customs and answer other questions.

Thomas Cochie (family number three) was also most helpful in answering questions. Several of his free days from work were spent answering questions related to the study. Questions would be asked and explained in Spanish. Thomas would answer in Spanish if he knew the answer; if he did not, he would ask his wife, Francisca, who only spoke Tzutuhil. Thomas would then translate back into Spanish her answer and it was then written in English. Tzutuhil men seem to know very little about the practices used in rearing young children.

Often the same questions were asked several different people, as it was believed by the investigator that some practices were different among different families. This appeared to be true in many instances. For the Tzutuhil, there was more than one way to care for a child. Additional information was obtained from the Sisters at the mission who worked in the hospital; by Sister Elizabeth who assisted in finding families; and by the supervisor of the baby clinic who spoke the Tzutuhil language and had a great knowledge of their customs and practices.

After each family visit, the information gathered was then classified according to the specific child rearing practice revealed. This was done after each visit to determine which areas needed more research and to see if the data were revealing pertinent information.

Subjects

A total of five families were visited over a thirteen month period. Visits were made on a weekly basis usually for four or five hours in the morning. Visits to the village were made in the morning by boat since every afternoon a southern wind caused the lake to become very rough and hard to cross. On some occasions, a family was visited twice in the same week. At least a two month period of observation was necessary to obtain the desired information. It took two or three visits for the children to feel relaxed with a stranger watching them.

Initially, plans were made to compare the traditional and changing child rearing practices of the Tzutuhil Indians living in the village of Santiago Atitlan. The help of a United States Catholic Priest, who worked very closely with the people, was enlisted to identify families which could be observed in these various categories. However, he was transferred before the study could be designed and no other person was found who felt qualified to make this distinction between families. The help of a Catholic Sister who worked with the people was then obtained to locate families who were willing to let an observer come into their home. The Sister felt it would be best if she talked to the families alone about the study to see if they were agreeable for an observer to visit the home. If the family agreed to the study, then a visit to the family was made with the Sister to meet them and arrange a day and time for the first visit. The same day and time was kept with each family throughout the entire observation period unless changed by the family or the investigator.

The families to be observed were told that the study was to find out about the children and how they worked and played. They were asked to go about their daily chores as normally as possible as this was what was wanted for the observation. Several visits usually occurred before the routine settled back to normal and the recordings were valid. The children were very shy until they became accustomed to a stranger. The very young one and two year old children usually cried and stayed close to their mothers or sisters and brothers for the entire period of the first visits. The older children moved about quite naturally after their initial shyness was overcome.

During the first visit, the names of the family members were learned and their approximate ages. Birthdays are of no importance and are not celebrated among the Tzutuhil. However, mothers of young children can usually give a fairly accurate age for their children.

The first family observed, lived at the doorstep of the rented house that the investigator occupied. This family was hired by the owner as caretakers of the house in which the investigator lived. Observations of the family were made all during the day as the opportunity for contact arose. A very open and close relationship developed between the investigator and the family which facilitated the observations with the other families. This family was more than willing to answer any questions asked. Much time was spent visiting in their home and observing their daily lives. Several sweat baths, which are similar to our sauna baths, were shared with this family at their invitation.

Family Number One

The family consisted of the father, Martin; the mother, Concepcion;

and five children. There were four boys, a girl, and a baby was expected in May of 1970. The boys were Nicholas, nine; Juan, seven; Jose, three; Diego, one and one-half; and the daughter, Maria, four. The child born in May was a girl, Lucita, and another boy, Martin, was born in August of 1971. Previous to the observation, two children had died in infancy.

The family owned no land and had always worked for others. Their income was also supplemented by crabs and fish that the two older boys would catch to be sold by their mother in the local market. They were somewhat unusual as they lived across the bay from the village and did not live in a family compound. They were Evangelists, instead of the traditional Catholic. None of the children attended school at the time of the observations. However, at the beginning of the new school year, the two older boys attended the public school and a younger brother was enrolled at a Montessori preschool set up by the Catholic Mission and run by two Tzutuhil girls. This family lives in the typical Tzutuhil thatched roof house. They wear typical hand woven clothes made by the mother of the family. Occasionally, the men wear a western shirt purchased in the market. The family goes barefoot as is the general custom of the Indians in Guatemala.

Family Number Two

The second family visited consisted of the father, Diego Mendoza; his wife, Maria; four daughters, and one son. The children and their ages are as follows: Concepcion, eight; Concepcion, six; Delores, four; Maria, two and one-half; Diego, seven months. The two oldest girls have the same name because the Tzutuhil believe that if one child dies they will still have a child of the same name. The oldest daughter was affectionally called a Tzutuhil name meaning little young one, so the girls could be distinguished by name in this manner.

The father owns no land, but works in the fields of other land owners. When there is planting and harvesting to be done on the coast, this father obtains additional work. His only transportation is on foot and the distance to the coast is about eight to ten hours. He usually stays five to seven days and returns home for a few days and then goes back to the coast, repeating the same procedure until his work is done. The two oldest daughters at one time attended the Montessori preschool but at the time of observation were not enrolled. The mother takes the two youngest children to the baby clinic to be bathed and fed a high protein meal once a week. The family is active in the Catholic church and an organization called Catholic Action which is a progressive thinking group made up of the youngest Tzutuhil men and women. The father has taken courses from the locally sponsored radio school which gives lessons in reading, writing, etc. over the radio with workbooks to go along with the lessons. This family lives in the typical thatched roof Tzutuhil house. They dress in the typical costume of Santiago Atitlan. The father does wear western style shirts and frequently wears leather shoes made in the village.

Family Number Three

The third family visited did not live in a family sitio or compound. The father owned a plot of land just big enough for his house with neighbors to the side and back. The house was of typical Tzutuhil construction except for the roof which was corrugated lamina.

This family consists of the father, Thomas; the mother, Franscia; two sons, Ramon, three years; and Diego, one. Thomas works at the Catholic Mission as a houseboy. He owns a plot of land on the mountainside and used it for planting corn. His wife is well known around the village for her fine weaving and embroidery. The oldest son, Ramon, was sent to the Montessori school but did not want to stay so he was not forced to attend.

Thomas, the father, wore typical pants, a western shirt and always shoes. He spoke Spanish well and a few greeting words in English, which he has learned at the mission. The mother and oldest boy dressed in typical clothes and the youngest son wore typical clothes and western clothes interchangeably.

The fourth and fifth family visited were located by a Guatemalan woman, a supervisor at the baby clinic, who had lived in the village all of her life. She speaks the native dialect fluently. This woman runs Casa Bonita which is a baby clinic sponsored by the Catholic Mission. It is here that mothers can bring their babies for a bath and high protein meal. Indian women are also instructed in classes about sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition. The supervisor of the clinic knew many families in the village because of her contact with them at the clinic. She selected two families and explained to them the study and permission was granted to visit their homes and observe their children.

Family Number Four

This family lived in a very small family compound consisting of three houses. The family consisted of the father, who was always away working at the time of observations; the mother, three girls, and two boys. The mother, Delores, said she was 34. She had a daughter, Josepa, 14; another daughter, Maria, 10; two sons, Diego, 9; and Jose, 6; and a young child, Wana, 2. The two boys attended school at the local public school. The oldest sister had spent several years there and spoke some Spanish but now helps at home. The family was rather poorly dressed on all of the visits of the investigator. They wore typical clothes that had been patched many times and had very little embroidery. The more ornate the clothes, the richer the man by Tzutuhil standards. The mother was often away at the beginning of the observation, gathering reeds to dry and to make into mats to sell in the local market.

The family owned two thatched roof houses. One was used for sleeping and the other was used for the cooking. This is an influence of the classes held at Casa Bonita as the people are told that it is best for their health. A few families in the village are beginning to use a separate house for cooking.

Family Number Five

The fifth family was a family of four children, Maria, 11; Lucita, 6; Antonio, 5; and Concepcion, 2; the mother, Marsella, and the father, Antonia. The oldest daughter, Maria, attends the National Public School in the village. The father of this family said he wanted his daughter to learn Spanish, which is unusual for an Indian woman to know. The family lives in a rented house made of slats of wood with a small space between so the cooking smoke can escape. The house had a lamina roof. The father said several times how poor he was as he owned no land and had to rent a house. In the same compound, there were several other houses. None of the families living in this compound were related. The father worked on the mountain chopping wood for a finca owner. He wore typical Indian clothing. The wife and the children were also dressed in typical hand-woven clothes.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND OF TZUTUHIL

The Village

Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, is located on the site of the original Tzutuhil settlement found on the southern shore of Lake Atitlan. The village is nestled at the base of the volcanoes Toliman and Atitlan and looks out on the Bay of Santiago toward the volcano San Pedro. This latter volcano is the site of many fields owned and cultivated by Atitecos.

The village boundaries begin at the irregular shoreline and continue back to the base of the volcanoes. The land surrounding the village and the sides of the volcanoes are used for agricultural purposes. This land is rocky and the earth is black from the ash that fell centuries ago when the volcano erupted.

The village of Santiago Atitlan consists of individual family compounds or sitios with three or four familes to each sitio. The compounds are separated on all sides by large volcanic rock walls which serve as boundary lines. A census taken in 1950 gives the population of Santiago Atitlan to be 9,513 (Madigan, 1971). Recent estimates of the present day population of Santiago Atitlan put it around 12,000. It is one of the largest villages on the lake, if not the largest.

The physical features of the village follow the same pattern of all typical Guatemalan Indian villages. There is a central plaza with streets and paths leading from it to the homes of the Tzutuhil. The plaza is lined with tiendas (small stores), each carrying an array of goods from soda pop to household items. The covered market square is also located off to one side of the plaza. This is where the women of Santiago Atitlan come each day to sell their fruits and vegetables and visit with each other. The local municipal building, a long low structure with many doors facing onto the plaza, is a site of constant activity. This is where the mayor of Santiago Atitlan has his office, where births and deaths are recorded, where disagreements among neighbors are settled, and where the post office and telegraph office are located. The National public school is near the municipal building. Children dressed in western clothes, handwoven Indian clothes, barefoot or wearing shoes begin their education here. Some go to all six grades but most attend for only two or three years. Overlooking all of this at a higher elevation is the Catholic church and Oklahoma sponsored mission house. The church was believed to have been built shortly after the Spanish conquest.

Santiago Atitlan is a major trade route from the highlands to the south coast. Many of the men of the village are employed on the coast during the planting and harvesting seasons. The merchants of Santiago Atitlan and San Pedro use the route for transporting their produce to the coastal towns. They return loaded down with tropical fruits such as pineapples and mangoes to sell in the local highland markets, where the altitude prevents the raising of such fruits.

The Lake

The lake itself is located on the plateau between the coastal plains and the highlands of Guatemala at an elevation of 5,100 feet. The three volcanoes found on the lake's shore rise sharply upward from the lake. The volcanoes Atitlan (11,500 feet), and Toliman (10,350 feet), overlook the town of Santiago Atitlan and the volcano San Pedro (9,925 feet) is located across the bay from the village (Sol Tax, 1946). The Tzutuhil terrace and farm these abrupt volcanic slopes they own. The more desirable flat land in the area is owned and farmed by owners of large coffee plantations.

The lake is a caldera lake formed when the volcanoes pushed upward and the surrounding land mass collapsed (Williams, 1960). The depth of the lake has been found to be approximately 11,000 feet deep with an average depth of 700 feet (Johnson, 1971). Abrupt cliffs occupy much of the lake shoreline where the volcanoes are not found. Two rivers enter into the lake on the north shore, each forming a large delta. They are the "Jaibal" and "Panajachel" rivers. There is no visible outlet but there is seepage through the southern wall down to the Pacific Coast. The 11 villages, of which Santiago Atitlan is one, are located around the lake on the shore where the land is gently sloping, in small bay areas or on the sides of the steep mountains where there is a level area. The lake is used by the Indians for transportation and as a source of fish and freshwater crabs. The Indians have somewhat of an unsophisticated canoe that they hollow out of tree trunks and then build up the sides with wooden planks to protect against the waves. The canoes vary in size from one man up to larger ones that hold 30 people plus their sacks of produce that they take to the markets around the lake. The canoes have a pointed hull and bottom and are turned over very easily by an inexperienced person. These canoes have been observed on the lake in heavy windstorms and they seem to be like corks bobbing in the water, taking each wave as it comes. There are several drownings in the lake each year of people who have turned their canoes over and do not know how to swim. Very few of the natives living around the lake know how to swim. The lake is also used for washing clothes, and as a water supply for some. There are some younger boys who are beginning to use the lake more for swimming and spear fishing. Some Indians do not recognize or even use the lake in any manner. Modern technologists are trying to reverse this situation somewhat as the lake could be developed into a major source of economic aid to many through improving the existing fishery.

The Climate

A wind comes up every afternoon on the lake, which is caused from the warm air of the Pacific Coast rising to meet the cold air of the highlands. This wind is called the chocomil or "One Thousand Crashes." Usually, the Indian plans his trips on the lake before this wind. It usually lasts until six or seven in the evening and then subsides until the next afternoon. During the months of November to March, northern winds are quite common. A ridge of clouds form on the northern rim of the mountains and then one knows a northern wind is coming. This wind may last anywhere from one to four or five days. Usually, the lake is so rough that even the most daring stay at home. During the fierce northern wind, even the chocomil, the daily wind, fears to show itself.

Lake Atitlan lies in a tropical savanna characterized by a rainy season and a dry season. The rainy season begins in May and extends through October; while the dry season begins in November and extends through April. The temperature rarely drops below 50 degrees and seldom gets above 85 degrees. This is why Guatemala is called "The land of the eternal spring." The life of the Indian is somewhat regulated by the two seasons. He must chop and stack his supply of firewood under the eaves of his house before the rains begin. The seasons also have an influence on the corn cycle as two crops of corn are planted each year. A crop is planted just before the rains begin and one is planted in January with the hope that a few showers will fall to help the seeds germinate.

Culture Today

The Tzutuhil Indian today is influenced both by his past and by the present. He still lives in a rather primitively made house, cooks over a fire made on the floor of his thatched roof hut, and weaves the material his clothes are made from on a backstrap loom. However, the Tzutuhil has not been overlooked by the world outside. Everyday the mail launch brings the tourists from the outside world to visit what they call a backward people. These tourists have left their mark on the Tzutuhil. There is usually a handful of children with baskets of trinkets, who meet the boat each day in hopes of selling a few centavos worth of their wares. There are also several children who have nothing to sell, but beg for money with an outstretched hand saying "tec-a-pich," this being derived from tourists of bygone days who have asked these native children in English, "May I take a picture?" Then they gave the children money for posing.

Native Dress

The Tzutuhil man shows more change than the women of the village. A Tzutuhil man may dress in typical handmade pants, held up by a long cummerbund wrapped around the waist several times and then tied in front, a handwoven shirt or a western shirt purchased in the market, occasionally leather shoes made by the local shoemaker, and the ever present cowboy hat or sombrero also purchased in the market. Some men are even beginning to wear western style pants. Very little change has taken place in the Tzutuhil woman's dress styles over the years. She still wears her skirt made of a long piece of material simply wrapped around her and tucked in at the waist. She wears a handmade blouse with purple strips running vertically, called a "huipil," that she embroiders or weaves on a design. Very old women can still be seen wearing a blouse with purple and red stripes on a white background with very little embroidery. The Tzutuhil women wear the typical headdress of a long narrow piece of heavy red ribbon with a design on each end. The women wrap this around their head, giving a halo effect. The women do not usually wear this headdress all of the time; usually it is worn only when they go to the market or on fiesta days. Young children's style of dress follows much the same style of their parents.

The contrasts in Santiago Atitlan of progress and the past are many and great. Many of the Tzutuhil have not been out of their own village. These are mostly women and children who have not even been across the lake which is a 14 mile trip by boat. Others have been to the coast to work for plantation owners; others take the bus that comes to the village daily and takes people to the city, while others use the mail launch to transport themselves and their produce to the other side of the lake and then from there they take a bus or walk to the various market places to sell their goods.

The transistor radio is a common item in the life of the Tzutuhil. Almost every family has a radio in their home. They listen to this a great deal in the evening and it seems that every radio in town is playing a station with marimba music. Many young men and boys of the village have a pocket size transistor radio which they carry with them sometimes held up to their ear to listen to their favorite station.

Modern medicine and public schools are a part of the Tzutuhil life, but not as yet an integral part of the everyday life. Some of the more progressive families will use the modern hospital facilities and the public schools available to them. However, the majority of the people still put a great deal of faith in their own forms of medicine and can see no reason to send their children to school as they need help at home and in the fields.

The Tzutuhil still speak their native Tzutuhil language in the home and among each other. However, since the language has only been studied in the last few years by linguists and become a written language, the men of the village have learned to speak Spanish in order to communicate with the Spanish speaking population. The people of the various villages around the lake can communicate and understand one another, even though they speak different dialects. The Tzutuhil women and children generally do not speak Spanish as they are not exposed to it like the men. When a boy becomes old enough to go with his father, he soon learns to speak Spanish as many of their contacts are with Spanish speaking people. The National school in the village also requires the Tzutuhil children who are attending school for the first time to take Spanish for one year before they begin their formal classwork.

Home Setting (Physical Structure)

Exterior and Outdoor Area

The physical structure of the dwelling of the Tzutuhil is composed of a unit of houses called a sitio. In most instances, these houses all belong to related members of one family, usually the parents and their married sons and families.

The yard of the sitio is enclosed by a wall of volcanic rock piled on top of each other to create a fence on all four sides with an opening for a gate on the street side. The fence is usually three or four feet high. The houses are placed about the yard in no special order. Each sitio is a different size, depending on how much land the family may own for their own living compound.

The houses in the sitio all look much alike as the Tzutuhil build in much the same style. The walls, up to about four feet, are made of mortar and stone; stalks of bamboo are then used the rest of the way up to complete the walls. The bamboo is placed side by side. There are no windows in the house and only one door. The roof is then made by first tying lengths of branches together to create a point in the center. The roof is then thatched with long grasses that are tied together in bunches and then fastened into the beam structure of the roof. Parts of the roof may be replaced as needed, simply by removing a section of thatching and replacing it with a new section. A few houses are beginning to appear in the village which have been built with adobe brick, cement floors and a lamina roof. This is the influence of western culture.

The actual area of the house may be a 10 by 10 or a 12 by 12 foot room in which all the cooking, eating, and sleeping are carried on by one family consisting of a husband and wife and anywhere from one to six or seven children. All the family's possessions are kept in this one room, from clothes, cooking utensils, beds, and the dried corn on the cob that is to be used in making tortillas.

The door of the house is usually just an opening in one of the walls. When the family leaves, they may put up a door made of bamboo stalks which have been latched together to form a covering for the doorway. Several of the families in the village do have wooden doors which are on hinges. These doors are usually cut into two pieces so the top half of the door may be left open for light while the bottom half is closed to keep out dogs or chickens. Some families are now beginning to build two houses, one for cooking and one for sleeping. The social worker in the village, public health officials, and the mission people have all been working to encourage the Tzutuhil people to do this as it is more healthful for them to live and sleep in a room that has not been filled with smoke from the cooking fire.

All sitios have a little low structure made of stone in their yard that they use for the sweat bath. Most sitios only have one which is shared by the families living in the sitio. The sweat bath is used several times a month for bathing purposes. It is also used when people are ill or after the birth of a child by the mother. The sweat bath is perhaps five feet tall inside with a rectangular shaped rounded roof. These sweat baths are made of rock and earth and the entrance way may have a door or be covered with a blanket when in use. A low bench is placed against the two long walls and a place for a fire is left at one end.

Interiors

The inside of the house consists of several beds, depending on the size of the family. The beds are made of wooden planks held up by what looks like a carpenter's sawhorse. The boards are then usually covered with a large reed mat purchased in the village. There is usually a shelf on one side of the wall for the family's transistor radio, a shelf for cooking utensils and a few supplies. Along one wall may be several clay pots and tin pans and cans used for cooking. The cooking fire is usually placed off to one side of the door so the smoke may escape through the door opening and that which does not find its way out the door seeks openings in the bamboo walls and thatched roof. In the early morning, if one were approaching Santiago Atitlan from the lake, a haze would appear to be hanging over the village; this is due to all the cooking fires used to prepare breakfast and the day's tortillas. The family's clothing may be kept in a box in the corner of the house or on pegs in the wall. Sometimes the dried corn is kept under one of the beds if there is room. The people have no electricity in their homes; the only light they have by day is that which comes in the doorway and by night they may have a small cooking fire or a kerosene lamp with an open flame which has been fashioned out of an old tin can and sold in the market. Water is carried by the women in clay pots on their heads from the lake or from the various water taps that have been placed around the village for the people's use. The Tzutuhil lives his life in such a dwelling described never knowing the conveniences of running water, electricity, or a soft bed.

Family Structure

The dwelling places of the Tzutuhil are set up, in most instances, on an extended family basis. The family unit may consist of several different related families, usually consisting of the parents and several of their married sons and their families. A house is built within the sitio for each individual family which consists of the husband, wife, and children.

After a son has married, he brings his wife to his parents' sitio to live; if, however, she is not happy then the couple may agree to move to her parents' sitio to live. In some instances, neither arrangement works out so the couple may part, each returning to live with their own parents.

In some families, a young man of 16 or 18 years may turn the money he earns over to his father to be used as the father thinks his son needs it. This also may be the case during the first year or so of marriage. After a young man has some possessions and has begun his family, this custom no longer is followed and he then handles his own money affairs.

Not all sons live in the parents' sitio or their in-laws' sitio. Much depends on the availability of space for another house to be built in the parents' sitio. In the case of Thomas Cochie (family number three), he owned a piece of land in the village just large enough to build his own house on. Thomas and his family live in a compound with people who were not members of their immediate family. However, Thomas's mother-in-law lived only several sitios down the street and there was much visiting between the mother and her daughter, Thomas's wife. Another example is Martin and his family who live on the land of his employer and work as guardians of the employer's vacation home. Martin is a poor Indian; he does not own any land of his own. His mother is dead and his father has remarried. So Martin must work and live with other people.

A family with several sons is old age security for a man and his wife, for after a man is old, he expects his sons to look after him and help him with his needs. One would guess then that sons would be more highly valued than daughters, however, this does not seem to be the case among the Tzutuhil. Even though a daughter may go to live in her husband's sitio, there is still much visiting carried on between mother and daughter.

The work of the Tzutuhil family is divided along rather strict lines according to female and male responsibilities. The female is the keeper of the home in all respects. She is the cook, the weaver, the shopper, and she has most of the responsibility of rearing the young children. The man of the family works in the fields, or travels on his trade route, or fishes, whichever is his occupation. He cuts the wood for the cooking fire and hauls it on his back to his home. Unlike many of the other villages around the lake where the women help in the fields and the men may be seen in the market place, this is not true of the Tzutuhil culture where a woman rarely, if ever, goes to the fields and men are seldom seen in the market place. However, this is beginning to slowly change as one does occasionally see men walking among the women venders and their baskets.

Much tradition is still alive among the Tzutuhil regarding family structure, however, some things are changing. Change is slow to come to the Tzutuhil, but as they are exposed to the outside world and new ideas, they are influenced by what they see and hear. The young are bringing about change.

CHAPTER IV

CHILD REARING PRACTICES

Birth Practices

The bringing of a new life into the world in the Tzutuhil village of Santiago Atitlan begins with little preparation before the child is born. When a woman knows she is pregnant, she goes to one of the midwives in the village and asks her if she will deliver the baby. Usually the midwife selected is one who has delivered the other children of the family and is a good friend.

Midwives do not choose their profession. The Tzutuhil, being superstitious people, believe that a midwife is called to her work by a Greater Being. Usually this is through a dream when the woman dreams something significant that makes her believe she has been called to this profession.

When a woman begins labor, the midwife is summoned and stays until the child is born. A woman in labor begins bearing down from the first labor pains until the birth of the child. She is in a squatting position in her house, a rope may be thrown over the beams of the ceiling which she can then hold in order to aid in the process. The mother, sisters, and mother-in-law may aid in the delivery. If the labor is a long one, the mother is usually exhausted when the child is born because she has been using so much of her energy during labor. There are often complications, if a woman has given birth to a large number of children and has lost all muscle tone, she may suffer a prolapsed uterus at birth. Another complication can be if the midwife feels that the labor and birth process is taking too long. She may send to one of the local drug stores for a shot that will speed the birth. This is usually administered by the untrained owner of the drugstore. This type of action usually results in many serious complications. The midwife and drugstore owner are not trained to tell when a birth is at the stage that such an injection will aid in delivery. Often the shot is given too soon, resulting in a ruptured uterus and possible death for both mother and child.

Even though there is a modern hospital and trained doctors and nurses in the village, very few women go to the hospitals for delivery, and doctors and nurses are usually not called until serious problems develop that the midwife cannot handle alone.

After the baby is born, it may or may not be bathed immediately, all depending on the particular midwife. Some feel that the child will become ill if it is bathed following birth and they prefer to wait several days, while others bathe the child immediately. It has been observed that many children several years old still have a crusty material on the scalp which was assumed to be the afterbirth that was never completely removed by bathing.

The placenta is usually wrapped in a rag and buried in the yard of the sitio or away from the house. When asked if there was any special belief about what should be done with the placenta, the answer was that it is buried merely so the dogs of the village would not eat it. Another answer was, "What else would be done with it?"

The customs vary concerning the amount a midwife is paid for delivery. Martin (family number one) said that their midwife charges \$5.00 for a boy and \$4.00 for a girl child. If the mother or child dies, the price is still the same. Thomas Cochie (family number three) said that there is not a set price, you give the midwife what you want. It may be one or two quetzals (equivalent to a dollar) and her meals. Others may pay the midwife with corn, beans, meat, or coffee.

The new mother does not get up until she is feeling better. Friends and family bring in baskets of tortillas, black beans, and some vegetables that are in season. The family may also buy their meals in the market place until the mother is once again feeling better.

For eight days after the birth the mother visits the family sweat bath. Here again the custom varies. She may go in alone or the midwife and mothers and sisters may accompany her. This was explained by Thomas Cochie (family number three) as a time to put the body together again after birth. A small cross, usually rather crudely constructed of wood, is put up over the sweat bath to guard the baby from evil for the eight days and to show people that the baby and mother are guarded from evil. After the eight days, various customs are followed according to the specific family. In some families, the midwife is taken several pounds of meat to celebrate the termination of the eight days. Other families reported that the umbilical cord has come off by this time. The umbilical cord is burned a little each day with a candle until it falls off.

Naming

A name is not chosen for the child until after birth and it is known whether the child is a male or female. Usually, male children are named after other male members of the family such as grandfathers, uncles, or the father. Thomas Cochie's (family number three) oldest son, Ramon, was named after a Catholic father who was at the mission for a number of years. Common male names are Diego, Jose or Jepe (in Tzutuhil), Martin, Nicolas, and Juan. Many of the names are of Spanish origin. Girls are named in much the same manner and there are several girls in the village who have been named after Catholic sisters at the mission. Another common practice of the Tzutuhil is to give the two oldest children of the same sex in the family the same name. For example, in Diego Mendoza's family (family number two), the two oldest children were both daughters and they were both named Concepcion. The oldest daughter was affectionately called "Yan," meaning "little one," in order to differentiate between the two.

Orphans and Adoptions

When a young couple cannot have children of their own, it is not the custom to adopt parentless children. A man is not considered a man until he has a child, but a couple will not accept a child that is not their own. Children who are left parentless are usually taken in by the grandparents. However, they are not always treated well and are expected to work and take much responsibility for themselves and younger brothers and sisters. If a very young baby or child is left parentless, it is not cared for properly. Such a child often dies due to lack of care on the part of the grandparents or aunts and uncles. If a man loses his wife at childbirth and has a young baby to care for, he usually does not want the child as he has no way to take care of it and this creates a problem for him. When several couples who had been childless for six or seven years were told about the custom of adopting parentless children, they did not seem to think this a good solution; instead they prefer to remain childless.

Birth Control

When questions were asked about forms of birth control used, the families interviewed seemed to know little about this topic. However, the social worker at the baby clinic told of a plant called, Azafran, that grows wild and which the Tzutuhil women occasionally use to abort an unwanted fetus. This herb is boiled and then taken in liquid form. The herb itself has a strong offensive odor. As to whether it is effective or not, is not known by the investigator. Mendelson (1956) tells of herbs used for this same purpose. His information was obtained from a Ladino midwife who said that women used the white flowered herb "altamis" or "oregano" cooked and then dipped in honey to provoke abortions. It was reported in the same study that quinine is sometimes taken raw for the same purpose. There are also various recipes used by the Tzutuhil women, mostly liquids which they believe will increase fertility and the ability to conceive more easily. The Tzutuhil are still a very superstitious culture and are ruled by custom. It will take years of education to convince them of the value of modern medicine.

Early (1970) reports that the Tzutuhil of Santiago Atitlan have a high fertility group with little deliberate population control. He further reports that fertility has remained high since 1955 with a lowered mortality rate among the infant group, thus contributing to a population increase of approximately three percent per year. He indicates that if this trend continues, the population of Santiago Atitlan will double in 24 years.

One can easily see tremendous problems developing for the people of Santiago Atitlan if the population continues to increase at such a rapid rate, combined with the factors of lower infant mortality rate, land shortage, and lower crop yield due to exhausted soil conditions. It is apparent that modern medicine must work hand-in-hand with technology to help alleviate the problems of survival that beset these people.

Infant and Child Care

The care of the child from infancy into young childhood is the responsibility of the women of the Tzutuhil family. The infant becomes the mother's almost constant companion up until the child is old enough to sit by himself. Then, if there is an older sister in the family, the young child may be carried with the sister to the various sitios where she goes to play. If there are no older girls in the family, an older brother who is still too young to go into the fields with his father will tend the younger ones. It is not an uncommon sight in Santiago Atitlan to see a young girl of seven or eight years weighted down with a baby in her arms and a child of three or four years tagging behind. Very young babies, who are still on frequent nursing schedules, are taken with their mothers to market while she sells her produce or does her shopping. Children, still in the crawling or toddler stage, are a common sight in the village market square, crawling around their mothers, sleeping in her arms, or nursing while they carry on their business of selling produce.

Children's Dress

When the child is first born, he is clothed in a little cotton knit shirt of some type, probably one purchased in one of the local tiendas (stores) that sells western clothing, a diaper which is an old rag wrapped around the baby similar to the fashion we are accustomed to, but held up with a long piece of material wrapped around the child several times and then tied. Then the child is wrapped from shoulder to foot around and around rather firmly with a long narrow piece of native material so it has very little freedom of movement. The young child is kept like this for a month or more and is unbound for diaper changes, to be bathed, or when it is felt he needs more freedom of movement. The child sleeps and nurses this way.

The child is changed as he wets or soils his diapers. Wet diapers are merely hung on a line to dry and the soiled ones are, of course, washed when the mother goes to the lake to wash the family clothing. Keeping a young child in dry, clean diapers is somewhat of a chore and one wonders where all the material is coming from for the diapers.

The styles of dress for young children differ according to age and as they grow older, according to sex. When the child is a month or so old, the material used for binding the child from head to foot is discarded and the child is then dressed in a shirt, diaper, and a piece of material wrapped skirt fashion around his waist. When the child enters the crawling stage, they are beginning to be dressed more according to sex--the boys in pants and the girls in the wrap-around skirts. However, this is not the rule as whatever is available and dry from the previous diaper changes is used. Usually a young child's clothes are a collection of the typical dress and western dress that have been given by the family member or purchased in the market. On one visit at Thomas Cochie's (family number three) residence, Francisca dressed Diego, her one-year-old son, in a skirt-like garment tied around his waist. He toddled off happily and not caring what he had on. The other children playing in the yard did not make any comments, as they were accustomed to this on the very young children who must have many changes a day until they are toilet trained.

Mendelson (1956, p. 534), in his notes on the scandals of Maximon, writes:

> In the matters of dress, small children are often dressed until the age of three in any available clothing and I have seen little children in clothes of the opposite sex. Until about this age, they wear a small bonnet (ishkopi) against the evil eye which, in public, frequently covers the head entirely. After three or four, a boy starts wearing male costume including a hat, while girls have to wait a little later before wearing their halos, as long hair is needed for this particular garment.

The bonnet Mendelson (1956) mentions to protect children against the evil eye or "Ojoh Malo," as the Tzutuhil call it, is still very much a superstition today. Some of these hats are made from the handwoven material of their mothers while others are purchased in the tiendas (stores) and are commercially knit hats for young babies. It seems that all young babies wear one or the other type of hat even in the hottest of weather. The superstition is that if a sick or evil person looks at the child's face, the child will become sick. So when a mother sees someone coming whom she does not want the child to be exposed to, she pulls the hat down over his face and head until that person has passed.

When children are between nine months and one year of age, they can begin wearing the typical dress of their parents. As they grow older, the girls are always dressed in little miniatures of their mothers. Boys may alternate between western shirt or typical shirt and pants, depending on how traditional their families are in styles of dress. Shoes are seldom worn by adults and even less by children. Boys from a very early age always have a sombrero and usually wear it. The sombrero is like our cowboy hat and purchased in the market. Often when permission was asked if a picture might be taken, a little boy would have to run get his hat before he would pose for the picture. The sombrero is a very important part of the male costume. The women only wear their headdress on occasion. These may be between 18 baras to 24 baras in length, a bara being about the equivalent to one foot. Young girls also wear these headdresses, but the length is somewhat shorter.

Feeding

All babies are nursed at least for the first year of life and usually until another child comes along which often may be two or more years. Sometimes another lactating mother will nurse a newborn until the mother's milk comes. The baby bottle is slowly making its appearance in the village for mothers who may lose their milk due to some physical problem. The bottle may also be used to give the child some water. Usually, the mothers who use the bottle have been to the baby clinic and have learned through instruction from the social worker that young children need some water or juice along with the milk.

Young infants who are breast fed are not introduced to solid foods until they are eight or nine months old at which time small bits of tortilla are introduced along with black beans, bananas, and several types of vegetables common to Central America. One popular vegetable among the Indians is called a quisquil. The quisquil is boiled until soft and mushy and can be easily eaten by young babies. Infants set their own feeding schedule and are offered the breast whenever they cry or seem fussy and unhappy. The very young infant is also fed through the night whenever he awakens and cries.

Sleeping

The new infant may share the same bed as the parents or sleep in a hemp woven hammock strung from the rafters of the thatched roof house. The infant will sleep with the parents until he is three or four years old and then will be moved to a bed with the other children. Most homes that were visited had only two beds. The beds are constructed from long planks of wood laid across sawhorse-like structures and then a large woven reed mat is placed on top. Some families are rich enough to have blankets while others must use what is available to cover them at night. Boys and girls sleep together until nine or ten years of age and then they are given separate beds. The only family where sleeping habits were observed firsthand was in the home of Martin (family number one). The children slept without their clothes and covered with an old blanket and other clothing which was piled on top. Bedding of this type, coupled with the body heat of four children sharing the same bed, provided warmth.

One morning, Concepcion, Martin's wife, said that their eldest son Nicholas, age nine, had kicked his five-year-old sister Maria out of bed and would not let her sleep in the same bed. When asked why, Concepcion said that Nicholas said he was getting too old to sleep with a girl. So this changed the family sleeping arrangement to three boys in one small bed, their ages being four, seven, and nine years. Martin and Concepcion shared their bed with Maria, five years; Diego, two and one-half years; and Lucita, just a baby. Another incident occurred one night which the family thought was very comical. Juan, the seven year old, had an accident in the night and had wet the bed. Nicholas, the nine year old, was angry and Juan was pouting because he was being teased by his mother and father.

Other sleeping arrangements observed in the families' homes were much the same as the one described. Thomas Cochie (family number three) had only one bed in his house, perhaps because he had only two young sons. Another family had one house for cooking and another for sleeping. Although the sleeping house was of fair size, only two beds could be seen from the doorway.

Sweat Bath

Unless the family lives near the lake or the father is a fisherman, the Tzutuhil have very little contact with the lake except for the family wash that the mothers and sisters do in the lake. Therefore, the lake is not greatly utilized as a bathing facility. Family sitios each have their own little house built of rocks and earth which is their sweat bath. This is used by the entire family every two to three weeks in the evening. The structure is only large enough to stoop down to enter and then sit on low wooden benches. Some have crude wooden doors while others just have a blanket thrown over the entrance way when in use to keep the steam from escaping. These little sweat baths are much like our more modern sauna baths, the major difference being the Tzutuhil have no temperature control. A fire is built at one end of the small house and rocks are placed around it to get hot. When the rocks are hot enough, the entire family goes in together. It is not the custom to wear clothes into the sweat baths and one can see why as the heat is suffocating. Water is thrown on the hot rocks and the steam pours off the hot rocks. Branches from the avocado tree are used to beat the skin to bring the blood to the surface and also are said to give off a good odor. The heat is stifling and many nights, Martin's (family number one) smallest children could be heard crying because they wanted to get out of the heat. One almost feels as if there is no air to breathe, the heat is so intense. Very small babies are not taken into the sweat bath but are left to sleep in the house just a few steps away. The sweat bath is also thought to be a healer of many ailments and is often used when someone is sick. The hospital staff attributed the sweat bath to the death of elderly people who often, when exposed to the colder air after the intense heat, would get pneumonia and die.

The sweat bath is considered to be a bath to clean one's body just as our baths in a tubful of clean water are used to clean bodies. The lake is being used as a source of bathing by some of the younger Tzutuhil boys who know how to swim; however, few know how to swim. The women and girls use the lake to wash their long thick black hair which they never cut from the time they are born to the day they die.

Parental Affection

Tzutuhil babies and children are usually not talked to by adults in the warm, baby talk fashion which is the custom in our culture. They are talked to when instructions need to be given or in conversation. Rarely does one see a mother with a baby or young child in her arms talking to it or cuddling and kissing her child affectionately. There is too much to be done each day in order to survive to spend a great deal of time playing with young children. Public display of affection is rarely, if ever, seen on a street or in the market of Santiago Atitlan. Even though the children are rarely fondled or kissed, they seem very happy and are usually laughing and smiling as they go about their play.

Walking

The Tzutuhil children appear to walk around one year of age or later depending on the individual child. Often a mother or older brother and sister will hold one of the hands of a young child just learning to take his first steps and help him walk about the yard of the sitio. Crawling may be somewhat inhibited from all observations. Several children observed in the crawling stage showed rather unusual means of propelling themselves about. The son of Diego Mendoza (family number two) at nine months of age would lie flat on his stomach and pull himself about with his arms. Thomas Cochie's (family number three) son, Diego, scooted around on his bottom, using one leg and his arms to move himself forward. Perhaps this later development and unusual crawling techniques were due to the fact that children of this age are carried about a great deal and when placed some place to play, are expected to stay there with an older brother or sister.

Death and Burial

Since the mortality rate of infants is rather high in Santiago Atitlan, information regarding the customs of burial in the case of a death of a young child were obtained. It was found that the death of a newborn baby is passed over with little or no traditional burial ceremonies attached. Usually the child is dressed, put in a casket or rolled in a reed mat and the father and several other men take the body to the cemetery to be buried.

If the child dies who is older, six months or more, it is handled in the customary tradition. The child is washed and dressed by the family. He is laid in a coffin on a table or just the body is laid on a table in the family home. Usually candles are placed at the head and feet and perhaps some flowers. The body is watched over through the night by the family. The father and mother and often times the grandparents drink through the night until they are extremely drunk. The Indians say this is to dull the pain or sorrow of loosing a loved one. Friends and neighbors come in and out during the night to offer their sympathy. They may stay for several hours and then go home. In the morning, a procession of family and friends begin their walk to the cemetery. They usually carry the coffin past the church, turn to face the church and then walk on. Some families will have the Catholic father say a short mass or prayer. When the procession gets to the cemetery if a grave has not been prepared, the men will do this, leaving the rest of the procession behind to wait. The natives bury one coffin on top of another, using the same grave over and over. If they find the bones of another person in the grave, they lift these out and put the new body or coffin in the grave and place the old bones on top. A cofradia, or religious man of the community, may say a prayer and then the body is covered. The family mourns for a period of time after the death. They keep to themselves and just carry on the necessities of living. If they do not observe this mourning period, they may be criticized by the others in the community.

When a person dies, the body must be buried within 24 hours of the death. This is a law in Guatemala as the natives and other people usually have no way of embalming the body. If a family cannot afford to buy a coffin, they may rent one to carry the body to the cemetery. The body is then rolled in a reed mat and buried. Coffins sell for as cheap as three quetzals (equivalent to three dollars), depending on the size and quality of the box. There are others for five quetzals and so on according to size and quality.

A death must be reported to the secretary of the municipality so that it can be entered in the village records. If this is not done within a specified number of days, a fine is imposed.

Weaning

The young infant is put on the mother's breast from the time her milk comes and most likely until another child is born. Usually a year or two has passed before another child is born and the older child has by this time been introduced to several types of food such as tortillas, bananas, some fruits and vegetables, and black coffee.

Jellifee (1968, p. 126) in his publication, Child Nutrition in Developing Countries, writes about the weaning process found in many underdeveloped countries, which is fairly typical of the practices in

Santiago Atitlan.

> It has been noted that many traditional, customary diets include a relatively limited range of food, usually based on rather coarse, bulky vegetable foods, and especially on one or more staples.
>
> The process of introducing semi-solids is often abrupt, and on to relatively indigestible, coarse vegetable foods of low nutritional value. Diarrhea is likely from infection introduced by unclean utensils, and from poor digestion of foods taken, leading to defective absorption. The process may also be complicated by the psychologic upset of the associated' sudden separation from the breast, and by innumerable general infections.
>
> It is, unfortunately, unusual for even the full range of the still limited foods that comprise the adult diet to be used for infant feeding. Likewise, the preparation of special dishes for young children is uncommon. The need for young children to have more frequent meals than adults is often not appreciated.

Mendleson (1956) found that it was generally agreed among his informants that a woman could not suckle two children at the same time, so one child had to be weaned before another came. He gave several different weaning procedures such as putting a chili on or near the breast to frighten the child, or sometimes the child is told the breast is an animal which will harm him.

When a new baby comes, the mother begins nursing the infant. If there is jealousy shown by an older child of the new infant, the mother will, at times, let that child nurse for a few minutes after the newborn has had all the milk he wants. Most children nurse for two years, some longer and some for shorter periods, the time depending on the arrival of a new baby and the mother's milk supply.

Older children of one or two years of age are not held in the mother's arms while nursing but will stand by a kneeling mother's side and suck. The mother may go about her work of cooking or selling her produce in the market while the child continues to nurse. It was learned that older children are not allowed to nurse very often as they suck too hard and hurt the mother.

Toilet Training

Young Tzutuhil children begin their toilet training between three and six years of age (Mendleson, 1956). Most children learn about controlling this need from being around older siblings, peers, and parents. The Tzutuhil have no bathrooms to speak of; they take care of these physical needs behind their houses or wherever they might be at the time. Young children are encouraged at this age to take care of these needs outside and are usually accompanied by an older sister or brother. Parents are very patient and many accidents happen before the child is completely trained. However, if a child is too slow about this training, a parent's patience does wear thin at times and a child may be scolded and made to know that his mother is displeased.

Some children are toilet trained at a younger age than three years. Thomas Cochie (family number three) said his youngest son, Diego, age one, is learning to go outside when he needs to toilet. However, he said that most children learn at a later age.

The toileting process is a very natural physical need in Guatemala and there is no secrecy or embarrassment attached. In several of the sitios visited, the young boys showed no embarrassment in turning their backs and urinating by a rock wall. Some of the younger boys urinated in the yard while playing, much to the amusement of the other children.

Eating

After a child is weaned from his mother's breast, his main diet for the rest of his life will be coffee and tortillas. Up until the time of weaning, a child will suckle at his mother's breast and experience the best year of health and immunity to disease that he will ever again experience in his entire life-time. When a child is seven or eight months old and still nursing, he will begin to be introduced to a few foods. He will be given small pieces of tortillas, bananas, black beans, and a little coffee.

The tortilla is the main source of food in the Indian homes throughout the country of Guatemala. The tortilla is made from the corn that the Indian grows in his fields, or if he owns no land, he must purchase it in the market. The Guatemalan countryside is one field of corn after another. Around Santiago Atitlan, the cornfields reach far up the sides of the two volcanoes Toliman and Atitlan. The Indians' way of life is centered around the various cycles of the corn, from preparing the soil for planting to the harvesting of the corn. The Tzutuhil language includes descriptive words for each step in the corn cycle.

After the corn has been harvested, it is carried down from the fields on the backs of the men. It is left to dry in the yards or houses of the Tzutuhil. After it is sufficiently dry, the women and young children shell the corn and store it in woven baskets. Each day they boil enough corn for the tortillas. They boil the kernels until they are soft and then rinse them with clear water. The corn is then ready to take to the malino for grinding. At various locations around the village, there is a building with a machine that grinds the corn into a soft powder. These machines can be heard running early in the morning as women bring their corn to be ground for the day's tortillas. The cost is a few centavos or pennies in United States money. The women then take the milled corn back to their homes to make the tortillas. Some of the milled corn is then placed on the grinding stone and a little water is added to the flour. It is then ground with a long cylinder shaped volcanic stone into a paste and separated into little piles for tortillas. These little piles are then patted out by the women into round flat shapes and placed on a large round heated plate placed over the fire and supported by three or four rocks. The very fine tortillas puff up as they are cooking and then deflate after they are taken off the fire. The tortillas are put in a basket as they are cooked. A woman with a family of six children and a husband must make close to 100 tortillas for the two meals of the day. Approximately 10 pounds of milled corn flour is used each day for the tortillas.

Checking with various families, it was found that the number of tortillas consumed at each meal by the various members of the household is fairly consistent among the families studied. For instance, a grown man generally eats 10 tortillas at each meal; his wife will eat between 6 and 8 tortillas a meal. Then taking a family the size of Martin's (family number one), it follows:

Nicholas	10 years old	10 tortillas per meal
Juan	8 years old	6 tortillas per meal
Maria	6 years old	4 tortillas per meal
Jose	5 years old	4 tortillas per meal

Diego	2½ years old	3 tortillas per meal
Lucita	1 year old	1 tortilla per meal

There would also be a difference in the number of tortillas consumed as the number of females and males differ in each family, the male children generally eating more than the female children.

Tortillas are usually prepared once a day and eaten at the mid-morning meal and again when the man comes in from his fields in the afternoon. The man of the household, if he is going to work in his field, gets up around 5:00 o'clock in the morning and drinks his coffee and eats his tortillas before leaving. He may take a few tortillas with him to eat at midday on the mountainside. The rest of the family will eat when they awaken.

Generally, at the afternoon or early evening meal, the family sits down together on the dirt floor of their home. The mother passes out the tortillas to each member of the family, starting with the father first. After the children have finished eating their tortillas, they do not ask for more; they sit quietly until their mother notices that they are ready for another one and gives them another.

On several occasions, Martin (family number one) was observed sitting Diego, age two and one-half, outside the house because he wanted more than his allotted amount of tortillas. Diego cried and cried but the Indians' philosophy is to eat just until the stomach is satisfied. If a child is given too much to eat, his stomach will stretch and he will eat more than his share and this is an added expense to the already sparse budget of most families. On another occasion, Diego, age two and one-half years, refused to take a tortilla his mother gave him. She finally sprinkled some salt on the tortilla and he ate it. Coffee is made by putting the coffee grounds in a pot of water and boiling it until the coffee is very strong. The entire family drinks this at their meals. Other foods are eaten by the Indian on various occasions. Black beans are sold in the market and are a favorite of the Indians. They are usually boiled until soft and then eaten. Also, vegetables that are in season and very cheap are purchased. The cheapest, most inferior quality of fruits and vegetables are bought by the Indian women, such as wormy tomatoes and bruised over ripe mangoes.

There are several butcher shops in the market square. A bull is killed early each morning for the day's market. The meat is sold for 50 centavos or 50 cents a pound. The insides of the animal are sold along with the high quality meat. The Tzutuhil do buy some of the better meat on occasion but usually this is a very small amount such as one-fourth or one-half pound to be used for soup or roasted on a stick over the fire. The intestines of the animal, the very cheapest meat, is often the part that is utilized by the Indian family.

The Indian eats very little meat in his diet. Many raise some chickens or turkeys but they are taken to market to be sold so they can then purchase coffee, black beans, thread for weaving, salt, or whatever the family may need.

Some of the men of the village fish for a living. However, most of their catch is sold to buyers who come out from Guatemala City and transport the fish to the city markets. If a family does have a fish, they will make a fish soup rather than cook the fish and eat it just for the meat. So seldom do they eat fish that their diet is greatly lacking in protein.

Young children of the village and some fishermen set out crab lines in the lake where fresh-water crabs live. These are generally sold in the market, also. Martin's (family number one) boys, Nicholas and Juan, fish for these crabs almost every night. They generally have a good catch. The family keeps a few and the rest are taken to market to be sold for four or five centavos each. The children eat these crabs raw, tearing off a leg and chewing it, shell and all. This is a real treat for them.

Due to the poor nutritional diet that the people have, many young children after they are taken off the breast, suffer from various stages and types of malnutrition. The most common deficiency found in children is one caused by a lack of animal protein. The general theory is that if a child does not die between the ages of two and five years, he will live the full life span. This is the period when a child is taken off his mother's breast and given the diet day in and day out of tortillas and coffee, supplemented occasionally with a few fruits and vegetables. If a child can adjust and survive this period, he is usually strong enough to live his life into adulthood.

Jelliffee (1968, p. 93) reports the following:

> Unless the local availability of food is very poor, school-age children do not usually have the severe problems found in the early years of life, and there is little mortality in this group from malnutrition. By this age, children will usually be eating most of the adult foods and will have become, to some extent at least, immune to many important infections and parasites.
>
> Nevertheless, school children in tropical regions very frequently show some degree of malnutrition. They are often underweight and below standard height, which may, in part, be due to failure to catch up following some degree of protein-calorie malnutrition in early childhood.

Many of the severe cases of malnutrition occur shortly after two years of age and the birth of a new baby in the family. The two year old is pushed aside and loses his babyhood. Often he becomes despondent over this turn of events. He will refuse to eat or his already overworked mother fails to encourage him to eat. He misses the close physical contact of his mother offered with the breast feeding. It does not take long before he begins to show signs of serious malnutrition. The older children in the family may be healthy but this child having all these new adjustments to make starts loosing ground nutritionally. Some children are taken to the baby clinic by their mothers for help, while others may be referred to the hospital by mission personnel or the village social worker. Many of these children die because of lack of education on the parents' part concerning the seriousness of such conditions in young children.

Figures 1 and 2 compare weight and age of Tzutuhil girls and boys with four weight-age standard curves (Normal, Thin, Undernourished, and Very Undernourished). The curves were calculated by the Guatemalan Public Health Department using children of Guatemala City, and the data points represent the measurements of children taken during the present study.

Tzutuhil boys appear to be more healthy than Tzutuhil girls through age six. Twenty-five percent of the total boy subjects are above the standard condition Thin and 75 percent below this condition (Figure 1); however, only nine percent of the total girl subjects are above the standard condition Thin and 91 percent are below (Figure 2).

Boys in all weights and ages are above girls. Beyond age two, weights more often are in the Undernourished and Very Undernourished

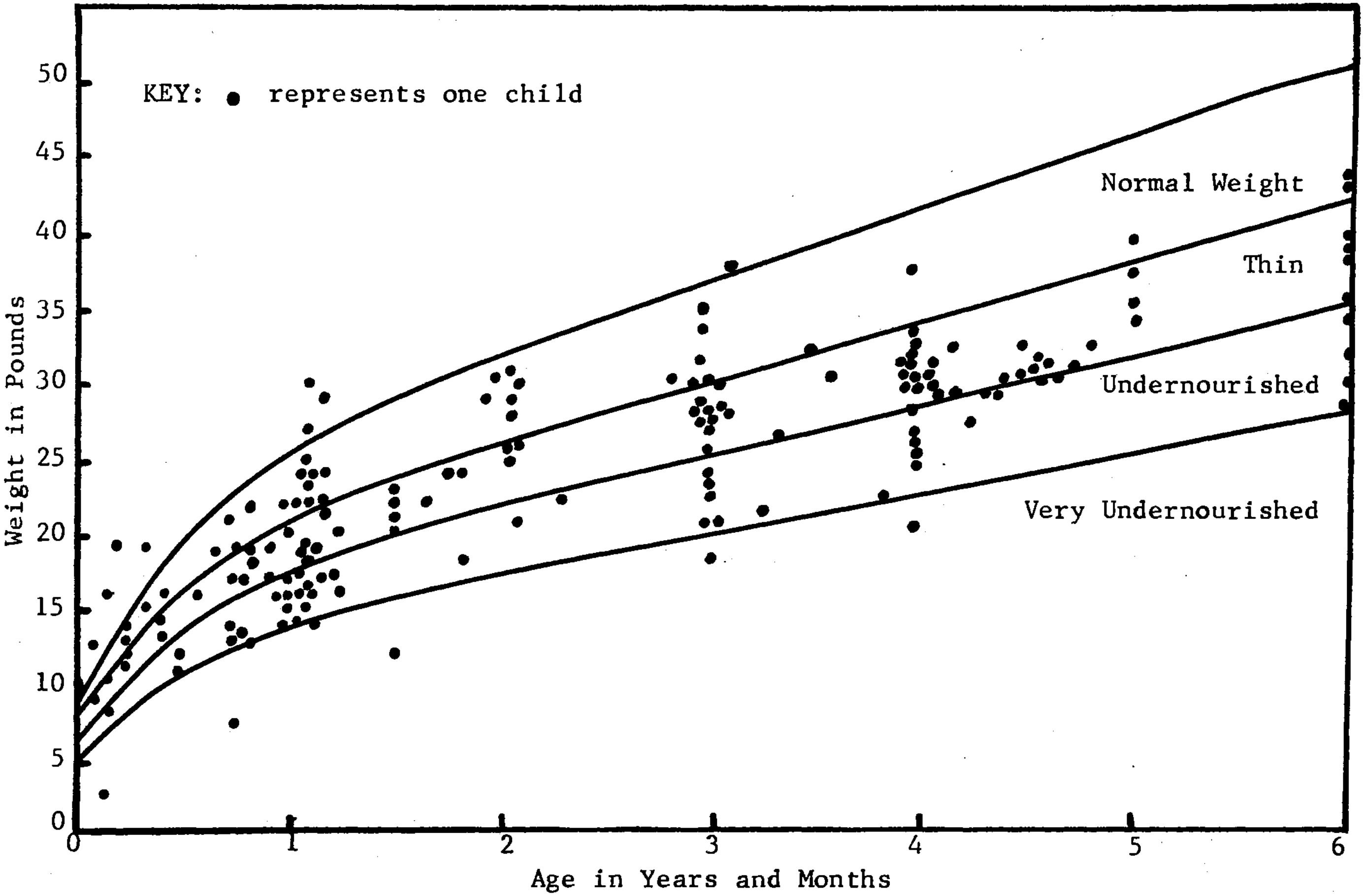

Figure 1. The Weight and Age of Santiago Atitlan, Tzutuhil Boys (Author's Data) on the Four Weight-Age Standards (Guatemalan Public Health Department, 1970)

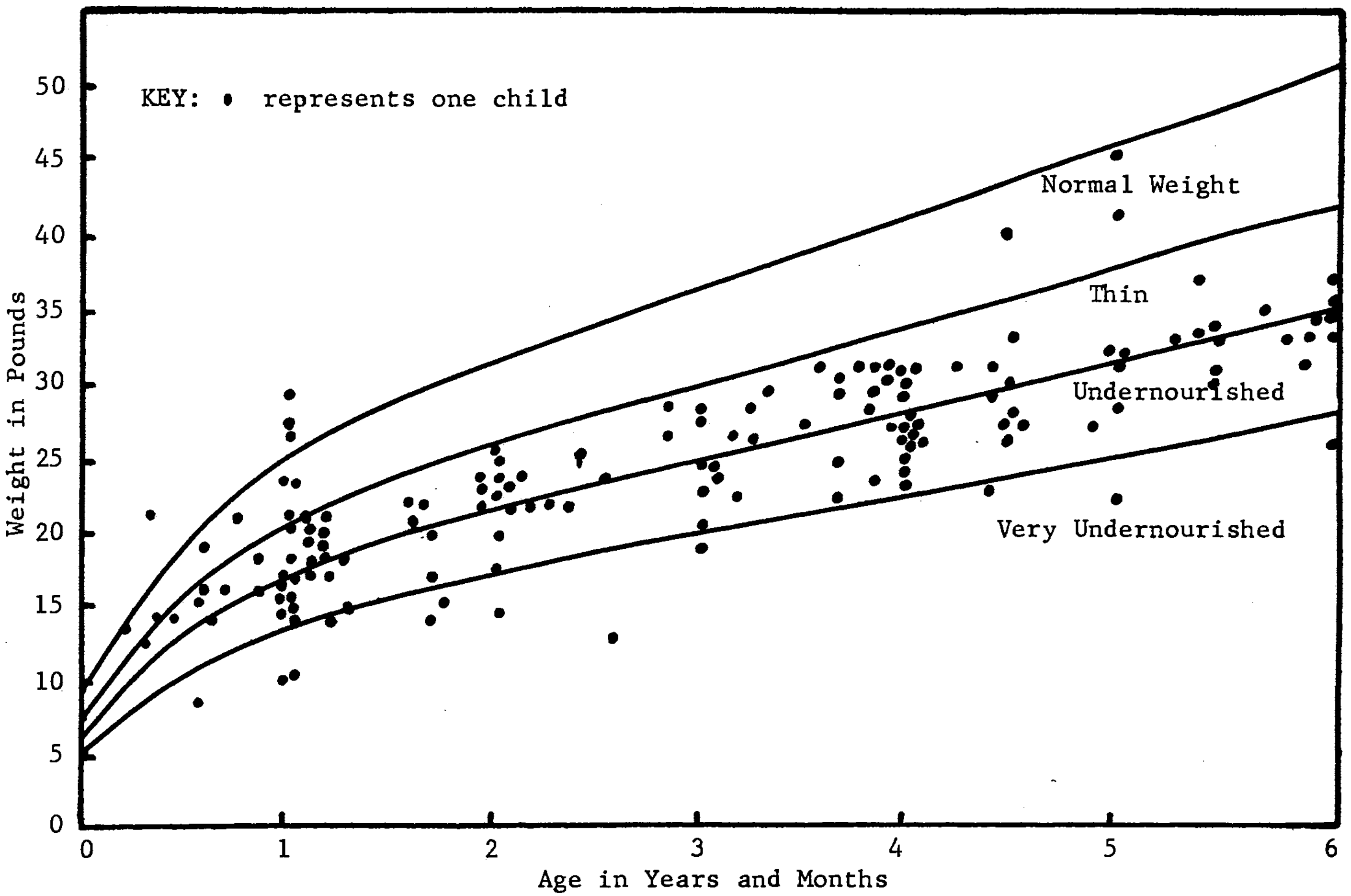

Figure 2. The Weight and Age of Santiago Atitlan, Tzutuhil Girls (Author's Data) on the Four Weight-Age Standards (Guatemalan Public Health Department, 1970)

categories.

Greater tortilla consumption and aggressiveness may account for more healthy boys than girls. Poor health among children after they have stopped breast feeding may be attributed to a change in diet of milk to coffee and tortillas.

Early (1970) found that the infant and preschool mortality rate in Santiago Atitlan in the age group zero to four years of age contributes 50 percent to 70 percent of the total number of deaths each year. He further reported that in the zero to four year age group in the 1950's, there were 1,814 deaths and in the 1960's, this dropped to 1,238 deaths. This is a 36 percent increase in mortality between 1950 and 1960. However, this age group still accounted for 56 percent of the total deaths in the 1960's, which is almost unchanged from 59 percent of the 1950's. This continued high percentage of infant mortality rate in the 1960's is due partially to a 2.9 percent population increase in 1960.

Various agencies both in Guatemala and the United States sponsor programs which are working to improve the diet of the people. Several of the programs offered are a baby clinic which offers a high nutritional meal for the children and a baby washing program. Several weekly meetings, instructed by the social worker who speaks the Tzutuhil language, are provided to instruct mothers in the use of Incaparina, a high protein food supplement and public health service which offers medical attention. The mission hospital gives services to those in need and takes care of severe malnutrition cases. The baby clinic also offers free daily meals to less severe cases of malnutrition.

Punishment--Obedience

The Tzutuhil child is rarely a victim of physical punishment inflicted by adults. It seems that rather early in a child's life, he learns about obedience and respect for his parents and elders. When a child has misbehaved or is doing something he should not or that annoys his parents, it is enough for the parents to scold him. They do this in a rather pouting way and their voice gets high pitched. This form of discipline is usually enough for a child to stop what he is doing.

The Tzutuhil parent is very patient in most instances. When they are in public and a child is misbehaving or having a temper tantrum, they will, in most cases, just laugh at the child's behavior and say that he is "muy bravo," meaning the child is angry or difficult. In the market place or on the street, it was observed that parents of misbehaving children would point their finger at a tourist or other light skinned person and talk to the child. It can only be assumed that the parent was trying to get the child to behave by telling him that the person would take him away or some such thing if he did not behave.

Only on few occasions was an observation made of a parent striking a child and usually this would be a slap on the side of the head. One instance occurred in the home of the investigator. Martin and his family (family number one) were looking at a collection of fishing lures and Jose, age four, picked one up. His mother, Concepcion, immediately slapped him on the side of the head and told him to put it down. His father also said something to him in a scolding voice. Jose cried more from the fact that he was punished than because he was hurt.

Another incidence occurred one morning while observing in the home of Diego Mendoza's family (family number two). A commotion was coming from one of the sitios several houses up the street. A young girl of seven or eight years came down the path; she was about even with the gate of the Mendozas when her mother came running down the path, grabbed the child, slapped her several times about the head and pulled her by the arm back to the sitio. The child cried for several minutes afterwards.

One day while visiting at the home of Thomas Cochie's family (family number three), several boys of various ages were jumping over a rope held by two boys. An older boy was teasing his younger brother and finally the child left crying. Shortly his mother appeared and said something to her older son. He laughed and continued to jump over the rope. She reached out to strike him but he ducked and she missed, much to the amusement of her son and the other boys. She stayed and visited with several other women for a moment and then left; apparently the incident was forgotten.

Mendelson (1956) reports that children are rarely punished before seven or eight years of age and then it is usually for disobedience and teasing younger children. He reports that one of his informants said that children from four to twelve years were beaten for very bad behavior and either taken to the municipality for admonition or were not fed for a day. He also said that it was reported by one of his informants that some parents threatened misbehaving children by telling them that a tiger would come and tie them up and throw them in the lake if they were not good. Another informant of Mendelson's denied the above and said that the worst that happened to misbehaving children would be a spanking.

From all observations, it appears that the Tzutuhil have a good relationship with their children and the children respect the word of their parents. In most cases of misbehavior, all that is needed is a few words from the parents and the child immediately complies.

Childhood Responsibilities and Work

Children of Santiago Atitlan take on responsibilities at a rather young age, beginning around five or six years, with the care of younger siblings. Both boys and girls share in this responsibility, taking younger ones with them to the sitios to play or on walks through the village.

As the children reach the ages of eight or nine years, they begin to take on more responsibility and the work is divided into the traditional male and female roles.

Girls

The girls at eight or nine years will sometimes be sent to the lake with the family's wash. She will wash on the rocks with the other women. At times, she may be accompanied by her mother and they will do the wash together. She also shells the dry corn from the cob and learns through observation about the preparation of the corn for making tortillas.

Diego Mendoza's oldest daughter, Concepcion, age nine, accompanied him when he would go to the coast to work on "fincas" or large plantations. They would walk eight to twelve hours and stay a week returning home for a few days' visit during planting and harvesting season. A large sack of tortillas were prepared at home for the coming week by his wife. Their young daughter would go with her father to cook, wash and keep house for him.

Between the years of nine and eleven, a young girl begins to learn the basic steps of weaving. She learns how to wash and prepare the thread, how to put it on a loom, and then she is taught how to weave. Usually a young girl will start by making the long cummerbund that men wear around their trousers or some other simpler piece of material.

During one visit to Diego Mendoza's house, the oldest daughter spent the morning washing her thread, putting it on the loom, and then she began the weaving. Her mother gave her instructions from time to time and several other women in the sitio came by and gave her some suggestions which she accepted goodnaturedly.

Thomas Cochie's (family number three) wife, Francisca, at the time of the observations, was teaching her niece whose mother had died, how to weave and embroider on a hupil (woman's blouse). The young girl was about thirteen years of age. She did not have a regular loom so she would use sticks from trees and make a small loom on which to practice. Francisca is known in the village for her weaving and embroidery ability. She would often sit with her niece in the doorway of the house and they would each work on a hupil, Francisca offering guidance when needed.

Young girls are also sent to the markets on occasion with a few centavos to purchase something for the family. Young girls spend a great deal of time there, either with their mother or friends. Through this exposure, they learn the price of the various fruits and vegetables and how to bargain.

At the age of twelve or thirteen, the girl begins to learn how to make the tortillas. Although she has watched her mother boil the corn, take it to be ground, and make the tortillas, she still needs hours of practice to master the actual patting out of a tortilla. The flour must be just the right consistency or it will not stick together or it may be too sticky and pull apart between the hands. This she must learn as the tortilla making is an everyday job and will be the main food of her family's diet once she is married.

Boys

Young boys begin helping their fathers at the age of eight or nine years and some even before this, depending on the number of older boys in the family and the wealth and needs of the family. Martin's oldest boy, Nicholas, age nine, at the time of the observation would fish with his uncle on the lake all night. They would leave just after dark and return in the early morning hours. Nicholas was an accomplished fisherman and a help to the family financially as the fish could be sold in the market.

Young boys of eight or nine years may also be given the job of feeding the bull that the family owns or is raising for someone else. The bulls in Santiago Atitlan are staked out in a field and not let out to pasture due to the scarcity of land to farm. The young boys must go each day to the cornfields to gather dried corn stalks and other grasses and greenery and carry these loads on their backs to where they have staked the bull. Young boys are also used at the beginning of planting season as human scarecrows. They go to the newly planted fields at dawn and stay until dark, scaring away any birds that may be after the freshly planted seeds or young green corn shoots that are pushing through the earth. As the boys get older, they accompany their fathers to their fields to work the earth, plant and harvest the fields.

Also along the dirt roads going into Santiago Atitlan, fathers and their young sons, some as young as seven or eight years, can be seen with heavy loads of wood on their backs for the cooking fires. Over the years, the forests have been cut back further and further by the people in their search for wood to keep the cooking fires supplied. The men must now walk two or three hours to where the forest has been cut back to cut and gather wood and then they must walk back with this load on their backs. They only bring what they can carry on their backs. Most men and young boys are able to carry their own weight on their backs. These people are small and a grown man usually weighs no more than 100 or 120 pounds.

If a boy's father is a trader selling vegetables and fruits from Santiago Atitlan on the coast and then brings the fruits and produce of the coast back to the village, a young boy may begin accompanying him on these expeditions at about the age of 11 or 12 years. Mendelson (1956) reports that after about 15 years of age, these boys may be permitted to go alone or with a friend on a trading journey to the coast.

Boys do not have to assume the same occupation as their fathers. This often depends on the number of boys in the family and what the father does for a living. If a father has some land, his son may help him work this, eventually inheriting the land. If a father owns no land, then his son may choose to be a fisherman, work on a "finca" for a "Ladino" employer, become a trader on the coastal route, or, if possible, save enough money to buy some land if it is available.

Adult responsibilities come early to the children of Santiago Atitlan. However, if one is to survive in this primitive, poverty-stricken way of life, one must learn early how to survive.

Play

"Play is a child's work." Whoever first coined this phrase was a master in understanding children. One can travel the world over observing children of all colors and cultures and it makes no difference if they live in a castle or a primitive hut, they all share one thing in common, play.

Children play what they know and what they feel. They imitate their parents or other adults of their community, and the Tzutuhil children of Guatemala are no exception. On a walk over the rocky little paths of Santiago Atitlan, one can see children busily at play in the yards of their sitios. Their favorite games seem to be those involved with dramatic play. They act out the roles that they have learned from their parents.

Girls of the village can be seen playing a variety of games from marketing to washing on the rocks as their mothers do. A group of little girls playing market will collect a variety of containers from around their yards such as tin cans and old clay pots and fill these with dirt, leaves, or berries that they have gathered from a few nearby bushes or trees. The black earth in one of their containers is always coffee. One of the girls may use the balance her mother uses at market which is simply two metal bowls attached to strings and the strings are attached to a piece of wood. A hook is placed in the center of the wood so the balance can be held. A series of weights are used in one bowl and the produce is put in the other until the scale balances. The little girls usually use little rocks as their weights in one bowl. Some of the girls are the venders and others pretend to buy the goods. The pretend money used in the transactions are little rocks which the girls keep in small wooden or metal containers with a lid just like their mother's, or some may tie the pretend money in a handkerchief as some of the market women do.

Another favorite game of the girls is to pretend they are cooking. They arrange the cooking fire just as they have seen their mothers do many times before. Several stones are placed at each corner of the fire; small twigs are placed in the center and a pot is placed on the fire to cook, or a flat top to a can is used so the girls can cook the pretend tortillas they have made. They use dirt to represent the corn that has been ground. Then they use leaves from trees for the tortillas which they pat between their hands and put on the fire to cook. Sometimes a group of boys playing in the same yard will come over and pretend to eat the things the girls have been busily cooking. They pour the make-believe food on the ground and hand it back to the girls empty, as if they have eaten the food.

Girls also imitate their mothers by pretending to wash some articles of the family clothing on a rock in the sitio or one conveniently located on the fence. Little girls also carry small cans or pots of dirt on their head just like their mothers do when going or returning to market.

Children of Santiago Atitlan have very few toys from a store. Some may have a plastic doll that is all blue or pink with just the impressions of hair, facial features, and clothing imprinted on them from the mold in which they were poured. Kites and marbles appear at certain times of the year and are sold in the local tiendas for just a few centavos. Tzutuhil children must rely on their own imaginations and creativity to find things with which to play. Diego Mendoza's nine month old son, Diego, was given an old can full of "odds and ends" with which to play. In the can was an old flashlight battery and a comb.

Young Tzutuhil girls are not different from other girls their age in other parts of the world. They all like to play with dolls. Three different types of dolls were observed in various sitios of the village. These were the plastic, commercially produced dolls which were previously mentioned; dolls which had been crudely carved out of wood by a father or grandfather for a young child; and dolls fashioned from the clothes of a young child of the family and stuffed with rags. The latter mentioned doll-type are not too common but several were seen. The wooden dolls have a head, trunk, and two legs. Arms are just impressions in the wood or may not be present at all. A piece of material sewed together in hupil fashion was usually the clothing for the female dolls. The male dolls were not clothed. The girls who played with these dolls had great fun carrying them around and treating them as if they were real babies.

Boys of the village also imitate and play at games that are typical of the male role of the Tzutuhil men. Young boys will gather several old machetes that are missing a handle and that are weathered and rusty. The boys pretend to go to the mountains and work in the field, gather corn or chop wood to bring home. They also, on occasion, dramatize a religious fiesta carrying a stool around on their shoulders pretending it is a holy statue and dancing like they have seen their fathers do at such celebrations.

Tzutuhil boys have great fun teasing each other, picking usually on a younger boy, taking his hat and playing keep away with it. Many of the boys who go to the National school have learned to play marbles. Usually, one boy in a group will have marbles with which the group can play. The game does not proceed as we know, with all the marbles in the center of a circle and each person trying to knock them out with his marbles. Rather, each boy has one marble and some are placed in a random manner in a small area, perhaps forming something like a letter H. The boys try to hit these marbles but also the object of the game seems to be to hit each other's shooting marble further away from where it landed so the next shot will be more difficult.

Another favorite game and one that seems to reach its height of popularity around Eastertime, is a game with round pieces of tar-like material about the size of our quarter. The boys take turns putting one of their circles down on the ground and the boy whose turn it is takes one of his circles and throws it down with all his strength trying to hit the other boy's circle. If a hit is made and the two objects stick together, the boy who threw, gets to keep the other boy's circle, the winner being the boy who has the most black circles.

Boys of the village also like to play with cars and trucks. Some have wooden trucks that have been sold in the market by some traveling salesmen; other trucks are made of plastic. They all look ancient and are broken but nevertheless great fun is had building roads on which the trucks can run.

A game that Thomas Cochie's (family number three) children and neighbor friends had great fun playing was a make-believe pinata party.

They would find an old clay pot that had a hole in one side or was broken in some way and was no longer usable. They would fill it with leaves and berries and tie a rope to one of the handles and throw it over the clothesline in the yard. Then one of the children would be blindfolded and given a stick. He would try to hit the pot and break it as another child moved it up and down the line with the rope. The pot would finally be broken by one of the children who peeked. The other children would scramble to gather up the berries and leaves that had fallen out of the broken pot just as if it were real candy. The custom of the pinata is a Ladino custom. Perhaps these children had seen this at the school, or the mission, or by peeking through a fence at a Ladino party.

Tzutuhil children manage to have fun and play and laugh even though they do not have bright, shiny new toys with which to play. They play what they know and with the materials available to them.

Schools

The school system in Santiago Atitlan is composed of a National school which includes grades one through six and a Montessori preschool provided by the Catholic mission. If any further education is desired, it must be obtained in one of the larger cities of Guatemala, as most small villages only have schools with grades through six.

Public

The National school runs five days a week and a half day on Saturday. The teachers are Spanish speaking Ladinos and the language used in all teaching situations is Spanish. Between three and four hundred children attend the school out of the town population of 12,000. If a Tzutuhil child wished to attend school but does not understand or speak Spanish, then he must take a year of Spanish instruction offered at the school before beginning his education.

A large percentage of the Indian children do not complete their education through the sixth grade. Many drop out for a variety of reasons. Often they are needed at home, the sons to help their fathers in the fields and the girls to help their mothers with the cooking, weaving, washing, and tending younger children. Also, the Indian has very little opportunity to use his knowledge gained at school as most wish to remain in their village close to their families rather than go to a larger city hunting employment and living a life that is completely foreign to them. After they have some knowledge of how to read, write, and work with a few basic number manipulations, they feel they need to return to the more important part of their life education, that of learning how to plant, harvest, and survive.

A larger percentage of Indian children attend the National school as opposed to the Indian population. The Ladino is an upward moving class so education is viewed by most as an important step to upward mobility. If some parents feel it is important enough, they will send their children to one of the cities to continue their education beyond the sixth grade.

The school curriculum is based on much oral recitation as a class, manuscript practice, and reading aloud from books. The system is structured.

Montessori

The Montessori preschool is owned and operated by the mission co-operative which is composed of a Catholic father and Tzutuhil men of the village who are members of the co-operative. The Montessori school was originally started by two North American girls in 1967 who were visiting the village and saw a need for such a school. The two girls spent a year in Santiago Atitlan organizing and setting up the school with monetary assistance from the mission. They trained two Tzutuhil girls who are now very capably and successfully running the school. Parents of the enrolled children built the schoolhouse, furniture, and some of the educational materials. Other materials were ordered from Amsterdam. The total cost of setting up the school came to less than $2,000.

The school is open nine months of the year, running for three months at a time and then taking one month off for vacation. The school sessions are three hours a day, five days a week and cost each child who is enrolled two centavos a day (or two cents). Up until January of 1971, there was only a morning session operating, but there was such a demand that the school is now operating on two half day sessions. The younger children come in the morning and the older children attend in the afternoon. The children enrolled range from ages three to six years. The majority of the children in attendance are Indian children, as the Ladino population of the village will not send their children to a school where there are Indian teachers. The school is well run and the children seem to be gaining valuable experiences from the activities which are planned for them.

Health Programs

Modern medicine is very much a reality in Santiago Atitlan. The Public Health Service of Guatemala has recently constructed a modern building on the village square with a nurse who dispenses medicine and immunizations. A baby clinic maintained by the Catholic mission and supervised by a Guatemalan social worker, offers baths and a high protein meal to babies and young children for only a few centavos and also holds weekly meetings for Indian women and Ladino women to instruct them about proper food storage and handling, cleanliness, and other areas in which the people need help. Perhaps most amazing of all is the hospital built and sponsored by the mission. The hospital is located about a mile south of the village on a dirt road. It is only several years old and looks like a modern well equipped clinic in the United States. The doctors are young Guatemalan interns who are required to do a specified number of months' training in the countryside. Several of the Catholic sisters are medically trained, one being a nurse, and the other an anesthesiologist. A number of local Ladino and Indian people are employed to keep records, admit patients, and translate from Tzutuhil into Spanish for the doctors.

The hospital has a well equipped dentist office with all the latest equipment such as high speed drills, and X-ray machines. A young intern in dentistry is there to work on the local people and also cooperate in a program with the National school in which school children are seen in the morning to check and work on their teeth.

The hospital is equipped with several examining rooms, an operating room, X-ray room, laboratory, several bed maternity ward, and incubator.

A second building houses a large room for patients who must stay over night and a large room for supplies. The hospital has its own generator for electricity.

Patients pay 25 cents' visitation fee and they are charged a small amount for the medication the doctor prescribes. The doctor does make house calls if he is summoned or if he has a case who fails to return for a checkup and they need to be watched carefully.

The Tzutuhil has been difficult to convince that the ways of modern medicine are better than the herbs they have used for centuries or witchcraft which is rumored to still be used but is not in evidence to the outsider. However, with each success in treating a case, the word is spread and a little more trust is developed and perhaps the next time someone is ill or injured, he will go to the hospital for help. Unfortunately, many of the cases have been untreated for so long and the patient is so near death by the time a doctor sees him that it is difficult to save his life. Perhaps one day this battle will be over and such diseases common to the Tzutuhil as tuberculosis, internal parasites, death at childbirth, death from malnutrition will be a thing of the past. This education of the people will take years of hard work to accomplish.

One other form of modern day medicine that is part of the Tzutuhil life is the local tienda (store) which sells such modern wonders as Alkaseltzer for stomach upset. This type of medication is available to the people for only a few centavos. On a visit to Diego Mendoza's (family number two) house, the oldest daughter was ill. Her mother said it was her stomach. She could be heard in the house crying from time to time. Finally, Concepcion, the seven year old, was given a few centavos and sent to the nearby tienda to buy some Alkaseltzer for her sister.

Stomach upsets and diarrhea are perhaps the most common sickness with which the Indians have to contend. It seems that young children are always suffering from one or the other.

Summary

This was a descriptive study of child rearing practices in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala. The five families studied seemed to be representative of the family life of this specific village.

Living at the study site and observing how other families lived, confirmed the findings reported concerning the five families of the study. The writer recommends this procedure and methods for gathering data concerning family life in any culture.

General observations were:

(1) The birth process is handled by a midwife.

(2) Male children are usually named for fathers, grandfathers, or close relatives. Females are usually named for their mothers, grandmothers, or other close relatives.

(3) Infants are breast fed until the later stages of the next pregnancy.

(4) Tzutuhil inhabitants of Santiago Atitlan do not accept adoptions when they cannot bear children of their own.

(5) No scientific birth control is practiced.

(6) The care of infants is the responsibility of the mother; however, older siblings are given the responsibility of caring for younger brothers and sisters.

(7) There is no privacy provided in relation to sleeping practices.

(8) The "sweat bath" is the usual method for cleansing the body.

(9) Most men and women still wear the native dress.

(10) Little physical affection is evidenced between parent and children.

(11) Toilet training is permissive.

(12) The main diet consists of tortillas, beans, and coffee, eaten twice a day.

(13) At an early age (five to ten years) children begin helping their parents.

(14) Children's play is an imitation of adult roles.

(15) There are two types of schools offered in Santiago Atitlan, the public school and the Montessori preschool.

(16) Modern medicine is not widely accepted by the Indian population of Santiago Atitlan.

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VITA

Ann Ranae Johnson

Candidate for Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CHILD REARING PRACTICES OF TZUTUHIL INDIANS IN SANTIAGO ATITLAN, GUATEMALA, CENTRAL AMERICA

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Richfield, Utah, November 21, 1945, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold J. Hansen; married Jeffrey Heber Johnson, May 4, 1968.

Education: Graduated from Richfield High School, Richfield, Utah, in May, 1964; received Bachelor of Science degree from Utah State University with a major in Child Development and Elementary Education in 1968; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1972.

Professional Experience: Graduate assistant, Department of Family Relations and Child Development, Oklahoma State University, 1971-72; Head Teacher, Oklahoma State University Children's Center, summer, 1972.