

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Women's Artivism Across Cultures and Borders: Los Angeles and Oaxaca

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By

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Creative Works Thesis Project to the women of Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz who took the time out of their busy lives to tell me about their involvement in their collectives. This project honors the hard work of the following artists: Leticia Hernández-Díaz, Margarita Carmen Gonzalez- Hernandez, Silvia Guadalupe Gonzalez-Hernandez, Jaquelina Hernández-Díaz, Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes, Marietta Bernstorff, Jennifer Grijalva-Martinez, Juana Martinez-Olivera, Rebeca Martinez-Santos, Leonila Aragon-Grijalva, and Liliana Escobar-Garcia, Margaret “Quica” Alarcon and Maritza Alvarez. I am grateful to have a group of powerful women that through their visual art, depict their stories and the stories of their communities. I am thankful that they opened their hearts and space for me to learn about their beginning, struggles, and their continued work to create a world that is a better place for future generations. This project is for the women like Leticia that have dedicated and invested so much time to make their vision possible. For women like Leticia who think about themselves and those around them. This book is also for women like Rebecca who depict stories or migration that resonate with the stories of my parents who also crossed the US-Mexico border. For Xicanas like Margaret “Quica” Alarcon, who live in the United States and create powerful art that documents a Xicana and indigenous history. It is an honor and privilege to document the powerful Chicana and Mexicana visual artists’ stories.

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN'S ARTIVISM ACROSS CULTURES AND BORDERS: LOS ANGELES AND OAXACA

By

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Master of Arts in Chicano and Chicana Studies

This project documents the artwork created by three contemporary women art collectives including: Mujeres de Maiz (MdM)/ Women of the Corn based in East Los Angeles, California, United States of America; Hormigas Bordadoras (HB)/ Embroidery Ants from San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, Mexico; and Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca (DM)/ Women's Detail of Oaxaca based in Oaxaca de Juarez, Oaxaca, Mexico. To contextualize this project, I discuss Chicana art, Chicana art aesthetic, the vocabulary utilized to discuss Chicana art to provide an understanding of Chicana art. Then, I discuss Chicana art collectives and Chicanas and *artivism* to highlight Chicana art and its organic relationship to activism. I utilize *artivism* to discuss Chicana and Mexicana art. I argue that Chicana and Mexicana visual artwork is *artivism*. In specific, I focus on and explore the visual artwork created by Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz. In 2015, I conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with visual artists Margaret "Quica" Alarcon and Maritza Alvarez from Mujeres de Maiz, members of Hormigas Bordadoras and members of Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca to document their *testimonios*. Like visual discourses created in social movements, I argue that the women of the aforementioned visual art collectives are also creating visual discourses. Through critical ethnography, I answer the following research questions:

What led to the creation of the women's art collectives Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz in their communities in Oaxaca, San Francisco de Tanivet, and East Los Angeles? What ethnic, gender, and economic issues do the poor and working class women in Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz face? How is the art of Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras and Mujeres de Maiz a form of activism?

CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S ARTIVISM ACROSS CULTURES AND BORDERS: LOS ANGELES AND OAXACA

I began my academic experience at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) through the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)'s Summer Commuter Bridge Program in 2008. I took a Developmental Math and a Developmental English course over the summer. I had the fortune of having Professor Vilma Villela as my English professor who planted a seed of consciousness. She taught an English course that was rooted in Chicana and Chicano Studies. As the Summer Bridge Program came to an end, I decided to take other courses in the department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. In 2010, I met Professor Yreina D. Cervantez because she was the professor for the Days of the Dead course I took in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. Professor Cervantez saw my interest in creating artwork and I continued taking courses taught by her such as Painting and Public Art. It is in the courses taught by Professor Cervantez where I had the opportunity to develop my art skills. In Chicana and Chicano Studies art courses is where I learned that the creation of art is rigorous. It was in her art courses where reading, writing, and the creation of artwork happened simultaneously.

In 2011, I became part of the Ronald E. McNair Research Program at CSUN where Professor Cervantez continued to be my mentor. I had the opportunity to have Professor Cervantez mentor me through the process of writing two research projects. The first project was about how Chicana and Chicano Studies courses at CSUN, such as Days of the Dead, foster community cultural wealth that students of color bring to the classroom, which in turn, helps students of color succeed academically. The second

research project documented the history murals have in the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at CSUN; and in particular, I documented the process of the creation of the latest mural in the room, Jerome Richfield 132. With my growing interest in the visual arts and in pursuing a Master's degree, Professor Cervantez encouraged me to apply to the Chicana and Chicano Studies Master's Program at CSUN. This program has provided an opportunity to develop a Creative Works Research Project that includes create visual artwork that is complemented by a written thesis.

As a graduate student, I discussed my research interests about women's art collectives with Professor Cervantez and she shared the work that a Chicana artist, Marietta Bernstorff, is doing in Oaxaca. I decided to visit Bernstorff in Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, Mexico. In 2014, I got in contact with Marietta Bernstorff, the director of Hormigas Bordadoras art collective. I introduced myself and asked if I could go to Oaxaca to check out the work the women's art collective was doing. Marietta drove us to visit and meet the women in the Hormigas Bordadoras collective who live in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, México. I saw the work the women were doing with patchwork art pieces and became interested in documenting their stories. I asked Marietta Bernstorff and the women if they would be interested in participating in my Creative Works Research Project and they agreed.

At the same time, Professor Lara Medina shared the work that Detalle de Mujer did. While I was in Oaxaca, I decided to check out Detalle de Mujer where I met, Jacqueline, who is Leticia Hernandez-Diaz's sister. I shared with Jacqueline that I was interested in learning more about their women's art collective. Jacqueline suggested that I talk to Leticia so I returned to their work space the next day and talked to Leticia. I talked

to her about my interest in women art collectives and the importance of documenting women's experiences within art collectives. I asked her if she thought the collective would be interested in participating in my thesis project so she asked the other women and they agreed. In meeting both Hormigas Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer, I knew that I would return to Oaxaca to interview them for my Creative Works Thesis Project.

In addition to documenting the experiences of women on the Mexico side of the US-Mexico border, it is also important to document the work that women's art collectives are doing on the U.S. side of the border. Professor Cervantez shared the community events that Mujeres de Maiz (MdM) plan, as well as, the different visual artists that participate in MdM. MdM is based in Los Angeles, CA and they bring together and empower diverse groups of girls and women by creating "community spaces that provide holistic wellness through education, programming, exhibition, and publishing" (Mujeres de Maiz website). The reason for choosing Hormigas Bordadoras, Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres de Maiz is to identify the importance of their art work because in different ways and through their artwork, each collective address social issues in their communities. The Hormigas Bordadoras, Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres de Maiz women's art collectives address social issues; and therefore, they participate in activism.

Using in depth interviews, this thesis documents the experiences of three women art collectives including, the Mujeres de Maiz or Women of the Corn collective in Los Angeles, CA, United States; the Hormigas Bordadoras or Embroidery Ants collective from San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, Mexico; and the Detalle de Mujer or Women's Detail collective in Oaxaca, Mexico. In particular, and for this research project, I interview members of Mujeres de Maiz, Hormigas Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer

collectives to understand what social circumstances have led these women to utilize art as a tool for social change.

This Creative Works Research Project is a critical ethnography so I utilize resources, skills, and privileges to document the experiences of the participants in my project entitled, “Artivism Across Cultures and Borders: Los Angeles and Oaxaca.” This research study seeks to answer the following research questions: What led to the creation of the women’s art collectives *Detalle de Mujer*, *Hormigas Bordadoras*, and *Mujeres de Maiz* in their communities in Oaxaca, San Francisco de Tanivet, and East Los Angeles? What ethnic, gender, and economic issues do the poor and working class women in *Detalle de Mujer*, *Hormigas Bordadoras*, and *Mujeres de Maiz* face? How is the art of *Detalle de Mujer*, *Hormigas Bordadoras* and *Mujeres de Maiz* a form of activism? The members of *Mujeres de Maiz*, *Hormigas Bordadoras*, and the *Detalle de Mujer* women’s art collectives are activists that engage in the creation of artwork that is activism. According to Sandoval and LaTorre, “artivism is a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism” (82). Through their artivism, the collectives create visual discourses and challenge hegemonic structures of power that exist within their communities.

The objective for the *Hormigas Bordadoras* group of women artists in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca is to create artwork that they can sell to survive. The women in Tanivet utilize the sewing skills that they have, as well as, the skills they develop in the collective to create patchwork pieces that tell their personal narratives. In telling their narratives, these women are addressing social issues in their communities, including the consequences of sizeable migration from Oaxaca, Mexico to the United

States. Lynn Stephen explains that as result of the high volume of men migrating to the United States, women and children in Oaxaca are having to engage in low wage work related activities to sustain themselves (180). Collectives like Hormigas Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer are a response to the social circumstances that people face in Mexico. The questions that will be addressed include personal questions about their lives, as well as, questions about the collective that will provide historical context and information about the women's art collective respectively. The objective of this Creative Works Thesis Project is to document their *testimonios* or testimonies; therefore, a brief history of the women's families in Oaxaca, Mexico and Los Angeles, CA, US; identify the social issues that poor and working-class women in Oaxaca and Los Angeles face in their communities; and the significance of the women's art collectives in their respective communities.

In addition to the written thesis, there will also be a visual art component in the Creative Works Thesis Project. The creative component will document and bring light to the work that the women in the collectives take part in. It is through visual artwork that I hope to capture and share who the women are, what kind of work they do, and why this work is important in their communities. The artwork in this creative works project will be complemented by a written thesis. The Creative Works Thesis Project my artwork and photographs of the women's artwork as well as the women creating their art. My artwork further documents the work of the women who participated in this project. The art exhibition includes a total nine artworks of a combination of two paintings, two mixed media stencils, and five linoleum prints. Overall, the artwork in this Creative Thesis

Project pays homage to the women and the artwork they create that is social justice oriented.

I interviewed the women art collectives based in Oaxaca de Juarez, Oaxaca, Mexico; San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca; and Los Angeles, California, United States to understand the necessity for their production of visual artwork. The collectives chosen for this project are important because they address social issues in their communities by creating artworks that document what is happening around them. The artwork and involvement in their community for these women has also been significant because the topics that the women address in their artwork have local and global effects.

In particular, the Hormigas Bordadoras artwork has led them to opportunities to travel abroad and talk about their artworks which address important issues such as migration in their communities and impact it has on a global level. Hormigas Bordadoras had the opportunity to travel to the Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC) in Venice Beach, California in the United States to exhibit and speak about their visual artworks that depict issues such as migration. The significance of the opportunity to speak about their artworks in Venice is that people from their hometown, San Francisco de Tanivet, migrate to places like Venice Beach and throughout the United States. It is through the stories of these three groups of women art collectives that I can explain the power of the visual arts.

Chicana and Chicano history is strongly connected to the visual and performing arts because the visual and performing arts have been and continue to be utilized as tools for social change. In addition, the visual arts are a universal language because art can be understood without words. In the creation of visual artwork, Chicana/Chicano,

Mexicana/Mexicano and Latina/Latino artists create artwork that depict issues that affect folks that reside in the United States, Mexico, and Latin America. This Creative Works Thesis Project contributes to the field of Chicana and Chicano Studies because it identifies phenomenal women art collectives that create visual art in response to unjust social circumstances in their communities. It identifies women who are talking back to hegemonic structures of power to demonstrate that they will not be silenced at the presence of social circumstances that need to be acknowledged and resolved. Throughout I identify the social issues that Hormigas Bordadoras, Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres de Maiz have identified in their communities and how they respond to those issues through the production of visual artwork that is informed by their experiences.

To contextualize this project, I identify important key terms for this project. This project examines Chicana and Mexican women's artwork. Mexican women who will take part in this project are women who were born in Mexico and identify as Mexican women artists. In particular, this project will focus on women from the state of Oaxaca in Mexico. It will also include Margaret Alarcon's interview and involvement as a visual artist in Mujeres de Maiz. The review of literature for this project will be on Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary and activism in Chicana art. Chicana art is described as visual art that not only combines image and identity, but also ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and resistance to create powerful commentary ("Conditions for Producing" 1). Chicana and Mexican women engage in the creation of artwork that depicts their social realities visually as activism. Sandoval and LaTorre explain that "activism is a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism" (82). The Mexicana and specifically Oaxacan artists in Hormigas

Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer, and Chicana artists in Mujeres de Maiz involved in this project are activists. It is through Hormigas Bordadoras and their creation of patchwork pieces; through the creation of garments by Detalle de Mujer; and through the visual artwork created by Margaret Alarcon from Mujeres de Maiz that we will learn who the artists are and the work they do.

This project grew from an interest in learning about women art collectives to a Creative Works Thesis project about Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca, Hormigas Bordadoras and Mujeres de Maiz. **Chapter One** is an introduction of the research topic. **Chapter Two** is a survey of literature about Chicana art, Chicana aesthetic and vocabulary, and Chicana activism. **Chapter Three** will discuss the methodology, critical ethnography, employed for this project. It will also discuss the methods or qualitative interviews with semi-structured questions that helped document the participant stories or *testimonios*. I also discuss the “women of color” or “third world women” lens utilized for this project. **Chapter Four** will presents the findings from the qualitative interviews with Hormigas Bordadoras, Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca, and Mujeres de Maíz. **Chapter Five** includes the artwork I produced that captures who the women in the collectives are and the work they do. **Chapter Six** is a conclusion about this project.

CHAPTER 2

CHICANA ART, CHICANA ART AESTHETIC AND VOCABULARY, AND CHICANA ARTIVISM

Since the emergence of Chicana art in the 1970s, there is an evolving and growing Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary that helps theorize Chicana art. The focus of Chicana art is the creation of art about Chicanas, for Chicanas and by Chicanas. Chicana art includes art with women as central and empowering figures. Chicana artists challenge notions that you cannot survive financially in the field of art. Chicana artists pursue careers in the arts because they are aware of the need for women to create art that reflects other Chicana and Latina experiences in places and spaces in dominant culture (United States) and Chicano or Latino culture that historically have not deemed women issues as equally as important as other issues. Chicana art addresses important issues for women including: identity, motherhood, regeneration, female ancestry, political resistance, cultural affirmation, bicultural identification, personal and social histories, indigenous roots, and spirituality amongst others. Chicana artists' existence and creation of visual artwork continue to have a powerful and lasting impact on society. With their understanding of the importance of art in society and in particular in community, Chicana artists have worked collectively to create art, including murals that depict the history, power, and social issues in their communities. Historically, Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary has evolved. Since 2008, Chicana art is recognized as activism or as art that is created by artists who see a connection in art and activism. This literature review will briefly explore the emergence of Chicana art, Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary, and activism in Chicana art.

Chicana art vocabulary was developed by Chicana artists, Chicana historians, and Chicana art critics that understood the significance of Chicana art. A brief discussion of the vocabulary utilized to describe Chicana art will be introduced here and further discussed in the body of the literature review. Chicanos like Tomas Ybarra-Frausto had begun theorizing Chicano art with terms like *rasquachismo*. *Rasquachismo* is “neither an idea or style, but more of an attitude” (156). *Rasquachismo* is perceived as “vulgarity and bad taste, a sense of being cursi” by those who are in control and see their own aesthetic norms as universal (156). However, *rasquachismo* is a working-class sensibility (a lived reality) where resilience and resourcefulness make use of whatever is available and hybridization, juxtaposition, and integration take place (156). Like Ybarra-Frausto’s *rasquachismo*, *domesticana* was the feminine version of *rasquachismo*. Amalia Mesa-Bains theorized Chicana art through the Chicana feminist aesthetic, *domesticana*, which takes materials from everyday life and creates something new with style, humor, paradox, biculturalism, and subversion that challenges patriarchy and colonization (Arredondo et al. 10). Both *rasquachismo* and *domesticana* describe Chicana/o art where Chicana/o artists utilize resources available to them to create art. Another way to theorize Chicana art is as border art. Chicana border *artistas* or border ‘artists’ engage in border *arte* or border ‘art’:

Cambian el punto de referencia or ‘change the point of reference’ by disrupting the neat separations between cultures, they create a mix, *una mestizada* in their artworks. Each person locates her/myself in this border *lugar* or ‘place’, tearing apart and then rebuilding the place itself. The border is the locus of resistance, of

rupture, of implosion and explosion, and of putting together the fragments and creating a new assemblage. (“Border Arte” 49)

In addition to theorizing art, it is also important to know the point of reference from which Chicana artists create art. It is in *nepantla* where transformation of ideas and identity cross and transformations occur. *Nepantla* is the Nahuatl word for an in-between state that is described by Gloria Anzaldúa as “that uncertain terrain one crosses when moving from one place to another; when changing from one class, race, or sexual position to another; when traveling from the present identity into a new identity” (“Border Arte” 56). *Nepantla es el “lugar entre medio”* (“Border Arte” 56) or “the midway point between the conscious and the unconscious, the place where transformations are enacted. *Nepantla* is a place where we can accept contradiction and paradox” (“Border Arte” 56). Both *nepantla* and mestiza aesthetics of clarity are places where Chicana artists can create visual art. Mestiza aesthetics of clarity are Chicana artistic visions that are transformed into visual representations of their socio-political and gender experiences (Tere Romo 25). Chicana artists also engage in *nepantlismo* or ‘nepantlism’ in “an anticolonial struggle against cultural and intellectual domination” by liberating spiritual energies “by shifting the frame of reference or by creating new contexts to view the familiar” (“Globalization and Chicana Politics” 57). While some Chicana artists engage in nepantlismo, other Chicana artists develop *la conciencia de la mestiza*. Anzaldúa explains that *la conciencia de la mestiza* is to “break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended” to uproot dualistic thinking both in individual and collective consciousness in hopes to end violence (“La conciencia” 80). Chicana artists

fight to end violence as seen through the re-membering of Coyolxauhqui. Coyolxauhqui *es la diosa de la luna* or the moon goddess. According to the Aztec myth, Coatlicue *la "Madre de los Dioses"* or the mother of the Gods becomes pregnant with Huitzilopochtli, God of War. When Coyolxauhqui learns Coatlicue will give birth to Huitzilopochtli, along with her siblings the Four Hundred Stars, she plots to kill Coatlicue because she did not want to live in a world where War would become God. Huitzilopochtli finds out about the plot and at birth, he kills or murders Coyolxauhqui by dismembering her body. Coyolxauhqui is dismembered and becomes *la diosa de la luna* or the moon goddess (Moraga 73). Chicanas pray to Coyolxauhqui and honor her because despite her mutilation, she transformed into the moon. She is a representation of dismembered womanhood and reconstitution. She is the fighter against misogyny, war, and greed (Moraga 74). Chicana artists recognize and depict Coyolxauhqui's power by documenting her story in their artwork. Chicana artists are recognized as Chicana *tlataminime* as "keepers and interpreters of native knowledges persecuted by institutionalized powers" (Perez 30). Chicana artists or *tlataminime* have created art because they understand the importance and urgency of creating art that depicts their realities for themselves and other Chicanas. Whether Chicana artists recognize it or not, their art is activism. Activism is the creation of artwork by artists that understand that activism and art go hand in hand. Activists use materials and methods to challenge "globalization that marginalizes the poor and the immigrant and to visualize the experiences of borderlands' subjects who struggle against global economical, political, and cultural hegemonies in the United States ("Transnational Feminism" 40).

Chicana artwork above all is an affirmation of the existence of Chicanas in the arts. Chicana artists affirmed that their place was in the arts despite those who questioned their ability and those who questioned the political value of their visual artwork. As women, Chicana artists were also challenged by traditional gender roles. Despite the challenges, Chicana artists persisted and created artwork in various media and about many themes. Some of the themes that Chicana art explores are about: Latino-Chicano community, women, children, alternative natural environments, domestic space, social change, the feminine, La Virgen de Guadalupe, gender politics, political resistance, cultural affirmation, bicultural identification, indigenous roots, spirituality, and queer identities among others. Chicana artists have persisted and many continue to be practicing artists. Chicana artists, Chicana critics, and Chicana historians developed a vocabulary to describe the ideas reflected in Chicana artwork. This literature review will briefly explore the emergence of Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary and activism in Chicana art.

Emergence of Chicana Art

The following texts briefly document the emergence of Chicana Art in the 1970s, Chicana art aesthetic, and the vocabulary created to describe Chicana art. First we will look at two foundational texts that describe the emergence of Chicana Art and Chicana Art aesthetic written by Sybil Venegas. In 1977, Chicana art historian Sybil Venegas wrote the Chicana art foundational text, “Conditions for Producing Chicana Art” where she argues that the preconditions for producing art including education, training, and apprenticeship have taken place long enough for Chicanas to be active and producing artists. She contextualizes this by providing a sexual-political analysis that explains that

the implication of being a Chicana artist includes being a woman who is part of a racially discriminated group that is economically and politically disenfranchised, and faces more obstacles with recognition, “equal opportunities and support, than her white sister or Chicano counterpart in the arts” (“Conditions for Producing” 2). However, she further argues that in the latter half of the 1970’s, the Chicano community has reached the socio-economic level necessary to produce a significant number of male and female artists. In addition, she explains that the existence of Chicana artists represents the change of gender norms and values concerning women in Chicano culture (“Conditions for Producing” 4). Venegas conducts a sexual political analysis of Chicana artists and she also identifies the needs and wants of Chicanas that were reflected in their art.

Sybil Venegas explains that Chicana artists seek to develop their identity as women and as Chicanas. Although Chicanas may be located in different places such as the Bay area, San Jose and Los Angeles and work in diverse medias, their work reflects a strong Chicana consciousness which is concerned with the Chicana, her goals, and desires. Venegas illustrates the Chicano Mural Movement in San Francisco as “centered around issues affecting the Latino-Chicano community” (“The Artists and Work” 3). In addition, the mural movement in the Mission viewed murals as positive and powerful vehicles by which to generate social change like the mural movement in Mexico in the 20th century. Murals appeared in 1972 in the Mission District and Mujeres Muralistas completed their first mural in August, 1973. Mujeres Muralistas murals reflect Latin American culture. The topics of focus are women and children but also include nature, plants, and animals to provide “alternative natural environments in the midst of their man-made urban metropolis (“The Artists and Work” 3).” Venegas’ articles are

foundational texts that situated Chicana artists as active participants in the world of visual art that looked to address issues that were important to them as Chicanas. Chicanas active participation in the arts challenged gender roles and expectations in their families and in society.

As a Chicana and as an artist, Chicana artists defied what it was to be an artist and woman in traditional families that did not value the arts. Shifra Goldman explains that her role as an advocate critic “is to assert, and reassert, that the art of women and peoples of the Third World (women and men) are crucial elements in the construction of the history of art” (197). Then, she discusses the fact that Chicanas were involved throughout the Chicano Movement which included their participation in cultural expression. Chicanas sought to clarify their identities as women who had their own problems and concerns. She explains that Chicanas confronted racism, classism, and sexism in society as well as in their own communities, to strive for personhood. Chicana artists broke “stereotypes within their patriarchal family (or the working-class family that conceived no economic advantage to be derived from entering the arts)” and juggled with “duties as lovers, wives, mothers, and workers with the time for creative work” (200). Like Goldman, Carlos F. Jackson highlights that Chicana artists challenged stereotypes and social norms. Jackson discusses that Chicana and Chicano political identity was supported by Chicanas who created artwork for the Chicano movement. However, Chicanas also found a lack of addressing male-female relations or the status of women within the Chicano movement (113). In addition, women were expected to fulfill tasks that were based on traditional gender roles, so Chicana feminism developed and acknowledged patriarchy, class and race as central elements of oppression, recognizing the effects of Catholicism, a history

of colonization, and an unbalanced economy. Chicana artists broke away from social norms and stereotypes because they pursued careers as artists despite beliefs that the arts did not bring any financial benefit for their working-class families (114). Both of these texts document Chicana involvement within the Chicano movement, as well as, the fact that their families from working-class backgrounds that these women came from did not understand how these women artists would profit from their involvement in the arts. Although it did not seem ideal for Chicanas to pursue career in the arts, Chicana artists knew the importance of documenting their realities through visual artwork.

Chicana Art Aesthetic and Vocabulary

Despite the fact that Chicana artists were discouraged from pursuing careers in the arts, they created artwork that can be described as Chicana/o art or border *arte* or border 'art'. Gloria Anzaldúa utilizes muralist, Judy Baca's description and definition of Chicana/o art, who states that 'Chicano art comes from the creation of community.... Chicano art represents a particular stance which always engages with the issue of its time' (112). In addition, Anzaldúa explains that Chicana/o art is a form of border *arte* because they both "challenge and subvert the imperialism of the U.S., and combat assimilation by either the U.S. or Mexico, yet they acknowledge its affinities to both" (112). While Anzaldúa discusses border *arte* as Chicana/o art, Mesa-Bains coins the term *domesticana* as a feminine art aesthetic to describe Chicana art.

Domesticana is a feminist art aesthetic that expands the Chicana art vocabulary. Educator, artist, and cultural critic, Amalia Mesa-Bains writes about Chicana art and the focus on identity. *Domesticana* is like *rasquachismo* because it is a product of resistance to dominant culture and "affirmation of other cultural values" (132). *Domesticana* or

“female rasquachismo defies the cultural identity imposed by Anglo Americans” and opposes “the restrictive gender identity by Chicano culture” (132). *Domesticana* includes narrative which positions women in roles where they have power and control while affirming Chicano culture. *Domesticana* is also how women artists circumscribe space in the domestic sphere or domestic space through home embellishments, home altars, healing traditions, and personal feminine poses or styles” to reappropriate territory (132). *Domesticana* is also social critique or a resistant feminine commentary. This commentary takes place due to women’s political consciousness, desire for social change, and maternal sense of responsibility for the generations to come” (132). In addition, *domesticana* is when intracultural critique takes place when “artists take shared female images of everyday family life and manipulate them to question the limits of the feminine” (132). This demonstrates that Chicana art does not just reflect ideology, but it is also a site where ideology is constructed (132). The ceremonial is also part of *domesticana* and it “highlights belief, healing, and celebration” as elements in Chicana art. Aspects of the ceremonial in Chicana art include the creation of shrines, ofrendas, altars, retablos and nichos (133). *Domesticana* aesthetic is significant because it expands the vocabulary of the feminine in the arts (140). To contextualize *domesticana*, Mesa-Bains surveys the work of Judy Baca, Santa Barraza, Carmen Lomas Garza, Ester Hernandez, Yolanda Lopez, Patricia Rodriguez and Patssi Valdez (133-139). An example of an artist whose artwork employs *domesticana* is Ester Hernandez. Hernandez creates artwork that depicts alternative sex roles such as the untitled etching of the *Virgen de Guadalupe* or ‘Virgin Mary’ in karate attire that is taking an aggressive, self-defense stance. The depiction of *Virgen* or ‘Virgin’ in karate attire is an example of “techniques

of subversion play with traditional imagery and cultural material” that together characterize *domesticana* (132). *Domesticana* art aesthetic defies Anglo American and Chicano culture because it represents Chicana art aesthetics as described by Chicanas. In addition to *domesticana*, there are other ways to theorize Chicana art including, *mestiza* aesthetics.

Art curator, Tere Romo, utilizes mestiza aesthetics to theorize Chicana art. Tere Romo explains that Chicana painters practice mestiza aesthetics of clarity that “are based on the visual transformation of their socio-political and gender experiences driven by their artistic vision” (25). Chicanas chose to address gender politics which included motherhood, regeneration and female ancestry in the early years of the Chicano Movement (24). Despite Chicana art being political, Chicana art was criticized by their male counterparts for not being political. Romo explains that the definition of Chicano art constructed by males included political resistance, cultural affirmation, and bicultural affirmation. Chicano artists also saw art as a tool for socio-political mobilization, propaganda, and empowerment. The Chicano Art Movement, artist collectives, and centers were overwhelmingly male with few women in these spaces and let alone in leadership positions. In Chicano art spaces dominated by men, women’s issues were omitted, so Chicanas had the necessity to make art that reflected their experiences (24). Chicana artists not only practiced political resistance, cultural affirmation, and bicultural identification but went a step forward and addressed gender politics. Due to their tackling of gender politics, “Chicana art was perceived as non-political (lacking a political message), too personal (rather than community focused), and pro-religion (too Catholic)” (24). Yet, Chicana art was indeed political because it “asserted their right to create

artwork that was meaningful to them” and included themes such as “motherhood, regeneration, and female ancestry” (24). It also utilized a vocabulary of Chicana art aesthetics that Chicanas created for Chicana artwork. Overall, Chicana artists’ work was created to respond to their socio-political and gender experiences. The visual transformation of socio-political and gender experiences also includes the spiritual.

Another way to understand Chicana art is by knowing from what spaces Chicana artists create art including how Chicanas challenge structures of power through their engagement in the spiritual. Clarence Cortez discusses Chicana artists work and their engagement with *Nepantla* or “*Nepantlah*: in the middle of something/*en el medio, o en medio* or ‘in the middle’, *o por el medio* or ‘through the middle’” (11). *Nepantla* is the “uncertain terrain one crosses when moving from one place to another, when changing from one class, race, or sexual position to another, when traveling from the present identity into a new identity” (Anzaldua 110). It is also where they challenge cultural perceptions, history, and creators and managers of perceptions and history. In addition, Cortez explains how *Nepantla* artists can “develop their own sense of the spiritual and explore its basis in the past” (16). Further, she also explains that artworks are not answers, but they pose questions for “viewers to re-evaluate our own multiple positions in culture” (16). Cortez discusses artist Santa Barraza’s work and explains that *Nepantla*, 1995, does not invoke *Aztlan* but “It is a communion between self, personal and social histories, and choices” (12). In addition, Cortez explains that Barraza opens infinite possibilities of *Nepantla* by placing the subject and viewer in this discursive space (12). Chicana artist, Yreina D. Cervantez’s triptych, 1995, is also examined by Cortez. Cortez explains that the works are a personal journey through *Nepantla* where Cervantez

examines indigenous roots, spirituality, and ideological and artistic perspectives imposed by the dominant white culture (13). In nepantla, Chicana artists have the space to explore and create their own sense in culture.

It is important to understand how Chicana artists challenge Eurocentric notions that marginalize non-Western traditions in spirituality. Laura E. Perez discusses how Chicana visual, performing, and literary artists challenge the trivialization of the spiritual which is often perceived as ‘folk religion,’ ‘primitive,’ and ‘superstitious’ because it includes beliefs and practices from non-Western traditions (20). Chicana artists also counter Eurocentric cultural evolutionary arguments that demean what is culturally different as inferior (20). Further, Perez studies the work of Chicana artists that “engage in *curandera* (healer) work, reclaiming and reformulating spiritual worldviews that are empowering to them as women of color and reimagining what a more serious social role for art and artist might be” (22). Their work also disrupts “the reproduction of gendered, raced and sexed politics of spirituality and art” (22). Perez examines author, Gloria E. Anzaldúa’s work, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, who writes about her “new mestiza” spirituality and affirms “her multiple positionings as a feminist Chicana lesbian writer” (24). In “Tlili, Tlapalli/The Path of the Red and Black Ink” she describes her image making process and soul-making as a *tlamatinime* (31). Perez also examines the work of writer, Cherrie Moraga, who is the author of “Codex Xeri” where she “disenchants” and “re-empowers artists through the recognition of the political power of their vision” (34) and therefore artists are recognized as “Codex Makers” or *tlamatinime* (35). In addition to writers, artists are also *tlamatinime*. Artist Yreina D. Cervantez’s *Nepantla, 1995*, lithograph triptych undermines “racist and sexist histories” and

reinscribes alternative and healing visions” that further the making soul for both “minority and dominant culture views” (37-41). Frances Salomé España’s video work “returns spirit to the human tribe, allowing us to perceive spiritual presence and power” (35). These creative writers and artists are examples of *tlamatinime*, that write and depict “signs of alternative spiritual and material knowledges and practices” (29). To further understand Chicana art, we must understand the power of ideas like *nepantlismo* in Chicana art.

Clara Roman-Odio discusses how Chicana artists challenge globalization and explore their *nepantlismo* or ‘thinking space of possibility’ that “recreates complex cultural and personal histories and practice spiritual activism” (57). She utilizes the work of Chicana visual artists such as Ester Hernandez, Consuelo Jiménez Underwood, and Marion C. Martinez because they use a borderlands methodology that seeks “liberation by challenging new forms of colonialism and aggressive capitalism arising from the growth and acceleration of economic and information networks that operate globally” (101). Chicana artist, Ester Hernandez, created the screenprint, *Sun Raid*, 2007, to visualize “the living conditions of illegal immigrants working as farmworkers in the US-Mexico borderlands” (102). She expresses her concerns of the effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), including the large numbers of indigenous Mexican immigrants who are forced by globalization to leave their country to survive (104). Consuelo Jiménez Underwood is a Chicana textile/fiber artist that creates pieces such as *Vestido de America/Tepin*, 1999, that depicts “experiences of violent colonization, miscegenation, and transculturation” that caused indigenous peoples of the Americas to navigate through *nepantla* (111). This artwork “dismantles the narrative of

the global” that usually erases the legacy of “colonialism in the Americas” (113). For Chicana artist, Marion C. Martinez, “Mixed Tech Media” and her spirituality are fundamental in her work. Her work such as *Compassionate Mother*, 2001, “combines Indo-Hispanic folk art with e-waste materials” that create a “shrine to the Virgin of Guadalupe, who is offering a rosary” (114). Through her use of e-waste, Martinez’s work depicts the “damaging effects of capitalist globalization” (115). These artists engage with themes of immigration, colonization, and spiritual mestizaje and use strategies of *nepantlismo* and spirituality to challenge globalization and racialization of the borderlands. Chicana artists challenge systems of power through their spiritual activism, as well as, through their queering of the sacred to reflect their lesbian identities.

Chicana lesbian artists and writers decolonize spaces by queering art and literary works. Roman-Odio presents the work of artist Alma Lopez and writer Carla Trujillo because they decolonize spaces by breaking the silence of Chicana lesbians through creating art and literary works that queer the sacred (120). Despite the fact that their altering of the iconography of the Virgen de Guadalupe maybe perceived as desecration or degradation, their work resolves cultural and societal conflicts experienced in the Chicano community (120). Lopez and Trujillo engage with the iconography of the Virgin and speak to themes such as “sexuality, motherhood, religion, nation— revealing the full complexity of their material and spiritual lives as lesbians of color” that decolonize spaces through ‘differential consciousness’ that disrupts and resists traditional normative discourses about gender, sex, race, nation-state, and compulsory heterosexuality (120). Chicana lesbian artists and writers utilize the image of the Virgin as “a provisional political sacred” that disrupts heteronormativity.

In addition to the section above that takes a brief look at the literature about the documented inception of Chicana art and Chicana art aesthetic, there are other ways to theorize Chicana art. Through this literature we can see the complexity of Chicana art. In addition, there is no one way to practice Chicana art and Chicana art can be many things at one time. Chicana art is viewed as cultural production or creation of artwork and artist are perceived as cultural producers, *tlamatinime*, and *curandera* (healer work) among other things. Along with the development of Chicana art aesthetic and vocabulary, there is also a development in terminology for the artwork produced by artists who understand and see the connection between activism and art or artivism. I argue that the work of Chicana artists is activism and therefore, it is artivism where the artists are artivists. An explanation of artivism is followed by a brief documentation of Chicana art collectives that engage in activism.

Chicana Artivism

Chicana/o artists have historically created art that has multiple layers to it that includes activism. Sandoval and La Torre argue that at the Cesar Chavez Digital Mural Lab at the Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC), digital artivism grew from the Chicana/o twenty-first-century digital arts movement. In 1996, Baca founded the digital mural lab at SPARC and it is officially called the UCLA/ SPARC Cesar Chavez Digital Mural Lab. This lab “introduced digital technology to the community mural movement as a new tool for the creation of public art” (84). This lab must also work with youth, children, and families to produce public art through collective processes and then exhibit the art (84). Sandoval and Latorre focus on the digital artivism by Judy Baca as well as the youth who are part of creative expression, social activism, and self-

empowerment. They also highlight the contributions from SPARC to the development of youth and contributions of youth to the development of SPARC, as well as, both of their contributions to the global community art movements. Sandoval and LaTorre explain that “artivism is a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism” (82). In addition, they explain how “artivism and *la conciencia de la mestiza* reflect the same human-technology convergences that allow for creative work through digital media” (83). In both, artivism and *la conciencia de la mestiza*, there must be “access to a myriad of cultures, languages, and understandings, thus requiring the ability to negotiate multiple worldviews” (83). Chicana/o artivism and *la conciencia de la mestiza* express “a consciousness aware of conflicting and meshing identities and uses these to create new angles of vision to challenge oppressive modes of thinking” (83). In addition to Sandoval and LaTorre’s definition of artivism, Roman-Odio extends the definition of artivism by connecting it to globalization. Roman-Odio explains that Chicanas partake in artivism by utilizing a “myriad of materials and methods to defy a notion of globalization that marginalizes the poor and the immigrant and to visualize the experiences of borderlands’ subjects who struggle against global economical, political, and cultural hegemonies in the United States” (“Introduction” 14).

Further, Roman-Odio explains that digital artivism is a response to globalization and neocolonialism. Román-Odio analyzes the artwork of four Chicana artists: Ester Hernandez, Consuelo Jimenez Underwood, Alma Lopez, and Marion C. Martinez who utilize “politics and methodologies of the transnational feminist movement, which became known as U.S. Third World Feminism, that challenged new forms of colonialism

and aggressive capitalism arising from the growth and acceleration of economic and information networks that operate globally” (“Transnational Feminism” 24). The analysis reveals how capitalist globalization is a “fragmentary process to which Chicana artists speak back in order to create liberating spaces” (“Transnational Feminism” 24). Roman-Odio further explains that Alma Lopez’s Chicana ‘digital activism’ includes “a myriad of cultures, histories, languages, and worldviews” that “denounces capitalistic exploitation arising from globalization and Anglo-American neocolonialism” (“Transnational Feminism” 31). For example, Alma Lopez’s *California Fashion Slaves*, 1997, is a digital composition that includes images of female Mexican-American workers, skyscrapers of Los Angeles, a map of US-Mexico of 1848, a Mexican man running from border patrol, the Virgin over 1848, an arrow alluding to “Manifest Destiny”, and Coyolxauhqui. This multi-layered piece depicts the political-economic conditions of Mexican-American women who work in the exploitative multinational garment industry in Los Angeles. Digital activism or activism is a way for artists to challenge oppressive modes of thinking and ultimately create liberating spaces. Transition Sentence: Although Sandoval and LaTorre focus on digital activism, I argue that activism is present in Chicana art and specifically in Chicana art collectives. Women art collectives are active participants of the creation of art that depicts their experiences.

Women art collectives Mujeres Muralistas create murals with focused on the Latino/a experience. Maria Ochoa explains the process and creation of the four murals: *Latinoamerica*, *Para el Mercado*, *Rhomboidal Parallelogram* by Graciela Carrillo, Irene Perez, Patricia Rodriguez and Consuelo Mendez and *Fantasy World of Children* created by Carrillo, Perez and Rodriguez. Mujeres Muralistas themes focused on the diversity

within the Latino/a experience. For example, when *Mujeres Muralistas* worked on *Latinoamerica*, Carrillo, Rodriguez, and Perez were the coordinating muralistas, while four others were assistants on the mural. For this project, the women created their design concepts separately, brought together the composition, and finally painted in their own styles (42). The work on the murals was divided amongst the artists but the artists were able to create a composition that brought together the mixed individual artistic styles that contributed to the group's depiction of cultural diversity. The division of the work on the mural was also beneficial for the artists who did not have hands-on experience to be assisted by experienced muralists. At the same time, experienced artists would not attempt to take control of the whole mural ("Mujeres Muralistas" 40). In addition to cultural diversity, *Mujeres Muralistas*' involvement in the Chicano Art movement debunked stereotypes about women in the arts. Alicia Gaspar de Alba discusses gender politics within the Chicano Art Resistance and Affirmation (CARA) exhibition and finds that although the CARA advisory board intended to feature gender issues throughout the exhibition, "a hundred more Chicano artists than Chicanas were represented" (119). Gaspar de Alba conducts an analysis and finds that Chicano art collectives featured included ASCO, the Royal Chicano Air Force, and Los Four; however, foremothers of Chicana art, *Mujeres Muralistas*, existed in the history of the Chicano Art Movement (120). In addition, the *Mujeres Muralistas* were an extremely important group for the empowerment of Chicanas in el Movimiento, for they challenged the sexist and stereotypical notions within the Chicano Art Movement that women were physically not able and politically not 'meant' to create murals, to build and climb scaffolding, to be on public display and withstand the comments of passerby" (121). *Mujeres Muralistas*'

artwork documents the Latino/a experiences of their communities and debunk notions that women are not 'meant' to create murals or challenge oppressive ways of thinking in regards to gender; and therefore, engage in art that is activism or artivism.

Yet, another collective that documents their Chicana/Latina experience in their artwork is Co-Madres. Maria Ochoa discusses how Co-Madres came to be a collective after Lerma Barbosa was invited to exhibit art at a Latina leadership conference. She invited other artists to participate and due to their success, they became a collective ("Co-Madres Artistas" 59). Ochoa interviewed Lerma Barbosa, Carmel Castillo, Laura Llano, Mareia de Socorro, Helen Villa, and Lucy Montoya Rhodes who was the collective's administrator to document the history of this collective ("Co-Madres Artistas" 59). Co-Madres was important not only because it was a women's art collective that centered a Chicana/Latina self-identity, experience, and history, but they also engaged in community service and contributed to the arts ("Co-Madres Artistas" 65). Chicana/Latina artists like Carmel Castillo created artwork that connected them to the spiritual. Castillo explains "that art is a pathway to the spirit" ("Co-Madres Artistas" 65) and she sees "India de la Tierra, Mother Earth, Goddess and Healer" ("Co-Madres Artistas" 65) as representations of harmony. Overall, she honors "Mother Earth and the power of female energies" ("Co-Madres Artistas" 65). Co-Madres Artistas utilized diverse styles and aesthetics while centering their Chicana/Latina experience in their artwork. The artwork of Carmel from Co-Madres is artivism because it depicts a spirituality that centers Mother Earth and female energies that challenge traditional spiritual practices and religions. In addition to depicting spirituality, Chicana artists also reinterpret traditional stories of goddesses.

Maestrapeace depict women and goddesses as active agents and central parts of murals. The “MaestraPeace Mural” was painted in 1994 by Juana Alicia, Miranda Bergman, Edythe Boone, Susan Kelk Cervantes, Meera Desai, Yvonne Littleton, and Irene Perez. Chicana artists reinterpret stories such as Coyolxauhqui’s story to challenge the heteropatriarchal story. We can visually see the reinterpretation and reconfiguration of Coyolxauhqui through the “MaestraPeace Mural.” Debra J. Blake argues that Chicana artists and writers recover goddesses that have been imprisoned and misrepresented for more than 500 years not only by the Mexicas but also by the Spaniards (34). Blake tells a version of the Mexica creation story that includes Coyolxauhqui dismembered and disempowered body. In a version of creation story, Coatlicue sweeps on top of Coatepec (Serpent Mountain) and becomes pregnant after she places a ball down her bosom. Her children coyolxauhqui (Painted with Bells) and Zentzon Huitznahua (Four hundred Stars) become angry at their mother’s offense and plot to kill her. Huitzilopochtli learns about the plan to kill her but assures his mother he will take care of it. It is then that the battle begins and Coyolxauhqui beheads her mother, Coatlicue, at the same time; Huitzilopochtli rises from the womb fully armed and decapitates, Coyolxauhqui, his half-sister and defeats his half-brothers. In addition to Coyolxauhqui’s decapitation, Huitzilopochtli throws his sister down Serpent Mountain which results in her dismemberment (30). Despite Coyolxauhqui’s “disembodied disempowered object of patriarchal myths and sculptures,” Chicana artists such as the mural group Maestrapeace visually refigure Coyolxauhqui on the Women’s building in San Francisco by remembering her as a whole human being. She is not only breaking out of her stone casing but she is clutching paint brushes that signify “creative and political power of the artists

to re-present women as active agents creating their own subjectivity” (35).

Coyolxauhqui’s image emerges from the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Rigoberta Menchu’s hand. Coyolxauhqui and Rigoberta Menchu’s “female figures symbolize dynamic, outspoken, actors for indigenous and Third World women’s rights” (35). By “remembering Coyolxauhqui as a whole” Chicana artists like Maestrapeace are challenging patriarchal myths of disempowerment. Cherrie Moraga shares similar sentiments to those of Maestrapeace who re-member Coyolxauhqui as a whole goddess. Moraga recounts *el mito Azteca* or Aztec myth about Coyolxauhqui’s dis-memberment and re-members her:

I pray to the daughter, *La Hija Rebelde* or the rebel daughter. She who has been banished, the mutilated sister who transforms herself into the moon. She is *la fuerza femenina* or ‘feminine force’, our attempts to pick up the fragments of our dismembered womanhood and reconstitute ourselves. She is the Chicana writer’s words, the Chicana painter’s canvas, the Chicana dancer’s step. She is motherhood reclaimed and sisterhood honored. She is the female god we seek in our work, *la Mechicana* before the ‘fall.’ (74)

Moraga re-members Coyolxauhqui because she is a representation of Chicanas who challenge violence against women, and in turn, patriarchy. Chicana artists challenge patriarchy by re-membering icons such as Coyolxauhqui, as well as, re-membering their own bodies. By re-membering, women are creating their own visual and narrative political spaces.

Chicana art groups are important in claiming political spaces. Judith L. Huacuja discusses the importance of Chicana art groups such as L.A. Coyotas, Mujeres de Maiz

and Comadres Artistas who educate themselves and other women about deconstructing structures of oppression including, cultural imperialism, racism and sexism. They utilize art to make visible “strategies of cultural imperialism” (105). The women in these collectives decolonize the female subject “by supplying knowledge that is rooted in the lived experiences of the marginalized community and denaturalizing an oppressive visual culture by picturing ‘othered’ Chicano subjectivities, such as gay and lesbian bodies” (109). These artists claim political spaces by re-membling their bodies (109). In the work of art, *Ixta*, 1999, Alma Lopez from L.A. Coyotas utilizes the power of gaze, desire, and disavowal between the images of *Ixta* and her partner’s “lesbian youthful beauty, *chola* makeup, dark skin, and other indigenous physical traits” (109). In this artwork, Lopez tells multiple stories that address “the social ostracizing of lesbian love, the physical endangerment faced by Chicano youth, and criminalization of youth culture based on attire and skin color” (109). This depiction emphasizes a non-essentialist or a monolithic Chicano culture (109). Like Alma, the artists of L.A. Coyotas “seek to heal the wounds of degradation wrought by racist and sexist actions” (111). Alma Lopez’s artwork uncovers multiple layers including racism, sexism, homophobia, and criminalization of youth of color. L.A. Coyotas fight systems of oppression including racism and sexism through their visual art which is activism. Like LA Coyotas, Chicana artist collectives challenge oppressive modes of thinking about race, gender, sex, sexuality, and spirituality; therefore, they engage in activism.

Chicana art engages in challenging and addressing traditional ways of thinking. Chicana art decolonizes our ways of thinking through visual art that depicts alternative ways of thinking. Chicana art challenges racism, sexism, homophobia, and notions of

gender roles and stereotypes that are structures of oppression. Chicana artists, as well as, Chicano artists see the importance of activism in their artwork. When we look at art in other countries and different cities, we find artists who also see a relationship between art and activism. Edward J. McCaughan documents the contributions of Chicanos and Mexicanos in the arts during “the social movements identified with the international generation of 1968” (168). McCaughan focuses on cultural politics of Mexico and Aztlan which includes discussing art collectives in Mexico City, a Zapotec indigenous struggle in Oaxaca, and the Chicano Movement. This includes artists creating a visual discourse that expands citizenship that imagines and enacts agency for “students, workers, immigrants, women, ethnic, and sexual minorities” (168). He also explains that artists contributed to “prideful collective identities” by challenging and subverting hegemonic structures of power that include class, gender, sexuality, race, and nation (168). In addition, artists were advocates for the most marginalized people within their own social movements. Artists “disrupted the dominant aesthetics and cultural politics of the elite art world,” reappropriated or invented “genres, forms, styles and media to create syncretistic expressions” (168) that created alternative spaces toward democratic, egalitarian, and mutually respectful communities (168). McCaughan also notes that Oaxaca and California are places where transnational movement of Zapotec and Mixtec migrants occurs. This creates sites where “artistic expressions of cultural traditions are being transformed by life in a new space commonly called Oaxacalifornia” (170). McCaughan focuses on social movements who identify with the generation of 1968; however, Chicana/o and Mexicana/o artists continue to create a visual discourse that enacts agency for those at the margins.

CHAPTER 3

DEMOGRAPHICS, METHODOLOGY, METHODS, AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Central valley communities share many features. Brick, adobe, and cement block homes of one or two stories with red tile roofs radiate in standard block grids from central plazas. Central plazas are constructed around churches, government buildings, and small market areas, and often include basketball courts, a band shelter and other public spaces.”

-Cohen et al.

It is important to understand the collectives' demographic information such as population, income level, and poverty level to get a general understanding of who lives in places like East Los Angeles and Central Valleys of Oaxaca, where San Francisco de Tanivet and Oaxaca City are located.

Demographics

The Central Valleys of Oaxaca include the Centro, Etna, Ocotlan, Tlacolula and Zimatlan districts that surround the state capital, Oaxaca City. When central valley communities are compared to the rest of the state, they are perceived as relatively well off because “they are linked to Oaxaca City through bus and taxi service and local economies are tied to the city and in particular the city’s tourism industries” (Cohen et al. 80). Farmlands circle central valley communities and “are critical to the survival of migrant as well as non-migrant households” (Cohen et al. 80). Households farm 1 ¾ hectares of land and when there is regular rain, households can produce about six months of the maize needed for family consumption; therefore, they can release pressure on wage labour and remittances to cover expenses (Cohen et al. 80). In the central valley communities, the population in 1950 was 19, 524 and it increased in 2000 to 33,261. This increased the demand for wage labour; however, there were few opportunities for wage labour.

According to the Mexican government, in Oaxaca, a living wage is two times the daily minimum wage which is around US \$10 since the late 1990s. Oaxacan households made less than the minimum; they made less than US \$20 a day (Cohen et al. 81). When we look at infrastructure in the communities, there is a need for access to basic services like water and sewers (Cohen et al. 81). When improvements take place, they are self-funded, funded through combination of local and state monies, and through federal programs. However, when their federal funds are not available, a *Cooperación* or fee is paid by community households (Cohen et al. 81). This system is also known as *usos y costumbres* or traditional practices (Cohen et al. 82).

The women of the Mujeres de Maiz collective are based in East Los Angeles. According to Sarah Ihn, East Los Angeles is home to the largest Mexican American community in the United States since 1930 (67). According to the U.S Census from 2006-2008, a majority, over 97% of the 118,000 residents in East Los Angeles identified as Hispanic (68). East Los Angeles is a largely low-income community with an annual household income of \$36,376. In addition, East Los Angeles has a 22.8% of families who “live below the federal poverty line” (83) compared to the Los Angeles County median household income of \$55, 192 with 12.2% of families living below the federal poverty line” (84).

When we look at the demographics of East Los Angeles and Central Valley communities, we can see that despite Central Valley communities are “perceived as relatively well off” while households make less than US \$20 a day, we can determine that most residents are from communities from low-income (Cohen et al. 81). Further, “bus and taxi service and local communities are tied to the city” especially to the “city’s

tourism industries” that are often owned by the few people that are wealthy (Cohen et al. 80). Despite these industries making money, the workers in these industries are making little money in exchange for their labor.

Methodology

I conducted a critical ethnography to document the stories of the participants in my Creative Works Thesis Project. As a critical ethnographer, I “use resources, skills, and privileges available to make accessible—to penetrate the borders and break through the confines in defense of—the voices and experience of subjects whose stories combines in defense of—the voices and experiences of subjects whose stories are otherwise restrained and out of reach” (5). In addition, I contribute to “emancipatory knowledge and discourses of social justice” (5). I also practice ‘reflexive ethnography’ where I understand my positionality and acknowledge my power, privilege, and biases as a critical ethnographer (5). Reflexive ethnography is important because it examines our intentions, methods, and possible effects (14). This also holds researchers accountable to “our research paradigms, authority, and moral responsibility relative to representation and interpretation” (14). Through critical ethnography I utilize theory for analysis “to articulate and identify hidden forces and ambiguities that operate beneath appearances; to guide judgements and evaluations emanating from our discontent; to direct our attention to the critical expressions within different interpretive communities relative to their unique symbol systems, customs, and codes; to demystify the ubiquity and magnitude of power; to provide insight and inspire acts of justice; and to name and analyze what is intuitively felt” (13).

To understand these women artist's experiences and struggles, I chose to write the *testimonios* of the women I interviewed. A *testimonio* is "an approach that incorporates political, social, historical, and cultural histories that accompany one's life experiences as a means to bring about change through consciousness raising" (364). Ultimately, individual stories are connected to collective histories of oppression that re-center marginalization and call for social change (364). I documented the work of Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras and Mujeres de Maiz's *testimonios* so that they can provide "a critical reflection of their personal experience within particular sociopolitical realities" (364).

Methods

The research study examined the creation of Mujeres de Maiz (MdM), Hormigas Bordadoras (HB), and Detalle de Mujer (DM) women's art collective to understand how the women utilize art as a tool for social change. A Human Subject Protocol Approval Form was submitted and approved by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. It included permission from Hormigas Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer to recruit participants from those organizations. The women artists were eligible to participate in the study if they met all three of the following requirements: were at least 18 years of age or older; active or had been part of MdM, HB, or DM; and were from Los Angeles or Oaxaca. This study took place from October 22, 2015 to June 10th 2016 and took approximately eight hours of each woman's time over the course of one month. I conducted a qualitative research study with a survey that included open-ended, semi-structured questions that were personal and about each participant's respective collective.

I met with Hormigas Bordadoras and Detalle de Mujer and told them about my project and asked if they would like to participate.

Detalle de Mujer women's art collective is based in Oaxaca city and their address is Murguia 702, Ruta Independencia, Centro, 68000 Oaxaca, Oax., Mexico. In the case of Detalle de Mujer, Leticia Hernandez notified all the women about the study. Once all the women were notified about the project and agreed to take part in this study, we assigned dates for interviews. The participants who agreed to be interviewed were Leticia Hernández-Díaz, Margarita Carmen Gonzalez-Hernandez, Silvia Guadalupe Gonzalez-Hernandez, Jaquelina Hernández-Díaz, and Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes. I focus on the interviews conducted with Leticia Hernandez-Diaz and Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes. The first step was to confirm that the women would commit eight hours of their time. Before an interview with each woman, I asked them to fill out an Adult Consent Form acknowledging that they were voluntary participants in this project. On average, most interviews took 30 minutes or less. However, my interview with Leticia Hernandez-Diaz was broken into sections because it was longer, since she was working on her garments while being interviewed. Both Initial and Follow-up Interviews were audio recorded. First Interviews were conducted with each participant and Follow-up Interviews were conducted when more time was needed. In addition to their interviews, I photographed the women while they created their artwork. Detalle de Mujer did not have weekly meetings, however, Leticia was in contact with all the women. At times, the women part of Detalle de Mujer would swing by their storefront to pick up work from Leticia so I had the opportunity to observe that interaction. Sometimes the women would stay and talk to

Leticia about garments they had already completed or they talked about the garments they were taking to work on, to make sure they understood what they needed to do.

Hormigas Bordadoras are based in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca. Marietta Bernstorff the director of the collective told the women who are part of the collective about the study. Since the women were interested in participating, I went to San Francisco de Tanivet and talked to them about the study. Once all the women were notified about the project and agreed to take part in this study, we selected dates for interviews. I confirmed that the women would commit eight hours of their time. Before an interview with each participant, I asked them to fill out an Adult Consent Form acknowledging that they were voluntary participants in this project. The women who agreed to take part in this study include: Marietta Bernstorff, Jennifer Grijalva Martinez, Juana Martinez Olivera, Rebeca Martinez Santos, Leonila Aragon Grijalva, and Liliana Escobar Garcia. I focus on the interviews conducted with Marietta Bernstorff and Liliana Escobar Garcia. I observed the women's weekly meetings to get an understanding of the way their collective functions. With a camera, I captured moments when the women were working on artwork.

Mujeres de Maiz are based in East Los Angeles, California. For this project, I focused on the interviews conducted with two members of Mujeres de Maiz, Margaret "Quica" Alarcon and Maritza Alvarez. I confirmed that they would commit eight hours of their time for this project. Once I discussed the project with the women and they decided to participate, we set up a date for an interview. We met at a local coffee shop or restaurant to conduct the interviews.

A debrief with the participants of this study will take place at the culmination of this project.

The possible risks and/or discomforts that the participants could have experienced and were associated with the procedures were minimal and included: fatigue, boredom, and shyness. To minimize this, participants were allowed to take breaks when needed. Also, if there were any discomforts, I checked in to make sure everything was okay or if a break was needed. Overall, there were no known harms or discomforts that the participants experienced that were associated with this study beyond those they encountered in their normal daily lives. Due to the low risk and discomforts for the participants, there were no discomforts addressed by the participants. However, due to the women's busy lives, there were pauses at times so the women could tend to their work matters such as using a loud sewing machine that could drown sound. At times like these, we took breaks.

The women did not directly benefit from the participation in this study. However, the results in the study highlight the importance of art as a tool for social change. This is significant because women art collectives utilize art to address their social circumstances. An alternative for women at any point of the study was not to participate if they were not comfortable. The women were aware that they would not get compensated for their participation in this research study. They were also aware that they would not get reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses, such as parking or transportation because I met them at their work spaces. The participants were free to withdraw from this study at any time. They were asked to notify me immediately. We also notified them that we

could terminate their participation in the study if they did not follow directions, missed scheduled visits, or if their safety and welfare was at risk.

Every participant was asked to initial in their Consent Form if they gave consent for us to use their legal name in this project. However, if any participant did not consent to use their legal name, they would be assigned a pseudonym in order to have their personal information (identifiable information) confidential. Moreover, their identifiable information would be linked to a pseudonym, and would be kept on a list separate from the research data. This list would have only been used to track information they provided with their pseudonym. In the meantime, identifiable data would be kept while I, Martha, analyzed and until I defended my thesis for my M.A. degree for which this information has primarily been collected. All participants gave consent to use their legal name.

The audio recordings were stored in a laptop computer that was password protected. Moreover, the audio recordings and notes taken from the interviews were stored in a cabinet in my home office under lock and key. The researcher, Martha Martinez, and the faculty advisor, Yreina D. Cervantez, have access to the study's records. Any information derived from this research project that personally identified participants was not released or disclosed without consent, except as specifically required by law. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will include identifiable information about participants. Participants may be informed when their identifiable information is used in presentations or publications. All identifiable data for this investigation was stored electronically in a laptop with a password.

Theoretical Framework

The three collectives in this project have formed cross-cultural alliances. I look at this project through a “women of color” or “third world women” lens that forms cross-cultural alliances amongst women that have common struggles against exploitative structures and systems (Ochoa 21). In Los Angeles, the Mujeres de Maiz “women of color” art collective forms cross-cultural alliances with other women who have common struggles. Hornigas Bordadoras have also formed alliances with women in their community, as well as, women in Los Angeles, California. Detalle de Mujer have not necessarily built alliances abroad but have built alliances throughout Oaxaca to challenge systems and structures of power. I will also document the experiences of women in these collectives through a lens that takes into account ‘intersectionality,’ “where multiple identities converge at the crossroads of a woman of color life. The woman of color life *is* the crossroad, where no aspect of our identity is wholly dismissed from our consciousness, even when we navigate a daily shifting political landscape” (Moraga and Anzaldúa xxii). I continuously examined how the multiple identities of the women I interviewed impacted their visual artwork.

CHAPTER 4

OAXAQUEÑA AND CHICANA ARTIVISM

The women of marginalized communities have taken it upon themselves to create spaces that are needed in their communities. Detalle de Mujer (DM) and Hormigas Bordadoras (HB) in Oaxaca and Mujeres de Maiz (MdM) in Los Angeles are collectives and work spaces that produce art in their communities. In both Oaxaca and Los Angeles, the women's experiences have informed the way they look at their social circumstances in their communities. The racial/ethnic, gender, and economic issues that they have faced has motivated them to create the spaces that they didn't have and knew were needed in their communities. Whether on stylized clothing, patchwork pieces, or visual artwork, the women art collectives are creating visual artwork that depicts their experiences and the experiences of their communities. Despite the women art collectives' existence across imagined borders, the art and work that these women do is a form of activism. This section will identify the origins of Detalle de Mujer (DM), Hormigas Bordadoras (HB), and Mujeres de Maiz (MdM) through life stories of co-founders and members of the collective. It will also explain the organization of their work. Finally, it will identify the ethnic/racial, gender identity or oppression and access to resources for the women in the collectives. Then, this project will discuss how the women's experiences have inspired them to form their collectives. This project will conclude with a homage to the women's art collectives with a collection of nine artworks that will depict who the women are and the work they do. It will also include images of the women in this project and the collectives.

Detalle de Mujer: Oaxaca de Juarez, Oaxaca, Mexico

The first time I reached out to Detalle de Mujer by going to their storefront that was on Morelos street in Oaxaca City, I met Jaquelina Hernandez-Diaz who is Leticia Hernandez-Diaz's sister. Jaquelina told me I should contact Leticia to discuss my project further and the possibility of Detalle de Mujer's involvement in the project. Once all the women knew about the project and agreed to proceed, I interviewed Leticia Hernandez-Diaz and then Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes from Detalle de Mujer.

Life Stories of Founder and Members

Hernandez-Diaz's interview is very important because she is the person who started Detalle de Mujer in 2010, continually recruited members, and took on the responsibility of having a collective. In 2015, Hernandez-Diaz disclosed that she was 40 years old and was born and raised in San Agustin Etla, Oaxaca, which is a town that is forty minutes from Oaxaca City. Her family included her mother Consuelo Diaz-Robles, father Heliodoro Hernandez-Cruz, and eleven siblings. Hernandez-Diaz's parents provided schooling for their children. However, Hernandez Diaz's three older sisters ended up married and did not complete degrees after high school. Leticia thought the same would happen to her. At the same time, she saw how hard her working-class parents struggled to get their children ahead. Leticia explained:

My mom was the kind of person that would go to sleep at the end, at twelve and one in the morning and would wake up at four or five in the morning to go sell her products at the market. My dad planted. He planted lettuce, radishes, flowers. There were always avocados, peaches, apples, whichever fruit was at home. Never, never was there ever something missing...to sell. So, what my mom would

do is take her baskets filled with fruit, boxes of avocados, her flower bunches, her radish bunches, her bags of lettuce, everything. And she would take that to the market to sell. Independently from making money from selling, what she didn't sell she traded. She traded it for tortillas, onions, tomatoes, supplies of food. And my mom would always return with her pockets full of money and her baskets filled with food. So... we were never missing anything. Nothing that was essential.

Overall, Hernandez-Diaz thought about her mother's long days at work and did not want her mom to invest money in her if there was a possibility of her getting married and not completing a degree. Hernandez-Diaz did not complete the upper half of middle school in 1988. Two months after leaving school, Hernandez-Diaz was sent to her aunt's dressmaking academy where she did the cleaning. On the second day, her aunt named, Angelina Diaz-Robles, handed her materials for the courses at the dressmaking academy. Although Hernandez-Diaz was forced to join the dressmaking academy, it started calling her attention and she saw that it was beautiful. In 1990 her aunt forced her to complete middle school. In 1992, her aunt enrolled her in high school. Leticia's day included being at school at 7:00am until 11:00am, then she would head to the dressmaking academy in Oaxaca City where her aunt taught classes. Hernandez-Diaz studied cut and confection with her aunt from 1990 to 1993. After studying cut and confection for a year and a half, Hernandez-Diaz's aunt opened a dressmaking academy branch in Etna and told Hernandez-Diaz she would be the instructor there. Hernandez-Diaz would teach classes in the evenings at the same time she was learning dressmaking techniques from her aunt. If she didn't know how to do something, she would meet her aunt before the next evening

to ask questions. When Hernandez-Diaz was done with high school, her aunt asked her, “What do you want to study?” Originally, Hernandez-Diaz wanted to study architecture but she was disillusioned by her architecture teacher who discouraged her. Hernandez-Diaz decided to study Fashion Design as she completed high school and studied cut and confection, which is when you sew together very delicate or elaborate garments.

Hernandez-Diaz’s interest in creating garments with embroidery grew from seeing her mother embroider household items. She was also inspired by a seminarian that discussed class structures. Leticia explains:

Beside my mom selling and doing many things when she was resting because her activities happened very early or very late when my father was back from the fields, at noon she would embroider. She would hand-embroider napkins and tablecloths. So, it called my attention. I would tell her, “why do you tire yourself out hand-embroidering a napkin, a tablecloth, if we can embroider a dress?” She would tell me I was crazy. She would tell me it would be better to buy myself printed fabric, with flowers, and that’s it. And um... but it started calling my attention.

Once Hernandez-Diaz learned she liked making garments, she was inspired by hand-embroidered household items her mother made. In 1990, when Hernandez-Diaz was fifteen years old, she began thinking about stylizing garments but did not see it as a possibility due to the lack of resources. She met a seminarian when she was twelve or thirteen that taught her about social structures. She learned, “Um...of how, how the ones that are at the top want to step on the ones at the bottom. They always want you to stay at the margins, in one level. That you don’t over achieve, that you stay there.” So, she

realized that her work could help many people. She could be a change for her community. Leticia was envisioning the garments she could make and was ready to attend a Fashion Design school.

In 1995, Hernandez-Diaz and her cousin were sent to Mexico City to study at the Centro de Estudios Tecnológico, Industrial y de Servicios, CETIS número 9, Puerto Rico or ‘The Center for Technological, Industrial and Services Studies.’ At that time, it was only a technical career. It is as if she would have studied high school again but with a specialty that was Fashion Design. Hernandez-Diaz expressed that she “had seven subjects for the career.” She also expressed that she needed materials such as “Fabric for every class, cardboard, paper, brushes, brand name colored pencils” and everything was very expensive. Hernandez-Diaz expressed that her father financed her education:

My father had a pension and... he was a worker at the factory of string and fabric in the pueblo or ‘town’ and he got them to give him a retirement pension. So, what he got from his pension, he deposited for my studies. And it was like so that I started figuring out how to make it last all month. I had to stretch it.

In addition, Hernandez-Diaz sought opportunities for low-income people, like a ticket for students for the Metro or ‘subway train’ that “cost \$40 pesos, \$30 pesos so you could get on and off of the metro unlimited times.” Hernandez-Diaz learned to utilize programs like the public transportation subsidy to survive as a student in Mexico City.

Hernandez-Diaz was influenced by the bordados or ‘embroidery’ styles of the different regions in Oaxaca. She explained that La Guelagetza or ‘Indigenous historical cultural event’ is a gathering of people from different regions that inspired her. Leticia’s teachers felt she was crazy because they thought it would be challenging to incorporate

embroidery onto her garments. However, Hernandez-Diaz created garments that she envisioned that included embroidery. On her second semester of studying Fashion Design, Hernandez-Diaz was given a scholarship for outstanding work. Since Hernandez-Diaz had a good grade point average, she was also invited to attend a Fashion Show at the Center of Bellas Artes in Mexico City by Armando Mafud, a Oaxacan designer. Mafud was living proof that stylizing embroidery was a possibility, which further influenced Hernandez-Diaz. After studying in Mexico City, Hernandez-Diaz returned to San Agustin, Etna, Oaxaca, Mexico.

In addition to Hernandez-Diaz, Mendoza-Arellanes is also a member of *Detalle de Mujer*. In 2015, Mendoza-Arellanes disclosed that she was thirty-nine years old and had lived in San Sebastian, Etna, Oaxaca, Mexico since she was born. Her family was also originally from San Sebastian. In 1988, while in middle school, she had courses for three years that were titled, *Dressmaking Industry*, where she learned basic sewing skills. She learned what a sewing machine was, how to utilize it, and to make things with the help of her teacher. Mendoza-Arellanes did not have anyone at home to guide her since her mother did not know how to sew. So, she learned everything she knows at school. Mendoza-Arellanes finished high school at a school that specialized in accounting and administration and was on track to a university level career. However, she did not continue going to school despite her familial support to continue studying. After high school, she began attending classes with a woman in her pueblo or ‘town’ that taught confection. That is where she learned she could “work on fabric, on skirts, that she learned to take measurements. Learned to...to...to cut the fabric, make the tracings, cut the fabric, and begin basting stitching if the fabrics were really, really slippery.” As a

member of Detalle de Mujer, Mendoza-Arellanes acknowledges that her job is “another type of job because it is job that is more fine and it has to cost more because it is for other people and because it has a special price as it is considered high couture. Like...like something like more, a job more well made.”

Organization of Their Work

The organization, Detalle de Mujer, functions by distributing their work when they see each other. This is also when she explains one on one to the different women how garments can be created. Diaz-Hernandez explains “how things will be sewn, what colors the embroidery will be, or what tones were requested or asked for. And everyone goes home and completes their activities at home.” In addition, Diaz-Hernandez explains that “To have a reunion where everyone from Detalle de Mujer is present, it is sporadic because it is only when we need every member's presence, when we need to show we exist and that we are really an organization.” However, Hernandez-Diaz is the person who sees most of the women and most often. She explains, “For example, since I have the responsibility of Detalle de Mujer, I see them at least 5 or 2 times, or once a week for those who take work home on a weekly basis, but we see each other. However, some of them don't see the others too often, it is occasionally.” There are women like Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes who are at the shop on a daily basis so Hernandez-Diaz will see them 5 days a week. There are also women like Margarita Carmen Gonzalez-Hernandez that pick-up work to take home, who Hernandez-Diaz will see once or twice a week. Despite the fact that the women are not always in the same room, they work collectively at times because it takes more than one woman to complete a garment. They are collectively

creating a garment that will benefit them all in the end because it will generate a shared source of income.

Sometimes the members of Detalle at the shop need to work together to complete orders that include several garments. For example, they had an order of six dresses in the same model/styles but different sizes. So, Mendoza-Arellanes described how they worked together to make the dresses:

So, for example, Leti would cut and I would do the basting stitch, her husband would iron. Then, we would put it together and then and at the same time we worked as a team, well when we don't have that much work, no. And when we didn't, for example, they tell me you are going to do those garments, those things, so they give me a certain task.

Since there were three people available to help, they would assign each person a task to work toward completing one garment together. However, when there was more work to do, then they work on their own to try to complete different garments.

Mendoza-Arellanes hoped that the work that they do is valued, that the energy that goes into these garments is appreciated. She explains that for her social justice looks like, "Well I think recognizing that the work that we do is to be valued, to be respected, because its valuable." Mendoza-Arellanes also discussed how she learned the value of embroidery through Detalle de Mujer. She learned the richness of art in her state and that art such as embroidery should be paid for fairly. She felt that there was work to be done to build consciousness around fair pay.

The ways in which Detalle de Mujer participates in community is through community events. The latest community event was an EXPO where you could rent a

stand and display your work. Mendoza-Arellanes explains that through giving their work exposure, and people learning about Detalle de Mujer's work, raises interest and will bring in more work.



Figure 1.0: Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca; (left to right) Margarita Carmen Gonzalez-Hernandez, Silvia Guadalupe Gonzalez-Hernandez, Leticia Hernandez-Diaz, and Jaquelina Hernandez-Diaz. Photographed by: Color y Cultura. 2015.

Ethnic/Racial and Gender Identity or Oppression and Access to Resources

In terms of ethnic hierarchies, Mexico has “a colonially inherited system of merged racial/ethnic classification” (209). In this system, indigenous peoples are at the bottom. Writer, Stephen explains that “When indigenous families from San Agustin and Teotitlan travel in Mexico, as soon as they identify themselves as coming from Oaxaca they are immediately classified as *chapparitos* (short ones), *Oaxaquitos* (little people from Oaxaca), or *Indito sucios* (dirty little Indians), and sometimes they’re told they can’t speak because of their use of their native Mixteco or Zapoteco” (210). Similarly, the women interviewed for this project have expressed similar humiliations experienced as Oaxacan women.

When Hernandez-Diaz was studying, she experienced discrimination because she was Oaxacan. She expressed “when we got there nobody wanted to be on our team. They would say they are Oaxaca. Or, oh, they are from Oaxaca, they are from a small town, they come from... they come from a small town. They pushed us to the side. Nobody wanted to work with us.” Hernandez-Diaz’s classmates had preconceived notions of Oaxacan people. For example, when Hernandez-Diaz was asked to work on a group project and go with the group to purchase fabrics, Hernandez-Diaz’s classmates made condescending remarks about Oaxacans. She explained that one time as they were getting off the subway, a girl pushed the other and said, “Don’t be Oaxacan.” And Hernandez-Diaz asked, “What did you say, not to be Oaxaca?” and “What does that mean?” And the girl said, “Don’t be an Indian, don’t be stupid, don’t be rororo...and she told me lots of things.” That is how Hernandez-Diaz learned the preconceived notions and prejudice people had towards Oaxacan people. Hernandez-Diaz time and time again proved that Oaxacans were not the preconceived notions/stereotypes that people had about Oaxacans. The next day in class, the same girl who had made negative remarks about Oaxacans asked Leticia for help. So, when the girl asked for help, Leticia laughed and explained:

I laugh because you say that Oaxacans are ignorant, stupid, we are...Ah, I told her you are asking a Oaxacan. Eh! And she turned really red, red. You are really from Oaxaca? Yes, I told her. And you know what, we are not [who or] what you are expressing. And to show you, I am going to explain what the teacher said.

Because besides not being brutes, stupid, ignorant or anything you say, I am also not rancorous or selfish. I am going to explain the class, and you are going to do

this and that and that... She was so embarrassed and she turned so red, that it was the last time I saw her at school.

Leticia let her classmate know that her stereotypes and degrading remarks about Oaxacans were not true. She also asked her not to express herself about Oaxacans like that ever again.

In addition to the experiences with her classmates, Hernandez-Diaz also experienced discrimination as a Oaxacan by her English teacher. This teacher had made negative remarks about Oaxacans including that “Oaxacans blamed poverty” for everything. So, Hernandez-Diaz lifted her foot onto her desk so the teacher could see she was wearing huaraches or ‘sandals.’ He said, “What does that have to do with it?” She explained to the teacher that she wanted to let him know that she was Oaxacan and that she did not appreciate him demeaning and insulting Oaxacans.

Despite the women who were interviewed for this project not explicitly identifying as indigenous, they have long histories in the towns they are from. Their identity as Oaxacans continue to be tied to an indigenous identity that is “othered.” Other Mexicans see indigenous peoples, and that which they don’t understand at the lower end of “ethnic/racial classification” (209).

While studying Fashion Design, Leticia Hernandez-Diaz (DM) experienced sexism. Her English teacher was a man who was handsome, blue eyed, light-skinned who was strict and very demanding. After the first exam that Leticia and her classmates took, he showed up to class infuriated because only two students had passed the test. The teacher said that those who didn’t pass, did not deserve to be there. He also expressed to the students that “at the end of the day they were women who should be at home, or those

women who liked wearing make-up or dress-up, should do something else.” Leticia felt that he was “denigrating the role of women because the school had mostly women, a few men, and many gay men.” So, Leticia responded to her professor “And so I ask you for this to be the last time that you express yourself about women in this way. And that you express yourself about us. And I want your respect. The fact that someone fails an examination does not justify you [your behavior].”

Hernandez-Diaz also discussed the family dynamics of the women who are interested in making garments. First, she discussed that:

There are people who fortunately or unfortunately, depend on their husband, that the husband is the breadwinner, that gives them what they need in their homes or for their children. And... at the same time it can be limiting. Even though they may have the talent or wish to do it, not for necessity, the husband simply will not let them because their children and home come first and you have to comply. And after that? So, these types of problems have been obstacles for all women, no?

The one [woman] that does not have one obstacle has another. So, we have seen it is difficult.

Hernandez-Diaz highlights the obstacles that women with husbands and children may face since they must first care for their families before engaging in the arts, or creating garments. In addition, she also explains:

But when there are people like single mothers, it is distinct [different] because they have the liberty or necessity to do two things. One, they realize they have talent and can carry on an artistic activity, and at the same time, they can gain or be able to obtain a resource for their family. So, it’s something very beautiful

because I have experience this because I have worked with various single mothers and they are people... that I really admire because... I admire them because, because they find a way to organize and develop their creative activity and not leave their, their kids and they can earn money with that activity. So, that is where I realize that I cannot mess up. If they work, I have to figure out how to pay them immediately. Now, they turn in their work and I have to pay them because they are people who do not depend on anyone else but themselves.

Leticia also discusses the fact that the single mothers who have been part of *Detalle de Mujer* have the ‘liberty or necessity’ to engage in an artistic activity where they display their talent and will also gain money for their family.

As a single mother, Mendoza-Arellanes started working with *Detalle de Mujer* because she was in need of an employment opportunity. Since she had two children at home, *Detalle de Mujer*’s first location in ETLA was convenient since she could walk to and from work. She also acknowledges that *Detalle de Mujer*’s new location in Oaxaca may be a disadvantage because it’s about an hour and a half away and her children miss her. However, she talks to them and lets them know that she may come late during the week, but all weekend, she can spend quality time with them. In addition, this employment opportunity will provide her with experience, and she hopes her salary will increase as she learns how to create garments faster.

Leticia sees her work, and her vision in terms of economics, as a business investment that is in the beginning stages. She expressed that:

“Because it is... an investment, money, it’s one of the things that... that sets us back, no? I am now a mother that lives day to day. The expenses or what, what I

sell. Everything. The family expenses, as well as... the business, they come from there. So yeah. It has not been easy to get there, to get where I am. However, I know that I can. I know there moments like right now that there is a time of crisis [financial hardship] because we invested in the property where the sewing shop will be.”

Leticia understands that with a business investment there will be good times and difficult times. She is also aware that there may be tough times like those she is experiencing with the investment in the building of property. At the same time, Leticia must make ends meet for her family.

Hernandez-Diaz has participated in various trainings and projects. Some of the trainings she participated in were through the ‘Secretary of Economic Development and Tourism.’ Hernandez-Diaz was referred for the trainings by her friend, Angela Sibaja-Hernandez, who now serves as the sub-director of the Secretaria de Desarrollo Económico y Turismo or the ‘Secretary of Economic Development and Tourism’. The trainings included administrative development, trademark, and customer service. In addition to Hernandez-Diaz attending these trainings, she also got the members of Detalle de Mujer to attend with her so they can also see the importance of the trainings.

In 2007, with the support of municipal president, Francisco Mayolo Ruiz Carreño, the town won the prize from the Rural Sustainable Development from SAGARPA [Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación] or SAGARPA [Secretary of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Rural Development, Fishing and Alimentation]. Hernandez-Diaz received funding for the infrastructure of her shop. She was supposed to receive \$400,000 pesos for machinery and \$400,000 pesos for

infrastructure. However, this was not possible because they released the funding by pieces. When you had half of the project completed, they would release the other half of the funding for the project. Then, when you have the next quarter completed, then, they release the last quarter. But there was a change in government, stopping the funds, and the completion of the shop was not possible.

Under the town leadership of Gabino Cue Monteagudo, instead of receiving equipment or money, the women were provided with workshops on cut and confection at the levels one, two and three. They were also provided with advanced couture workshops for seamstresses. Three years later, a resource that Hernandez-Diaz accessed provided support for sewing machines through the Instituto [Integral] de Capacitación [y Productividad] Para El Trabajo (ICAPET) or the ‘Integral Institute for Training and Productivity for Work’ (ICAPET). Since Hernandez-Diaz had already accessed resources for her community under her name, she had her husband apply for the resources that would amount to \$45,000 pesos in machinery and equipment. The truck that Detalle de Mujer owned was obtained through Instituto Nacional de la Economía Social (INAES) or the ‘National Institute of the Social economy.’ The process of having access to resources through state or federal government agencies includes certain requirements for example, “As a person you must be registered under government finances, pay your taxes, and be up to date, not owe anything. So, all those types of documents need to be presented so you can benefit from the projects or announcements within the government.” Fortunately, Detalle de Mujer has been able to maintain current documents that has provided them opportunities to apply for resources.

Detalle de Mujer was established as a business that is also a women's art collective. Hernandez-Diaz felt she needed to take responsibility for Detalle de Mujer. Detalle de Mujer was established as an 'S.A. de C.V.' or 'Anonymous Society of Variable Capital' or 'Public Limited Corporation' because there has to be a person that is responsible in a business and that has the capacity to make decisions. Therefore, Hernandez-Diaz is the one who makes administrative decisions. However, when it comes to work or making their garments, they strive to have equity. For example, people questioned Hernandez-Diaz's decision in registering the trademark in the name of the business or organization instead of her name, since it was her investment and designs. She argued that she may have imagined the designs but there were other women who embroidered, sewed, knitted, ironed, and who finished the garments. Hernandez-Diaz cried as she disclosed that she wanted everyone who worked for and supported Detalle de Mujer to get credit. Hernandez-Diaz believes in a more equitable world that values and gives credit to the women who create the visual artwork through garments.

Activism takes place within Detalle de Mujer while working with artisans who provide the embroidery. Despite the ongoing discussions of the altering of garments or not altering garments with embroidery that have sacred meanings to certain ethnic groups, Hernandez-Diaz took the best approach possible to utilize bordados or 'embroidery' in a respectful manner. Hernandez-Diaz had to build a relationship with the artisans who make the embroidery that she utilized for her stylized garments. Hernandez-Diaz explained that she had to create consciousness about utilizing the embroidery to create something different. At the beginning, the artisans would say:

‘What do you want it for?’ I would try to explain and tell them that we were going to do something different. And they would say, ‘No. I don’t want to work for you.’ My thing is like this and this. People were radical. The people did not have that mission or that vision. No, no the people were jealous about their work. They were, they wanted to keep their regalia autochthonous, to keep their stitching, or what they did how and what it is. Because for them their regalia is almost sacred. Why? Because it is an art that has... that takes them many days to make, no?

So, Hernandez-Diaz talked to the artisans so that they could see their work differently. So, that they could see that everything has an evolution. Hernandez-Diaz explained that they have to “allow change and do things differently to be able to survive.” This is important because those who have money will find ways to get ahold of bordados or ‘embroidery’ and will sell these pieces for more money. So, the purpose was to make sure that the people who made the bordados or ‘embroidery’ were paid fairly for their labor. The embroiderers also had to grant permission for bordados or ‘embroidery’ to be taken apart to create a new stylized garment or piece of art. Detalle de Mujer took the best possible approach in connecting with artisan women who made the embroidery especially those they continued working with.

The women who form Detalle de Mujer are workers and artists who engage in the creation of garments that depict culture through embroidery, but also bring in an income that can be perceived as a form of activism. Diaz-Hernandez’s garments are her work but they are also art. She explained and described the difference in creativity and art from her point of view:

Because at the end, each garment or thing has a moment of... of inspiration, if you want. Because not everything or I had not realized that creativity was.... I had a definition, creativity is born out of necessity, no? But art is not only necessity to survive but it is also having passion for the things you like. And not only that you do things you like, but that you do things that make money, no? And... and they leave you wellbeing and satisfaction and it all happens in one thing.

She further explains that in creating her garments she has moments where she is in deep concentration thinking about future projects, “And in addition... I love my activity, I like my job because when I am concentrating, I am sewing and coming up with ideas for the next garment, what colors combine or what can I make that I haven’t made that could be new ideas.” DM creates garments that will create jobs for women and at the same time, it also brings her wellbeing and satisfaction to its members. Creating stylized garments with embroidery is also a preservation of culture that is a form of activism.

Mendoza-Arellanes explains that sometimes the women who experience the most challenges are the women who make the bordados or ‘embroidery.’ She explains:

And I say, well they are the ones that have the worst part of it because they make it and then they have to go out and sell it, or go all the way to the city to offer it. And if they [customers] pay it, well good, and if they [customers] don’t they [customers] will haggle to get it at a lower price. And so, and so I say that we should value things because maybe here in the city people don’t really give it the importance that it should have, no. The value it has. The people that make it are from small towns that are far away. And so, that yes, that their art that they... [value their work since they took long journeys in/out of the city and paid for

transportation to be able to sell bordados; they spent many hours, days, months to make the bordados; they invested on cloth and embroidery floss] Maybe they don't even know what they have, no, because if you ask them to lower the price, they will give it to you as long as that... because there is lots of necessity, no? And if there aren't, if there aren't people that buy it at the price that the women want, what is fair for all the work, for all the time it takes. And necessity to take to their community. [People are poor in small towns and need to return with money to their communities] It's the illusion that they [have to] come to sell it, no? [The artisans believe they will get paid well for their embroidery, but will get desperate if they don't and will take any amount of money to sell the embroidery.]

Overall, Hernandez-Diaz continually learns from her experiences and the experiences around her. She is aware of ethnicity, gender, and economics of her community and strives towards equity and ultimately, liberation. Therefore, Detalle de Mujer is always growing as an organization, business, and collective that strives for equity for all of its participants.

Hormigas Bordadoras: San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, Mexico

Hormigas Bordadoras is a women's art collective that creates art that depicts its member's histories. The women who take part in the collective are like ants that work in collaborative efforts towards their goals. Like the HB, all the women in this project are like ants who constantly work collaboratively towards their goals whether it is through their patchwork pieces, garments, or visual artwork. According to the Mexican government's Secretaria de Cultura or 'Secretary of Culture,' HB came into existence after Mujeres artistas y el maiz (MAMAZ) or 'women artists and the corn' worked with

the women of Tanivet for over three years. According to writer Perez Garcia, the HB collective was established in 2010. Balerini Casal, writer of “Hormigas bordadoras de Oaxaca van a Londres y Los Angeles,” explains that the women reside in San Francisco de Tanivet or Tanivet, which is its Zapotec name, that translates into English as, anthill. HB gathered in Tanivet’s school to embroider and Marietta Bernstorff proposed to the women to make products that generated an income.

Life Stories of Founder and Members

Marietta Bernstorff is the director of the Hormigas Bordadoras collective. She is fifty-six years old and she was born in Chiapas, Mexico. Marietta identifies as Chiapaneca, Oaxaqueña, Chicana or Oaxaqueña Chicana Chiapaneca depending where she is living. She grew up in Hattiesburg, Mississippi and attended nine different high schools as she traveled through the United States. She ended up in California. She is now living in Mexico but travels back and forth to the United States. Noel Chilton from Mujeres Artistas y el Maiz (MAMAZ) asked Bernstorff if she would like to visit a group of women in Tanivet who were working with a psychologist, Claudia from an organization that addressed gender issues. Bernstorff was interested in working with the women because they were farmers. Bernstorff was also interested because Tanivet was a community that was originally a hacienda or ‘ranch’ where people were not indigenous. The people there were mestizos because they were brought from different places and they were mixed. She further explained that people in Tanivet were unlike Zapotecs who have a huge tradition and language. Bernstorff realized that the school was really poor when she first visited Tanivet. She also observed that women had no activities of their own outside their home or church. So, she began with the women who were interested in

participating in her project. Marietta was amazed that the women could draw so well from memory, and without having experience in drawing. Since Chilton and Bernstorff were intrigued with the use of cloth, they set forth to work with the women in Tanivet on patchwork pieces. This was important because the women did not have money for materials to teach them something else. So, getting ahold of hand me down cloth, needles, and thread from the community was something feasible for this project. Bernstorff was able to ask people to come to Tanivet to teach a class so the women could build on their skills and learn new skills. Since the women were beginning their creative process, Bernstorff would not let teachers stay too long due to the fear the women could start making things like other people and not develop their own identity as artists.

Liliana Escobar Garcia is a member of Hormigas Bordadoras who depicts her story on her patchwork pieces as a person who has lived in Tanivet all her life. Escobar Garcia is thirty-three years old. She has been a member of the collective, Hormigas Bordadoras, for two years. She expressed that her skills had developed thanks to the workshops by Aleli and Araceli who were the teachers at the time she became a member of the group. However, she explained that she had knowledge of embroidering, the normal and traditional napkin making and cross-stitching. She did not have knowledge of appliqué. With the workshops and practice, Escobar Garcia learned to create patchwork pieces for projects such as Nuevo Códice or ‘New Codex.’

Escobar Garcia explained that the collective creates pieces that depict the countryside and immigration. For example, she explains that their patchwork pieces include things you see in the countryside including maize, beans, garbanzo, bulls, goats, sheep, chickens and turkeys. A project that Hormigas Bordadoras worked on was making

a book out of cloth that told the story of the corn. That piece was purchased by Michael Nyman. This book was important because it depicted what is the base of the town or the fundamental, corn. Corn is sustenance and is what people live off of. She also talked about members such as Rebecca, specializing in the depiction of migration stories. She thinks that due to Rebecca's family having experience with migration, it is a theme that is discussed in her family; and, therefore she is knowledgeable about that theme.

Escobar Garcia's work focuses on the countryside and history of Tanivet. She learned and tells the story of Tanivet as it was told by her grandfather. He explained that Tanivet was a hacienda or 'ranch' where people looked for jobs. The owners of the ranches would provide jobs and housing for employees. When the ranchers left, they donated the lands to the workers who became owners of the lands and spaces where they lived. That is how Tanivet was formed.

Organization of Their Work

The members of the collective work both independently and collectively. The work that Hormigas Bordadoras have, depends on how often they meet. Escobar Garcia disclosed that they met at least once a week. However, she added that sometimes they met twice a week depending if they had more work to do. She also explained that every member of Hormigas Bordadoras works on their own patchwork pieces. But, when they have group work, they work together. At the time of the interview, they were working on a patchwork piece for the Museo Textil or 'Textile Museum' in Oaxaca City that juxtaposed their town, Tanivet, with the United States border. She described it as "it's like Tanivet in the United States and in Oaxaca."



Figure 2.0: Hormigas Bordadoras Tanivet and Oaxaca; (left to right) Rebeca, Juana, Liliana, Leonila, and Jenni. Photographer: Martha E. Martinez. 2015.

Ethnic/Racial and Gender Identity or Oppression and Access to Resources

Marietta Bernstorff expressed that working with Hormigas Bordadoras was important to her because it was about teaching women. It was about working with a group of women who had no clue about the arts yet became great artists. These women, despite being immigrants, poor, not artists, not craftswomen, women who stayed home, did feel like this project or being part of Hormigas Bordadoras had given their minds something to do. In addition, the praise the women received for creating their patchwork pieces raised their self-esteem.

The focus and objective of Hormigas Bordadoras revolves around women. Escobar Garcia is a member of the Hormigas Bordadoras; and, therefore is a visual artist who creates patchwork pieces. Escobar Garcia explains that the objective of Hormigas Bordadoras is for women to have jobs. So, that women could support themselves and not

always depend on their husbands. Women financially contribute and support their husbands. This also helps to stop husbands from having to migrate to the United States. Overall, women can contribute financially to their household income.

Marietta Bernstorff discussed how Hormigas Bordadoras were initially working with a non-profit. Due to the lack of funding, they stopped their work with the Hormigas Bordadoras. She further explained that there were some government funded programs called, oportunidades or 'opportunities' in which the government will go to villages and give money but there is no follow through. For example, there have been instances where the government gives people in villages sewing machines and no instruction or sewing machine and instruction, but then there is no explanation or model of what can be done next. So, in the case of Hormigas Bordadoras, Marietta Bernstorff and people she collaborated with, they learned the process of drafting ideas, created patchwork pieces or products, and learned how to sell their work. Bernstorff explains that the difference between government projects and the Hormigas Bordadoras project was that they taught a process from beginning to end, so that the women can continue to go through this process on their own, so that this process is sustainable and there is a constant flow of work and funds.

In terms of funding and resources, Hormigas Bordadoras have mixed sources that help fund their collective. Sometimes they have scholarships, donation, or sometimes they are self-sufficient. Sometimes people will donate funds to the whole group which helps the women acquire materials for their patchwork pieces. There are people who work with fabric who have pieces of fabric that they donate to the group. Escobar Garcia added that people support them with donations such as pieces of fabric, string, and

scissors. By selling their patchwork pieces, the women budget their money and invest in materials for their artwork.

Marietta Bernstorff director of Hormigas Bordadoras and part of MAMAZ discusses the power of art collectives. She discusses her experience in demonstrating the power of art.

Bernstorff expresses:

So, I think collectives, all the collectives of the arts are really important because one, we work together as teams and second, because we are sharing information and we can do a lot for numerous people and show people how to use that. So, MAMAZ or Mujeres de Maiz or every art form is really inspiring for people that don't have access, and our communities really don't have access to it.

Hormigas Bordadoras is a collective that worked as a team to develop individual and collective skills to establish themselves as artists. They have demonstrated the power of art in communities that don't have a history of artisans in their communities or institutions that train them in the arts. With few workshops and skills, they developed their artwork. The power of their art has transcended borders and they have shown their artwork internationally.

Bernstorff questioned Western art aesthetics that categorize and rank art. She explores what is considered high and low art, and how that marginalizes people's artwork when it is perceived as low art. She explains:

It, art shouldn't be considered high or low art... cus [because] that's discrimination. But if you were born in community with no access to education in general and had um, never heard about those things, and you start creating something, your art is just as valid as the other person's art, because it's truthful. And I think when creators in any historical time were making art, they were making art for themselves and their soul. So, who placed the order of who is high and who is low? What is valuable and what isn't valuable? I think it doesn't...I think those questions are really out of date in today's time.

Bernstorff addresses important issues that continue to be important because we exist in a world that creates hierarchies. However, in the work that Hormigas Bordadoras are doing, they are asserting their truths in their artwork. They are also navigating through and into art institutions that may have never shown their art before because it may have been categorized as an artisan piece, or "folk art" and not real art.

Fortunately, Hormigas Bordadoras have had the opportunity to exhibit their artwork abroad. Hormigas Bordadoras were invited to participate in an art exhibition in Los Angeles that addressed their identity as Oaxacans. The art exhibition the Hormigas Bordadoras participated in was titled, "Nuevo Códice: Oaxaca, Immigration, and Cultural Memory." The women made a codex from cloth that depicted the story of Tanivet, as well as, depicting why people from Tanivet migrated to the United States. The Hormigas Bordadoras work transcends borders because it depicts the identity of people from San Francisco de Tanivet in both San Francisco de Tanivet and in Los Angeles. Other Oaxacan communities and migrant communities may see themselves in the powerful stories that these women tell through their visual artwork. The Hormigas Bordadoras representation and artwork is powerful and meaningful and therefore, activism.

The Hormigas Bordadoras shifted the way they thought about making their patchwork pieces when they crossed into the arts. First, the Hormigas Bordadoras learned that their work had economic potential that would benefit them. When the women began to sell their work, they understood the benefit of creating their patchwork pieces. However, Bernstorff explained that after the mujeres or 'women' crossed into the arts, "they no longer cared if it sold or not, they were amazed at what they could do." She further elaborated that "that's the transition from making something because you need money or making something because it fills your soul. An artist has to make art because it needs to fill the soul." In the development of their creative process, Hormigas Bordadoras learned the necessity to create their patchwork pieces because it completes them and inspires them as community spokespersons.

The patchwork pieces that Hormigas Bordadoras have created are activist artwork. Hormigas Bordadoras has presented their work in locations in Oaxaca, as well as in Los Angeles and also England. They presented their patchwork pieces about corn at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca (MACO) or the ‘Contemporary Art Museum of Oaxaca.’ The artwork spoke to how sacred native corn is considered by people in risk of its extinction due to many factors: the lack of support for farmers from the government, loss of the tradition of farming due to migration, scarcity of water due to climate change, and economic interests of transnational companies. The women also created artwork about Tanivet in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca and in an exhibition titled “Nuevo Códice: Oaxaca, Immigration, and Cultural Memory.” at the Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC), in Los Angeles. In this exhibit their visual artwork included the history of the town, life in the town, and migration stories. In addition, in the exhibition “Made in Mexico; The Rebozo in Art, Culture & Fashion” which took place at the Museo de la Moda y los Textiles de Londres or the ‘Museum of fashion and Textiles in London,’ they exhibited a rebozo from Mitla, Oaxaca with embroidered women on it. Their artwork transcends borders and powerfully depicts their histories.

Mujeres de Maiz: East Los Angeles, California, United States

Across the imaginary US-Mexico border, the Mujeres de Maiz collective was born in Los Angeles. Mujeres de Maiz (MDM), is a women’s art collective established in 1997 to unite and provide spaces for women of color. The co-founders of the collective include Claudia Mercado and Felicia Montes. Over the years, there have been core members such as Gina Aparicio, Martha Gonzales, and Michelle L. Lopez amongst other core members. In 1997, Mujeres de Maiz held quarterly Live Art Shows, exhibits and

published Zines. However, after the first year, they shifted to an annual celebration that honored International Women's Day in the month of March. According to the mujeresdemaiz.com website, they have organized now over twenty Live Art Shows & Exhibits, published annual Zines and produced programming on holistic wellness. They began as a grassroots, multimedia women's activist organization based in East Los Angeles, California. They worked with local artists, performers, educators, and organizers to create and implement their programming. They also have partnerships with primarily Chicana/Latina college graduates between twenty-five to sixty-five years of age. Those partners are invited to perform music, dance, theatre and poetry/spoken word. They exhibit artwork, facilitate interactive workshops, demonstrations and classes on various topics. Collaborations take place with women artists and educators of African, Central and South American, Jewish, Filipina, Asian, Native American and Sri Lankan descent who perceive cross-racial solidarity as a need. Mujeres de Maiz is an intercultural, intergenerational and interdisciplinary collective for womxn of color that has shared "mind, body, spirit and cultural work." Their mission is to "bring together and empower diverse women and girls through the creation of community spaces that provide holistic wellness through education, programming, art and publishing.

Life Stories of Founder and Members

Member, Margaret Alarcon is a Xicana, indigenous identified woman who was born and raised in East Los Angeles. She is a visual artist, teacher, and community arts activist. Her creative interests include mixed media, painting, drawing, printmaking, papel picado, and publishing. In her work, she visually translates, documents, and reinterprets the history of the ancestors. She explores "within the roots of identity,

spirituality and memory.” Her work has been included in publications such as: “Mujeres de Maiz Flor y Canto 'Zine' publications, volumes three through eleven, Where are The Chicana Printmakers, in Just Another Poster? Chicano Graphic Arts in California, by Holly Barnet-Sanchez, Borderlands: Critical Subjectivity in Recent Chicana Art, Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, by Judith L. Huacuja, and El Imaginario Chicano: La iconografía civil y política chicana en Estados Unidos de América 1965-2000, in Prague.” She has exhibited her work in galleries and museums such as “the Palos Verdes Art Center, Galeria Otra Vez in Self Help Graphics & Art, Avenue 50 Studio, and the Láfia House Gallery Brewery Arts Complex in Los Angeles, the Snite Museum of Art in Notre Dame, Indiana, the Fowler Museum in UCLA, the Jersey City Museum in New Jersey, and the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art in Austin Texas.”

Margaret Alarcon is a visual artist that is an honorary co-founder and member of the Mujeres de Maiz collective. She has developed her art skills in different ways. Alarcon took her first art classes at Self-Help Graphics. She remembered taking a watercolor class with professor and Xicana artist, Yreina D. Cervantez. She also taught herself to play guitar. Prior to attending Art Center, Alarcon learned how to make papel picado at Plaza de la Raza from Olga Ponce Furginson in the 1990s. Alarcon graduated and earned a B.F.A from Art Center in Pasadena and was trained as an illustrator. That is where she learned “drawing and painting and all that fancy stuff.” She also earned a Master’s degree in Education from National University. Then, she earned a Master’s in Fine Art from California State University Los Angeles.

Alarcon described the mixed-media mobile artwork she has worked on as a visual artist. She explained that her grandmother had left her family photographs and that is how

she began this body of work. She used oil cloth and amate paper to talk about the past and present. She also utilized gold paint to “bring back the majesty of ancient times.” These mobiles honored past heroes, past women who have inspired and sacrificed. She wanted to talk about memory because it’s fragile, very powerful, and can be very dark. These mobiles move freely and emit shadows that create interactive pieces, so that people can think about the images they see in these altars or alterities. The mobiles honor the “preciousness of memory, what we do remember I think is so precious that if we don’t, it’s like this hole, it’s just emptiness.” She explained that the history of our ancestry is part of our diaspora. She elaborated “some of us have more holes than others, maybe in their ancestry and uncovering that is... important.”

Maritza Alvarez is a person who was involved in the planning and organizing of events for the annual Mujeres de Maiz events. Maritza Alvarez is forty-seven years old at the time of the interview. Alvarez was raised in Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles. She graduated from high school and attended UC Santa Cruz. However, she completed her bachelor’s degree at UC San Diego. Alvarez co-founded Mujeres Unidas para Justicia Revolución y Educación because “MEChA at that time, was unwilling to include and look at the issues of sexuality and queerness.” She was also part of a Chicana Indigenous Identified Film Collective. While working, and attending Los Angeles City College, she decided to take a film class where she “fell in love, deep love” because she was “telling a story through the visual.” She ended up getting involved in a project through Film Independent and eventually received the Barbara Boyle Film Scholarship where they would fund her film school for one year at LA Film School.

Organization of Their Work

Mujeres de Maiz has served as a space for women both in organizing toward their annual event and as a support network. Alarcon remembered being approached by Felicia Montes and Claudia Mercado who had started Mujeres de Maiz about the idea of a publication for Mdm. Alarcon had gained graphic design skills while studying at Art Center that she utilized to produce an Art Zine for Mujeres de Maiz. In this case, Alarcon had the skills to produce a publication, so she created a Zine for Mujeres de Maiz. In addition to Mujeres de Maiz serving as a space for organizing, Mujeres de Maiz also served as a support network for its members. Alarcon described how art has functioned as transformation in her life. She remembered getting sick after a long relationship. She attended a bear ceremony, that is intended for healing and medicine. Like bears heal themselves after being injured, a bear ceremony takes place so people can heal their wounds. Alarcon felt that the ceremony transformed her life. She felt like she undid her whole life and her life fell apart and she had to pick it up the pieces of her life by herself. She restructured her thinking and life. During that time, she made some paintings and drawings that helped soothe and heal her so she could be able to express and talk about what she had experienced. Her relationship to art helped calm her mind and settle things. She added that at this time, the women from Mujeres de Maiz were there to support her in every way possible.

Maritza Alvarez discussed her involvement in the Mujeres de Maiz collective. With her experience in cinematography, Maritza Alvarez helped document what Mujeres de Maiz has done over many years. Alvarez's goal every time she was filming was to get as many mujeres or 'women' as possible helping with the documenting process. She

expressed that her aim was having women “doing the lighting, doing the camera work, have women behind the camera.” She also explained that she was part of the original core members of MDM whose responsibilities included such work as selecting “art pieces for the exhibition or sifting through poetry.” It also included “reading through poetry submissions” for the zine. As a member of Mujeres de Maiz, Alvarez felt there were three things that were important: to engage community members outside the core artists and intellectuals; have the annual event in a community in East Los Angeles such as Mariachi Plaza in Boyle Heights that was densely populated; and include and engage local, national, and international voices. In addition, there were ideas about creating workshops and engagement/exchange with artists on an intergenerational level. Alvarez wanted to engage artists on an intergenerational level which took place at one of the first Mujeres de Maiz events in the form of live mural painting across different generations of women muralists in 2009. Since then, intergenerational participation is something that continues to take place at Mujeres de Maiz events.

Alvarez also mentioned that she had worked with attempts to implement evaluations. She wanted to know how people/community members were responding. She wanted to know not just what the founders and intellectuals thought but also engage community organizers, strong leaders, strong voices in community. She also added that she didn't just want to see intellectuals sitting on panels but she also wanted to see mothers who are also organizers and leaders in their communities. She further explained that her critique was that the community needed to be involved otherwise it would be elitism. However, Maritza also expressed that at that point more than ever, she was glad that community engagement had successfully taken place.



Figure 3.0: Mujeres de Maiz; (left to right) Martha Gonzales, Maritza Alvarez, Margaret “Quica” Alarcon, Gina Aparicio, Felicia “Fe” Montes, Christina Gorocica and daughters, Lilia “Liliflor” Ramirez, and Claudia Mercado. Photographer: Unknown. 2017.

Ethnic/Racial and Gender Identity or Oppression and Access to Resources

In the United States, Mujeres de Maiz is a women’s art collective that provides a space for womxn of color. The United States is a country that values whiteness and marginalizes those who are perceived as “other.” Spaces created by Mujeres de Maiz are important because they are intercultural, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary. In a society that is divided, spaces like these allow for women and girls to work and build together. In their mission, Mujeres de Maiz seeks to empower women and girls through community spaces that provide holistic wellness. They collaborate with women artists and educators of Chicana/Latina, African, Central and South American, Jewish, Filipina, Asian, Native American and Sri Lankan descent who perceive cross-racial solidarity as a need. Cross-racial solidarity is important to work towards a society where we can understand each other’s differences.

Maritza Alvarez explained that the focus on women in the Mujeres de Maiz collective was important because there was an obvious disparity of representation of women everywhere including the arts. She stated that this had been the case historically and wherever there are women in the world. She also discussed how we are under a patriarchal system that has the idea that the masculine power should be dominant. So, there is a need for spaces that deconstruct those ideas and provide support for women. Margaret Alarcon added that there was a growing need and urgency for support systems for women. So, the goal was to provide as much support for women in their communities through the arts, holistic practices, and social justice. Alarcon adds that the MDM collective engages with community by inviting everyone from the community to show their work and perform. They also offer guidance for people to express themselves through poetry workshops.

Mujeres de Maiz has a mix of people from different socio-economic backgrounds. Alarcon discussed that historically her family was poor. She remembered her mother having holes in her shoes when she was growing up. Then, she mentioned that there was a progression because she, Margaret, did not have holes in her shoes. She remembers her parents telling her “you’re going to college” and “we want a better life for you, we want you to have a better life.” She remembered her parents living paycheck to paycheck. She added that most of the members came from a midway or in-between poor and middle class.

The three women's art collectives recognize the need for spaces for women to produce and create art. They recognized the importance of their contributions to their collectives. They find empowerment in their collectives and experiences despite facing

sexism at times. Through their existence in their collectives, they address gender issues, as well as, economics.

Mujeres de Maiz has accessed resources in different ways over time. Mujeres de Maiz was started as a grassroots organization, asked for in kind service and applied for grants. Alvarez disclosed that they are applying for grants and have applied for grants in the past. For example, she shared that she has participated in applying for two small grants that helped cover the charge for space. She also added that people who have facilitated workshops have done so with in-kind service. They have donated their time and skills for the benefit of the community.

Live mural painting at the Mujeres de Maiz's annual event is also a form of activism. The creation of a collective mural provides a space for intergenerational artists to meet. Alvarez explained that it is a way in which you don't have to "wait until they [artists] are deceased to honor them, if they are here now. You know. And there is mentorship." Alvarez organized a live mural painting that created a space for professional and experienced artists, as well as a younger generation of artists to meet and create art together. She also expressed that "we learn like, no matter what form of artist you are, there was always someone who came before you." So, spaces where you can meet living artists are important so you can honor them in their lifetime and learn from each other. So, live mural painting is a site where activism happens. There is a connection between living women artists, women artists in training, and women interested in the arts that create art that depict their lived experiences as womxn of color in a space with other womxn of color. This is a site where all the participants create visual artwork that is activism in its process.



Figure 4.0: Mujeres de Maiz Intergenerational Mural; (left) Yreina D. Cervántez (right) Noni Olabisi. Photographer: Unknown. 2009.

This project centers on the work of Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz because they are activist collectives. The women's art collectives in Oaxaca and in Los Angeles have had a mix of access to resources. The collectives have accessed grants, scholarships, and donations. In the case of Detalle de Mujer, they have had access to funding through state and federal agencies. Further, these collectives in some way, shape or form are a response to racial/ethnic issues in their communities. Whether in the United States or in Mexico, race and ethnicity are social markers that are utilized to label people as “other.” However, standing up, creating spaces, and talking

back are important things that women art collectives are doing in working toward a more equitable world. In Mexico, ethnicity/indigeneity is an issue that non-White Mexicans constantly face. In the United States, women artists of color also challenge racial/ethnic discrimination. All the women in this project not only challenge racial/ethnic discrimination, but also challenge discrimination based on gender. The women in this project face intersectional oppressions that include gender, race/ethnicity, and social economic status. It is their visual artwork that addresses and responds to the oppressions they face.

CHAPTER 5

MY CREATIVE INSPIRATION

As a Chicana artist in training, I pay a visual homage to the women in the HB, DM, and MdM art collectives who produce artwork that is activism. It is at California State University Northridge in the Chicano and Chicana Studies where I had the opportunity to develop my visual arts skills. Since 2010 and with the guidance of artist and professor, Yreina D. Cervantez, I have developed my drawing, painting, and printmaking skills. While conducting research and interviews for this project, I learned how to make stencils with Aler and Acker at Proyecto 30/30 in Oaxaca City, Oaxaca. Stencils are one of the media I utilize for this project. I utilize all the visual arts skills I have developed over the years to create portraits with acrylic paints, mixed-media stencils and paintings that represent the collective work of the collectives, and linoleum prints that represent the individual work of the women in the collective. The collection of artwork that follows is a visual homage. This visual homage will be connected by prints of hormigas or ‘ants.’ Across cultures and borders, the women in this project are like hormigas or ‘ants’ that constantly work in a collaborative effort towards their goals whether it is in the creation of patchwork pieces, garments, or visual artwork. This section begins with two portraits, one portrait from Hormigas Bordadoras and one from Detalle de Mujer.



Figure 5.0: Lilia from *Hormigas Bordadoras* (2018). Acrylic on canvas. 18"x24".

This is a portrait of Lilia Escobar Garcia from *Hormigas Bordadoras*. This portrait was drawn from a photograph I took of Lilia after one of the collective's meeting in San Francisco de Tanivet. This meeting and photograph took place at Escobar Garcia's family residence. I believe this portrait captures Lilia's positive attitude at all times. It captures her personality which includes someone who is willing to listen and talk about visual art production. It also captures a woman who is willing to dream and create artwork that documents her experience as a visual artist.



Figure 6.0: Leticia la creadora de sus sueños or ‘Leticia the Creator of Her Dreams’ (2018). Acrylic on canvas. 18”x24”.

This portrait represents the person who found her calling and dreamt the impossible. However, through her persistence and along with other women, she has developed the collective group, Detalle de Mujer. As the founder, she has seen women join and leave the collective. Despite that, she has maintained her vision alive and this collective has become her livelihood. Once she discovered her passion for designing clothing and incorporating a piece of her culture into her designs, she fought for a way to make Detalle de Mujer a possibility. Along the way, she has struggled to make her collective’s work something that can also support the women in the collective and herself. Despite that the work created by Detalle de Mujer is exchanged for money to provide an income for the women, their work is important because it is a way to preserve culture via textiles on stylized clothing.



Figure 7.0: Hormiga or 'Ant' (2017). Water-soluble ink on lokta paper. 4"x6".

This piece will help unify all the pieces by being in and around all the pieces. This piece will unify the artwork as a whole. It is also representative of the Hormigas Bordadoras or 'Embroidery Ants' based in San Francisco de Tanivet which is also known as, "El Hormiguero." All the women in this project are like hormigas or 'ants' that constantly work in a collaborative effort towards their goals whether it is in the creation of patchwork pieces, garments, or visual artwork.

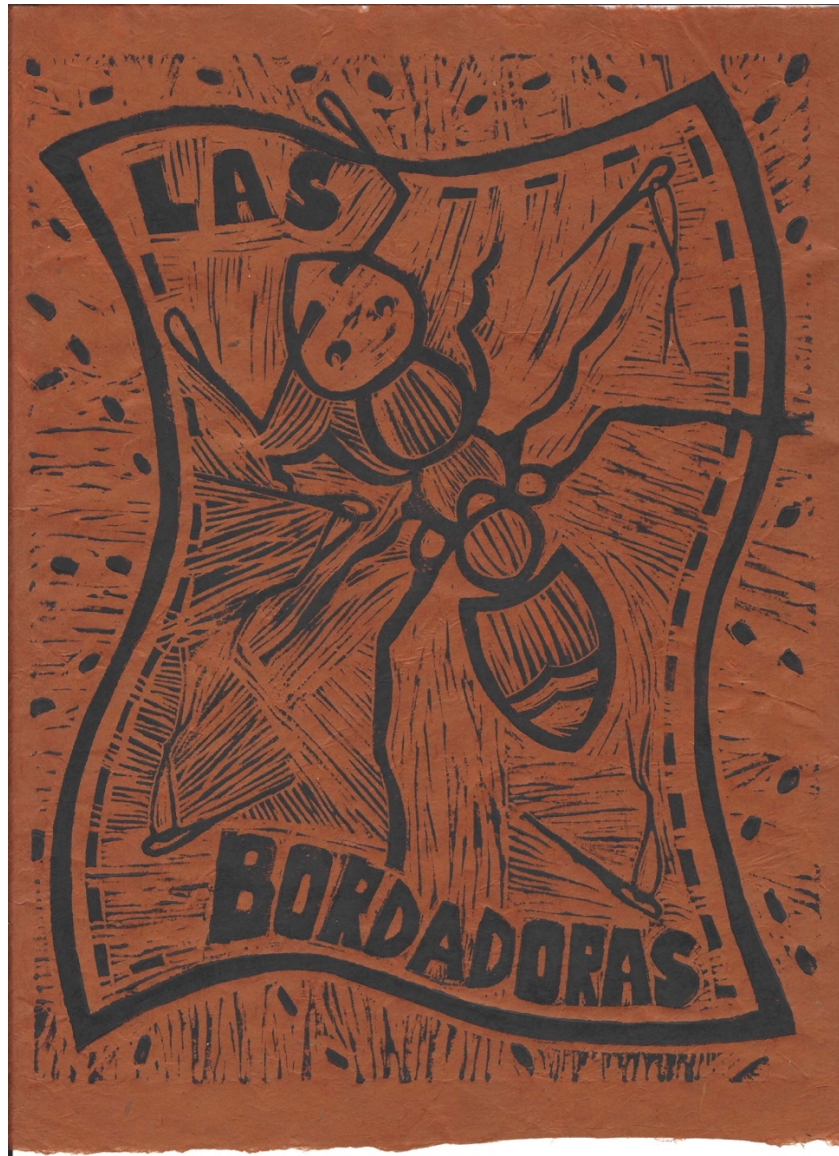


Figure 8.0: Hormigas Bordadoras or ‘Embroidery Ants’ (2017). Water-soluble ink on lokta paper. 8”x10”.

The Hormigas Bordadoras named themselves Hormigas Bordadoras since their hometown “Tanivet” is hormiguero in Spanish which translates to anthill. The women in this collective are the hormigas or ants who represent women and people in their community.

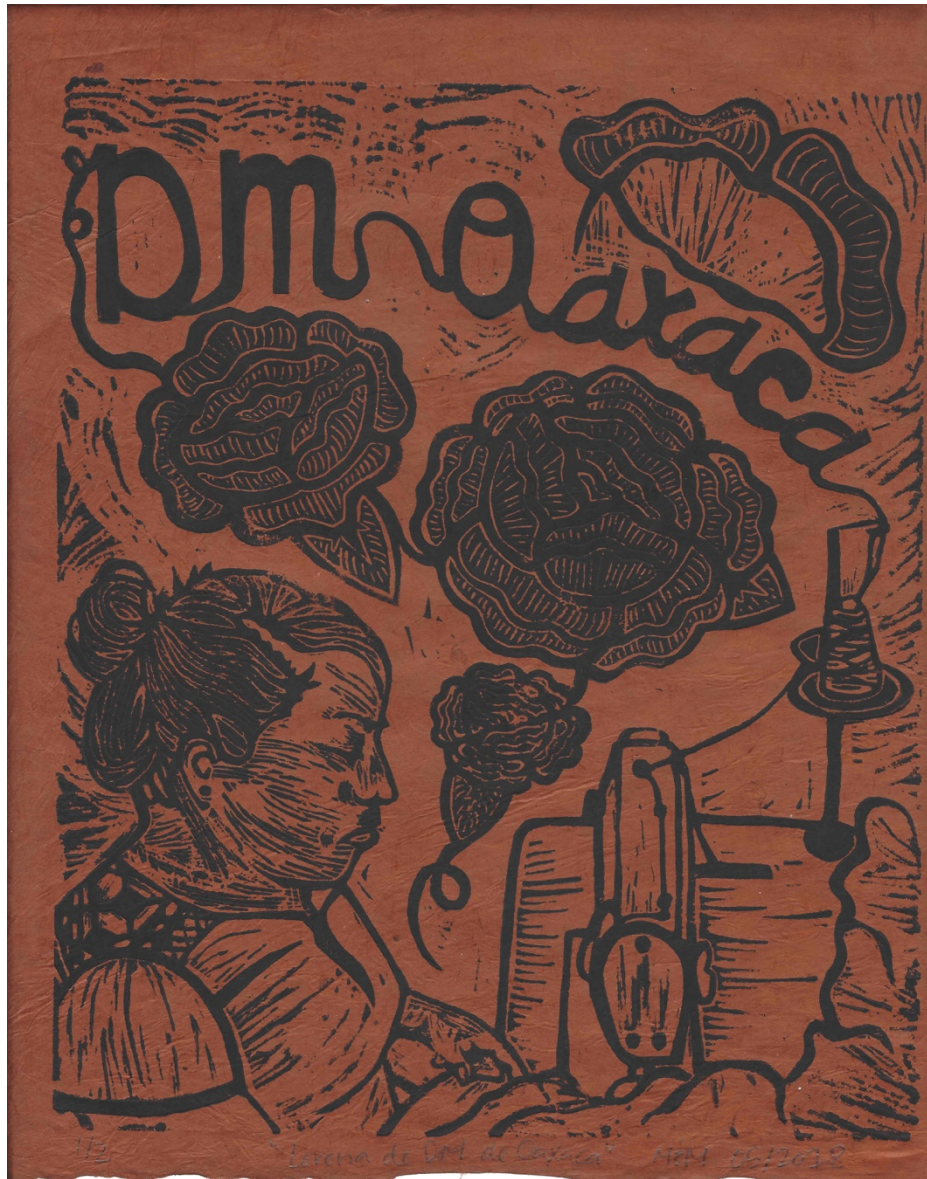


Figure 9.0: Lorena de DM de Oaxaca (2017). Water-soluble ink on lokta paper. 8”x10”.

This piece depicts Lorena working on the *maquina de coser* or ‘sewing machine.’ This also depicts her hard work as part of *Detalle de Mujer*. She is a single mother who continues to learn about sewing in order to make ends meet and support her children. The garments that she is creating are connected to the name at the top of this piece because she is one of the many women who contribute to *Detalle de Mujer*.



Figure 10.0: Maritza (2017). Water-soluble ink on lokta paper. 8"x10".

I would like to honor and document the work that women who have been part of Mujeres de Maiz continue to do. Maritza and Claudia both recorded the cultural exchange of Chicanas and aboriginal women's traditions in Australia. This portrait features Maritza.



Figure 11.0: Margaret (2017). Water-soluble ink on lokta paper. 8"x10".

This is a portrait of visual artist, Margaret Alarcon, who has created visual artwork for the Mujeres de Maiz collective. Alarcon creates artwork that depicts her complex identity as an indigenous woman living in Los Angeles. So, this lino-cut incorporates stencil techniques where I highlight light and dark to create a portrait of Alarcon that includes her personal logo.



Figure 12.0: De San Francisco de Tanivet a Los Angeles (2017). Acrylic on canvas. 3'x4'.

This work of art depicts how Las Hormigas Bordadoras see both San Francisco de Tanivet and Los Angeles. This artwork depicts the collective process of Las Hormigas when they have a project to complete. This artwork is based on a photograph taken to document their collective process.



Figure 13.0: Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca (2017). Acrylic on canvas. 3'x4'.

This work of art depicts Leticia and Lorena working together as they often do in the process of stylizing clothing. Leticia usually makes the patterns while Lorena sews them together. Depending on the amount of work and what are each of their strengths, determines who completes different parts of the process.

Overall, this visual depiction of these women's art collectives is a brief documentation of the years these women have spent on their visual art production. In the United States or across the imaginary border in Mexico, women continually create visual artwork as a response to the social issues in their communities. Detalle de Mujer create employment opportunities for women who are willing to learn to create garments that are guided by Hernandez-Diaz's designs. Hormigas Bordadoras create spaces for women to create patchwork pieces that depict their lives as women from San Francisco de Tanivet that are impacted by globalization. Mujeres de Maiz provide spaces by, for, and about womxn of color. These collectives create spaces for women who see space of possibility in the visual arts.

CHAPTER 6

ARTIVISM ACROSS CULTURES AND BORDERS

Women's lives are affected by globalization, sex, race/ethnicity, migration/immigration, and economics all over the world. This project focuses on three women's art collectives based in East Los Angeles, California, United States; Oaxaca City, Oaxaca, Mexico; and San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, Mexico. *Detalle de Mujer* (DM), *Hormigas Bordadoras* (HB), and *Mujeres de Maiz* (MdM) are women art collectives who individually and collectively create visual artwork. They create visual artwork that depicts their lived experiences and culture. *Detalle de Mujer* creates stylized garments that include embroidery, *Hormigas Bordadoras* create patchwork that captures the history of San Francisco de Tanivet, and *Mujeres de Maiz* provide a space for womxn of color to present their performance and visual artwork. *Detalle de Mujer*, *Hormigas Bordadoras*, and *Mujeres de Maiz* are womxn art collectives that engage in activism through the production of their visual artwork.

Detalle de Mujer is a women's art collective that engages in activism through their stylized garments that include embroidery. Leticia pays women in the collective fair wages, as well as, to the artisans who make the embroidery. For example, artisans take weeks and months to complete elaborate embroidery so Leticia explains that if an artisan asks for \$800 pesos for embroidery, that she will gladly pay that price. However, if she can't pay the price, she will not try to drive the price down because she understands the time and resources artisans spend on creating the embroidery. She also explains to the artisans that she understands the work it takes to create the embroidery and that they should think about the time and money they spent on their embroidery before lowering

their prices. The social consciousness she has developed over the years, she spreads within the collective and the artisans she works with. Since they are all working towards the same goal of creating garments with embroidery, she wants everyone to get paid for their labor. Another example, is that she helps train the women within the collective to make the best garments possible. Some women in the collective have had experience sewing garments but were not paid well for their labor. For example, the women were sewing and getting paid \$5 pesos per garment at the Central de Abastos or 'large swap meet' but had no expectations in terms of the quality of their sewing. However, Leticia paid the women \$10 pesos to sew each garment but expected well-made garments. So, Leticia explaining to artisans and women that their labor should be paid well is raising social consciousness and a form of activism. Detalle de Mujer is also making stylized garments that include embroidery that is preservation of culture. Detalle de Mujer highlights embroidery from regions throughout Oaxaca on their garments. They provide an opportunity for people to proudly wear garments that visually depict Oaxacan culture.

Hormigas Bordadoras engage in activism because they are a space for women to visually depict their stories. The collective, Hormigas Bordadoras, depicts the stories of San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca on their patchwork pieces which is a form of activism. As a women's art collective, Hormigas Bordadoras address the issues important to their perspective. Their artwork addresses social issues such as globalization that pushes people to migrate from communities like San Francisco de Tanivet. On their patchwork pieces, they document the many stories of their families and people who migrate from San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca, Mexico to Los Angeles, California, United States, because they can't find employment opportunities in San Francisco de Tanivet. They

captured stories along journeys of migration and stories of people who have reached Los Angeles. They also created an artwork that juxtaposed people from San Francisco de Tanivet living in the large city of Los Angeles and people from San Francisco de Tanivet in San Francisco de Tanivet. It highlighted the differences of a rural small town, San Francisco de Tanivet, and large city, Los Angeles. This art piece addressed the necessity for people to migrate due to globalization, to a place like Los Angeles. Hormigas Bordadoras is a response to global issues of migration. The women of Hormigas Bordadoras have created a space through their collective that provides an opportunity for the women to develop their art skills through their patchwork. In addition to the creation of artwork that documents their experiences, the women have the opportunity sell their artwork and have a form of income. An income that contributes to their household income, and that helps support their families. They have created employment opportunities that they needed to support their families. The creation of their visual artwork through patchwork is activism that has transcended borders because their artwork has been shared in London, England and Los Angeles, California. Hormigas Bordadoras depict stories of migration that are important to address because it isn't just an issue specific to San Francisco de Tanivet but a global issue. Hormigas Bordadoras' artwork is activism because it sparks conversations about globalization and its effects.

Mujeres de Maiz is a visual and performance art collective that engages in activism. This collective is a womxn of color art collective that creates a space for visual and performance artists to showcase their work. This is a unique space that is about womxn, for womxn, and by womxn. Women organize an annual Mujeres de Maiz event and includes a space for the arts. The visual artwork created by visual artists such as

Margaret Alarcon is powerful because it depicts her lived experience as a Xicana indigenous identified woman in the United States. Alarcon follows her intuition or what Gloria Anzaldúa refers to as La Facultad in her process of creating artwork for her latest exhibition, "Urban Release." Guided by La Facultad, Alarcon creates artwork that is intuitive and creates a presence of womxn of color in a society that values whiteness and marginalizes people of color. Alarcon's visual artwork is activism. Alvarez's participation in Mujeres de Maiz was also a form of activism because she participated in the documentation of events for Mujeres de Maiz. While she headed the recording of Mujeres de Maiz events, she also recruited other womxn of color to be involved in the process of recording. Documenting these events truly contributed to having a space by womxn, for women, and about womxn. Documenting Mujeres de Maiz's womxn centered space for over 20 years is activism.

Overall, Detalle de Mujer, Hormigas Bordadoras, and Mujeres de Maiz are examples women who are artists that engage in activism through the creation of their art or activism. Separated by imaginary borders, these collectives' existence and creation of artwork is proof of activism. Showing their art locally and globally is powerful because it raises awareness of the social issues they face in their communities. At the same time, their artworks transcend borders and can be relatable to other women. Artwork is intended to spark conversations and is not solely for aesthetic purposes. The women in this project have not created art for art's sake but art as a tool for social justice. They have created art that is a social response to global and local issues. Like the spaces that the women in this project have created, women art collectives are spaces for possibility.

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Appendix A- Study Protocol & Questions

Project Information Form

Date: Tuesday, April 7, 2015

Project Title: Women Artivism Across Cultures and Borders

Researcher Name: Martha Emma Martinez

All sections of the form must be completed within the field provided (do not attach a separate form with your responses). Type as much as you need, each field will expand to accommodate your answers. You must use 12 pt font. **Do not leave any sections blank.** **Answer all questions asked in each section.** Incomplete and/or handwritten forms will be returned.

Section 1 Background and Purpose of the Study

- Provide a concise description of the research project.
- State the objectives, and rationale.
- Provide background information on the hypothesis and/or research question to be tested including references/citations, if applicable.

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

This creative works research project will examine and analyze the visual artwork of three women art collectives including, the Mujeres de Maiz or Women of the Corn collective in Los Angeles and the Mujeres Artistas y el MAiZ (MAMAZ) or Women Artists and the Maize collective, and the Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer or Women's Art/Women's Detail collective in Oaxaca, Mexico. In particular, and for this research project, I will interview the Mujeres de Maiz, MAMAZ, and Arte de Mujer collectives to understand what social circumstances have led these women to utilize art as a tool for social change. This research study seeks to answer the following research questions: What is the history of the women and their families in Oaxaca and Los Angeles? What are social issues that women in Oaxaca and Los Angeles face? What is the importance of women's art collectives in Los Angeles and Oaxacan communities? The Mujeres de Maiz, Mujeres Artistas y El Maiz, and the Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer women's art collectives engage in the creation of artwork that can be identified as activism. According to Sandoval and LaTorre, "activism is a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism" (82). Through their activism, the collectives create visual discourses and challenge hegemonic structures that exist within their communities. The director of the MAMAZ, Marietta Bernstorff, explained that the hope for the group of women artists in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca is to create artwork that they can sell in order to be able to sustain themselves and their families. The women in Tanivet utilize the sewing skills that they have to create patchwork pieces that tell their personal narratives. In telling their narratives, these women are addressing social issues in their communities, including the consequences of sizeable migration from Oaxaca, Mexico to Los Angeles. In addition, Lynn Stephen explains that as result of the high volume of men migrating to the United States, women and children are having to engage in low wage work related activities (180). Collectives like MAMAZ and Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer are a response to the social

circumstances that people face in Oaxaca. The questions that will be addressed include personal questions about their life as well as questions about the collective that will provide historical context and information about the women's art collective respectively.

In addition to the written thesis, there will also be a visual art component that is part of the Creative Works Thesis Project. The written thesis, as well the exhibition, will include photographs of the women's work. The Creative Works Thesis Project will culminate with a visual arts exhibition that will include my artwork and photographs of the women. My artwork will represent the different types of work that women do in Oaxaca and Los Angeles to sustain themselves and their families. The exhibition will include a minimum of 2 paintings, 2 stencils, 2 drawings and 2 linos. It will also include 10 photographs and 6 clips of the audio/video recordings from the interviews. The images will also be utilized for scholarly presentations and publications, public presentations, and in the classroom for educational purposes. All unused photographs and audio/video recordings will be deleted.

Section 2 Subject Information and Recruitment Procedures.

Subjects

- Identify the study population (age, gender, health, etc.).
- What are the inclusion and exclusion criteria?
- If vulnerable (such as minors, prisoners or cognitively or emotionally impaired) please describe extra protections of rights and welfare.

Recruitment

- How will subjects be recruited?
- Will a screening device be used to select from the wider subject pool?
- Will there be any deception (that is, not telling subjects exactly what is being tested)? If so, provide a justification and plans for debriefing.
- Describe your procedures for consent (include minors (assent) and adult and/or parental consent)?
- If advertisements (e.g. craigslist, Facebook, newspaper, etc.), a letter of invitation, or fliers will be used to recruit, attach copies.

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

The studied population in all three collectivas will be the women who are part of the Mujeres de Maiz, Mujeres Artistas y el MAiZ (MAMAZ) women's art collective, and the Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer collective. The women who participate will be over the age of 18 and involved in their respective art collective for at minimum of 6 months.

Subjects at each location will be recruited through the director (Marietta Bernstorff at MAMAZ) and founder (Leticia Hernandez at Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer collective) who will present the research project and ask for participants in my presence during a meeting. The visual artist, (Margret Alarcon at Mujeres de Maiz), will be contacted to present the research project and ask her to participate. No emails, flyers or advertisements in any way will be distributed, nor will a screening device be utilized to select a wider subject pool. There will be no deception and I will further explain to my participants why I am conducting this research. I will have an Adult Consent Form that I will discuss with my subjects prior to my interviews with them so they know what they are consenting to and that they know they are voluntarily taking part in the interview process.

Section 3 Research Methodology and Study Procedures.

Procedure

- Describe in a step by step fashion, what subjects will experience in the research. For example, what will happen first, next, and so on. This should include the researcher's introductory remarks to participants, all testing, questions, observations, follow-up and debriefing of the study.
- Include the time duration of each part of the research.
- Will subjects be compensated for their participation? If so, describe. This may include cash or gift certificates or course credit. However, subjects cannot receive both course credit AND compensation.
- Specify the duration of each procedure.
- Identify any new procedures that you are investigating in the study and explain how they differ from standard procedures (medical, psychological, or educational).
- If deception is used, provide justification and plans for debriefing.

Instruments

- Attach the exact data collection instruments to be used in the study. If open-ended questions are asked, give examples of prompts to encourage responses.
- If translations are required, include those as well.
- If permission to use a copyrighted instrument is required, please include that as well.

[Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.](#)

The women who voluntarily agree to participate in the research project will be asked to commit 8 hours of their time.

The commitment will be divided into the following procedure for MAMAZ and Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer:

1. The first step in participating in the study is to fill out the Adult Consent Form (Appendix A) This will take about 20 minutes.
2. Then, the participants will be observed in their collective's meeting once a week for 4 weeks. They will be observed for an hour. I will take two photographs of each of the collective's (MAMAZ and Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer) meeting. Once the meeting is over, all the women will be scheduled for an individual interview. I plan to interview 8 women. This will take 30 minutes.
3. The researcher (Martha Martinez) will conduct two interviews at each organization per week for five weeks. This includes First Interviews and Follow-up Interviews (Appendix B and Appendix C). First Interviews will last one and a half to two hours. The Follow-up Interviews will last one and a half hours to two hours. I will take two photographs at the end of each interview with each woman (MAMAZ and Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer). The purpose of two interviews is in case I have additional questions.

4. Once the thesis is completed, all the participants and the researcher will meet for a debriefing meeting. (Appendix F) The debrief will take approximately 2 hours. This will take place in a group setting. I will also take the time to debrief individually with the women. I will take one hour to debrief with the MAMAZ Collective and one hour with the Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer Collective. The time span between step 3 and 4 is one year. By August 2015, I should have debriefed with the women. I will return to Mexico once I have completed my thesis to debrief.

Location: The interview with MAMAZ will take place at Nuevo Mundo Café in Oaxaca City, Oaxaca. The interview with Arte de Mujer will take place in Downtown Oaxaca City at Morelos 902, Solidaridad 68018, Oaxaca, Mexico. The researcher will work with your schedule in order to conduct the interviews at a time that is best convenient for you.

Compensation: The participants will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

Instruments: The instrument that will be utilized to collect data is a semi-structured, open-ended interview. The purpose of the open-ended interview is to get personal historical context and learn about the importance of art to address social circumstances of the women in the MAMAZ collective. (Appendix B and Appendix C)

The commitment will be divided into the following procedure for Mujeres de Maiz:

1. The first step in participating in the study is to fill out the Adult Consent Form (Appendix A) This will take about 20 minutes.
2. Then, the participants will be observed in their collective's meeting once in the month of August. The participants will be observed for an hour. In particular, I will be looking at the participant's role within the collective as one of the visual artists. I will take two photographs of of the Mujeres de Maiz collective's meeting. The participant will be scheduled for the first interview out of two interviews. This will take 10 minutes.
3. The researcher (Martha Martinez) will conduct two interviews. This includes a First Interview and Follow-up Interview (Appendix D and Appendix E). The First Interview will last one and a half to two hours. I will take two photographs of the visual artist of Mujeres de Maiz at the end of each interview. The Follow-up Interview will last one and a half hours to two hours.
4. Once the thesis is completed, the participant and the researcher will meet for a debriefing meeting. (Appendix F) The debrief will be an individual debrief with the visual artist from Mujeres de Maiz. The debrief will take approximately 1 hour.

Location: For the third women's art collective, The interviews will take place at the Mujeres de Maiz visual artist's office in Los Angeles, California. The researcher will

work with the participant's schedule in order to conduct the interviews at a time that is best convenient for the participant.

Compensation: The participants will not receive any compensation for participating in this Study.

Instruments: The instrument that will be utilized to collect data is a semi-structured, open-ended interview. The purpose of the open-ended interview is to get personal historical context and learn about the importance of art to address social circumstances of the women in the Mujeres de Maiz collective. (Appendix D and Appendix E)

The interviews with each individual woman in MAMAZ (Oaxaca, Mexico), Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer (Oaxaca, Mexico), and Mujeres de Maiz (Los Angeles, California) will be audio/video recorded and photographed. The women in MAMAZ, Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres de Maiz will be video recorded discussing their artwork. The women in the MAMAZ, Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres de Maiz and their artwork will be photographed. The purpose of the audio/video recording and photographs is to show how MAMAZ, the women artists from San Francisco de Tanivet, create patchwork art that depicts their experiences in a town with high numbers of men that migrate to the United States. We will be able to see MAMAZ's patchwork pieces, where they have stitched together their stories, as well as the story of their community, San Francisco de Tanivet. I will take photos of the women in MAMAZ and Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer sewing to capture their artistic process at their group meetings (collectively) and (individually) when they are interviewed. MAMAZ's work will be photographed and video/voice recorded at their group meetings (every Tuesday when they have their group meetings for 4 weeks) and individually in San Francisco de Tanivet. Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer's work will be captured at their storefront in Oaxaca de Juarez (every Saturday when they hold their group meetings for 4 weeks) and individually. The purpose of the audio/video recording and photographs is to show how the women artists for Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer create individual and collective textile work. Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer will also be voice recorded and video recorded to explain why they do the work that they do. The purpose of audio/video recording and photographs of the MAMAZ collective is to capture the discussion of their work and their visual work. The purpose for audio/video recording and photographs of Mujeres de Maiz is to show the experience of one of their visual artists who utilizes different mediums to create artwork. This will also capture the individual and collective work of the visual artist from Mujeres de Maiz. When I conduct the individual interview with the visual artist from Mujeres de Maiz, I will take photographs of her artwork and video record her experience as an artist. We will have visuals of the artwork that she is working on. I will also photograph the Mujeres de Maiz Collective meeting in August of 2015 to capture the visual artist's role within the collective. The overall purpose of the video/audio recordings and photographs is to have data to be examined for the thesis project.

Section 4 Anticipated Risks and Minimization of Risks

- List any potential risks to subjects and what steps have been or will be taken to minimize these risks.

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study are minimal but might include: fatigue, boredom, and shyness. In order to minimize these potential risks, the participants will be allowed to take breaks if needed. Also, if the researcher notices any discomfort, the researcher will check in with the participant to make sure everything is ok or if a break is needed. There is no known harm or discomfort associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life.

Section 5 Potential Benefits

- Specify the benefits that this project will have to society and specify how the project will directly benefit the subject.
- If the project will not benefit subjects directly then please state so.
- Explain why the risks are reasonable in relation to the potential benefits to subjects and to society.
- Do not include compensation in this section, as it is not a benefit.

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

Subject Benefits

You may not directly benefit from participation in this study.

Benefits to Others or Society

The results of this study might highlight the importance of art as a tool for social change. This is significant because women's art collectives such as Mujeres de Maiz, Arte de Mujer/Detalle de Mujer, and Mujeres Artistas y el Maiz are utilizing art to address the social circumstances they face in the United States and Mexico, respectively. Since the risks of this research are minimal, the potential benefits outweigh any potential discomfort associated with this research. The possible benefits include a better understanding of the importance of women's art collectives and the continued need to create spaces such as women art collectives that address social circumstances that women face. **Also another possible benefit-outcome is establishing initial connections/networks between Chicana artists and Oaxacan women artists for further communication and potential exchanges.**

Section 6 Confidentiality of Research Information/Data

- Explain how confidentiality of subject information will be maintained.
- Specify whether data will be collected anonymously (i.e. no direct identifying information such as name, email, address, or birth date, and no codes linking back to identifiers will be created/accessed.)
- Specify where study records will be stored, how they will be secured, and who will have access. (Identifiable data and de-identified data cannot be stored in the same location)
- Types of data:
 - Identifiable information

- List linking the identifiable information and de-identified information (i.e. list of pseudonyms and participant names)
- De-identified information
- If you intend to collect identifiable information specify when identifiable information will be destroyed, who will have access to identifiable information, where it will be stored and how it will be made secure.
- Specify the planned final disposition of all data after the study is complete (e.g. the data will be maintained for 3 years after the conclusion of the study and then destroyed, the data will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study, etc.)

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

The information stated in the survey, in the interviews, and information shared with the researcher, Martha Emma Martinez, will be kept confidential at all times. In order to keep the participants personal information confidential and to protect their privacy, they will be assigned a pseudonym. The primary investigator will be the only person to have access to a list that links the participants' personal information with their pseudonym. The purpose of this list is to help Martha Emma Martinez keep track and match the participants' information with the pseudonym. The linking list will be stored in the researcher's computer and it will be secured in the laptop that is protected by a password. This laptop is only accessible to the researcher. Photos and video/audio recordings (identifiable data) will be stored in the researcher's laptop that is protected by a [password. After the end of the Fall 2016 semester (expected graduation date), all identifiable data including, photographs, video recordings, and audio recordings will be destroyed.

Once all data is collected all identifiable information will be kept while the research analyzes it until the researcher defends her MA thesis for which these data is being primarily collected. After the end of the Fall 2016 semester (expected graduation date), all identifiable data will be destroyed. In the meantime, identifiable data will be kept in a separate cabinet at the researcher's home office under lock and key.

The interviews will be audio- recorded and will be transcribed. The investigator will also take notes during the interviews to aid with the analysis of the information shared. The notes, video recordings and the audio recordings of interviews will be kept safe in a cabinet separate from the identifiable data. Also, all de-identifiable information provided will be stored securely in the investigator's password protected laptop. After the end of the Fall 2016 semester (expected graduation date), all de-identifiable data will be destroyed. Martha Emma Martinez and her faculty advisor will be the only people who will have access to all the audio recordings from the interviews, notes, surveys, and any other information provide in the study.

Section 7 Potential Outcomes of Study

- Describe the projected outcomes of the project and how they relate to your hypothesis.
- Include the significance of your project to your discipline, department, school, university, community, etc.

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

The researcher hypothesizes that the qualitative data will provide knowledge and understanding of the history and social factors of the women's art collectives in Oaxaca that have led them to the creation of art to sustain themselves. In addition, the data will provide insights about activism and the response to factors that have led to the production of art by women in art collectives in Los Angeles and Oaxaca for an exchange of money to support themselves and their families.

A more critical understanding of the lived experiences of women in art collectives in Los Angeles and Oaxaca will benefit disciplines including Ethnic Studies, Chicana/o Studies, and Gender and Women Studies. It will also benefit the community at large because it will provide opportunities for others to learn about the production of women's artwork in art collectives in Los Angeles and Oaxaca which will demonstrate how artwork is a tool for social justice across cultures and borders.

Section 8 Researcher Qualifications and Expertise

- Summarize your qualifications to conduct this project (include prior research and training--resumés may be attached)

Do NOT delete the above instructions and type your response below this line.

Martha Martinez a candidate for the Master's in Chicana/o Studies at California State University Northridge is a community member and scholar. Her field of study and focus are interdisciplinary and she has received training at the university in preparation for her master's. She conducted two qualitative research studies in the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program as an undergraduate, and has experience conducting interviews with community members. In addition, as an undergraduate, courses in the Sociology and Chicana/o Studies have prepared the researcher to conduct interviews, code, and analyze data. Martha Martinez will be under the supervision of her chair for this study. The researcher's ties and commitment to the preservation and growth of the field of Chicana/o Studies are fundamental factors of her motivation for this project.

I. Interview Session: First Interview (Hormigas Bordadoras, Detalle de Mujer and Mujeres de Maiz Collectives)

Interview Section I:

Personal Questions/Preguntas personales

1. What is your name? How old are you? Como se llama? Que edad tiene?
2. How long have you lived in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca/Oaxaca, Mexico? Cuanto tiempo a vivido en San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca/ Oaxaca, Mexico?
3. Do you have family that lives in San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca/Oaxaca, Mexico? Tiene familia que vive en San Francisco de Tanivet, Oaxaca/Oaxaca Mexico?
4. Are you formally trained at an institution or did someone in your family or community teach you)? Usted fue capacitada por alguna escuela o institución o algún familiar o persona de su comunidad le enseñó?
5. Did you go to school? What level of education do you have? Usted fue a la escuela? Hasta que nivel de escuela llego?
6. What type of art do you do? How did you learn to create the type of art that you do? Are you self-trained/taught? Que tipo de arte sabe hacer? Como aprendio a hacer lo que el tipo de arte que sabe hacer? Usted se capacito o se enseñó sola?
7. What does social justice mean to you? Que significa para ti la justicia social?

Interview Section II:

Questions about the collective/Preguntas acerca de la colectiva

1. Why women (why is the focus on women)? Porque el enfoque es en la mujer?
2. Do you have a mix of middle and working class women? Tienen personas que son de clase media y de la clase obrera/trabajadora?
3. What are the collective's goals/objectives? Do you have a mission statement? Cuales son las metas y objetivos del colectivo? Tienen una declaración de misión?
4. How often do you meet? Cada cuanto se reúnen?
5. How do you function? Como funciona el colectivo? Do you work individually? If so, what do you do individually? Trabajan individualmente? Si trabajan individualmente, que hace cada persona?
6. Do you work collaboratively? If so, what do you do collectively? Trabajan juntas? Si trabajan juntas, que hacen?
7. Are you self-sufficient? Where do you get resources? Do you rely on grants? Son auto suficientes? Donde encuentran recursos? Ustedes utilizan subvenciones?
8. Does the collective engage with the community? If the collective has engaged, how has the collective engaged with community? La colectiva participa en eventos con la comunidad? Si la colectiva participa, como participan?
9. How does religion or spirituality take place in collectives? En que aspecto lleva acabo la religión o espiritualidad en la colectiva?
10. Does art function as a tool for transformation? Cree que el arte funciona como una herramienta hacia la transformación?

11. Does the collective establish or reestablish indigenous/native worldviews ? El colectivo establece o reestablece las visiones del mundo de los indígenas/nativos?
12. What do you think about social consciousness? Que piensa acerca de la conciencia social?

Appendix B- Transcribed Study Interviews

Interview with Leticia:

Part 1

I: Good morning we are with Leticia Hernandez from Detalle de Mujer. Well, I am going to ask you again. What is your name?

I: Buenos días estamos con Leticia Hernandez de Detalle de Mujer. Bueno le voy a volver a preguntar. Como se llama?

L: My name is Leticia Hernandez-Diaz. I am forty years old. Um, what else?

L: Yo me llamo Leticia Hernandez-Diaz. Tengo cuarenta años. Este que más?

I: Um... How long have you lived in Oaxaca?

I: Este... Cuanto tiempo ha vivido en Oaxaca?

L: Since birth, I am from here, I have forty years living in Oaxaca, well I left the city for some years for training, for work, for other things. But I was born here. I am originally from San Agustín ETLA, Oaxaca. It is a community that is twenty minutes from the city.

L: Yo desde que nací soy originaria de aquí. Tengo cuarenta años viviendo en Oaxaca, bueno salgo algunos años que he salido de la ciudad para capacitarme, para trabajar, para algunas otras cosas. Pero nací aquí. Soy originaria de San Agustín ETLA, Oaxaca. Es una comunidad que está a veinte minutos de la ciudad.

I: And... do you have family in San Agustín?

I: Y... tiene familia en San Agustín?

L: Yes... I have all of my family... Like I said earlier, I am originally from San Agustín, um, I am the daughter of, of two... of my parents, they had twelve children. We were a large family. I am the eleventh. So, I feel very lucky because... although my parents had a large family, they were caring, loving, and educate us. They were always watchful, no. They gave us values and all of that. So... I think for me... I feel like a very special person in my family because after my mom had ten children, um, their godparents from marriage told them no more children, there are too many already. Her godmother had a hospital where she delivered her children and where they handled her births. So, when the tenth person was born they told her no more children, that they were going to tie her tubes but she... she didn't want to. So, I was born and they didn't go to the hospital. So, I was born at home with a midwife and... and uh, they didn't, they didn't go to their godmother because they were embarrassed. So, fortunately everything went well.

L: Si... pues yo tengo a toda mi familia este... como decía yo hace rato, soy originaria de San Agustín, eh, soy hija de, de dos... de mis papas, llegaron a tener doce hijos. Fuimos de familia muy numerosa. Yo soy la onceava. Por lo que yo me siento muy afortunada porque este... mis papás a pesar de haber tenido pues una familia muy grande supieron sobre todo darnos cariño, darnos amor, educarnos. Todo el tiempo estuvieron a la expectativa, no. De darnos valores de todo eso. Entonces este... A mi creo que me... Yo me siento como una persona muy especial dentro de la familia porque después de que mi

madre había tenido diez hijos, este, sus padrinos de casamiento le dijeron ya no más hijos, ya son muchos. Y su madrina tenía un hospital y ahí se aliviaba y allí le atendían sus partos. Entonces cuando nació la décima persona este le dijeron que ya no más hijos, que la iban a operar pero ella...ella no quiso. Entonces nació yo y ellos no acudieron al hospital. Entonces yo nació en casa con una partera y... y este, ellos ya no, por pena ya no fueron a ver su madrina. Entonces afortunadamente todo salió bien.

L: After time passed, they noticed that... after two years, my mom is pregnant again with the twelfth daughter. And her godparents told her why she had put herself at-risk with the twelfth daughter and didn't say anything. So, she said because they had told her no more, no. However, it is a beautiful story that at the end it has... I feel that it has, has an antecedent to prepare something beautiful for me in life because I was different from all my siblings. The two brothers were born in the same hospital. They had the same godparents when they were baptized. Um, everything was... from the first child to the twelfth child to the tenth it was the same model that my parents followed. When I was born, they took me to get baptized by other people like... with other godparents.

L: Tiempo después se dieron cuenta que... después de dos años, otra vez mi mamá se vuelve a embarazar para la doceava hija. Y es cuando sus padrinos le dicen que porque se había arriesgado con la doceava y no había avisado. Y entonces ella les dijo que porque ya, ya le habían marcado su alto, no. Mas sin embargo es una historia bonita que al final tiene... Yo siento que tiene, tiene como un antecedente para prepararme algo bonito en la vida porque fui diferente a todos mis hermanos. Los dos hermanos nacieron en el mismo hospital. Tuvieron los mismos padrinos de bautizo. Este, todo fue como... desde el primer hijo hasta el doceavo hijo hasta el décimo fue el mismo modelo los que mis papás seguían. Cuando nació yo me llevan a bautizar con otras personas como a... con otros padrinos.

L: And um... the godmother of the other eleven children um... years later I saw her when my mom was sick and she started asking for forgiveness because the... I wasn't born in her clinic, in her hospital and because she felt bad for having said that to my mom. No. And I told her no, that it never affected me. While at home, when we were kids there fights because we were so many, um... they always told me I was the ugly duckling. They didn't want you. And no, I would bring up the lineage and told they I wasn't the ugly duckling. I am a unique being, different from all of you. And I am different from you so I am I am not like all of you. So, it was always that idea, or that... We could've taken it that for another person it would've been a scar or a mark, for me it was a type of strengthening. That me, that my parents had lived through that until I was older they told me about it and they talked about it with me and I understood it. When I was smaller by instinct... I would defend myself by saying I am not the ugly duckling. I am a unique being, I am a unique person, the best daughter, the best everything, no. So, that has taken me to... in life I have come across many obstacles but they do not scare me. On the contrary, it turns into a challenge for me and I say that I am going to do it, I am going to be able to do it, I am going to achieve it.

L: Y este...la madrina de bautizo que era de los otros once hijos este... años después me la encuentro cuando mi mamá ya estaba enferma y empieza la señora a pedirme perdón porque el...yo no había nacido en su clínica, en su hospital y porque ella se sentía mal

por haberle dicho eso a mi mamá, no. Y pues yo le dije que no, que a mi nunca me había afectado. Mas sin embargo de niños cuando había pleitos de casa por ser tantos, este... siempre me decían tú eres el patito feo. A ti no te querían. Y no, yo siempre sacaba la casta y les decía no yo no soy el patito feo. Yo soy un ser único, diferente a todos ustedes. Y yo soy mejor que ustedes por eso no soy igual que ustedes. Entonces, siempre como que esa idea, o esa... pudiéramos haberlo tomado que para otra persona hubiera sido una huella o una marca, para mí fue una especie de fortalecimiento. El que, el que mis papás hayan vivido eso hasta que yo era grande me lo comentaban y me lo platicaron y yo ya lo podía entender. Cuando yo era chiquita por instinto de... de no dejarme yo les decía no yo no soy el patito feo. Yo soy el ser único, soy la persona única, la mejor hija, la mejor todo, no. Entonces eso me ha llevado a... en la vida me he topado con muchos obstáculos pero no me dan miedo. No, al contrario se convierten para mí en un reto y digo lo voy a hacer, lo voy a poder, lo voy a lograr.

L: And uh... I think that it is, it is proof that my mom gave me, that she was brave. Although she had ten children, she decided not to get her tubes tied because of her beliefs because of the way she was educated, no. No, well, my grandparents and parents had the idea that at that time that was a sin, like rejecting God's will and they grew up in that faith, in that ideology, no. Of respecting what God mandated. And for them, God had planned twelve children and they accepted twelve children with lots of love, with lots of affection, with lots of bravery. My parents had a low-socioeconomic status, and they never, never said that's it. Or, they never said we are going to give him more and give her less. No because I saw how my parents were equivalent, how they created equity, no and about family unity, keeping us together. Overall, my father because my father was a person who became an orphan when he was three years old. And he fought in life alone and how he could. Because his mom uh... she passed, during a time when there was a chickenpox epidemic. And with his mother, three brothers died. And he was alone with his father who were the ones saved in their family. So, he grew up with his stepmother.

L: Y este... creo que ese es una, una muestra que mi madre me dio, pues que fue muy valiente. Porque a pesar de que ya tenía diez hijos, pues ella decidió no dejarse operar por las creencias por las formas en que anteriormente los educaban, no. No, que pues al menos mis abuelos o mis papás tenían las ideas de que pues eso era en ese entonces como un pecado, como renegarte a la voluntad de Dios y ellos crecieron en esa fe, en esa ideología, no. De respetar lo que Dios dispusiera. Y para ellos Dios había dispuesto doce hijos y doce hijos aceptaron con mucho amor, con mucho cariño, con mucha valentía. Porque pues mis padres eran de escasos recursos económicos, y aun así nunca, nunca dijeron hasta aquí. O nunca dijeron a él le vamos a dar más y a ella menos. No, porque yo si miraba en mis papás cómo lograban equivalgar, como hacían la equidad, no y la unidad familiar, el mantenernos juntos. Sobre todo de mi papá porque mi papá fue una persona que se quedó huérfano a los tres años. Y luchó en la vida pues solo y como pudo. Porque su mamá este... falleció en una, en una época que hubo epidemia de varicela. Y junto con su mamá murieron tres de sus hermanos. Y se quedó solamente él y mi abuelo se salvaron de la familia. Entonces creció con su madrastra.

L: Finally, my grandfather found someone else and had more children. But he suffered but was never resentful. On the contrary, to this day uh... he always comments that,

that... God took his mother but gave him a better one, no. He always said Maria was his mother and that he took refuge on her. That is why he showed us to have faith, to have love, to forgive, to not be rebels with life, because life has many beautiful things. And since he was three years old he stayed with that and, and, and he lived it all his life, no. He was a good person, a positive person. And he was able to share that with us, his children. My father is a person who never feels rancor, resentment. He doesn't, on the contrary, he has always told us that when we have an enemy, give him your hand because that is the best revenge that you can give your enemy. No? And I think it is a beautiful demonstration because like siblings or people, they helped us get ahead.

L: Finalmente mi abuelo consiguió a otra persona y tuvo más hijos. Pero él si sufrió pero nunca se crió como una persona rencorosa. Si no al contrario él hasta la fecha esté... siempre comenta que, que... Dios le quitó a su mamá pero le dio a una mejor, no. Siempre decía que María era su madre y que, y que pues él en ella se refugiaba. Por eso él nos enseñó a tener fe, a tener amor, a perdonar, a no ser rebeldes con la vida, no porque la vida tiene muchas cosas bonitas. Y él desde los tres años se quedó con eso y, y, y lo vivió todo su vida, no. Siendo una buena persona, una persona positiva. Y eso nos logró contagiar a nosotros como sus hijos. No, porque mi papá es una persona que jamás siente rencor, resentimiento. Él para nada, al contrario, siempre nos ha dicho, cuando tengan un enemigo, déanle la mano porque esa es la mejor venganza que su enemigo puede tener. No? Y creo que es una muestra pues muy bonita porque a nosotros como hermanos o como personas, pues nos sacaron adelante.

L: They provided schooling for all of us. In reality, the ones that don't have a career are because they didn't want to. It wasn't because they said they were tired or I can't or I don't have anymore. Because they never...they never limited us. They gave us, well we could say they didn't gave us handfults but what was necessary. Like... not to stop you from your mission, from your objectives that you had in life. No? I think that is an antecedent that is important because I feel that that is where my strength comes from, that impulse to get be Detalle de Mujer to be a reality we have had to go through many things. No? Obstacles, difficult times, also times of prosperity, satisfactions. But overall obstacles, obstacles. And so I have always thought that when we make a project, when we have a, a, want to make something we have to make it thinking of others. In being able to help others. That is what gives you strength, what impulses and it's a type of synergy that one generates and things begin to work, no? They begin to work. And I for example, for example, like... I don't know, fifteen years ago we could say that I could see the dream of having a business, of having a shop, a shop like the one I have, almost impossible, no? Because I didn't, Because I didn't have the resources. Because I didn't have the contacts. However, this... has developed through time. No? Good. Anything else?

L: A todos nos dieron estudios. Realmente el que no tiene una carrera fue porque no quiso. Pero no porque ellos dijeran ya me canse, o ya no puedo, o ya no tengo. Porque ellos nunca se... porque ellos nunca nos limitaron. Nos daban, pues pudiéramos decir no a manos llenas, pero si lo necesario. Como... no como para desistir de tu misión, de tus objetivos que tenías en la vida. No? Y ese es un antecedente que yo siento que es importante comentarlo porque de ahí siento que viene como esa fuerza, ese impulso de que para llegar a ser Detalle de Mujer una realidad hemos tenido que pasar por muchas

cosas. No? Obstáculos, tiempos difíciles, tiempos de bonanza también, de satisfacciones. Pero más que nada obstáculos, obstáculos. Y pues de que yo siempre he pensado que cuando hacemos un proyecto, cuando tenemos un, un, las ganas de hacer algo lo tenemos que hacer pensando en los demás. En poder ayudar a los demás. Por que eso es lo que te da fuerza, lo que te impulsa y es una especie de sinergia que uno genera y se van dando las cosas, no? Se van dando. Y yo por ejemplo, por ejemplo, hace... no sé, quince años pudiéramos decir veía casi imposible el sueño de llegar a tener una empresa o de llegar a tener un taller por lo menos un taller como lo que tengo ahora porque lo miraba muy difícil, no? Porque no, porque no tenía los recursos. Que no tenía yo los contactos. Mas sin embargo este... pues se ha dado con el tiempo. No? Bueno. Algo más?

I: Yes, no. I also want to return to... to your education or how you were trained to where you are today?

I: Si, no. También este quiero volver a... a su educación o Como fue capacitada para llegar a donde, a donde está hoy? (11:00)

L: Once again. Um... I am telling you that I was fortunate to have the parents that I had because um... I completed my univer... elementary, middle school, everything was normal. When I was in middle school I no longer wanted to study because it was a difficult stage in, in our family because my older sisters were adolescents, they were adults. Three of them got married. Um... they got married. Three of my sisters got married in one year and then... the oldest was studying accounting. And I would hear my mom tell her not to get married, to finish her career. Instead of a graduation we can have your wedding but prepare yourself, get trained, and then you get married. And she would say no mom, I am going to get married because you have many obligations and my husband will help me finish my studies. I will finish my studies. My mom told her not to fool herself, it's not true. Then, it happens to the next sister. And then... it happens to the third. She was even studying at a private school because my parents wouldn't tell you... if they could or couldn't. They would ask what you wanted to do and they would support you no matter what it cost them. Our third sister was studying at a private school. And the same thing happened. Um... She got married and it didn't matter um... the fact that my parents had made an investment with her.

L: Bueno pues igual. Este... te digo que fue muy afortunada de tener unos papas como los que tuve porque yo este... Pues curse mi unive... primaria, secundaria, todo normal. Cuando yo iba a la secundaria ya no quería estudiar porque fue una etapa como difícil en, en la familia porque para ese entonces mis hermanas las más grandes ya eran adolescentes, ya eran adultas. Y tres de ellas se casaron. Este... se casaron. En un año se casaron tres de mis hermanas y entonces este... la mayor estaba estudiando contabilidad. Y mi mamá yo escuchaba que mi mamá le decía no te cases hija, acaba tu carrera. Si quieres en vez de graduación, hacemos tu boda pero preparate, capacitate y después te casas. Y ella decía no mamá me voy a casar porque usted tiene ya muchas obligaciones y mi esposo me va ayudar a acabar de estudiar. Y yo voy a acabar de estudiar. Y le dijo mi mamá no te engañes hija, eso no es verdad. Este... mejor acaba de estudiar y despues haces todo lo que tu quieras. Y ella no escuchó. Después viene la siguiente hermana y pasa lo mismo. Y así... hasta la tercera también. Ella estaba estudiando incluso en una escuela particular porque mis papas pues no solo te decían

este... si podían o no podían. Si no que querías hacer y ellos te apoyan. Les costara lo que a ellos les tuviera que costar. Y la tercera de mis hermanas, ella estaba estudiando en una escuela particular. Y lo mismo paso. Este... se caso y pues no le importo este...el hecho de la inversión que estaban haciendo en ese instante mis padres con ella.

L: That led me to reflect and think and say that to fall in love is an ugly sickness because it doesn't let you rationalize. So... I was scared then to say I am growing and I am starting to be an adolescent. What if one day I fall in love and I throw away everything my parents have done for me. So, then I told my mom, mom don't invest in me anymore, don't get tired anymore since I saw how she worked to be able to get us ahead. My mom was the kind of person that would go to sleep at the end, at twelve, and one in the morning and would wake up at four or five in the morning to go sell her products at the market. Because what she did is that my dad planted. He planted lettuce, radishes, flowers. There were always avocados, peaches, apples, whichever fruit at home. Never, never was there ever something missing...to sell. So, what my mom would do is take her baskets filled with fruit, boxes of avocados, her, her flower bunches, her radish bunches, her bags of lettuce, everything. And she would take that to the market to sell. And independently from making money from selling, what she didn't sell she traded it. She traded it for tortillas, onions, tomatoes, supply of food. And my mom would always return with her pockets full of money and her baskets filled with food. So... we were never missing anything. Nothing that was essential. Maybe we wished to have many things that were not essential. So, um... so I would see my mom's tiredness, I would say there is no point that my mom invests in me, if I am going to do the same thing that my sisters did.

L: Eso me llevo a mi como a reflexionar y a pensar y a decir creo que el enamorarse pues es una enfermedad fea porque no te deja razonar. Entonces... este yo tenía miedo en ese instante decir yo ya estoy creciendo empiezo a ser una adolescente. Que tal que un dia yo me enamoro y voy a echar a saco roto todo el esfuerzo que mis padres han hecho conmigo. Y entonces le dije a mi mamá, mami en mi ya no invierta, ya no se canse porque miraba como trabajaba mi mamá para podernos sacar adelante. No, mi mamá era de las personas que se dormían al último, hasta la doce, una de la mañana y se levantaban a las cuatro o cinco de la mañana para, para llevar a vender sus productos al mercado. Porque ella lo que hacía es de que mi papá sembraba. Sembraba lechuga, rábano, flores. Siempre había aguacate, durazno, manzana, cualquier fruta en la casa. Nunca, nunca en la casa faltó algo de... para vender. Entonces lo que mi mamá hacía era llevarse sus canastos de frutas, sus cajas de aguacate, sus, sus ramos de flores, sus ramitos de rábanos, sus bolsitas de lechuga, todo. Y eso se llevaba al mercado a vender. Y ella independientemente de que sacara dinero de vender, lo que ya no vendía lo cambiaba. Lo cambiaba por tortillas, por cebollas, por tomates, por víveres. Y mi mamá siempre regresaba del mercado con dinero en las bolsas y con sus canastos llenos de comida. No? Entonces... nunca nos hizo falta como nada. No? Nada de lo indispensable. Tal vez deseábamos tener muchas cosas pero que no eran indispensables. Entonces, este... eso yo miraba el cansancio de mi mamá, yo decía no tiene caso que mi mamá invierta en mi, si yo voy a salir con lo mismo que mis hermanas.

L: So, I refused and told my mother, no I am not going to study. She said, my daughter you have to study. No mom, no because what if the same thing that happened to my sisters happens to me. I don't want to. And she would tell me well it's not going to. You are seeing what your sisters did and are aware of it. You are not going to do the same. You are only going to concentrate on what you want to be and what you want to do. And then I practically dropped out of middle school... I didn't study the upper half of middle school or high school, nothing. I stayed at home. And like a month after I stayed home, my mom told me she couldn't have me at home. You have to go learn something, go do something. And um... and it was when she said it's fine study beauty or career or something. So, it was then when I studied beauty but at a month and a half, I saw it wasn't for me. I didn't like cutting hair, the liquid to make curls smelled bad. Um, no, no, no, it was chaos. I told my mom, don't waste your money on me. I don't like it. I am not going to do it. I go so they can style my hair, so they can dye my hair, so they can do what they want. And I don't want you to keep wasting your money on something I am not benefitting from.

L: Y entonces fue que me negué y le dije a mi mamá, no yo ya no voy a estudiar. Me dice hija, tienes que estudiar. No mamá, no porque que tal que me pasa lo mismo que a mis hermanas. Yo no quiero. Y me decía ella no pues es que no. Tu porque estas viendo lo que hicieron tus hermanas y estas conciente de eso. Tu no lo vas a hacer. Nadamas te vas a concentrar en lo que tu quieres ser y en lo que tu quieres hacer. Y entonces fue que me quede prácticamente saliendo de la secundaria... no me metí a estudiar la media superior ni la prepa, ni nada. Me quede en la casa. Y entonces como al mes de que me quede en casa, me dijo mi mamá sabes que no te puedo tener aquí. Te tienes que ir a aprender algo, a hacer algo. Y este... y fue que ella me dijo está bien estudia belleza o un oficio o algo. Y entonces fue que me metí a belleza pero al mes que me metió, pues vi que no era algo para mi. No me gustaba cortar el cabello, me olia feo el líquido de los chinos. Este, no, no, no, era un caos. Y le dije mami, no gaste su dinero en mi. No me gusta. No lo voy a hacer. Voy pero a que me peinen, a que me pinten, que me hagan lo que quieran. Soy el maniquí de la academia. Pero yo no muevo un dedo porque no me gusta. No me llama la atención. Y yo no quiero que usted siga gastando en algo que yo no estoy aprovechando.

L: And it was when my mom told me, okay if you don't want to do things on your own, then we will have to do them on my terms. You will leave the academy; I will take you out of the academy and you are going with your aunt. At that time, my aunt had an academy for dressmaking. And she told me you are going with her. No, I told her I wasn't going to go learn to sew because I didn't like it. It's not that you like it, you are doing it. She forced me to go. First, she made me believe I was going to go clean for my aunt. I went because I was told I was going to wash, sweep, dust. My aunt received me the first day. Wash here, clean there, dust, arrange this. The next day I was trustful, I got there and my aunt told me... On the table is the material you are going to use for class and said here's your material. From now on you are going to come to class. I said I don't want to. Well I didn't ask you if you want to or not, you are going to do it because I say so. Your mom and I say so. You are still a young girl that has to obey. Since I had to be obedient, I learned to sew. And because they forced me to. From then, I started sewing. I saw that it was beautiful. It started calling my attention. After that, the next year my aunt

got my documents in... she got me a spot at the high school. She told me you are going to go study. But I don't want to study. We are not asking you if you want to study or not. You are going to go study. So I went back to high school. My aunt would check the time that I went in well, at that time my mom was responsible because I woke up at home. They would wake us up at five in the morning to do chores and at seven we would go to school. At six in the morning we had to leave home so we could catch the bus that made it into the city at seven, six thirty or seven. Classes would start at seven. From then, I would stay here til eleven in the morning. Or I would stay until my classes ended and then go to the academy. My aunt would give me classes. And I would stay all evening.

L: Y fue que me dijo mi mamá, esta bien como no quieres a la buena, pues entonces a la mala. Te sales de la academia, te sacó de la academia y te vas a ir con tu tía. Mi tía en ese entonces tenía una academia de corte y confección. Y me mijo de vas a ir con ella. No, le dije yo no me voy a ir a aprender a coser porque a mi no me gusta. Pues no es que te guste, lo vas a hacer. Y me mandó a la fuerza. Y primero me hizo creer que yo le iba ir a hacer el aseo a mi tía. A lavar, a barrerle, a sacudirle y con esa condición fui. Y si, mi tía el primer día me recibió. Que lava aquí, que limpia allá, que sacude, que acomoda. Y al siguiente día cuando iba yo confiada, llegue y me dijo mi tía... sobre la mesa ya tenía el material que yo iba ocupar para la clase y me dijo aquí esta tu material. A partir de hoy vas a venir a clases. Dije tía pero yo no quiero. Pues es que no te estoy preguntando si quieres o no, lo vas a hacer porque así dispuse. Tu mamá y yo, así dispusimos. Y tu eres una niña que todavía tiene que obedecer. Así es de que, por obediencia aprendí a coser. Y porque me obligaron. No, de allí empece a coser. Vi que si era bonito. Me empezó a llamar la atención. Despues de allí, al siguiente año mi tía ya me saco mis documentos en... me saco mi ficha en la prepa. Y me dijo te vas a ir a estudiar. Pero si yo no quiero estudiar. No es estamos preguntando si quieres o no. Tu te vas a ir a estudiar. Y entonces me metí a estudiar la prepa. Para ese entonces mi tía me checaba la hora de que entraba yo pues a la prepa a la hora que entraba era responsabilidad de mi mamá porque amanecía yo en mi casa. No, nos levantaban a las cinco de la mañana a hacer los quehaceres y vete a la escuela a las siete de la mañana, a las seis de la mañana teníamos que salir de casa para agarrar el autobús que llegaba a las siete de la mañana aquí a la ciudad a las seis y media siete. A las siete entrabamos a las clases. De allí me quedaba hasta las once del día. O hasta la hora que terminara mi horario de clases y me iba yo a la academia. Y ya mi tía me daba clases. Y me quedaba toda la tarde.

I: Where was the academy?

I: Y donde estaba la academia?

L: Here, downtown. Like four blocks from here. So um.... That's what my aunt did. When I had a year learning dressmaking, a year and a half, she told me, I am going to open a branch in, in Etna. And um... I don't have anyone to give classes there so you are going to have to go. I told her but I don't know anything. Yes, you do. And you are going to learn with them. So we are going to go and I will present you, and what you don't know you are going to bring it to me the next day and I am going to show you how to do it. And in the evening you can teach it. So without knowing much, I began teaching. I had to learn with my students to um... to do it. So that is how she got me interested, she

got me interested. When I finished high school um... she told me... um, that what did I want to study.

L: Aquí en el centro. Como a unas cuatro cuerdas de aquí. Entonces este... así me trajo mi tía. Ya cuando yo tenía un año estudiando corte y confección, año y medio, fue que me dijo voy a abrir una sucursal en, en Etna. Y este... no tengo quien de clases allí, te vas a tener que ir tú. Y le dije pero yo no sé nada. No, si sabes. Y vas a aprender junto con ellas. Así es de que vamos a ir porque te voy a presentar y tú, lo que tú no sepas te lo vas a traer para que al otro día aquí te lo enseñe. Y en la tarde lo enseñas tú. Y así es de que sin saber casi nada, me puso a dar clases. Y tuve que aprender junto con mis alumnas a este... pues hacerlo. Y fue así como me fue metiendo, me fue metiendo. Para cuando termine de estudiar la prepa este... me dijo... este, que que quería yo estudiar.

L: I told her I wanted to study architecture. But at school we had a teacher that was the teacher for technical drawing that made our lives impossible. And he would tell us that, that the of architecture was saturated and it wasn't possible for anyone to study there. He would discourage us because he said architecture was difficult. He would leave us a lot of homework. I would do the homework and um... he would rip it, he scribbled on it, he wouldn't let us fix it, he would make us do everything. And it was then when he completed his objective because I was disillusioned about architecture. And um... I didn't want to study architecture anymore.

L: Y le dije yo que yo quería estudiar arquitectura. Pero en la escuela teníamos un maestro que era el de dibujo técnico que nos hacía la vida de cuadritos. Y que nos decía que, que la escuela de arquitectura estaba muy saturada y que no era posible que cualquiera, fuera a estudiar allí. Así que de su cuenta corría desanimarnos porque arquitectura no era cualquier cosa. Y nos dejaba muchísima tarea. Hacía yo la tarea y este... nos la rompía, nos la rayaba, no nos permitía componer, nos hacía hacer todo. Y entonces fue cuando sí consiguió su, su objetivo porque me desilusioné de arquitectura. Y este... ya no quise ir a estudiar arquitectura.

L: So, I decided to study fashion design. Beside my mom selling and doing many things when she was resting because her activities happened very early or very late when my father was back from the fields, at noon she would embroider. She would hand-embroider napkins and tablecloths. So it called my attention. I would tell her why do you tire yourself out hand- embroidering a napkin, a tablecloth, if we can embroider a dress. She would tell me I was crazy. She would tell me it would be better to buy myself printed fabric, with flowers, and that's it. And um... but it started calling to my attention. So when I decided to study fashion design, um... my aunt found schools at that time. And in the country, they were only in Monterrey, Guadalajara, and Mexico. So, she told us... she told me if you want to go study, there are three places, three options. Where do you want to go? I told her I am going to Monterrey because it's what is the furthest away. The farther it is the better, no. I wanted adventure because I was young and restless, no.

L: Y entonces fue que decidí estudiar diseño de moda. Aparte de que mi mamá vendía y hacía muchas cosas en la tarde cuando ella ya estaba descansando porque sus actividades eran muy temprano o muy tarde hasta que mi papá llegaba del campo, entonces en el mediodía ella lo que hacía era bordar. Y bordaba que sus servilletas, que sus manteles. Y entonces me llamaba la atención a mí. Decía mamá porque te cansas

bordando una servilleta, bordando un mantel, si lo pudiéramos bordar en un vestido. Y me decía, hay estas loca. Mejor comprate una tela estampada, una tela con flores, y se acabó, no. Y este... pero me, me empezaba a llamar la atención. Entonces cuando decidí irme a estudiar diseño de modas, este... mi tía nos consiguio donde había escuelas en ese entonces. Y aquí en el país solo había en Monterrey, Guadalajara y en México. Así que nos dijo... me dijo a mi si quieres irte a estudiar, hay tres lugares, hay tres opciones. A dónde te quieres ir? Le dije yo me voy a ir a Monterrey porque pues es lo que me queda más lejos. Entre más lejos esté mejor, no. Yo por aventurar, porque finalmente seguía siendo una chamaca con inquietudes, no.

L: So, it was my aunt who said, no. No, you will be going to Mexico because your cousin also want to study that. If I study that. And if I supported your idea it was because... I want both of you to go. And like this you will keep each other company. I have the school's address. And we have a date to go get a ticket for the process of getting admitted. You have to take a test. And... and if you...if you pass the test you get into the school. If you don't pass, we are going to have to figure out how to get in. I have already arranged where you will sleep, stay. I called some aunts and uncles and you are going to live with them. They are going to support you and let you know how to get to school.

L: Y entonces fue que ella me dijo, no. No, se van a ir a Mexico porque tu prima tambien quiere estudiar eso. Y si yo apoye tu idea es porque... quiero que se vayan las dos. Y asi se van a acompañar. Y ya tengo la dirección de la escuela. Y ya esta el dia en el que hay que ir a sacar fichas. Tienen que ir a presentar un examen. Este... si se quedan en ese... si pasan el examen se van a quedar en esa escuela. Si no lo pasan vamos a tener que ver la forma de que se queden allí. Pero vayan y presenten su examen. Va ver un curso propedéutico. Ustedes tienen tal y tal fecha. Aquí están sus boletos. Yo ya arregle a donde van a llegar a dormir, a quedarse. Le hable a unos tíos y ustedes van a llegar a vivir con ellos. Ellos las van a apoyar para decirles cómo se van a ir a la escuela.

L: And my aunt was really skilled. She was a really strong support for my mom. She was her sister. And my mom had so many children that sometimes she couldn't. She couldn't with everything. But my aunt was her right hand. And she always relied on her, her sister. And she was practically the one who had authority. And when we wanted to get out of line, well she intervened and she didn't allow us to do so because she had a strong character. And uh, and what she said was not up for discussion. And... there was no turning back. And thanks to her, I went to study. (Crying) I went to study, learned and I had basic knowledge of cut and confection. At that time, it was only a technical career. It is like if I would have studied high school again but with a specialty that was Fashion Design. And I liked it a lot because I had basic knowledge and it was easy.

L: Y mi tía era realmente hábil, era pues un apoyo muy fuerte para mi mamá. Era su hermana. Y mi mamá tenía tantos hijos que de repente como que no, no podía, no? No podía con todo. Pero mi tía era su brazo derecho, no? No, y siempre se apoyaba en ella, su hermana. Y ella pues prácticamente era la que tenía autoridad. Y de repente cuando nosotros nos queríamos salir del riel, pues ella era la que intervenía y no nos lo permitía porque mi tía tenía un caracter fuerte, no. Y eh, y a ella lo que ella decía no se le discutía. Y... y no había vuelta de hoja. Así que gracias a ella, este pues yo me fui a estudiar. (Llorando) Me fui a estudiar, aprendí la cuestión yo ya llevaba los

conocimientos básicos de corte y confección. En ese tiempo era una carrera técnica nadamas. Es como si yo hubiera vuelto a estudiar el bachillerato o vuelto a estudiar la prepa pero ya con una especialidad que era diseño de modas. Y si, me gusto mucho porque yo ya llevaba conocimientos básicos y se me facilitó.

L: However, I was afraid because it was an expensive career. We had seven subjects for the career. And... in the seven subjects we had drawing, modeling, tracing, planning, um... sewing, and everything, everything related to our job and we had different materials. Fabric for every class, cardboard, paper, brushes, brand name colored pencils. Everything, everything was very expensive. And for everything it was expensive. So, I started to worry because I would say that in whatever way possible my aunt would send money to my cousin. But I didn't want to be like a burden for her because I knew my parents didn't have money to send me on a monthly basis. So, what I would do at that time, my father had a pension and... he was a worker at the factory of string and fabric in the pueblo and he got them to give him a retirement pension. So how he got his pension, he deposited for my studies. And it was like that that I started figuring out how to make it last all month. I had to stretch it. So, I discovered that in Mexico city... they sold a ticket, it was a ticket that cost \$40 pesos, \$30 pesos so you could get on and off of the metro unlimited times. You would insert it and it would come out the other side and you didn't have to pay more. And so... but you had to go make line at 4:00AM to be able to get one because there was a limited amount that they gave to students or low-income people. And you could get that ticket but you had to go at 3:00AM, 4:00Am to make line to get the ticket. And I would do it. I would get up really early, I would make line and I would get my ticket. And that was a great advantage because I didn't spend any money all month on transportation. Fortunately, that ticket worked on the Metro and Tren Ligero. And it was the two forms of transportation I used for school. So, So it wasn't a problem but a benefit.

L: Mas sin embargo, este si me daba temor porque la carrera era muy cara. Teníamos prácticamente siete materias que eran de, de la carrera. Y este... en esas siete materias entraba dibujo, modelado, trazo, plano, este... costura, y bueno todo, todo era relacionado a nuestro trabajo y teníamos que llevar diferentes materiales. Telas para cada clase, cartulinas, papel, pinceles, colores que ya eran de marca. Este todo, todo era carísimo. Y para todo era mucho material (26:12) Entonces, pues yo me empecé a angustiar porque decía mi tía de alguna forma le mandaba a mi prima dinero, no? Pero yo tampoco quería ser como una carga para ella porque yo sabía que mis papas pues no tenían gran cosa de dinero para mandarme mes con mes. Entonces, lo que yo hacía en ese entonces a mi papá lo pensionaron y... el fue trabajador de la fábrica de hilados y tejidos allí en el pueblo y consiguió que lo pensionaran. Entonces así como cobraba su pensión, así me la depositaba integra para mis estudios. Y fue que yo empeze a ver que por lo menos me alcanzara ese dinero para todo el mes. Tenía que estirlo. Entonces, descubrí que en la ciudad de Mexico este... vendian un ticket, un vale que... que te costaba como cuarenta pesos, treinta pesos para subir y bajar del metro todas las veces que quisieras. Y entonces lo metias por un lado y te salia por otro y podías entrar sin pagar más. Y entonces... pero tenias que ir a hacer unas filas enormes a las cuatro de mañana para poder alcanzar porque era nada mas cierto número que daban como apoyo a estudiantes o a personas de bajo recursos. Y tú podías obtener ese boleto pero tenias que ir a las tres, cuatro de la mañana a hacer fila para poder alcanzar ese boleto. Y lo

hacia. Me paraba muy temprano, me iba a hacer las filas y lograba yo alcanzar mi boleto. Y eso era una gran ventaja porque todo el mes ya no gastaba un solo peso de pasaje. Afortunadamente, ese boletito era aceptado en el metro y en el tren ligero. Y eran los dos únicos transportes que yo usaba para llegar a la escuela. Entonces, pues no me causaba problema si no mucho beneficio.

I: What year did you go to Mexico?

I: *Y en que año se fue para México?*

L: I went in 1997. Mmmm. In '97, no '96, in 1996 I went. And... and so it was then that I was there. And another way I found my business is that my classmates didn't like some subjects or couldn't do them because they didn't understand the classes. So, I did their homework. I would do their work. And they... (Aside: Seven pesos for what? Andre: To drink a...a, what is it called? L: A yogurt? Andre: Aha, a yogurt... L: For your grandpa of for you? Andre: For me. L: Ay, child) So...And that's how I did it. And then, Ah! I started, started to... sell homeworks. I would to the tracing, garments, I did everything that I could sell to my classmates. Ans for some I would make simple things in exchange for breakfast because I didn't have enough for breakfast and everything. I didn't have to worry about food because we lived at my aunt and uncle's and they didn't charge us a dime and we could have any food that we wanted like if it was our home. And its not just because they're my mother's family, but they were angels, really nice people. They also have a beautiful story because they suffered, they were really poor, and lived in a big house that was once an ex-farm in the City of Mexico. And they were poor and they were rubbish pickers. And today they are wealthy but, but it cost them. So... we didn't have to think. They fed us. They gave us everything we needed at home. But the materials and costs for school were our responsibility. That is how I was able to study.

L: *Me fui en mil novecientos noventa y siete. Mhmm. En el noventa y siete, no noventa y seis, en mil novecientos noventa y seis me fui. Y este... y entonces fue que ya, ya estuve allí. Y otra de las cosas como encontré mi negocio es de que a mis compañeras no les gustaron algunas materias o no las podían hacer porque no entendían las clases. Entonces, yo les hacía sus tareas. Yo les hacía sus trabajos. Y ellas este... (Aside: L: siete pesos para que? André: Para tomar un, un este... un, como se llama? L: Un yogur? Andre: Aha, un yogurcito. L: Para tu abuelito o para ti? Andre: Para mi. L: ah, chamaco) Este.. y así es de como le hice. Y ya este.. Ah! Empeze, empecé a... vender tareas. Hacia yo trazos, hacia yo prendas, hacía yo todo lo que podía para venderles a mis compañeras. Y algunas que les hacía cosas sencillas pues era a cambio del desayuno porque pues a mi no me alcanzaba el dinero para todos los días tener para el desayuno y todo. La comida no había preocupación porque vivíamos en casa de mis tíos y ellos no nos cobraban ni un solo peso por vivir allí y podíamos disponer de los alimentos que quisiéramos como si fuese nuestra casa. No porque ellos eran familia de mi mamá pero igual eran unos ángeles, unas personas buenísimas. Que también tienen su historia muy bonita porque ellos también sufrieron, fueron muy pobres, y vivían en una casisima que fue algun día una ex-hacienda en la Ciudad de México. Y ellos fueron pepenadores cuando llegaron allí, iniciaron. Llegaron sin nada, llegaron a ser pepenadores. Y hoy en día son personas con mucho dinero pero, pero que su trabajo les costó. Entonces este... pues de allí no teníamos que pensar. Ellos nos daban de comer. Nos daban todo lo que*

nosotros necesitábamos en la casa, no? Pero ya los materiales y los gastos de la escuela eran gastos que corrían por nosotros. Así es de que así fue como yo logre estudiar.

I: What school did you go to?

I: Y a qué escuela fue?

L: So...my school is, it's called, Puerto Rico. It's a (Centro de Estudios Tecnológico, Industrial y de Servicios) CETIS número 9 or '(Center of the Studies of Tecnology, Industry and Services) CETIS number 9. It was called Puerto Rico. That was the school that in...in nineteen eighty-five, when it shook, during the earthquake in Mexico, the school fell. Part of that school fell and... Puerto Rico, the country Ouerto Rico, supported the restoration of the school and to build it. And in exchange of that, they called it, Puerto Rico. But it was a really good school. Most of the teachers were elderly. Really elderly. They were affiliated with the Industry Chamber of the Dress. They were people who were up to date with fashion, technology and evreyting. And so...they were really good. We, although it was a government school, that we didn't pay for, it was a government one, a ublic school, it was a really good school. So then... So because they were so nice and because they were connected in the fashion world and everything, well they entered us into contests for Fashion International Debut. I participated in one of them. So... in many contests that were renowned and we competed with the best schools in the country from Guadalajara, from Monterrey, from various schools. The Iberoamericana, that was a school that was famous for Fashion. And they always told us that the fact that we went to a public school did not mean that we could not be as good as them. So then... everything consisted of creativity, in how you did things. And... and they gave us lots of motivation.

L: Este... mi escuela es, se llama, Puerto Rico. Es un (Centro de Estudios Tecnológico, Industrial y de Servicios) CETIS número 9. Puerto Rico se llama. Esa fue una escuela que en él... el mil ciento ochenta cinco, cuando tembló, el terremoto que hubo en México, esa escuela se cayó. Parte de esa escuela se cayó y... Puerto Rico, el país de Puerto Rico, apoyo para la, restaurar la escuela y levantarla. Y a cambio de eso le pusieron ese nombre, Puerto Rico. Pero era una escuela muy buena. La mayoría de maestras pues ya eran personas ya muy adultas. Ya muy grandes. Que estaban afiliadas a la cámara de la industria del vestido. Eran personas que estaban muy actualizadas con moda, con la tecnología, con todo. Y este... pues eran muy buenas. Nosotros, aunque fuera una escuela de gobierno, que no era de paga, era de gobierno, una escuela pública, era muy buena esa escuela. Entonces este... ellas por ser tan buenas maestras y como estaban relacionadas pues en el argor de la moda y todo eso, pues este nos metían a los concursos de Fashion International Debut. Yo participe en uno de ellos. Este... en muchos concursos que eran pues de renombre y competiamos con las mejores escuelas del país de Guadalajara, de Monterrey, de varias escuelas. La Iberoamericana, que era una escuela en ese entonces muy famosa en cuanto al ramo que era la moda. Y ellas pues siempre nos metían esa terapia de que el hecho de ir a una escuela pública no quería decir que no pudiéramos ser tan buenos como ellos. Entonces este... todo concistia en la creatividad, en cómo hicieras las cosas. Y... Y nos daban mucha motivación.

L: So it was then when I was studying there, I was like on my second year, I wanted I always wanted, during my whole life, I think I was fifteen, when I began thinking about

stylizing artisans' work. But at that time, there was no hope. There weren't any resources. I saw it as an impossibility. Then, I met a person that was my aunt's friend. And this man would... would tell us that, that he did community service. He uh, he worked with the company, Kellogg's, they gave resources to low-income communities so that they could... make something, different things, no. And they could be sustainable communities. So, he saw my aunt like a good alternative because he told her that we could train them to confection their garments and so that the artisans' products would not be boxy, or would have loose threads or sewn or confectioned in a rustic form or rude like they make them. So that they make it with technique, more finished. And my aunt gets along with him because she works at Pastoral Social. She likes to do altruistic activities.

L: Entonces fue allí cuando yo estaba estudiando allí, iba yo como en segundo, de por sí de por siempre, desde toda la vida yo creo que tenía como unos quince años cuando a mí se me empezó a meter la idea de estilizar las artesanías. Pero pues en ese entonces que esperanzas no? Si no había recursos. Lo miraba yo imposible. Entonces, conocí a una persona que era amigo de mi tía. Y este señor este... nos decía que, que él hacía muchos servicios a la comunidad. Él eh, él trabajaba con la empresa Kellogg's, que ellos daban apoyo a las comunidades de bajos recursos para que pudieran este... hacer algo, cosas diferentes, no? Y ser sustentables en sus comunidades. Entonces él miró a mi tía como una buena alternativa porque le dijo ustedes pueden capacitarlos en confeccionar sus prendas y que las artesanías ya no sean cuadradas, ya no sean deshiladas, deshilachas o cosidas o confeccionadas en una forma rústica o ruda como lo hacen. Si no que lo hagan con más técnica, más acabado. Y mi tía se llevaba con él porque ella trabajaba en Pastoral Social. A ella le gustaba hacer actividades altruistas.

L: So, she... she eh trained in communities to give cut and confection courses. And that was when I met him because he sent me to give one of those courses that, that she agreed to through Pastoral Social. Because she lived in the church and she would be involved... to do, to do something for indigenous communities or for people who were in need. And she would always say that her job was a... a, she would see it like a blessing, like an art even. Because she said that she could help many people with her work. And... and that was what she instilled in us little by little. And then this man during that time well I remember that they didn't exist not even the... fees began to exist no? And on the acetate he would make us drawings and caricatures and he would tell us stories on the walls. Um... of how, how the ones who were at the top, ah, they want to step on the ones at the bottom. They want to always keep you at the margin, at one level. That you don't go above and beyond, that you stay there. No? It was many movies that he made, that he created, based on his lived experiences, what he perceived. Now, he is a federal deputy. He... he has grown a lot. He has done so much for Oaxaca. I met him because I am telling you that her was a seminarian at one time and that was the relationship that united my aunt with him and that's how I met him. And I would get those courses because my aunt would invite the older women. And I practically was twelve or thirteen when I would go see what they were doing. But that stayed with me. And I said it was true. With this work we could help. We could help many people. And that is how it got in my head and I said I was going to study Fashion Design because doing things really different and well-made could help people. Because if we are going to do the same thing, we are going

to do things half way well no, no, no. It isn't going to be possible. And that is how I got that idea. But I would see it far away and almost impossible. And I would think I am going to cut and I am going to ruin things. And there were lots of things that went through my head.

L: Entonces, ella... ella este eh capacitaba en comunidades a dar cursos de corte y confección. Y fue cuando yo lo conocí porque me mandó a dar uno de esos cursos que, que ella comprometía a través de Pastoral Social. Porque ella vivía mucho en la iglesia y se metía a... pues a actuar, a hacer algo por las comunidades indígenas o por los más necesitados. Y ella pues siempre decía que su trabajo era pues una... una, lo miraba ella como una bendición, como un arte incluso. Porque ella decía que podía ayudar a mucha gente con su trabajo. Y... y eso pues nos lo fue como clavando a nosotros poco a poquito. Y entonces este señor en esa época pues me acuerdo que todavía no existían ni los esté... empezaban a existir los cánones no? Y el en acetatos nos hacía dibujitos y caricaturas y nos pasaba historias así en las paredes. Este... de como, como los que están arriba, ah no, quieren pisotear los de abajo. Te quieren siempre mantener al margen, a un solo nivel. De que no sobresalgas, de que te quedes allí. No? Eran unas películas que él hacía, que el creaba, según sus vivencias, lo que el persevera. El ahora ya es diputado federal. A... a crecido mucho. El a hecho mucho por Oaxaca. Yo lo conocí te digo porque el fue seminarista en algún momento y esa fue la relación que unió a mi tía con el y por eso yo lo conocí a él. Y yo iba a esos cursos porque mi tía invitaba a las señoras. Y yo prácticamente tenía como doce o trece años cuando yo iba de mirona a ver que hacían. Pero a mi se me quedó eso pues. Y que yo decía sí es cierto. Con este trabajo podemos ayudar. Podemos ayudar a mucha gente, no? Y fue así como ya se me metió y dije voy a estudiar diseño de modas porque haciendo cosas realmente diferentes y bien hechas podemos ayudar esa gente, no? Porque si vamos a caer en lo mismo, en lo que medio sale y en lo que medio se queda, pues no, no, no. No se va a poder. Y así es de como saque esa idea. Pero la miraba muy lejana y casi imposible, no? Porque yo decía hijole para comprar un bordado cuánto me va a costar? Y cómo lo voy a hacer? Y le voy a meter la tijera y lo voy a echar a perder. Y eran muchas cosas las que pasaban por mi cabeza.

L: But at school every time they asked for a design, I would always out an embroidered design. And, and that is what my teachers liked. And they would say and why do you have so many ideas? Where do you get them? Because many of my classmates would buy fashion magazines, they would buy up to date things, fashion. The most up to date, up to date. And there they would reproduce an idea. That's where they got their designs. But not me. I would imagine the embroidery of Oaxaca, of different regions. I would collect collect newspaper clippings when they announced the Guelagetza or where they featured regalia from different regions. And that's what I tried to draw. Capture it on night gown. Capture it in a fifteen dress. Even on sweats, on sports clothing. So, that was like my interest. But I did see it very remote. It would call my teachers' attention. And like they implied that that, that what I wanted to do, or that which I dreamed was practically impossible. Because. Because well for them it was complicated. They said how are you going to do the fretwork here. How long will it take to do the fretwork, making a flower, embroidering this, embroidering that. No like, no. The cost and everything. They were scared of my designs. However, I would make them and said well

if I am cray, well that is okay. I will end up in a madhouse. And that, and that is how I did it.

L: Pero yo en la escuela cada vez que nos pedían un diseño, pues siempre le ponía yo detalles bordados. Y, y eso era lo que le gustaba a mis maestras. Y me decían y por que sacas tantas ideas? De dónde las sacas? Porque la mayoría de mis compañeras pues compraban revistas de moda, compraban lo que había del día, pues en la moda. Lo actual, lo más actual. Y de allí pues se fusilaban una que otra idea. Sacaban sus diseños. Pero yo no. Yo me ponía a imaginar los bordados de aquí de Oaxaca, de las diferentes regiones. Incluso agarraba y me encantaba coleccionar los pedazos de periódico cuando anunciaban La Guelaguetza o donde salieran los trajes típicos de la región, no? Y eso era lo que trataba de dibujar. Plasmarlo en un vestido de noche. Plasmarlo en un vestido de quince años. Hasta en un pans, en ropa deportiva. Osea, esa era como mi inquietud, no? Pero si la veía muy remota, pues. Y a mis maestras les llamaba la atención. Y como que me daban a entender que eso, eso que yo pedía hacer, o eso que yo sonaba era como prácticamente imposible, no? Porque. Porque pues a ellas se les hacía complicado. Decía cómo le vas a meter un calado aca. Cuanto tiempo te va a llevar haciendo un calado, haciendo una flor, bordando esto, bordando el otro. No, osea, no. El costo y todo no? Les asustaban mis diseños. Mas sin embargo yo los hacía y decía yo bueno si estoy loca pues ni modo, no? Terminare en un manicomio, no? Y así, y así lo hice.

L: Finally, um... when I was in second, in second year, on the fourth semester um... from the second semester they gave me a scholarship... because of the grades I had, the school gave me a scholarship, I began... I ran to buy my sewing machines. It was the first thing I bought because it was my tool for work. And im... I told my parents, father, mother, that I got a scholarship and um...but I want to know if you give me permission to invest the money in school, so I could buy my machines so I could work. In addition, I do my classmates work and I can sell it. And they said yes daughter it is your money, use it for whatever you want. If you wanna go to the theatre, than go to the theatre. If you want to go out and party, then go out and party. It's your money. But I bought my machines and that was fun for me. I would make, make lots of things. Even my classmates would order things. They would draw, explain how they wanted their blouses, or a dress and I would make it. Or the teachers would select their designs. They would say, Leti you are making it. And how much you need for fabric, how much do you need for this and that. And I would make it. And they presented it like their work. And so that is how, how I started doing it. And thanks to God, it helped me a lot.

L: Finalmente, este... cuando yo iba en segundo, en segundo año ya en, en el cuarto semestre este... desde el segundo semestre a mi me becaron este... por mis calificaciones que yo tenía me becaron en la escuela, me empez... yo con eso corrí a comprar mis maquinas. Fue lo primero que compre porque pues era mi herramienta de trabajo. Y este... les dije a mis papás, papá, mamá, me becaron y este... pero yo quiero saber si ustedes me dan permiso de que yo no invierta ese dinero en mi escuela si no que, si no que pueda comprar mis máquinas para tener donde trabajar. Y porque yo le digo el tiempo que estoy en la escuela no me alcanza. Entonces, este necesito hacer más. Que además hago tareas de mis compañeras y se las puedo vender. Y entonces me dijeron si hija es tu dinero, dispone para lo que tu quieras. Si tu te quieres ir al cine, vete al cine. Si te quieres ir de parranda, vete de parranda. Es tu dinero, no? Pero compre mis máquinas

y pues eso me divertía a mi. Yo hacía, hacía pues muchas cosas, no? Incluso mis compañeras luego agarraban y hasta me encargaban cosas, no. Me dibujaban, medio me explicaban cómo querían una blusa, un vestido y yo se las hacía. O las maestras les seleccionaba sus diseños. Me decían Leti encárgate de hacerlo, no? Y cuanto necesitas para tela, cuanto necesitas para esto para el otro. Y yo los hacía. Y ellas los presentaban como sus trabajos de ellas. Y entonces así fue como, como yo le fui haciendo pues. Y gracias a Dios, a mi me sirvió mucho.

L: It didn't help them because they didn't practice. But it helped me a lot because I, I advanced in my ability. And like that, like that I, that is how I did it... that is how I was able to get through school. But when I was in my fourth semester, they gave everyone who had a good grade point average a ticket to a fashion show by Armando Mafud. Armando Mafud is one of the... A world renowned Oaxacan designer in ethnic clothing, to be precise. He makes beautiful designs, Most of them are embroidered and painted. His dresses are very expensive. So I went to that... I felt, I was far, very far away. But I felt ...like I was dreaming to be in that theatre which was... it was in the center of Bellas Artes in the City of Mexico. It was a theatre, a beautiful place. And I said wow, Oaxaca is here. Because everything was Oaxaca here. When you entered, there were snacks and it was quesillo or 'oaxacan cheese', chapulines 'grasshoppers', it was... And I said, there is my state.

L: A ellas pues no porque nunca practicaron. Pero a mi me sirvió de mucho porque yo, yo este avance en mi habilidad. No? Y así, así me la, así me la pase yo este... así fue como saque mis estudios adelante. Pero bueno, cuando yo iba en cuarto semestre, a todos los mejores promedios nos regalaron un boleto para ir a ver un desfile de modas de Armando Mafud. Armando Mafud es uno de los... Un diseñador Oaxaqueño más destacado a nivel mundial porque él tiene una moda étnica, justamente. Él hace unos diseños preciosos. La mayoría de ellos es bordados y pintados. Sus vestidos son carísimos. Entonces fui a ese... yo me sentía, me tocó hasta la luneta, los últimos lugares. Pero yo me sentía... soñada de estar en el Teatro en el este... fue en el Centro de Bellas Artes de la Ciudad de México. Era, es un teatro, un lugar hermosísimo. Y yo dije wow, Oaxaca aquí, no? Porque todo era Oaxaca allí. Desde que entrabas había bocadillos y eran quesillo, chapulines, era... Y dije ay esta mi estado, no.

L: When I yes, when I went to study, I experienced discrimination with the, with the girls or young women at my school because well all of them because it was a fashion school, well they all wore make-up, dressed up, and everything. And I well, I always really eh, not just because I was from Oaxaca but because I was raised in the fields, in a small town, it didn't call to my attention to wear make-up, and everything. It doesn't call me. So, so I would go to school like that. We used uniform and... and when they began asking us to wear uniform I saw glory because I didn't have to worry about what close to wear because I has two or three pieces of clothing and had to repeat them. So then, when we wore uniform, we were all the same.

L: Cuando yo sí, incluso cuando yo me fui a estudiar, yo sufrí discriminación con las, con las chavas o las chicas que estaban en mi escuela porque pues todas al ser una escuela de modas, pues todas iban maquilladas, que muy arregladas, y todas no? Y yo pues, yo siempre la verdad eh, no por el hecho de solo de ser de aquí de Oaxaca si no

haberme criado pues en el campo, pues en el pueblo, a mi casi no me llama la atención el hecho de maquillarme, de todo eso, no. No me llama pues. Entonces, yo así me iba a la escuela. No? Usábamos uniforme y... y cuando nos empezaron a exigir el uniforme yo vi la gloria porque yo ya no tenía que sufrir con que ropa me voy a llevar porque tenía dos o tres prendas y las tenía que repetir muy seguido, no? Entonces este, cuando llevábamos uniforme, y a todos éramos iguales. No?

L: However, when we got there, nobody wanted to be in our team. So...they would say uh it's Oaxaca. Or uh, those are from Oaxaca, they are from a small town, they come from... from province, no. They would demean us. Nobody wanted to work with us. Fortunately, my cousin was with me. I think if we would not have been together, it would have been difficult to survive that they would look at us in a condescending manner. Then... well I would tell her don't worry, we are going to be a team, we are going to... I would talk to the teachers, I would tell the teachers I was going to be in a team with my cousin only because no one wanted us on their team. There were teachers that would say yes, there is no problem. And there were teachers that would have it their way and ask for teams, and if they saw there were teams of three... they would put us into another group. They are going to be with you. And it wasn't if we wanted or didn't want to, but we had to. And then, but there were teachers that would feel sorry that they didn't want us and let them do their things however...however they can. (Aside: L: That is the tablet.)

L: Mas sin embargo cuando llegamos allí, nadie quería hacer equipo con nosotros. Este... decían ay es Oaxaca. O ay esas son de Oaxaca, son del pueblo, vienen de... vienen de provincia, no. O sea, si nos hacen el fuchi. Nadie quería trabajar con nosotros. Afortunadamente, a mi prima le toco también conmigo. Yo creo que si no nos hubiese tocado en el mismo salón, hubiera sido difícil como sobrevivir esa etapa de que si te mal miraban. Entonces... este pues le decía tu no te fijas, nosotros vamos a hacer equipo, nosotros vamos... Yo si me acercaba a las maestras, yo decía maestra yo voy a hacer equipo con mi prima nadamas porque nadie nos quiere integrar a su equipo. Habían maestras que decían este si, no hay problema. Y había maestras en que se ponían en su papel y decían haber entreguenme sus equipos, y si miraba que había equipos de tres equipos de... ah se vienen a este equipo. Ellas van a estar con ustedes. Y no era si querían o no querían, sino que nos teníamos que integrar. Y entonces, pero había maestras que decían pobrecitas no las quieren y que hagan como puedan sus... sus cosas. (Aside: L: La tableta es esa.)

L: There was a time when we had a team project, a project that required us to look for fabric and know its composition, texture and everything. Then, um...one of my classmates when we were getting off the metro, she pushes the other and tells her don't be Oaxaca. And then I look at her and tell her, what did you say, not to be what? And I told her but what does that mean? And she said, well not to be an indian, not to be dumb, not to be rororo... and she told me lots of things. And I started laughing and told her if that was the concept she had of Oaxacans, I told her. And she said yes, they are Indians, they are... and she repeated a series of ugly words, no. And, and I was quiet and didn't say anything at that moment.

L: Hubo una ocasión en que nos dejaron un equipo, un trabajo por equipo de ir a buscar las telas para saber su composición, textura y todo eso. Entonces este... una de mis compañeras cuando íbamos bajando del metro, agarra y empuja a la otra y le dice no seas Oaxaca. Y entonces yo me quedo y le digo, oye que dijistes, que no sea Oaxaca? Y le dije pero qué quiere decir eso? Y me dice, pues que no sea india, que no sea tonta, que no sea rororo... y me dijo muchas cosas. Y yo me empeze a reír y le dije que ese concepto tenían de los Oaxaqueños, le dije. Y dice pues si, son unos indios, son unos... y me vuelve a repetir una serie de palabras feas, no. Y, y yo me quede callada y no le dije nada en ese instante.

L: The next day when we go turn in iur work, um...her work was really ugly, and mine was beautiful. And uh well how... why didn't you give us the idea yesterday because the teacher said we were a team when we looked for the fabric. That everyone was going to do it how they wanted, I said. So that is why I did mine like this. And she said your work is really beautiful. And then she said, the teacher said... and I started laughing because I remembered I was from Oaxaca. Then, the teacher said I am leaving you, I am leaving an assignment because we are having a meeting in the main office and she explained the class. And then um... the teacher said everyone start working and I am leaving. And then she got close to me and said, hey Leti I didn't understand the teacher. Did yu understand?

L: Al otro dia cuando llegamos a dejar el trabajo, este... su trabajo de ella pues era muy feo, y el mío pues estaba muy bonito. Y ay oye pues como... porque no nos diste ayer la idea le dije porque la maestra dijo que en equipo íbamos a buscar las telas. Que cada quien lo iba a ser como quisiera, le dije. Así es de que yo hice el mio asi. Y dice ay esta muy bonito tu trabajo. Y ya dijo, dijo la maestra... y me empeze a reír porque me acordé que yo era de Oaxaca. Entonces este... dijo la maestra las voy a dejar, les voy a dejar un trabajo porque vamos a tener una reunión en la dirección y nos explico la clase. Y entonces este... la maestra agarró y dijo bueno todo mundo se queda a trabajar y yo me voy. Y entonces ella se acercó y me dice oye leti yo no le entendi a la maestra. Tu si le entendiste?

L: And I start laughing. And I said what is going on. And she says why are you laghing? What do I have something on my face? And I wiuld say, "Hahaha" I wiuld say to her face. But why are you laughing?At you face, I tell her. Byt what do I have? She runs to get her mirror. I don't have anything. I tell her, "Do yu know why I laugh?" Because you say that Oaxacans are ignorant, dumb, we are... Ah, just to le let you know, you are asking a Oaxaca. Eh! And she turns red, red. Are you really from Oaxaca? Yes, I told her. And you know what, we are not any of what you express. And to demonstrate it to you, I am going to explain what the teacher said. Because besides not being brutes, dumb, or ignorant, or nothing that you said, I am also not rancourous, or not selfish. So, I am going to explain the class. And yu are goin to do this and that...

L: Y agarro y me empiezo a reír. Y le dije oye qué te pasa. Y dice porque te ríes? Que traigo en mi cara algo? Y le decía yo, "Jajaja" en su cara le decía yo. Pero de que te ríes? De tu cara le dije. Pero que traigo. Que corre a sacar su espejo. No traigo nada. Le dije, "Sabes porque me río?" Porque tu dices que los Oaxacos somos ignorantes, somos tontos, somos... Ah, le dije fijate que le estas preguntando a una Oaxaca. Eh! Y se pone roja, roja. Deberás tu eres de Oaxaca? Si, le dije. Y sabes que, no somos nada de lo que

tu te expresastes. Y para demostrarte te voy a explicar lo que dijo la maestra. Porque aparte de que no somos ni brutos, ni tontos, ni ignorantes, ni nada de lo que tu dijiste, tampoco soy rencorosa, ni tampoco soy envidiosa. Así que te voy a explicar la clase. Y vas a hacer esto y esto y el otro...

L: And she was so embarrassed that she turned red and that was the last time I saw her at school. She never returned. Never returned. Ah! And I told her, and and ah, and I am going to ask you for a favor. Ah, I tell her I am going to teach her under one condition. Which one she says. That you don't express yourself like that about Oaxacans because you have no right to do so. And I tell her, "Or what, where have the best presidents of the republic been from?" And she says, "Hhhmmmm, what presidents?" And I told her don't don't you know who the presidents of Mexico are? I tell her, "Have you heard of Benito Juárez?" And she says, "yes." And where is he from? I think he is from Puebla, I don't know from what pl... No, I tell her he is from Oaxaca. To demonstrate to you that your ignorance is bigger than that of Oaxacans. So she blushed, felt very but very humiliated... Or, who knows what happened. The point is that she never, I never saw her again. And um, and things like that happened to me.

L: Y ella se avergonzó tanto y se puso tan roja, que fue la última vez que la vi en la escuela. Esa chica jamás regresó. Jamás regreso. Ah! Y le dije yo, y y ah, sí te voy a pedir un favor. Ah, le dije te voy a enseñar con una condición. Cual dice. Que no te vuelvas a expresar así de los Oaxaqueños porque si tu no conoces a los Oaxaqueños, no tienes porque expresarte así. Y le dije, "O que, de donde han sido los mejores presidentes de la república, de nuestro país, de donde?" Y me dice, "Hmmm, qué presidentes?" Y le dije no sabes quienes son los presidentes de México? Le dije, "Has escuchado oír hablar de Benito Juárez?" Y dice, "sí." Y de donde es? Pues creo que es de Puebla, no se de que lu... No le dije, es de Oaxaca. Para que veas que es una muestra de que tu ignorancia que es más grande que la de los Oaxaqueños. Y entonces así se sonrojo, se sintió muy pero muy humillada... Oh, no se que le paso. El chiste es que nunca, nunca mas volví a ver a esa chica. Y este, y cosas así me pasaban.

L: And even with teachers. There was an English teacher who was handsome, blue eyes, light-skinned, who taught English. He was very strict, very demanding. And um... and on the first exam that we presented, he was angry and told us that only two people had passed the exam. And that besides those people, no one sitting in a desk deserved to be there just warming up a seat. That at the end of the day there were women, that we should be at home, or that those young ladies who liked putting on make-up and dressing-up should find something else to do. (Aside: L: No, we already had lunch.) It was what happened there with the... with the teacher, no. And at the end um... he started talking, telling us lots of things. To denigrate women's work because it was a school of mostly women and one or few men and many gay men, no. And then um... he had told us so much. And then the teacher would not get tired of talking and he had told us many things and I felt my body getting hot, hot, hot, hot from hearing so many things.

L: Y hasta con los maestros, pues. Había un maestro que era de Inglés, guapísimo de ojos azules, guero, el nos daba la clase de Inglés. Era una persona muy estricta, muy exigente. Y este... en el primer examen que nosotros presentamos, llegó hecho una furia y dijo que solamente dos personas habían pasado ese examen. Y que de allí en fuera

ninguna de las que estaba allí merecían estar sentada en ese butaca calentando asiento. Que finalmente éramos mujeres, que deberíamos estar en casa, o de que aquellas señoritas que les gustaba tanto maquillarse y arreglarse, pues que se dedicara a otra cosa porque realmente no. (Aside: L: No, nosotros ya almorzamos.) Es de que eso fue lo que sucedió allí con la... con el maestro, no. Y cuando al final este... ya agarró y empezó a hablar, a decirnos muchas cosas. A denigrar como el papel de la mujer porque era una escuela prácticamente de puras mujeres y uno que otro hombre y muchos gays, no. Y entonces este... nos puso como trapeador. Y entonces no se cansaba el maestro de hablar y ya nos había dicho muchas cosas y yo sentía que me ponía yo caliente, caliente, caliente, caliente de mi cuerpo de escuchar tantas cosas.

L: And then I raise my foot onto the desk and that day I was wearing my huaraches or ‘sandals.’ And he had said that that’s why that in Oaxaca, that due to people like, like the ones that were at school, there were here in Oaxaca. And that was why Oaxaca was a state that was lagging, that were ignorant, because they were biund to the climate, this and that. That we blamed poverty. That if it rained, because it rained. And if it didn’t rain, that it didn’t rain. The point was that we were always fucked, practically. That is why, because we were not capable of, of moving forward, studying, taking advantage, no. And then after saying many things, that we didn’t even know the colors and other. Then, I lifted my foot to show him I had huaraches or ‘sandals.’

L: Y entonces que agarro y alzo mi pie arriba de la butaca y ese día yo llevaba huaraches. Y él había dicho de que por eso en Oaxaca, que por gente que como, como la que estaba allí en la escuela, había aquí en Oaxaca. Y que por eso Oaxaca era un estado que estaba rezagado, que eran ignorantes, porque estaban expensas del clima, de esto del otro. Que nosotros le echamos la culpa a la pobreza. De que si llovía, porque llovía. Y si no llovía, porque no llovía. El chiste es que nosotros siempre estábamos jodidos, prácticamente. Por eso, porque no éramos capaces de , de salir adelante, de estudiar, de aprovechar, no. Y entonces ya que dijo muchas cosas, que ni los colores conocíamos y bueno. Entonces alcé mi pie y le enseñe que yo llevaba huaraches.

L: And she told me Hernandez, because she, he wouldn’t call us by our first name but by iur last name. He says, “Hernandez what are you doing?” I tell him lifting my foot so you can see I have huaraches or ‘sandals.’ And, and what does that have to do. Well, you are saying I told him that indian peoples, that people are not knowledgeable. He says, “Hernandez out your foot down and calm down. Because I was just...after all I said, I was just going to congratulate you because you are one of the two people who passed the test.” And I said, “Well I don’t want your congratulations because you insulted us. And I am not going to allow you to talk to us, women, like that. So, like I listened to you, yui are going to listen to me. Because you could have blue eyes, professor, and everything but respect comes first. And you told us so much. Yes? And now you are going to listen to me. Because I am here.” And let me tell you “That I am one of those people from Oaxaca. And that come rom a mountain. And I am proudly going to tell you that my parents studied til third grade, right? But if you ask them to add, subtract, multiply, if you ask about history, you ask them whatever you want, they will respond. They don’t need t have a postgraduate degree. They don’t need to be professors to learn to respect. And they are my parents and they are farmers. And I am very proud.

L: Y ella ya me dijo Hernández, porque ella, él no nos hablaba por nuestro nombre sino por nuestro apellido. Hernández dice, “Que hace?” Le dije estoy subiendo mi pie para que vea que yo traigo huaraches. Y, y que tiene que ver le dije. Pues usted está diciendo le dije, que las personas indias, que las personas que no saben que no tienen conocimientos. Dice, “ A ver Hernández, baje su pie de allí y tranquilice. Porque apenas... después de todo lo que dije, apenas la voy a felicitar porque es una de las dos personas que pasó el examen.” Y le dije, “Pues no quiero sus felicitaciones. Porque ya nos puso hasta el piso. Y yo no le voy a permitir que como mujeres nos hable de esa forma. Así es de que aquí, así como yo ya lo escuche, usted me va a escuchar a mi. Porque usted tendrá ojos azules, será catedrático de la escuela, y será todo lo que quiera pero primero es el respeto. Y usted ya nos dijo hasta de lo que no. Si? Y ahora usted me va a escuchar a mi. Porque justamente yo estoy aquí.” Y déjeme decirle dije, “Que yo soy una de esas personas que vienen de Oaxaca. Y que vienen justamente de una montaña. Y orgullosamente le voy a decir mis padres estudiaron hasta tercero de primaria, si? Pero si usted los pone a hacer una suma, una resta, una multiplicación, les pregunta lo que usted quiera de historia, les pregunta de lo que sea, ellos se lo responden. (54:25) No necesitan estudiar un diplomado. No necesitan ser catedráticos para aprender a respetar. Y ellos son mis padres y son campesinos. Yo me siento muy orgullosa.

L: And I am never going to allow you to express yourself like that about women because it is not fair. The fact that we are because... he said ugly things that, that I don't like to repeat. The fact that we were born in that supposed gender and, and with fragile parts does not mean that we are going to live from that because we also have arms and legs. We also know how to take care of ourselves. Hernandez calm down because everything I said is not about you. Yes, but you attacked me. I also felt part of that. So I ask that this is the last time that you express yourself about women like that and of us. And I want your respect. Failing a test does not justify that you talk to us that way. No? And he said, No Hernandez. I think you are Benito Juarez's family, no? And he says... And I say no. I am not Benito Juarez's family but I don't need to be to put you in your place. And then, from there I earned this teacher's respect. Because everyone was afraid of him. He was a despot and conceited he was like that... with me, never ever. Hernandez how are you? What does Oaxaca say? He would hug me. He would greet me. From there, I earned his respect. No? And I demanded respect for everyone else. And that was how I started like I started finding myself with many things in my career that I had to swallow and that I had to... swallow my pride to get what I needed, no? But my objective was that. I would tell myself, one day I will be able to do it.

L: Y nunca le voy a permitir por lo menos delante de mí, que se exprese así de las mujeres porque eso no se vale. El hecho de que nosotros porque... dijo unas cosas muy feas que, que no me gusta repetirlas. El hecho que nosotras hayamos nacido en ese supuesto género y, y partes débiles no quiere decir que de allí vayamos a vivir porque también tenemos manos y pies. Y también sabemos valernos por nosotras mismas. Hernandez pero tranquilícese porque todo lo que yo dije, no lo dije por usted. Si, pero me agredió. También yo me senti allí. Y así ese de que yo le pido que sea la última vez que usted se expresa así de las mujeres. Y que se expresa de nosotras. Y que quiero su respeto. El hecho de reprobado un examen no justifica que nos hablen de esa manera. ¿No?

Y fue que me dijo, no Hernandez. ¿Usted creo que es familiar de Benito Juárez verdad? Y me dice... le dije no. No soy familiar de Benito Juárez pero no necesito serlo para ponerlo en su lugar. Y entonces fue que de allí me gané el respeto de ese maestro. Porque todo mundo le tenía miedo. Era déspota, era engreído, era así... Conmigo, jamás y nunca. Hernández como esta? Que dice Oaxaca? Me abrazaba. Me saludaba. De allí me gané su respeto. No? Y le exigí respeto para las demás y los demás. Y así fue como yo me fui como... encontrando con muchas cosas dentro de mi carrera que me tenía que tragar y me tenía yo que hacer... de tripas corazón a veces por conseguir lo que yo quería, no? Pero mi objetivo era ese. Yo decía algún día voy a poder hacer esto.

L: So I return again to when I arrived at the fashion show. It was an impressive show. To start the place, the Center of Bellas Artes in the City of Mexico is an antique building, beautiful. And he, and there was a musical band from the state. All the fashion show with live banda music. No? And um, and Mafud from that point on I saw his designs, his things and ran to the teacher, see how what I imagine is possible. And she tells me, Leti I see. There were beautiful garments. Beautiful things. All of them with ethnic embroidery from here. Well most of it, they weren't from all the regions of the state. Well, he focuses on the Isthmus. Because he is from the Isthmus. Mhmm, he is from the Isthmus. But there were amazing dresses that left you with your mouth open. Then, um... Edith Gonzalez went, his models, no, no, no it was well attended. It was a dream, no?

L: Entonces regresó otra vez cuando llegó al desfile de modas. Allí era un desfile impresionante. Para empezar el lugar, El Centro de Bellas Artes de la Ciudad de México es un edificio muy antiguo, hermosísimo. Y el, y amenizaba una banda de música de aquí del estado. Todo el desfile de modas lo hicieron con música viva de banda. No? Y este, y Mafud a partir de allí, vi sus diseños, vi sus cosas y corrí a decirle a mi maestra, ya ve como lo que yo me imagino si es posible. Y me dice, Leti mira veras. Osea unas prendas hermosísimas. Unas cosas muy hermosas. Todas con bordados étnicos de aquí. Bueno la mayoría, no eran de todas las regiones del estado. Bueno el se enfoca solamente al Istmo. Porque el es del Istmo. Mhmm, el es del Istmo. Pero eran unos vestidazos que te quedabas con la boca abierta. Entonces este... fue Edith González, sus modelos, non, no, no estuvo ese evento cotizadisimo. Era una cosa de sueños, no?

L: And from there I started to believe in the reality of my work. Of what I was thinking. That it could be done. Sadly, many years have gone by and I am barely waking up. Why? Because it is. The investment, the money, that is one of the things that... that delays us, no? Today, I am a mother and live day to day. The expenses and everything I sell, Everything. Like the family expenses like the... like the business, well they come from there. So yes. It has not been easy to get where, where I am at. However, I know I can. I know these moments are going to pass because this is the time of crisis because we are making an investment on the infrastructure where we are going to have the sewing shop. Right now, I am getting to know the artisans. We are living like a stage of training, no?

L: Y que yo de allí yo ya fui empezando a creer más en la realidad de lo que yo estaba haciendo. De lo que yo estaba ideando. Que si se podía hacer. Tristemente han pasado muchos años y yo apenas voy como apenas despertando. Porque? Porque es... la inversión, el dinero, es una de las cosas que nos... pues que nos atrasa no? Yo hoy en día pues soy madre de familia, voy al día. Los gastos o todo lo que, lo que yo vendo. Todo.

Tanto los gastos familiares como de la... de la misma empresa, pues salen de allí. Entonces sí. No a sido fácil llegar hasta, hasta donde estoy. Mas sin embargo se que puedo. Se que van a pasar estos momentos porque ahorita es época de crisis porque nosotros estamos haciendo una inversión en el inmueble a donde va a ser el taller de costura. Es ahorita estoy conociendo a los artesanos. Estamos viviendo como una etapa de entrenamiento, no?

L: For the moment that we can really produce more. No? Now, I create some designs or make some designs. And the artisans try to capture my idea. No? And from..we are practicing and sometimes... I can't say we waste anything. We never waste anything. Always, even the smallest thing, the smallest detail that may look ugly but when you see it in a garment, it looks beautiful, no? Or there are other things that help save it. And it looks beautiful no/ The, but I am in a phase of consciousness towards them. That they have to be committed to making quality things, they are going to do it well because it's our to a better life, no?

L: Para cuando llegue ese momento de realmente poder producir más. No? Ahorita yo creo algunos diseños o hago algunos diseños. Y los artesanos tratan de captar mi idea. No? Y de... estamos haciendo practicas, ensayos y aveces... no puedo decir que echamos a perder. Nunca se echa a perder. Siempre hasta la cosita, el detalle que aparentemente es mas feito cuando lo ves sobre una prenda ya se ve hermoso, no? O hay otra cosa que lo rescate. Y se ve bonito no? Entonces, pero si estoy como en una etapa de concientización a hacia ellos. De que tienen que verse comprometidos a de que lo que van a hacer, lo van a hacer de calidad, lo van a hacer bien porque es nuestro a una vida mejor, no?

L: Because... I tell you that sometimes there are people that want to help me, they tell me let's do business. I will put the capital, let me know how much you need and let's do it, no? But they are people that want to pay you a salary and they want to take the fame. They want to say this is mine. Um... WE are going to, I am going to, to give you everything you need but I am going to put my brand. I am going to put my name. I am going to... An that is one of the things that I have always defended. No? Our business is called Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca. Our brand is Detalle de Mujer. My... with many obstacles we have come across in terms of working in teams, I determined that we had to be constituted as a SA de CV because there has to be a person who is responsible in the business that has the capacity to make decisions. And when it comes to... to taking administrative decisions. Due to expenses. Of the investments that need to be made.

L: Porque... yo le digo hay veces que me encuentro mucha gente que me ha querido ayudar, que me dice Leti vamos a hacer negocio. Yo te pongo el capital, dime cuanto necesitas y vamos a hacerlo, no? Pero son gente que a ti te quieren pagar un sueldo y ellos quieren tomar la fama. Ellos quieren decir esto es mío. Este... lo vamos a, yo te voy a, a dar todo lo que tu necesitas pero yo le voy a poner mi marca. Yo le voy a poner mi nombre. Yo le voy... Y es una de las cosas de que yo he defendido siempre. No? Incluso nuestra empresa se llama Detalle de Mujer de Oaxaca. Nuestra marca se llama Detalle de Mujer. Mi... por muchos obstáculos que nos hemos topado en cuestión de poder trabajar en equipo, yo termine constituyendo como una S.A. de C.V. porque tiene que a ver una persona responsable en una empresa que tenga la capacidad de decisión. Y en

cuestión de... de tomar decisiones por la cuestión administrativa. Por la cuestión de los gastos. De las inversiones que haya que hacer.

L: And like an SPR, like a figure that has influence where we are all equal, we can't move forward. Because maybe, I have bet on my dream and think I can get more people to help make this dream possible with the other people but they can't take the same responsibility in terms of.. of asking for credit. In terms of doing these things because they are scared. Because they know they can't take that step. That they don't feel capable and able to make that kind of agreement. And that is the motive behind being a SA de CV. Because I, I appear as the only responsible administrator that is responsible for expenses and charging and everything else. For whatever the, the law asks. Or whatever the law has to do with Detalle de Mujer.

L: Y como una S.P.R., como una figura influyente de más gente a donde todos seamos iguales, no se puede avanzar. Porque a lo mejor, yo le apuesto a mi sueño y creo que puedo jalar a más gente que, que se haga realidad ese sueño con la demás gente pero ellos no pueden tomar la misma responsabilidad en cuestión de... de sacar un crédito. En cuestión de hacer ese tipo de cosas porque les da miedo. Porque saben que no pueden dar ese paso. Que no se sienten capaces y solventes para sacar un compromiso de esos. Y eso es el motivo por lo que yo soy una S.A. de C.V. Porque yo, yo aparezco como administradora única y responsable de gastos, cobranzas y demás. Por la cuestión de, de lo que la ley indique. O de lo que la ley tenga que ver con Detalle de Mujer.

L: But when it comes to work. When it comes to moving forward, we try to have equity. Because when I got close to... to register my brand they would question why do you want to register the trademark as the name of the business or name of the organization if the designs are yours. If the creation are yours. If the investment is yours. I said yes, the investment is mine, they are my designs but this design was not only made by me. Maybe I imagined it. But there was another woman who did the embroidery. There was another woman who has to sew. There was another woman who had to knit. There was another woman that had to put make the finish. Or even simply ironed it. But it has a part of each of us. And I... I don't want to um... tomorrow when Detalle de Mujer has sufficient resources or support, when there is people who look at our work, that my name is not the only name that appears. (crying) But that the names of all the people who believed in my project, appears. That believed in a hope no? Because it is a consciousness that I have worked on with the artisans. That I have always told them, no? If I am going to eat dry tortilla and I am eating dry tortilla, I am going to share it with you. But the day that I eat delicacies, I also have to share it with you. (crying) Why? Because I believe that the fact that they trust you to do... because this was honestly really difficult...

L: Pero en cuestión del trabajo. En cuestión de salir adelante, allí tratamos de mantener la equidad. Porque cuando yo me acerque a... a registrar mi marca me decían porque quiere usted poner el registro de marca a nombre de la empresa o nombre de la organización si los diseños son suyos. Si las creaciones son de usted. Si la inversión es de usted. Le dije sí, es mi inversión, son mis diseños pero ese diseño no lo hice yo nadamas. Yo a lo mejor lo imagine. Pero hubo otra mujer que tuvo que bordar. Hubo otra mujer que tuvo que coser. Hubo otra mujer que tuvo que tejer. Hubo otra mujer que tuvo que poner y hacerle el terminado. O a lo mejor hasta simplemente planchar. Pero lleva una

parte de cada una de nosotras. Y yo lo... yo no quiero este... el día de mañana cuando Detalle de Mujer tenga suficiente recurso o tenga los suficientes apoyos, cuando haya que realmente voltee la cara hacia nosotros, no aparezca mi nombre nadamas. (crying) Si no que aparezca el nombre de toda la gente que creyó en mi proyecto. Que creyó pues en una esperanza no? Porque es una concientización que yo he trabajado con los artesanos. Que yo siempre les he dicho no? Si yo voy a comer tortilla seca y estoy comiendo tortilla seca, la voy a compartir con ustedes. Pero el día que yo coma manjar, también lo tengo que compartir con ustedes. (crying) Porque? Porque yo creo el hecho de que te den ellos la confianza de hacer... porque esto fue realmente muy difícil...

L: Now, we see it everywhere. These designs we see them primarily in the touristic corridor. Where there a people with lots of money. And that have been able to afford the artworks that the women make. But before, the women did not allow that you cut a flower. That you cut a... when I started working they would tell me what do you need it for? And I tried explaining and telling them we were doing something different. And they would say, "No, I will not work with you." My work is like this and this. The people were radical. The people did not have that mission or vision. No, the people was jealous with their work. They wanted to keep their regalia indigenous. Their stitching or what they did how and what it was. Because for them it was their regalia that was almost sacred. Why? Because it's art that has... that takes them many days to make, no? Then, I think there many of us who suffered, many that suffered to make that consciousness of people. So that the... the artisans could see their work a different way. They could understand that there is evolution in everything. That we have to accept change and do things differently to survive. Because no one likes you robe. Because no one likes your square. Nobody likes your indigenous dress. That you look like an indian. Because you look like, like instead of looking like, of like feeling proud of what you make, it's almost as if it was the moment that you have to be embarrassed for wearing huaraches or 'sandals,' for wearing an embroidered blouse. No? Why? Because of culture or the ignorance of people. I tell you because I lived it! Si? Because I was the kind of person who loved wearing my typical Oaxacan blouse. And I would go and they would tell me, "And that Indian, where did she descend from? Where did she come from, no? But when I put a flower, a detail, it was finished with lace and you took off the cloth, no?

L: Ahora y lo vemos en todos lados. Estos diseños los vemos principalmente en el corredor turístico. A donde hay gente que tiene mucho dinero. Y que le ha llegado al precio de comprar esas obras de arte que hacen las mujeres si? Pero anteriormente ni las mismas mujeres permitían de que tu recortaras una flor. De que tu recortaras un... cuando yo empecé a trabajar esto me decían para que lo quiere? Y trataba de explicarles y decirles vamos a hacer algo diferente. Y decían, "No. Yo no trabajo con usted." Lo mio es así y así. La gente era radical. La gente no tenía esa misión y ni esa visión. No, no la gente era celosa con su trabajo. Era, quería mantener sus trajes autóctonos. Sus puntadas o lo que ellos hacían tal y cual era. Porque para ellos su vestimenta viene siendo casi sagrada. Porque? Porque es un arte que les a... que les lleva muchos días para poder hacerlo, no? Entonces creo que hubimos muchos que sufrimos, muchos que sufrimos para hacer esa concientización de la gente. Para que ell... los artesanos pudieran ver su trabajo de otra manera. Pudieran darse cuenta que todo va evolucionando. Que tenemos que acceder a veces a cambiar y a hacer cosas diferentes

para poder sobrevivir. Porque a nadie le gusta tu bata. Porque a nadie le gusta tu cuadro. A nadie le gusta vestido autóctono. Que te ves como india. Porque te ves como, como en lugar que, de que te sientas orgullosa de lo que aportas, pareciera que llegó el momento que te tuvieras que avergonzar por portar unos huaraches, por portar una blusa bordada. No? Porque? Porque la cultura o a veces la ignorancia de la gente. Te digo porque yo lo vivi! Si? Porque yo era de las personas que me encantaba ponerme mis blusas típicas de Oaxaca. Y iba yo y me decían, ¿Y esta india de donde bajo? ¿De donde llegó, no? En cambio cuando le ponía la flor, el detalle, lo terminabas con encalle y le quitabas la manta, no?

L: I even had an experience that I still don't know if it makes me laugh or I don't know what, no. But when my mom was going to have twenty-five years... I mean fifty years of marriage, I was so excited making her a beautiful design because it was my mother no? And then um... well I always wanted to make things from cloth. Make things from cotton fibers. Why? Because at school I had learned that natural fibers were the best that there was. That using a shiny fabric does not bring anything good... that it does not serve any purpose to use... because at the end it's plastic. It's polyester, it's something that contaminates. It's something that damages. However, you use cotton and it's a natural fiber, it's a fiber that has benefits, it's a fiber that keeps you fresh. Then, but I didn't tell my mom all of that. Then, I was excited making her dress out of cotton. And she agreed to wear her regalia, her cotton dress. And after time passed, when I told... I was talking with her, she said. "cotton, cotton is the cheapest. For me, cotton is ugly." And I told her, "Mom but I made your wedding dress out of... It doesn't matter, I wore it because it made you happy, no. And I was shocked. Mom, but you wore something that, that um ehm, that I made. And not what you wanted. And it was your wedding, not mine. Hahaha. No? And things like that well, were things that needed to change. And um, but... but what is it called (Aside: L: Respond to your aunt that we brought the pills with us. That tight now he will go drink a natural juice.)

L: Incluso, yo tuve una experiencia que todavía a veces no se si me da risa o me da no se que, no. Pero yo cuando mi mama iba a cumplir veinticinco años... digo cincuenta años de casada, yo estaba emocionadísima haciéndole su diseño pues bonito porque era mi mama no? Y entonces este... pues yo siempre quería hacer cosas de manta. Hacer cosas de fibras de algodón. Porque? Porque yo ya en la escuela había aprendido que las fibras naturales eran lo mejor que podía haber. Que de nada te sirve usar una tela brillante... de nada te servía usar... porque al final era plástico. Es polyester, es algo que contamina. Es algo que te daña. En cambio usas algodón y es una fibra natural, es una fibra que te trae beneficios, es una fibra que te mantiene fresca. Entonces al estudiar todo eso, yo cambie mi concepto de ver la manta como la cosa que era digno de avergonzarte, no? Entonces, pero yo todo eso no se lo platicue a mi mama. Entonces, yo emocionada haciéndole su vestido de manta. Y ella accedió a ponerse su traje, su vestido de manta. Y tiempo después, cuando yo le... yo platicando con ella, me dijo ella, "la manta, la manta es de lo más corriente. Para mí la manta es, es fea." Y le dije, "Mami pero yo le hice su vestido de novia de..." No importa hija, yo me lo puse porque a ti te hacia feliz, no. Y yo me quede así. Mama, pero se puso algo que, que este ehm, que yo quise. Y no lo que usted quería. Y era su boda, no era la mía. Jajajaja. No? Y así cosas así pues era, era lo que había que cambiar. Y este, pero... pero como se llama (Aside: L:

Respondele a tu tía que si nos trajimos las pastillas. Que ahorita que se vaya a tomar el núcleo.)

L: Ah and then well those are the things I learned. That well putting a detail that is arranged on the fabric looked different and was beautiful. And for the others they didn't say that indian, no. Wow, they said nice bordado. Because then they focused in the true art which is the embroidery, no. And that is what I tell yui that I have many years working in this and, and I am going slow. But why? Because I have tried to be just, I have liked to try, I have tried to be the most just possible, no. That the artisan gets paid what it really is That if even I don't have to... and maybe I could sell a garment eh three or four times more the value of the embroidery to be able to grow faster but... I don't have that... that courage because I say no because they also have a need and we are going to to it slowly. And we are going to try and sell. And we are going to try and be the most just possible, that is what I have looked for.

L: Ah y entonces pues esas son las cuestiones que yo aprendí. Que pues poniendo un detalle pero arreglandolo con una tela se veía diferente y era bonito. Y ya para los demás ya no dicen aquella india, no. Wow, dicen que bonito ese bordado. Porque entonces la mirada se enfoca al verdadero arte que es el bordado, no. Y eso fue lo que yo pues te digo tengo muchos anos trabajando esto y, y voy muy lento. Pero porque? Porque justamente me a, me a gustado tratar, he tratado de ser lo más justo posible, no. De que al artesano se le pague lo que realmente es. De que pues aunque yo no tenga para... a lo mejor yo pudiera vender una prenda eh tres o cuatro veces más el valor que cuesta un bordado para poder crecer más agitadamente para salir más rápido pero... no tengo esa... ese valor porque digo no porque también tienen necesidad y vamos a hacerlo despacio. Y vamos a tratar de vender. Y vamos a tratar de ser lo más justo posible, no eso es lo que yo he buscado.

L: Besides that, I have had to take many courses. (Aside: L: Answer her.) I have had to take many courses. In this all, there was a time where they supported us in the beginning, in nineteen... in two thousands and seven when I was um... when I was a member of the committee of parents for the kinder in my town where my son went. They called us to a meeting in the town to explain that there was a contest to participate in an award of sustainable rural development at a nacional level that was about making a project that would imoact the communities. And then um... the person who was the municipan president at that time dreamed with seeing our town like a magical town. Like a town that had an ecological vision, that had jobs, that kids had activities and everything. Then, I loved it and the idea fascinated me. When I heard this, I said well yes. And I started contributing, participating in those meetings. There was a municipal development plan with which the nacional prize was won. We won first price. Because the president made swimming schools, gymnastics, and... cultural activities like painting, sculpture, dance, music. Adult people that could not do activities that needed strength could paint, they could do yoga. Um... there were many experiences where there were many alcoholic adults. They founf an activity to do and resolve their problems. It was an exciting story.
L: Aparte de alli, yo he tenido que tomar pues muchos cursos. (Aside: Contéstale hijo.) Yo he tenido que tomar muchos cursos. Dentro de todo esto hubo una etapa que nosotros, nos apoyar en un principio en, en mil noveciento... en el dos mil siete cuando

yo era este... cuando yo era integrante del comité de padres de familia del kinder de allí de mi pueblo donde iba mi hijo. Nos llamaron a una reunión al municipio para explicarnos de que había un concurso para participar en un premio de desarrollo rural sustentable a nivel nacional que se trataba de poner a hacer algún proyecto que causará impacto en las comunidades. Y entonces este... la persona que estaba como presidente municipal en ese entonces pues soñaba con ver a nuestro pueblo como un pueblo mágico. Como un pueblo que tuviera visión ecológica, que tuviera fuentes de empleo, que los niños tuvieran actividades y todo. Entonces a mi me encanto y me facino la idea. Cuando yo escuche esto, yo le dije no pues si no. Y yo empecé a contribuir, a participar en esas reuniones. Se hizo un plan de desarrollo municipal con el cual se ganó el premio nacional, a nivel nacional. Ganamos el primer lugar por nuestro municipio. Porque el presidente hizo escuelas de natación, de gimnasia, esté... actividades culturales como pintura, escultura, danza, música. Las personas adultas que ya no podían realizar una actividad a dónde he aplicara fuerza, las puso a pintar, las puso a hacer como especie de yoga. Este... hubo muchas experiencias de que había muchas personas grandes que eran alcohólicas. Encontraron una actividad que realizar y superaron sus problemas. Bueno una historia emocionante.

L: Then, I got close and asked for help and to be able to... we um... get and fo the, the, um... eh, eh the municipal plan. And then I got close and I told him my idea of, of making a business where I could employ women overall single mothersor people that was... that want to learn to sew, that would like to learn to embroider, that would like to learn activities related to my job. Then, he told me yes Leti I support you. Tell me what yiu need, what we can do. We started training people because sadly there is a thing in our state or or our people that because you are their neighbor, they can't see you doing well, no. Even though I could be an extraordinary teacher in my community, in my town I am simply Leti or simply so and so's daughter, that that what can she show if we were raised together, if she is my neighbor, and everything. Then, I told him why don't we do one thing, why don't we hire other people to do the trainings. (Aside: Take him to drink his pill. Right now we will stop, okay. Yes)

L: Entonces yo me acerque para pedir ayuda y poder este... nosotros este... agarrar y hacer el, el este... eh, el plan municipal. Y en eso me acerque yo y le platique mi idea que yo siempre habia traído de, de hacer una empresa donde pudiera yo emplear mujeres sobre todo mamás solteras o gente que estuviera este... que quisiera aprender a coser, que quisiera aprender a bordar, que quisiera aprender las actividades que eran relacionadas a mi trabajo. Entonces el me dijo si Leti adelante yo te apoyo. Dime que necesitas, que hacemos. Empezamos por capacitar a las personas porque tristemente hay una cuestión en nuestro estado o en nuestra gente por el hecho de que tu eres su vecino, no te pueden ver bien a ti, no. Aunque yo podría ser una extraordinaria maestra en otra comunidad, en mi pueblo soy simplemente Leti o simplemente la hija de fulano y sutano, que que me puede enseñar pues si se creó conmigo si es mi vecina, y todo. Entonces yo le dije porque no hacemos una cosa, porque no contratamos a otro personal para que vengan a capacitar. (Aside: Llévalo a tomar su pastilla. Ahorita nosotros paramos, pues. Si)

L:Lets continue.

L: *Continuamos.*

I: Yes. (Both laugh.)

I: *Si. (Rien las dos.)*

L: I don't remember where I stopped.

L: *Ya no me acuerdo en que quede.*

I: Umm...

I: *Este...*

L: Ah... when it comes to the training well um...

L: *Ah... en cuanto las capacitaciones pues este...*

I: Ah, yes, yes.

I: *A si, si.*

L: Thanks to having to knock on doors, self-sufficiency organizations, looking for support with economic resources, there I found the resource for training. And I studied in a training that lasted six months that was called System for the Quality Administration. In that training, it was there where, there I taught... more like learned well how to treat my customers, how to... how to um, how to be, have a, like a how the word says it, a quality in its totality. Not just in the operative part of the garments. The human quality. It was a way of treating the people that Detalle de Mujer works with with dignity. It is a way of organizing to be able to take the next step. Overall, what I liked about here... finally they gave us a class about empowerment that was about empowerment where I understood and learned that that I always... even though I have the experience in making garments and that my garments have gone to Germany, they have gone to Greece, they have taken them to many countries, and they have flattered my work um... I have always had like, I had that fear no, of wanting to grow more, of more people getting to know me because I feel that I don't have... the strength in production at the production because the production depends on investment, no. So that was my fear.

L: *Gracias a que he tenido que andar tocando puertas, independencias, buscando quien nos apoye con recursos económicos, allí encontré el apoyo para capacitación. Y me metí a estudiar un diplomado que duró seis meses, que se llama Sistema de Gestión de la Calidad. En ese diplomado, fue allí en donde, pues allí enseñé... aprendí más bien a como tratar a mis clientes, a como.... A como este, a como ser, tener una, una así como lo dice la palabra, una calidad en su totalidad. No solo en la cuestión operativa de las prendas. Esa calidad humana. Esa forma digna de tratar a las personas que colaboran con detalle de mujer. Esa manera de poder organizarte para poder dar el siguiente paso. Sobre todo a mi lo que me gustó de allí es... finalmente nos dieron una clase que se llama empowerment que fue de empoderamiento en donde yo entendí y aprendí de que yo siempre... aunque tengo ya la experiencia digamos para hacer prendas de vestir, y que mis prendas de vestir se han ido a Alemania, se han ido a Grecia, se las han llevado a muchos diferentes países, he y me han halagado mi trabajo esté... siempre he tenido como, tenía yo ese temor no, de querer crecer más, de que me conocieran más personas*

porque siento que no tengo... pues la fortaleza de producción o la cuestión productiva porque la cuestión productiva depende de inversión, no. Entonces eso era mi temor.

L: And then I took that course and they gave lots of tips for... well to get to the next step, no, which was to open a store, what we are doing now, yes. Because well because in our community they know us. There are people who recommend us and that take other people to us and like that. But not for... for the ability let's say to be able to push it all forward, no. Then, well that is why I decided to have a store, to open the store. And it was like, like we, we had the confidence to do it. Because... thanks to that, to that training that I took. And we are in constant... in constant training because the Secretary of Economy that is mine give us... gives us administrative trainings about trademark registration, about customer service... And then it's when I try too... whoever that is part of the organization assists with me to the courses. So that they can see and believe that it is important to get training. Because well like that you are not gonna be oblivious. Although sometimes we don't know things, no. But... but it's its not like when you are certain because there are methodologies, there are techniques, that there are things... (Aside: L: So take it.) That there are things you can do, no. (Aside: L: Or leave it, I will take it.) And um... And, and that the also have to give it the importance of making quality things and well well so that there won't be any claim or issues where we have look bad with the customer. That it was that.

L: Y entonces cuando tomé ese curso pues me dieron como muchos tips para... pues para salir al siguiente paso, no, que era pues abrir una tienda, lo que estamos haciendo ahorita, si. Porque pues porque en nuestra comunidad si nos conoce gente. Hay gente que nos recomienda y que nos lleva otra persona y así. Pero no para... para poder digamos sacar adelante toda, no. Entonces pues, por eso decidí poner la tienda, abrir la tienda. Y fue así como, como nos, nos dimos el valor de hacerlo pues. Por... gracias a ese, a ese diplomado que yo tome. Y estamos en constante... en constante capacitación porque la Secretaría de Economía la mía nos este... nos da capacitaciones administrativas, sobre registro de marca, sobre cómo tratar al cliente... Y entonces es cuando yo trato de que... cualquiera de las de la organización asistan junto conmigo a ese tipo de cursos. Para que ellas vean y crean que es importante capacitarse. Porque pues así no vas andar dando patadas de ahogado. Bueno aun así les damos, no. Pero... pero no es tanto como tener la certeza de que hay metodologías, que hay técnica, que hay cosas... (Aside: L: Entonces llévatelo.) Que hay cosas que tu puedes hacer, no. (Aside: L: O dejala, yo me la llevo.) Y este... Y, y que ellos también tienen que darle como esa importancia de hacer las cosas de calidad y bien bien para que no alla pues después reclamamos o no haya cuestiones que tengamos que quedar en, en mal con el cliente. Que eso fue.

I: And you said the Secretary of what...?

I: Y dijo que la Secretaría de...?

L: The Secretary of Economic and Tourism Development. That is what that secretary is called. She started to, to um... It started to call her attention because of the type of clothes I made because she is from there, the Isthmus. But she was one of the people that said never ever. She was incapable of using a huipil or 'ethnic blouse' with jeans because she

had... like lots of caring and respect for her, well to her... to her culture, no. And she said that well, well that she couldn't. That she wasn't going to do that, no. And when she saw me with my garments, with my clothes, she would say oh your blouse is beautiful. But the day I wear one like that, my people will kill me, they will shoot me, they are going to I don't know what. I told her, "Wear one of these and you will see that nothing will happen." And I began by gifting her one. And she said gift me... ah she said the day that I take, how do you think that I am going to accept that. No Leti, they cost lots of money. No, she said. If I accept one it will be with another embroidery, from another region and something more simple that does not cost you much, if you want to gift it to me. But I can't accept this because it was a beautiful embroidered blouse, with a vintage embroidery. And so, she said, no. And um... and then she told me and if you want I can buy this embroidery but make it into a dress. And I made it into a dress and she bought it. And from there I gifted her a blouse. And she always... began, I would talk to her. And apparently, I would not see that she would see a future in me, you understand. Like I would feel like she didn't care what happened to me.

L: La Secretaria de Desarrollo Económico y Turismo. Así se llama aquí esa secretaria. Esa Secretaria ahorita es subdirectora una amiga mía. Ella empezó a, a este... Empezó más bien a llamarle la atención yo a ella por el tipo de ropa que yo hacía porque ella es de allí, del Istmo. Pero ella era una de las personas que decía jamás y nunca. Era incapaz de usar un huipil con un pantalón de mezclilla porque le tenía... como mucho cariño y respeto a su, pues a su a... a su cultura, no. Y decía ella que pues, pues que no. Que ella no iba a hacer eso, no. Y cuando me veía a mí con mis prendas, con mi ropa, ay que bonita se ve tu blusa. No pero el día que yo me ponga una así, mi gente me va a matar, me va a fusilar, me va a no se que. Le dije, "Póngase una de estas y verá que no le va a pasar nada." Y empecé por regalarle una. Y ella me dijo regálame... ah me dijo el día que yo se la lleve, no como crees que te voy a aceptar eso. No Leti, eso cuesta mucho dinero. No dice. Si te acepto una pero de otro bordado, de otra región y algo más sencillo que a ti no te cueste tanto, si tu me la quieres regalar. Pero esto yo no te lo puedo aceptar porque era una blusa muy bonita bordada, con bordado de mano y antiguo. Y entonces ella me dijo, no. Y este... y entonces fue que me dijo y si quieres te compro ese bordado pero hazmelo en un vestido. Y se lo hice en un vestido y me lo compro. Y de allí le regale una blusa. Y a ella pues siempre... empezó, yo platicaba con ella. Y aparentemente yo no miraba que ella mirara futuro en mí me entiendes. Como sentía yo que como que no le importaba lo que me sucediera.

L: Until one occasion when I was part of a course. Um... one day she told me, um... come Leti, come because I want to talk with you. And that was when she talked to me and told me that there was going to be a course. And she told me Leti I really appreciate what you are doing and I want to help you. But I want to help you but not with money because money, when you give people money they end up with problems. But when know for what you need money and have a clear objective, your mission, your vision and you are sure of what you want to do, then they can give you money. Then, we will see where we get money. (1:22:41) And then she invited me to take a training where I felt out of place because I would see businesspeople that have big businesses. And that they went because they wanted to take corrective actions, no.

L: Hasta que en una ocasión cuando hubo este, este curso. Este... un día me dijo, este... ven Leti, ven porque quiero platicar contigo. Y ya fue que me platicó y me dijo que iba a ver este curso. Y me dijo Leti yo aprecio mucho lo que tu estás haciendo y yo te quiero ayudar. Pero yo quiero ayudarte no con dinero, porque el dinero, cuando se les da dinero a las personas terminan en problemas. Pero cuando tu sabes para qué es el dinero y tienes claro tu objetivo tu misión, tu visión y estás segura de lo que quieres hacer, entonces te puedo dar dinero. Entonces veremos de dónde sacamos dinero. (1:22:41) Y entonces ella me invitó a que tomara ese diplomado a donde yo me sentía pues fuera de lugar porque yo miraba que llegaran, que llegaban empresarios que realmente tienen sus empresas grandes. Y que ellos van pero a hacer acciones correctivas, no. Sobre cuestiones de que ya tienen una empresa, que ya está funcionando, pero que tienen fallas y tienen que corregir esas fallas pero que ya vivieron años, están en cierta, en cierto avance o desarrollo. Y entonces pues yo, pues apenas miraba mi empresa como un granito de arena, no. Y decía es que yo no estoy en el lugar indicado.

L: And she always cheered me on and told me Leti we are barely getting to the good stuff. Don't get anxious, don't leave, you have to see that everything you need is there, no. That it is that you have to really focus, real focus to your business, to say it. But if you want to help everyone else, you have to be well to help others. If you are a vulnerable person, that, that doesn't have the tools to, to be able to continue the thr process of a business, well it will be difficult, no. And um... she would say, she would really cheer me on. She would tell me you have the leadership. You have what many don't have. Many people may have the money to make a business, but they don't have leadership, they don't have that sensibility that you have with others. And that is important. So, it is a matter of you hanging in there. It's true you have... Because it's true, I would tell her why do I want to hear big numbers, big things, big promises if my pockets are empty, no. And I would, she would tell me if your pocket is empty but your mind and heart have to always be open, she would tell me. And she well she is a great friend, that well has guided me. Now...she didn't have the Secretary then. She was like a government employee when I started talking to her. However, she is a person that I admire because she is very capable. She is an accountant and has taken small steps.

L: Y ella me echaba porras y me decía no Leti apenas va a venir lo bueno. No te desesperes, no te salgas, tienes que darte cuenta de que allí está todo lo que tu necesitas, no. Que es dar un enfoque real, real a tu negocio, por decirlo así. Porque si tu quieres ayudar a los demás, tienes que estar bien tu para después poder ayudar a los demás. Si tu eres una persona que está vulnerable, que, que no tiene las herramientas para, parapoder seguir un proceso de lo que es una empresa, pues va a ser difícil, no. Y este... me decía, ella me echaban muchas porras. Me decía tú tienes el liderazgo. Tu tienes lo que mucho no tienen. Mucha gente podrá tener el dinero para hacer un negocio, pero no tiene liderazgo, no tiene esa sensibilidad que tu tienes para con los demás. Y eso es importante. Entonces es cuestión de que tu te aguantes. Es cierto traes... porque si es cierto, le decía para qué quiero oír de grandes números, de grandes cosas, de grandes promesas si mis bolsos están vacíos, no. Y yo siempre me decía si tu bolsa está vacía pero tu mente y tu corazón tiene que estar abierto siempre me decía. Y ella pues es una gran amiga que, que pues me ha sabido guiar. Ahorita... ella en ese entonces no tenía esa Secretaría. Ella pues digamos era una empleada exis de gobierno cuando yo me

empeze a llevar con ella. Mas sin embargo, es una persona que yo admiro porque es capaz. Es una contadora y a ido paso a pasito.

L: And now she is sub-Secretary of... of the Secretary of Tourism. And to get there she has really earned people's respect because of who she is. Then, um I well I have always been very expressive, very open. I like to say things how they are. And when I go talk to government officials, well I tell them no, the bad things I see in the state. What I don't like about politics. It, I for example have clients who are deputies, deputies and I feel that with them I talk like, that they see me like any other person, no. But whatever person from my town is capable of demanding, of fighting for their rights, no. And that I tell them that they are wrong, they're wrong. They are doing things wrong, no. Sadly that doesn't change... it doesn't change anything, no. If they hear you. If they get embarrassed. But they do it. Like, they do it. For example, I am really sad right now because I met two ...um.. I know various deputies that are in power now, that I make their clothes. And they were like federal deputies and one of them told me Leti if I become federal deputy, I am going to be on the commission of artisans. And look like some years ago... I was federal deputy, I was on the artisans commission, I traveled with artisans to seventeen countries, I took them to sell their products, I didn't know you that is why I didn't invite you.

L: Y ahora es sub-Secretaria de...de la Secretaría de Turismo. Y para llegar hasta allá pues la verdad es que se ha ganado el respeto de mucha gente por ser como es. Entonces, este yo pues siempre he sido muy expresiva, muy abierta. A mi me gusta decir las cosas como son. Y cuando yo voy a platicar con los funcionarios, pues yo si les digo no, lo que miro mal en el estado. Lo que a mi no me gusta de la política. Me, yo por ejemplo tengo clientes que son diputadas, diputados y yo me siento con ellos y yo platico como, pues que miren como cualquier persona, no. Pero cualquier persona del pueblo que es capaz de exigir, de pelear por su derechos, no. Y que yo les digo están mal, están mal. Están haciendo mal las cosas, no. Tristemente pues eso no cambia... no hace que cambie, no. Si te escuchan. Si les da vergüenza. Pero lo hacen. Osea, lo hacen. Yo por ejemplo, ahorita estoy muy triste porque yo conocí a dos... a... conozco a varias diputadas que están en función ahorita, que yo les hago su ropa. Y ellas estaban como diputadas federales y una de ella me dijo no Leti si yo llego a ser diputada federal, lo que yo voy a ser es la comisión de artesanías. Y mira yo hace no se cuantos años... ya fui diputada federal, estuve en la comisión de las artesanías, viaje con los artesanos a diecisiete países del mundo, los lleve a vender sus productos, no te conocía a ti por eso no te invite.

L: But if I get to federal deouty, I am not only going to want to take you to travel with your designs, I want you to organize and motivate the artisans so that they can do what you are doing. SO you can make aliances, to unite people, to develop your activities in groups, to transcend. We look for people who are trained to make a project that is impactful to, to take as a model your business like a model and we can do this, no. Sadly, she didn't get to federal deputy because she was very sure she could do it because in her community they speak dialect, she is a... Amongst all the deputies, all the deputies I know, she is like the most decent because she has a clean slate, no. She has earned... her title. Like she has earned what she has by going to towns. Fighting for women's rights. Doing lots of things, no. She, she eh in her story, the experience she has she was the first council member in

her town. She says they even threw stones at her and everything, no. She has many experiences with discrimination against women. And so I see that she is one of the people that really experienced first hand what other feel. Sometimes, that feeling of impotency when you don't have power.

L: Pero si ahora pasa eso que yo llegue a ser diputada federal, yo no voy a querer nadamas llevarte a viajar con tus diseños, yo quiero que tu organices y motives a los artesanos para que hagan lo que tu estas haciendo. Para que hagan alianzas, para que unan a la gente, para que desarrollen sus actividades en equipo, para que tengan una trascendencia. Buscamos a gente capacitada para que haga un proyecto que tenga impacto para, para modelo para tomar tu empresa como modelo y podamos hacer esto, no. Tristemente ella no llegó a la diputación federal porque ella estaba muy segura poder hacerlo porque en su comunidad ella habla dialecto, ella es una... Digamos que entre las diputadas, todas las diputadas que conozco, ella es como la más decente porque ha venido con una trayectoria limpia, no. Que se ha ganado... este el nombre. Osea a ganado lo que tiene de verdad metiéndose a los pueblos. Luchando por los derechos de las mujeres. Haciendo muchas cosas, no. Ella, ella eh en su historia, la experiencia que tiene fue la primer regidora en su pueblo. Dice que hasta la apedreaban y todo, no. Ella tiene muchas experiencias de la discriminacion que le hacian a las mujeres. Y por lo tanto yo veo que ella si es una de las personas que realmente sienten en carne propia lo que los demás sienten. A veces no, esa sensacion de impotencia cuando no tienes poder.

L: But when you have power sometimes you forget many things, no. And it was what I always or it was what I have always expressed, no. That when they are asking for votes they have the most humility and frank people. But when they are in positions and see the validation they have, then they say I am so and so and they forget everyone else, no. And then she, she would discuss that. But the PRI is a rough party. At the end, the three deoutiesthat I know and that she presented me, were candidates for federal deputies. And what happened? They didn't let them get to federal deouties and other people were put in power and they kicked them out. And then one day one of them says, Leti do you have lots of work? I told them, "Why?" it's because I need a tunic. I asked, "For what?" Because we are going to Tierra Santa. Because they didn't give them the political positions, the PRI payed for them to go to Tierra Santa for two weeks for all the PRI deputies, for all the precandidates that didn't get a position. Sadly, with resources from the people, with the resource from the party and finally they continue being the same people that have power, no. And that made me very sad because I said well maybe they can't fight and fight for the position to do what they, they promised or what they dreamed to do.

L: Pero cuando tienes poder también a veces se te olvidan muchas cosas, no. Y era lo que yo siempre o era lo que yo siempre les he expresado, no. Que cuando andan pidiendo el voto son las personas mas humildes y parecieran ser las francas. Pero cuando ya están en el curul y ven la validez que tiene su charola, entonces dicen yo soy fulana de tal y se olvidan de los demás ,no. Y entonces ella, ella si me decía platicabamos eso. Pero pues el PRI es un partido muy canijo. Y al final a ellas, porque a las tres diputadas que yo conozco y que ella me las presento, estaban como candidatas a diputadas federales. Y qué pasa? No las dejaron llegar a ser candidatas a diputadas federales y pusieron a otras personas y las quitaron a ellas. Y cuanto va siendo de que un dia me dicen, oiga

Leti tiene mucho trabajo? Le dije, "Porque?" es que necesito unas túnicas. A si le dije, "Para qué?" Porque vamos a ir a Tierra Santa. El hecho de que no les dieron la candidatura, el PRI les pagó un viaje a Tierra Santa por dos semanas a todos esos diputados de PRI, a todos los precandidatos que no pudieron quedar. Tristemente con el recurso del pueblo, con el recurso del partido y finalmente siguen siendo las mismas personas que tienen poder, no. Y eso a mi me puso muy triste porque dije bueno a lo mejor ellas no pueden pelear y luchar por que les dejaran la candidatura por hacer lo que, lo que prometían o lo que sonaban hacer.

L: But as a person from my town, with my dignity I would say you didn't give me the position, you didn't give me that, you didn't give me the money or budget or investment that they are going to make on us, give it to the people that don't have anything. Give it to those in need. You knowing the history and sad cases where the... where people really don't have food. Why didn't they say don't give us the trip, no? Give us the money and we are going to pass it out. That would be a good action. That would be a testimony or a something I would say that is my candidate or that is a person who really...but that they buy your ideals with a few coins. That you exchange change everything that you are supposedly fighting for in exchange of a two week trip with all expenses paid. Like it's like no eh? The, um... well everything is the same, everything is the same.

L: Pero yo como persona del pueblo, con mi dignidad yo le diría no me diste la candidatura, no me diste eso, no me diste ese dinero o ese gasto o esa inversión que van a hacer en nosotros, dásela a gente que no tiene, no. Dásela al que necesita. Ustedes conociendo historias y casos desgarrantes a donde la... de verdad la gente no tiene que comer. Porque no dijeron no nos den el viaje, no? Denos el dinero y lo vamos a repartir. Esa sería una buena acción. Esa sería un testimonio o un algo que yo dijera esa si es mi candidata o esa si es una persona que realmente... pero que te compren con unas cuantas monedas tus ideales. Que cambies todo lo que supuestamente estás luchando a cambio de un viaje de dos semanas con todos los lujos que tu necesites. Pues como que no eh? Entonces, este... pues todo viene siendo igual, todo viene siendo igual.

L: I have had very pleasurable and very sad experiences because I tell you in my... in my ideal, in my mission I have put my heart, I have seen, I have suffered many things with my children, with my family. I have had to give as the artisan comes with their bordado, one-hundred pesos, here it is, no. Or what their work is worth, here it is. Mom and what are we going to eat? I had to pay the bordado. I had to pay the garment. I had to pay the loom. Because that people come from far away. Yes? They come from a ranch, from a, they come from whatever place and had to spend on transportation to come leave this garment to come leave this embroidery. And we, we will have or tomorrow we will have a customer, that will buy and we will have food or what we need. No? And my children are the ones who have lived many limitations, many things that I have not been able to give them to be able to share the little we have, no. (Crying.) And I went and the moment came that to manage and ask for resources, look for things, there were times I would go with an empty stomach and returned with an empty stomach. And sometimes without a dime in my pocket. And, and on occasion I would still have to choose the money for transportation or money for milk for my children because I have to go see so and so, or

certain depouty, or so and so... or this person to see if they listen, to see if they help me. To see if they can help to, to realize the project.

L: Yo he tenido experiencias muy gratas y muy tristes porque le digo yo en mi... en mi ideal, en mi misión he puesto el corazón, he visto, he sufrido muchas cosas junto con mis hijos, junto con mi familia. Yo he llegado a tener que dar así como que llega el artesano con su bordado, tengo cien pesos, aquí está, no. O lo que cueste su trabajo, aquí está. Mamá y nosotros que vamos a comer? Tuve que pagar el bordado. Tuve que pagar la prenda. Tuve que pagar el telar. Porque esa gente viene de más lejos. Si? Viene de un rancho, viene de, viene de exis lugar y tuvieron que gastar su pasaje para venir a dejar esta prenda para venir a dejar este bordado. Y nosotros, nosotros al rato o mañana va a venir otro cliente, nos va a comprar y vamos a poder la comida o lo que tengamos que necesitar. No? Y mis hijos si han sido quien ha vivido muchas privacidades, muchas cosas que yo no les he podido dar por el afán de compartir lo poquito que tenemos, no. (Llorando.) Y fui y llegó el momento que yo por gestionar y tirarme a buscar apoyos, a buscar cosas, había veces que me iba con el estómago vacío y regresaba con el estómago vacío. Y a veces sin un peso en la bolsa. Y, y todavía había ocasiones en que(1:33:30) tenía que elegir el dinero de mi pasaje o compro la leche para mis hijos, no. Entonces había veces que me la jugaba y decía pues no voy a comprar la leche para mis hijos porque tengo que ir a ver a tal, a tal funcionario, a tal diputado, a tal... a tal persona a ver si me escucha, a ver si me ayuda. A ver si nos puede ayudar para, para realizar el proyecto.

L: And well that is why my sons my sons know and love the job. Love my job. We have suffered together, no. My son the oldest, when I was studying in the training, I didn't have a computer, I didn't know how to turn it on, I didn't know how to use it. He showed me. He, he would do my homework. He tries to help me in whatever he can. And um... and each time that he listens or that we write together what we are going to say or what we are going to do, well he finds out, no. And, and he says mom I am going to study Business Administration, I am going to...to study something that I can help you, that I can, that your business lives. That even if you die, your business continues. Your business, no. So that I can employ my cousins. So I could give my children jobs, no. Then he, he is in a stage in which he is fourteen years old but he understands perfectly what I have had to do, no. And that is not stepping on people, it's not with corruption, it isn't how we are going to move forward.

L: Y pues por eso mis hijos mis hijos saben y aman el trabajo. Aman mi trabajo. Hemos sufrido juntos, no. Mi hijo el grande, cuando yo estaba estudiando el diplomado, no tenía una computadora, no sabía ni prenderla, no sabía ni usarla. El me enseñó. El, el agarraba y me hacía mis tareas. Él trata de ayudarme en lo que él puede. Y este... y cada vez que me escucha o que escribimos juntos lo que vamos a decir o lo que vamos a hacer, pues el se entera, no. Y, y el dice mamá yo voy a estudiar administración de empresas, yo voy a... a estudiar algo que yo te pueda ayudar, que yo pueda, que tu empresa viva. Que aunque tu te mueras, tu empresa siga. Tu empresa este, no. Para que yo le pueda dar empleo a mis primos. Para que yo le pueda dar trabajo a mis hijos, no. Entonces el, el esta en una etapa en el que tiene catorce años pero comprende perfectamente bien lo que yo intento hacer, no. Y que no es tampoco pisoteando, no es a través de la corrupción, no es a través de nada cómo vamos a salir adelante.

L: Because we have come across cases like that. You give this, and give you this much. We are going to ask for this resource but you have to give us a cut and I am going to give you this much. I have come across with all sorts of people, no. Moreover, they know because they see it and live it with me. And they tell me mom, “Are you going to do it?” And I say, “No, No, son.” If thngs are going to happen, they are goin gro be done right. If they aren’t going to happen, they aren’t goin to happen. Yes. But we can, I can’t be an example for my sons of corruption, of being an accomplice of something because then they are going to learn, no. That tricking like the saying states, “If you don’t trick, you don’t move forward.” No? Then I tell him son, “without sacrifice, there isn’t victory.” And even if it’s more difficult we have to do it. We have to sacrifice, we have to earn it with our work. In a clean way, with transparency. Where we never have to be ashamed for what we have because we didn’t steal anything. No? And it’s like that how we have applied for resiuurces. For example, from SAGARPA [Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación] or ‘SAGARPA [Secretary of Agriculture, Farming, Rural Development, Fishing and Food]’ with the prize for sustainable rural development that was won in 2007 thatnks to the municipal president.

L: Porque nos hemos topado con casos así. Da tanto, yo te doy tanto. Vamos a bajar tal recurso pero te vas a mochar y yo te voy a dar esto. Me he topado con todo tipo de gente, no. Mas sin embargo ellos lo saben porque lo ven y lo viven junto conmigo. Y me dicen mamá, “Si, si le vas a entrar?” Y le digo, “No. No hijo.” Las cosas si se van a dar, se van a dar bien. Si no se van a dar, no se van a dar. Si. Pero no podemos, yo no puedo poner un ejemplo a mis hijos de, de ser cómplices de corrupción, de ser cómplice de algo porque entonces ellos van a aprender, no. Que transando como dice el dicho, “Si no tranzas, no avanzas.” No? Entonces le digo hijo, “sin sacrificio, no hay victoria.” Y aunque nos cueste tenemos que hacerlo. Tenemos que sacrificar, tenemos que ganarnos los con nuestro trabajo. En forma limpia, en forma transparente. Donde nunca tengamos que agachar la cara por lo que tengamos porque no nos lo robamos. No? Y es así como nosotros hemos bajado apoyos. Por ejemplo, de SAGARPA[Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación] con el premio de Desarrollo Rural Sustentable se ganó en el 2007 gracias a ese presidente municipal.

I: What was the municipal presiden’t name?

I: Cómo se llamaba el presidente municipal?

L: The municipal president is named Mayolo Ruiz Carreño [Francisco Mayolo Ruiz Carreño]. He is a person who loves his townand wanted to do many things. Sadly, wherever you go there is politics and negative things reign then um that is why no... in the town there has not been a great advancement. But it was a golden dream that we needed to do. Including, um in my project it was integral because there was a... there was a touristic corridor, a route, no. For the people to go to CASA, the center of arts, would go to... where they make the paper, the paper factory, go to... where they produce the zeta mushrooms, to... to the shop, to my sister’s house where they sell, they make um, plants, they plant ornamental plants and the, and of what is it called...vegetables. Um... behind and a little forward there is a small crown where there is historic place that is believed to be enchanted by our ancestors, where there is glory. They are stories, no, like

legends that, that are told about the town. Things like that, no. And they were planned. That is why we let ourselves dream big with the investment in the shop even though it was in the mountain. Because there were other things that would go with it so it wouldn't look like, like abandoned, no or like far.

L: El presidente municipal se llama Mayolo Ruiz Carreño [Francisco Mayolo Ruiz Carreño]. El es una persona que ama a su pueblo y quiso hacer muchas cosas. Tristemente donde quiera la política y las cuestiones negativas reinan entonces este por eso no... en el pueblo no ha avanzado gran cosa. Pero era un sueño dorado que nosotros teníamos de hacer. Incluso, este dentro de mi proyecto era como integral porque he había un... se había planeado un corredor turístico, como una ruta, no. Para que la gente fuera al CASA, el centro de las artes, fuera al este... a donde hacen el papel, a la fábrica de papel, fueran a este... a donde producen hongos zeta, a... al taller, a casa de mis hermanas donde ellas venden, hacen este, plantas, siembran plantas de ornato y de, y de este cómo se les llama... hortalizas. Este... posteriormente adelantito hay una coronita a donde hay como un antecedente histórico de nuestros antepasados que que era un lugar encantado, que se abre la gloria. Son historias, no, como leyendas que, que se escuchan que hubo en el pueblo. Cosas así, no. Y estaban planeadas. Por eso nos atrevimos a, a sonar en grande con la inversión del taller a pesar de estar en la montaña, a pesar de eso. Porque habían otras cosas que iban a ser acompañadas a su alrededor para que eso no se viera así como, como abandonado, no o cómo lejos.

L: That is why every time I am asked why I made such an investment, why did I make it so big, why did you make that like that, I say because I really dreamed that one day that is going to be real, no. Maybe it will... lots of times they have proposed Leti why aren't municipal president so you can do everything and you can save it. And I told them that that isn't the end. Because maybe I am not going to be the person that is going to sin in power and forget about everyone. I am probably not. But I have something more valuable, than, than, than my town. That are my sons. My sons are still in a stage where they need their mother and father, where we have to grow. When they may nit need me anymore, and that I see tha theu um... walk on their own and freely, well then I can think of everything else. But right now no because that absorbs you, it derails you completely from your life. For me my family comes first, then everything else. Like I want my project, I love my project, I love my town. But first I have to succeed to be able to show and demonstrate that it's possible. Because if there is no testimony, if there isn't a reality, or there isn't something concrete and made, people don't believe, no. People don't believe.

L: Por eso cada vez que me preguntan porque hizo tanta inversión, porque me avente eso tan grande, que porque hizo eso así, digo porque yo realmente sueño con que un día eso va a ser realidad, no. Tal vez sea... muchas veces me han propuesto Leti porque no eres presidenta municipal para que hagas todo eso y para que rescates. Y les dije es que ese no es el fin. Porque a lo mejor yo no voy a ser esa persona que cometa el pecado de sentirte con poder y olvidarte de los demás. Pueda ser que no. Pero yo tengo antes algo más valioso que, que, que mi pueblo. Que son mis hijos. Mis hijos todavía están en una etapa que necesitan a su mamá y a su papá, a donde tenemos que crecer. Cuando ellos tal vez ya no me necesiten a mi, que yo ya vean que están este... caminando no solos pero ya mas sueltos, pues ya entonces yo pudiera pensar en los demás. Pero ahorita no le digo

porque eso te absorbe, eso te, te desvía completamente de tu proyecto de vida. Primero para mi esta mi familia y despues los demas. Osea si si quiero mi proyecto, amo mi proyecto, amo a mi pueblo. Pero primero tengo que realizar yo para poder después enseñarles y demostrarles que sí se puede. Porque si no hay un testimonio, si no hay una realidad, o no hay algo ya concretado y hecho, la gente no cree, no. La gente no cree.

L: But yes. That was the first resource that I got from SAGARPA. And that one they gave it to us for the infrastructure of the shop. Sadly, because I didn't know about all of that, well the project manager that made my project told me to do it for \$800,000 pesos because if it was over \$1,000,000 pesos they wouldn't give it to us. And then, no, no... he didn't project what we needed. He focused on what we could do, no. So \$1,000,000 and \$500,000 pesos for machinery well 848,000 was the resource. \$400,000 pesos for machinery and \$400,000 pesos for infrastructure. But the, the project wasn't like, like I needed it with the required spaces. So then, we did it how we had really dreamed. And, the money was used until it was possible, in SAGARPA they were rats that made a correction that stated that I wasn't going to buy the machinery, that I was going to invest the money in the infrastructure. Sadly, we hit the limit... they didn't liberate all of the resource because they did it by quantities. At fifty percent and when you did fifty percent, they liberated the other... the other twenty-five, when you make the other twenty-five, they liberate the other twenty-five. Like that. Until, until they give you the resource. But for us there was a change in government and I was not possible. (Aside: Uh, I am going to interrupt.)

L: Pero si. Ese fue el primer apoyo que yo baje de Sagarpa. Y ese nos lo dieron para la infraestructura del taller. Tristemente, como yo desconocia de todo eso, pues el técnico que a mi me hizo el proyecto me dijo no nadamas hágalo por \$800,000 pesos porque si pasa del \$1,000,000 de pesos ya no se lo van a dar. Y entonces no, no... no proyecto lo que necesitábamos. Si, no el se enfoco en lo que alcanzaba, no. Osea un \$1,000,000 y \$500,000 pesos para maquinaria bueno 848,000 fue el apoyo. 400,000 pesos para maquinaria y 400,000 pesos para infraestructura. Pero el, el proyecto no estaba como, como yo lo necesitaba con los espacios que se requería. Entonces este, lo hicimos como realmente lo habíamos soñado. Y, el dinero hasta donde alcanzo, este en Sagarpa accedieron hacerme una fe de ratas haciéndome la corrección de que yo no iba a comprar la maquinaria, de que iba invertir el dinero en la infraestructura. Tristemente, nos topamos...no nos liberaron todo el recurso porque nos dan por tantos. A el cincuenta por ciento y cuando hagas el cincuenta por ciento de la obra te liberan el otro...el otro veinticinco, cuando hagas el otro veinticinco te liberan el otro veinticinco. Y así. Hasta que, hasta que te dan todo el recurso. Pero para nosotros hubo cambio de gobierno y ya no fue posible. (Aside: Ay, voy a interrumpir.) Entonces este... fue el primer apoyo.

L: Then, from there we didn't receive another resource until now with Gabino Cue's (Gabino Cue Monteagudo) government that started with the dynamic of trainings not resources. So when I got close and they expressed how he was, well the plan he had for the government. By then, I had a record of, of having received trainings because um... in the, when the plan for municipal development took place, I insisted to the president that there be trainings for different levels. For example, there were women who didn't know how to sew or that didn't like sewing and they were trained to paint by hand with brush

and to, to make garments. Dressy garments but with paints made by hand. Yeah... there were others who liked or had the ability to sew and there were workshops for, for cut and confection at levels 1, 2, and 3. Advanced... very advanced for the ones who were... all the seamstresses that were already seamstresses in the town were given high couture workshops. The ones who didn't know anything but wanted to learn, they gave them their, their workshop on basic cut and confection. And like that. Then, I went door to door talking to people, convincing them to get trained because I wanted my dreams to become true. To have if possible, all the women in the town there. Sewing, embroidering, or doing whichever activity there. Including the project that I had was the sewing shop, the boutique store like the one we have or like we have it projected. And also a daycare, a library and a sports area so kids can take on an activity under the supervision of the parent that was working there, no.

L: Despues de alli este ya no recibimos ningún otro apoyo hasta ahora en este gobierno de Gabino Cue (Gabino Cue Monteagudo) que empezó con la dinámica de el no dar recurso sino capacitaciones. Entonces cuando yo me acerque y me expresaron como era el, pues el plan que el traia como gobierno. Este para eso yo ya tenía antecedentes de, de que había recibido capacitaciones porque este...en el, cuando se hizo el plan de desarrollo municipal, yo insistí con el presidente de que se hicieran capacitaciones de diferentes niveles. Por ejemplo, hubo mujeres que no sabían coser o que no les gustaba coser y se les capacito en que aprendieran pintar a mano con pincel y para, para hacer prendas. Prendas de vestir pero con pinturas hechas a mano. Aha... hubo a otras que les gustaba o tenían la habilidad de coser y se les bajaron este... talleres de, de corte y confeccion en nivel 1, 2 y 3. Avanzados para... muy avanzados para las que ya eran... todas las costureras que ya eran costureras del pueblo les dieron talleres de alta costura. Los que no sabían nada pero querian aprender, les dieron su, les dieron su taller de corte y confeccion basico. Y así. Entonces yo anduve puerta por puerta tocando a la gente, convenciendolas de que se capacitaron porque yo quería que mis sueños se hicieran realidad. Tener si es posible a todas las mujeres del pueblo allí. Cosiendo, bordando, o exis actividad allí. Incluso el proyecto que yo tenia era el taller de costura, la tienda boutique así como la tenemos o como lo tenemos proyectado. Y además una guardería, una biblioteca y una área deportiva para que los niños pudieran realizar una actividad bajo la mira de uno que iba estar realizando sus actividades laborales allí, no.

L: So that was my dream. My father um... he supported my dream, that is why he gave me his property. And told me, "Daughter if this happens and you need more property, you tell me and I will give it to you." He was willing to give up more for, for the daycare to be built. But like I am telling it, I dreamed it was going to happen fast. And when I presented the project to the municipal president, he thought I was crazy. It is an ambitious project but I support you, no. Because I am also crazy, no. Then, he believed in my dream and I received lots of support from him. Because by then, I didn't even have a document that confirmed that the place I lived in which were communal lands, were in my possession. Thanks to the support from the municipal president, I could get a paper that stated that it was mine. Um... and like that we were able to do many things that we were unable to do before or didn't have access to those types of documents because they weren't allowed to give it. Then um... and less likely to a woman because you had to be part of the commune and, and a man on top of everything. There were lots, lots of factors.

L: Entonces eso era mi sueño. Mi papa este... apoyaba mis sueños, por eso me dio ese pedazo de terreno. Y me dijo, "Hija si esto se hace y necesitas más terreno, tu dime y yo te lo doy." El estaba dispuesto a ceder más para, para que se construyera una guardería. Pero así como yo te lo estoy platicando, así soñaba yo que iba ser de la noche a la mañana. Y el presidente municipal cuando yo le presenté mi proyecto, así como que estas loca. Es un proyecto muy ambicioso pero te apoyo, no. Porque estoy igual de loco, no. Entonces él creyó en mi sueño y recibí mucho apoyo de él. Porque para ese entonces ni siquiera yo tenía una acta de posesión del lugar de donde vivía porque esos terrenos son comunales. Gracias al apoyo de ese presidente municipal yo pude obtener mi papel donde dijera que era mío. Este... y así fuimos haciendo muchas cosas que anteriormente no tenía acceso a ese tipo de documentos porque no estaba permitido que lo dieran. Entonces este... y menos a una mujer porque tenías que ser comunero y, y hombre para acabarla. Muchas, muchos factores.

L: What is a comunero?

I: Que es comunero?

L: Uh, a comunero is, is like think about it like every town, every town has their territory. And a small territory is private property. Like you own land, no. And you have the title to your house and you can sell it, buy it and do whatever you want with it. But the rest of the lands in the municipality is communal. Which means that it belongs to all of the community. To every member of the community. Then... for you to be comunero, or to be recognized in the nucleus of comuneros, you have to do community service like that... in the case of men that there only has been men, um, it is to make rounds which to make rounds is to do like a police service during many years. To do rounds on the weekends, and nights. That when there are meetings or something, that they attend to surveil order in the town. And that they are tiquitlatos or 'messengers.' The tiquitlato or 'messenger' for example is a sort of, of the mail of the town that he is the one that delivers messages, citations, the one who takes what, everything that the municipal authority needs. It takes them to do that service.

L: Eh, comunero es, as de cuenta cada pueblo, cada pueblo tiene su territorio. Y una manchita de ese territorio es propiedad privada. O sea tu posees un terreno, no. Y tienes escrituras y puedes vender, comprar y hacer lo que quieras con él. Pero el resto del terreno del municipio es comunal. Lo que quiere decir que pertenece a toda la comunidad. A todos los miembros de la comunidad. Entonces... para que tu seas comunero, o estes reconocido en el núcleo de los comuneros, tu tienes que hacer servicios en la comunidad como ese... en el caso de los hombres que siempre a solo habido hombres, este, es dar ronda a lo que le llaman hacer ronda es hacer como un servicio de policía durante varios años. De hacer rondines los fines de semana, en las noches. De que cuando hay juntas o algo, acudan para vigilancia de orden en el pueblo. Este, que sean tiquitlatos. El tiquitlato por ejemplo es como una especie de, del correo del pueblo que él es el que lleva mensajes, citatorios, él lleva lo que, todo lo que la autoridad municipal necesite. Los lleva a hacer ese servicio.

Part 2

I: We were talking about resources.

I: Estábamos hablando acerca de los apoyos.

L: Well the first resource we accessed was with SAGARPA [Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación] who did not give us the whole resource due to the guidelines they have. In that phase, when we completed this.. The resource that they gave us first... we did not have enough time to get the full resource because there was a change in government. Since there was a new government from a different political party, things got complicated. So, the resource they did not give us was a total of \$25,000 pesos which was for the roof. So... so then they returned it to the federation and they didn't give it to us. And after that... after that the next resource was, we had to... It was like three years after with this one... with a resource for sewing machines. There is an institute that is called the Instituto de Capacitación Para El Trabajo (ICAPET) [Instituto Integral de Capacitación y Productividad para el Trabajo (ICAPET)] or Institute of Training for Workers. They train you and once you are trained they give you... machinery or equipment but the maximum value is up to \$45,000 pesos. So we quoted some machines, an iron, and... what else? A, an industrial iron, two machines and one...three machines. And a buttonhole lever which is an accessory to make zig zags on these types of machines. And it was for that where... where they gave it to us under my husband's name because ICAPET has a limit on the resources they give you. And if they already gave you, they will not give you again. And when I went to... to ask for it, they did not accept my documents because I was already registered like if I had received a resource because I took some training courses for couture, painting, and embroidery. For the courses that I promoted in my town, in the community to be able to... to expand my knowledge, so... it was what they told me, they told me no... they told me that I had already been given resources. And I had already reached the maximum value of resources. So... so we got it under my husband's name. We got it. So, it was how we got... we got another three machines... And the iron and accessories. It happened. From there we tried... we tried to... to submit another project to INAES. Um... INAES is also self-sufficient. It is the Institute for the promotion of the Development of... I don't remember the acronym. [Instituto Nacional de la Economía Social (INAES)] The point is that they also give out resources but they are part of the federal government. Then, we went and filed an application. And what we asked for there or what they told us there was to analyze our priority. In our case, we have always wanted to finish the infrastructure for the shop. But to be able to reach an amount from the federal government, it was not possible... because the federal resources... they have to be... when it is for infrastructure (Aside: Client: How much...L: The yellow one? That one is \$1,500. Client: And this one? That one is \$2,000. Client: This one is going to look really nice... If you would like, we can bring it down so you can try it. Client: Yes, thanks we are looking. This blouse would look bad ass. What is the price on this blouse? L: That one is \$2,000 pesos because it's vintage embroidery and it is made by hand. I am going to give you a card because today is our last day here. We are moving and will be by the patios. We will be able to help you there. The address is the one written in pen. We also have huipiles and we just give them shape.

L: Ah, ah pues este el primero fue el que nos dio SAGARPA [Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación] que no no los dio completa por las reglas operativas que ellos tienen. Y en esa etapa cuando nosotros terminamos este... el

apoyo que nos dieron primero este... no dio tiempo liberal el el apoyo completo porque hubo cambio de gobierno. Entro un nuevo gobierno y como era de otro partido se complicaron las cosas. Y se supone que el recurso que ya no nos dieron fue una cantidad de \$25,000 pesos que era el monto de lo del techo. Este... en ese entonces este lo lo regresaron a la federación y no nos lo dieron. Y ya de allí este... de allí el siguiente apoyo fue que, que volvimos a tener... Fue como tres años después con este... con un apoyo de las máquinas de coser. Hay un instituto que se llama Instituto de Capacitación Para El Trabajo (ICAPET) [Instituto Integral de Capacitación y Productividad para el Trabajo (ICAPET)]. Ellos te capacitan y ya que te capacitan te dan este... maquinaria o equipo pero un monto máximo de hasta \$45,000 pesos. Entonces nosotros cotizamos algunas máquinas, una plancha, este... que otra cosa? Un este, una plancha industrial, dos máquinas y una este... tres máquinas. Y un ojalador que es un accesorio para hacer ojales en este tipo de máquinas. Y fue eso a donde... a donde ya se lo dieron a nombre de mi esposo porque ICAPET tiene un tope para darte apoyos. Y si ya te dio, ya no te vuelve a dar. Y resulta ser de que cuando yo fui a...a solicitarlo, a mi no me aceptaron mis documentos porque yo ya estaba registrada como si tuviera apoyo porque asistí a cursos de capacitación de alta costura, de pintura, de bordado. A los cursos que yo promovi en el pueblo, en la comunidad para poder esté... pues ahora sí para poder ampliar mis conocimientos,este... fue lo que me dijeron que ya no...que yo ya había sido apoyada. Y ya había yo como esté alcanzado el tope máximo de apoyo en esa dependencia. Entonces este... pues lo sacamos a nombre de mi esposo. Y él sí pudo. Y entonces fue así como tuvimos otras... otras tres máquinas... Y la plancha y los accesorios. Y así. Ya de allí volvimos a... volvimos a este... a tener a meter otro proyecto en INAES. Eee...INAES es una independencia también. Es el Instituto para el fomento del Desarrollo de... ay no recuerdo bien las siglas. [Instituto Nacional de la Economía Social (INAES)] El chiste es que ellos también te dan apoyos pero son de gobierno federal. Entonces fuimos y metimos la solicitud. Y allí lo que pedimos o lo que nos dijeron allí es que analizáramos cuál era nuestra prioridad. Nosotros en nuestro caso siempre hemos querido acabar la infraestructura del taller. Pero para poder alcanzar un monto que sea un apoyo de gobierno federal, no podía ser posible porque este... porque los apoyos federales este... tienen que ser sobre eee... cuando es para infraestructura (Aside: Clienta: Cuanto...L: Cual el amarillo? Ese cuesta \$1,500. Clienta: Y este? Ese \$2,000. Clienta: Ese te va a quedar bien bonito...L: Si gusta se los podemos bajar para que se los prueben. Clienta: Si, gracias estamos viendo. Esa blusa te va a quedar chingona. Y esa blusa que precio tiene? L: Esa vale \$2,000 pesos porque es un bordado antiguo y es a mano. L: le voy a regalar una tarjetita porque es el ultimo día que vamos a estar aquí. Nos vamos a cambiar por los patios. Allí si vamos a poder atender. La dirección es la que está con lapicero. Si tambien tenemos los huipiles. Por ejemplo si quieres que se te haga sobre medida. Aquí ya mira tenemos huipil y ya nadamas le damos la forma.)

Part 3

L: Well then the way in which we function as Detalle de Mujer after having been through many experiences that are less pleasant and more bitter than pleasant, so we opt for, for making a... after becoming a Public Limited Corporation, well we learned that to truly be able to keep up with the commitment of work, as well as, of a responsibility of acquiring a resource and to have to respond for that resource well that responsibility would fall on

one person. And even if it, and even if the benefit would go to, would well fall on all of us, but ultimately there has to be, someone to represent or the responsibility needs to fall on one person. No? So that made us all analyze and people, not all of us can have equal responsibility. Although there may be situations in which organization, by law must be egalitarian, that they have equal parts like in cooperatives.

L: Bueno pues entonces la forma de organizarnos para nosotros para Detalle de Mujer después de haber ya pasado por tantas experiencias pues más que gratas, mas amargas que gratas entonces este optamos por, por hacer una...apartir de que nos constituimos como una Sociedad [Anonima] de Capital Variable pues aprendimos de que realmente para poder cumplir con un compromiso tanto como de trabajo, como una responsabilidad de adquirir un recurso y tener que responder por ese recurso pues esa responsabilidad recae en una persona. Y aunque él, y aunque el beneficio vaya a, vaya pues a recaer en todas, pero finalmente pues este pues si tiene que ser de hecho el que haya, el que la representante o la responsabilidad sea para una sola. No? Entonces fue la que a nosotros nos hizo pues analizar y que realmente la gente, no todas pueden adquirir un compromiso por partes iguales. Aunque hay ocasiones en que hay organizaciones que, que la ley te exige que sean equitativas, que sean por partes iguales como en el caso de las cooperativas.

L: It's like we say. No? That there is no one who is more or less than anyone else, all of them are equal and have to take the same actions and obligations. There is a rotation of responsibilities and all. But no, not all of them can take on the same commitments or responsibilities in the same way because not all have the, the same liberty of expression, sometimes of time availability. Sometimes for women it has been difficult to organize in terms of developing an activity in art if that is what you want to call it because what Detalle de Mujer does is no more than an art on garments with thread, fabric, embroidery, paint, and with whatever we make. That garment becomes a piece of art. So... So there are times where people would like to, to make things but don't have the liberty. Why? There are those who have a necessity to work and find the way to organize themselves.

L: Por decir, No? Que allí nadie es mas ni nadie es menos, todas valen igual y tienen las mismas acciones y las mismas obligaciones osea una cierta rotación de responsabilidades y todo eso. Pero no, no todas pueden cumplir de la misma forma porque no todas tienen la, la misma libertad a veces de expresión, a veces de disponibilidad de tiempo. A veces incluso porque para la mujer a sido difícil el poderse organizar en cuestion de que quieren desarrollar una actividad artística si tu lo quieres por que al menos lo que hace Detalle de Mujer no es otra cosa mas que un arte en prendas de vestir llamese con hilos, llamese con telas, con bordados, con pintura, con lo que hagamos. Esa prenda termina convirtiéndose en una obra de arte. Entonces este... Hay veces que la gente tiene, tiene el deseo de hacer las cosas pero no tienen esa libertad. Porque? Hay quienes tienen la necesidad de trabajar y que ven la forma de organizarse.

L: There are people who fortunately or unfortunately depend on, depend on their husband, that the husband is the breadwinner, that gives them what they need in their homes or for their children. And... at the same time it can be limiting. Even though they may have the talent or wish to do it, not for necessity. The husband simply will not let

them because their children and home come first and you have to comply. And after that. So these types of problems have been obstacles for all women, no? The one that does not have one obstacle has another. So we have seen it is difficult. But when there are people like single mothers, it is distinct because they have the liberty or necessity do two things. One, they realize they have talent and can carry on an artistic activity. At the same time, gain or be able to obtain a resource for their family. So its something very beautiful because I have had experience because I have worked with various single mothers and they are people... that I really admire because... I admire them because, because they find a way to organize and develop their activity and not leave their, their kids and they can earn money with that activity. So that is where I realize that I can not mess up. If they work, I have to figure out how to pay them immediately. Now, they turn in their work and I have to pay them because they are people who do not depend on anyone else but themselves.

L: Hay quienes afortunada o desafortunadamente dependen de la, del esposo, que el esposo es quien le da mantención, que les dan lo que requieren para lo que necesitan en el hogar o para sus hijos. Y... al mismo tiempo pues las limita. Aunque ellas a veces tengan el talento o lo quieran hacer por deseo, no por necesidad. El marido sencillamente no las deja hacer porque les dice primero estan tus hijos y la casa y tienes que cumplir. Y despues alla. Entonces ese tipo de problemas si han sido barreras que a habido en todas las mujeres, no? La que no tiene una barrera tiene otra. Entonces si hemos visto que es difícil. En cambio cuando hay personas en el caso de las mamás solteras, ellas es distinto porque ellas tienen la libertad o por necesidad hacen dos cosas. Una, este darse cuenta de que ellas tienen el talento y pueden desarrollar una actividad artística. Y al mismo tiempo, ganar, o poder obtener un recurso para su familia. Entonces es algo muy bonito porque yo he tenido experiencia porque yo he trabajado con varias mamás solteras y son personas... realmente a las que yo admiro mucho por la cuestión de que... yo las admiro porque, porque ven la manera de organizarse ,y además, de desarrollar su actividad y de no dejar su, a sus hijos y de poder ganar dinero con esa actividad. Entonces es allí donde yo me doy cuenta que pues ellas no les puedes quedar mal. Si ellas trabajan, les tienes que pagar en forma inmediata. Ahora si que, aquí entregan su trabajo y aquí hay que pagarles porque son personas que no dependen de nadie más que de ellas mismas. (05:45)

L: So it's beautiful because... they, I have observed, I realize that it is their work and sometimes we can't live with limitations because there are times that there is lots of work and we must stay extra time to work. Sometimes you have to stay up. And... but at the same time it is also rewarding. Because they are activities that can be taken home if they are not completed in the workplace, you can care for your children and home and work and develop their activity. Because to embroider, sew, and iron or to do these types of activities do not force you to be in a certain place to complete that activity. You can do it in your house, in your home. It has been a thing I have given priority to since I decided to study this, I liked it, no? Well, I would say this is a good idea because it is an activity you can do at home, no? If I get married or if I don't but wherever I go, I will be able to develop it and don't need lots of things to do it, no? So, I can use my hands, vision, and good health to do this. So, yeah. It is an activity that I consider it beneficial that is good because it gives you satisfaction wherever you go. When you see it as work, it gives you

satisfaction. When you see it like art, you also see it as satisfaction. Because being able to see the finished garment and to say, I made it. Sometimes without caring who is going to buy it or take it, no?

L: Entonces, si es bonito porque...ellas, yo he observado, me he dado cuenta que es su trabajo, y algunas veces no podemos vivir con limitaciones porque hay veces que hay mucho trabajo y hay que quedar momentos extra, horas extra de trabajo. A veces desvelarte. Y.. pero también al mismo tiempo es bien satisfactorio. Porque son actividades que finalmente si tu no las terminas de hacer en tu lugar de trabajo, puedes llevarlas a casa, estar al pendiente de tus hijos y hogar y también trabajando y desarrollar tu actividad. Porque el bordar, el coser, el planchar o el hacer este tipo de actividades no te impide que forzosamente tengas que estar en un lugar para hacer esa actividad. Si no la puedes hacer en, en tu casa, en tu hogar. Y que ha sido una de las cosas a las que yo les he dado prioridad de hecho desde que yo decidí estudiar esto, pues me gustaba, no? Que decía yo, no pues esta es una buena idea porque es una actividad que yo puedo desarrollar en mi casa, no? Si algun dia me caso o no me caso pero donde quiera que esté, la voy a poder desarrollar y no necesito pues de tantas cosas para hacerlas, no? Entonces, pues sí más que las manos y la vista, sobre todo pues tener salud para poder trabajar en esto. Entonces, pues sí. Es una actividad que yo considero que es muy benéfica, que es muy buena porque da satisfacción donde quiera que tu te encuentres. Cuando la miras como trabajo, te da satisfacción. Cuando la miras como arte, también te da satisfacción. Porque ya al ver una prenda terminada y el hecho que tu digas, yo la hice. A veces incluso sin importar quien te la va a comprar o quien la va a llevar, no?

L: Because at the end, each garment or thing has a moment of... of inspiration, if you want. Because not everything or I had not realized that creativity was.... I had a definition, creativity is born out of necessity, no? But art is not only necessity to survive but it is also having passion for the things you like. And not only that you do things you like, but that you do things that make money, no? And... and they leave you wellness and satisfaction and it all happens in one thing. And in addition to... I love my activity, I like my job because when I am very concentrated, I am sewing and coming up with ideas for the next garment, what colors combine or what can I make that I haven't made that could be new ideas. Or you are thinking about your family, your kids, what can you do? How can you be more efficient? How can you be better? So it is something that that can not... And it is also nice because you don't, don't get tired that much because you are not in the sun. You are not suffering in abrasive physical conditions, no? Because it is tiring at the end of the day, thighs, back and neck. But it is after long hours of doing work that you enjoyed. And it is something we like to spread in the organization, well at least I do. There are times where I tell them, to be able to complete a job and for it to be a piece of art, it is necessary that you give it your all, no?

L: Porque, este, finalmente cada prenda o cada cosa tiene un momento de... de inspiración, si tu quieres. Porque no todas las cosas o yo me he dado cuenta que la creatividad es cierto... yo tenía una definición, la creatividad nace a través de una necesidad, no? Pero eso del arte no nadamas es la necesidad para sobrevivir sino también la pasión por hacer las cosas que te gustan. Y que además de que te gustan, pues te dejan dinero, no? Y... Y te dejan bienestar y satisfacción y todo sucede en una misma

cosa, no? Y además de que... al menos a mi me encanta mi actividad, me encanta mi trabajo porque cuando yo estoy muy concentrada, estoy cosiendo pero estoy pensando, estoy ideando, cual sería la siguiente prenda, que color combina con esto con el otro, o que cosas no he hecho que podrían ser nuevas? O incluso hay veces que cosiendo estas pensando en tu familia, en tus hijos, en que puedes hacer? Como puedes ser más eficiente? Como puedes ser mejor, no? Entonces, pues es algo, algo que no... Y también es bonito porque no, no te cansas tanto, no estás en el sol. No estas como sufriendo una, un desgaste físico muy, muy brusco no? Porque si le cansa al final del día pues si termina uno cansado piernas, de la espalda el cuello. Pero pues es por tantas horas de trabajo que ya llevaste pero que finalmente disfrutaste de hacer lo que estas haciendo. Y es algo que tratamos de contagiar en la organización o al menos yo. De que hay veces que yo les digo, para que nosotros podamos terminar un trabajo y que termine en una obra de arte, es necesario que entregues todo de ti, no?... (10: 29)

L: It's true that like people we are going to have preoccupations, problems, we are going to have... but there is also the moment that you have to focus and say my problems well I am going to leave them to God or to my faith or whatever thing and I am going to concentrate on my job. I am a person who... They passed those things to me. My parents taught me to believe in what we can't see, no? I feel that I really believe in GOD so when I am going through difficult times, I ask him to help me so I can develop my activity. So I can have the ability and concentration on what I am doing. And when you realize it you the day went by and you have solutions and other alternatives and other... you see things in a different way. So it is something I try to pass on to others. That whatever they do, they do with love, care, not only because it bring me money. Just because I have to work certain hours of work or because no matter what I do they will still pay me. Or whether I do it or not, I am earning. Instead, what I am doing is worth a lot because it is my work and I have to love what I do. That everything work out well, no?

L: Es cierto que como personas vamos a tener preocupaciones, vamos a tener problemas, vamos a tener... pero también llega el momento que tu te tienes que centrar y decir mis cosas o mis problemas pues los voy a dejar o los voy a encargar a dios o se los voy a dejar a mi fe o a exis cosa y me voy a concentrar en mi trabajo. Al menos yo soy una persona que... a mi me contagiaron todo ese tipo de cosas. Mis papás me enseñaron a creer en lo que no vemos, no? Yo siento que creo mucho en dios entonces yo aveces cuando estoy pasando por cuestiones difíciles, lo que hago es pedirle a él que me ayude para que yo pueda desarrollar mi actividad. Para que yo tenga habilidad y concentración en lo que estoy haciendo. Y cuando te das cuenta, paso el día y tienes otras soluciones, otras alternativas tienes otras... miras las cosas de diferente manera. Y pues es algo que, que yo trato de contagiarles. Que lo que hagan lo tienen que hacer con amor, con cariño, no solo porque me deja dinero. Solo porque tengo que venir a cubrir ciertas horas de trabajo o porque lo que haga todos modos me van a pagar. O lo haga o no lo haga, yo estoy ganando. Si no que lo que yo estoy haciendo vale mucho porque es mi trabajo y tengo que amar lo que estoy haciendo. Que todo esto salga bien, no?

L: So, in terms of the organization, it is in the moments that we see each other that we figure things out. I explain how things will be sewn, what colors the embroidery will be, or what tones were requested or asked for. And everyone goes home and completes their

activities at home. To have a reunion where everyone from Detalle de Mujer is present, it is sporadic because it is only when we need their presence, when we need to show we exist and that we are really an **organization**. I have defined organization as the way in which you organize to develop certain activity. The way to organize is not written, it is to improve and everyday to improve, no, what we are doing. When we all gather or everyone who is part of Detalle reunites, well it feels really good because we see each other with happiness because we don't always see each other. For example, since I have the responsibility of Detalle de Mujer, I see them at least 5 or 2 times, or once a week for those who take work home on a weekly basis. But we see each other. But some of them don't see the others too often. It is occasionally.

L: Entonces, al final de cuentas en cuestión de la organización, es así como en momentos en que nos vemos pues nos ponemos de acuerdo. Les explico como va ir cosido, de que colores quiero el bordado o que tonos me encargaron o me pidieron. Y todo mundo se va a desarrollar sus actividades a casa. Para reunirnos juntas, que estemos todas, todas las que trabajamos para Detalle es muy esporadicamente porque es únicamente cuando requerimos la presencia de, de mostrar que existimos y que somos realmente una organización. Yo he llegado a definir qué organización viene la forma en que te organizas para desarrollar cierta actividad. La forma de organizarte no creo que este escrita, sino solamente nosotros siempre y cada día mejorar, no, lo que estamos haciendo. Ellas en un determinado momento cuando todas las socias o las que formamos parte de Detalle nos llegamos a reunir, pues yo siento muy bonito porque todas nos vemos con alegría porque no nos vemos seguido todas juntas. Yo por ejemplo que llevo la responsabilidad de Detalle de Mujer las veo a todas por lo menos 5 veces o 2 veces, hasta 1 vez a la semana en los casos de las que llevan trabajo por semana. Pero nos vemos. Pero unas con otras no se ven tan seguido. Es ocasionalmente.

L: So, for example, at the moment that I give them a garment, lets pretend and the person who made the garment made this, then Mrs. Julia comes and she is the person who embroiders, I show her how her embroidery looks and she says it looks beautiful and everything, no. And who sewed it? Mrs. Margarita sewed it. And she finally says, Mrs. Margarita knows how to make my garment look better. I always create the design. No one ever participates in that activity. But they do in the making of the garment. Mrs. Margarita makes the garment, Mrs. Julia embroiders right? That is how we do it. However, they can identify each other and get excited when they see their finished product. And if you put this embroidery on a red blouse it will look totally different and they will also like like it or sometimes its the textures or sometimes the colors. Something needs to call to them or be magical in very garment, no? And that it finally passed through the hands of the one that cut, sewn, and embroidered, it passed through all those hands, no? And... And it is exciting because they identify each other. In the case of a garment that has... like this one that is embroidered, fabric, zipper and weaving. The one that weaves is not the same one who embroiders. But when the person... but there are times that the one who brought the huipil or made the embroidery on the huipil, and she comes back and sees the finished blouse and says its beautiful. She asks who sewed it? How did she do it? Who weaved it? Well it was so and so. Well, it looks beautiful. I am going to make myself o... It is always our saying. I am going to tell her to embroider

something for me or I am going to embroider one for myself, it is a pleasure we never give ourselves. We always, always sell everything.

L: Mas sin embargo, por ejemplo, en el momento que yo les di una prenda, vamos a suponer y la que hizo la blusa, hizo esto, viene la señora Julia que es la que borda y le enseno mire como quedo su bordado y ay que bonito se ve y todo, no. Y quien la cosió? La cosió Doña Margarita, no. Y entonces ella dice finalmente ay Doña Margarita sabe hacer que mi prenda se vea mejor. El diseño pues siempre lo pongo yo. Nunca nadie participa en esa actividad. Pero la cuestión de la confección si. No? La confección la hace Doña Margarita, el bordado lo hizo Doña Julia, si? Y así es como nosotros hacemos. Sin embargo ellas identifican quien es quien y se emocionan cuando ven su producto terminado. Y si, y si este mismo bordado lo haces en una blusa roja se va a ver totalmente diferente y tambien les va a gustar o a veces es la textura o a veces son los colores. O algo les tiene que llamar o ser mágico en cada prenda, no? Y que finalmente pasó por las manos de la que cortó, de la que cosió, de la que bordó, por todas esas manos, no? Y... Y pues esa es la emocionante porque ellas se identifican, no? O en el caso de cómo una prenda que lleve...que como esta que lleva bordado, que lleva tela, el cierre, que lleva el tejido. La que teje por ejemplo, no es la misma que cose ni es la misma que borda. Pero cuando la persona... hay veces que cuando la que me trajo el huipil o hizo el bordado de huipil, viene y esta blusa ya está terminada le enseno ya vio como quedo y dice que bonita esta, no? Y quien la cocio? Y como le hizo? Y quien la tejió? No, pues la tejió fulanita. Hay que bonita. Ay, me voy hacer... Y siempre nuestro dicho de todas no? Voy a decirle que me haga un bordado para mi o voy a bordar una para mi pero un placer que nunca nos quedamos con nada. Todo lo vendemos siempre, siempre.

L: So, on that part when they always see each other.... Where I don't avoid getting together is in December. In december, we have a breakfast or dinner or something exclusivel for all ofthem to get together. This is the moment when we get together and I introduce them to each other. Do you remember the dress that looked beautiful? Well, she made it, she sewed it, she weaved it, she emroidered it. This is when we see each other. There is communication when they come at the same time [to the storefront] and coincide because they come to leave embroidery and someone else comes to pick up garments to be sewn. They greet and talk to each other with hapiness. It is beautiful to see them coexist. Even though we don't see each other all the time or have a day and time to see each other, there is communication and I always try to be truthful and honest with them because I think that transparency is a very important think to keep harmony.

L: Entonces, este pues si en esa parte ellas cada vez que se encuentran, donde si yo no evitó la forma que se encuentren en diciembre. En diciembre siempre un desayuno o una comida o algo exclusivo para todas, no, para convivir. Y es el momento cuando nos reunimos y les presento unas a otras. Y se acuerda de tal vestido que quedó muy bonito, pues ella lo hizo, o ella lo cosió, o ella lo tejió, o ella lo bordo. Y entonces es cuando nos encontramos, no. Pero si hay comunicación cuando a veces ellas llegan y coinciden porque vienen a dejar bordado y otra viene por costura. Platica, se saludan con gusto, con alegría y ya no. Pero si es muy bonito, no, esa convivencia. Que aunque no nos frecuentamos o no tenemos un dia o un horario para vernos pero hay comunicación, hay comunicación y sobre todo que yo siempre trato de ser más franca y honesta con ellas

porque yo creo que la transparencia es una cosa muy importante para mantener esa armonía.

L: So, when I am going to get a resource, machines, um... Infrastructure, credit, even though they may not know or even though they are not making the commitment, I inform them because sometimes they ask, "But who works for you?" Regularly, I am the one that has to respond. But, but there are some that ask to meet the group or those who work for Detalle de Mujer. I tell them of course you can meet them. So, then I call them and introduce them and tell tell them why that person is here. Or, or when I ask them to meet I tell them this is for this or that. Its interesting because sometimes they will ask me, "If they ask, what do we say? It's because we don't, don't..." You, to start off with I don't know what they are going to ask. Well, you all need to express what you feel. If you say well I work with Leti but I am not happy with what she pays me or the way she treats me or whatever, well express that. But I am not going to say that I do this and I do that [No bragging] because it should not be like that. But they always say if it's so you can continue giving us jobs, because if I am going to ask for a machine for example, I am going to ask for a resource where they are going to give us machines, they know that there will be more work and they will benefit. They will not own the machines but they will, will, they know and are aware that it will be so the business can grow and so they have more work.

L: Entonces, cada vez que yo voy a bajar un recurso, dígame máquinas, dígame este... infraestructura, algún crédito, aunque ellas no estén enteradas o aunque no sea su compromiso de ellas yo si se los informo porque hay veces que nos piden, "oiga pero quien trabaja con usted?" Por lo regular siempre soy yo nadamas la que da la cara no? Pero, pero si hay los que me piden conocer a tus socias o a las que trabajan para Detalle de Mujer. Y les digo pues si las pueden conocer. Y ya las llamo y se las presento, esta persona viene por tal y tal motivo. O, o cuando las cito les digo es para esto, es para lo otro. Es muy curioso porque hay veces que ellas hasta me dicen, "Si nos preguntan que decimos? Es que no, no"... Ustedes, yo para empezar no se que les vayan a preguntar, no? Y enseguida pues ustedes tienen que expresar lo que ustedes sienten. Si ustedes dicen no pues yo estoy trabajando con Leti pero fijese que yo no estoy conforme con lo que me paga o a mi no me gusta como me trata o, o equis cosa pues eso expresen. Pero yo no voy a decir que yo esto o aquello porque tampoco debe de ser así. Pero si, ellas este siempre me dicen si es para usted nos siga dando trabajo, porque si yo voy a bajar una máquina por decir, no? Voy a bajar un recurso donde nos van a dar máquinas, ellas saben que va a ver mas trabajo y por lo tanto ellas van a ser beneficiadas. (20:25) No van a ser dueñas de la máquina pero si van, van, ellas saben y están conscientes de que es para que la empresa crezca y ellas puedan tener más trabajo.

L: In the case, for example, INAES we got a truck. The truck we have, we got from INAES because...

L: Y si es en el caso, por ejemplo, en INAES adquirimos una camioneta. La camioneta que poseemos, este nos la dieron en INAES porque...

I: What is INAES?

I: Que es INAES?

L: INAES is the National Institute and I forgot the rest of the acronym...of the development... it's because it used to be FONAES. Development... the point is that it is the development of businesses.

L: INAES es Instituto... INAES... Instituto Nacional ay se me olvido las siglas... del fomento... es que antes era FONAES. Fomento... bueno el chiste es que es fomento de las empresas.

I: Yes.

I: Si.

L: So that , that you can get resources and you can... they have a lost profit background, it's what you call it. It is called lost profit background because you don't have to make and return the capital or pay it back like if it was a credit. Lost profit is that they give it to you, you prove that you used the resource for what you asked, and once you prove that you bought and you are using it and everything, they give it to you and tell you to enjoy it. But it's not a matter of...of. Of having to reimburse that money.

L: No? Para qué, para que te den recurso y tu puedas... son de beneficios a fondo perdido, lo que se le llama. Se le llama fondo perdido porque tu no tienes que recuperar ese capital para devolverlos o pagarlos como si fuera un crédito. Si no fondo perdido es que te lo dan, tu compruebas que ocupastes el recurso para lo que pedistes, una vez que compruebas que si efectivamente compraste y lo estas usando y todo, ellos te liberan y te dicen pues aprovechelo, no? Pero no es cuestión de... de. De que tenga uno que reembolsar ese dinero.

L: And INAES, for example, has two modalities. The one where they give you and you prove it and that's it, that is where it ends. But if you are going to say this time they gave me a machine, I mean a truck, but next time I want to have my shop, as an example, or I want another car or machines or whatever. Then, they will create a program of two years to pay back the money they gave you the first time. Because the resource they give you is supposed to benefit the business and it is so you can continue growing. So, you need to figure out how to divide the amount of money they give you in those two years to deposit money every month to an account that is not under INAES' name, but under the organization's name so you can make your payments. When you finish paying at the end of the two years, you tell them you have the money to buy whatever it is you are buying. I have the money. So, then an agreement is drafted. And they say what do you need now? And one of two things happens. If you don't owe anything they will return the money to you and tell you you can use it, it's yours. You demonstrated your capacity to return funds like they say, to return money. And it's never going to be the... (pause) and you give it back and they give it back to you.

L: Y INAES, por ejemplo, tiene dos modalidades. El hecho de que te da y lo compruebas y ya, hay quedado la historia. Pero, si tu algun dia vas a decir ah, ya esta vez me dieron una maquina perdón o una camioneta, pero para la otra yo quiero que me terminen de hacer mi taller, un ejemplo, o yo quiero otro carro o yo quiero maquinas yo quiero eso o lo otro. Entonces ellos te ponen una programación de dos años para que en dos años tu reintegres ese dinero que te dieron la primera vez. Porque se supone que el recurso que

te dan es para el beneficio de la empresa y de que sigas creciendo. Entonces, tienes que ver la manera de dividir en esos dos años el monto de lo que te dieron para estar depositando cada mes en una cuenta que no esta a nombre de INAES, sino que está a nombre de la organización para que allí tu vayas haciendo ese pago. Cuando ya acabastes de pagar, pasan los dos años y les dices saben que yo ya tengo el dinero que ustedes me dieron para que yo comprara tal artículo, tal beneficio, tal cosa. Ya está aquí el dinero. Entonces, se hace una especie de convenio. Y dicen ahora que necesita? Y una de dos, si tu ya no debes nada te regresan el dinero y te dicen puede usted disponer de ese dinero, ya es suyo. Pero tu demostrastes tu capacidad de poder hacer un fondo revolvente como quien dice, de regresar ese dinero. Y nunca va a volver a ser de la... (pausa) y tu lo regresas y te lo vuelven a dar.

L: Pero si tu no lo regresas, este... pues tampoco pasa nada mientras realmente hayas hecho las compras para lo que pediste. Pero si tu no compras este, todo lo que tu pedistes, ellas, ellos tienen derecho a hacerte como una especie de demanda, denuncia donde tu tienes que regresar ese recurso por no haberle dado buen uso. Por no haber hecho lo, lo que tu habías dicho que ibas a hacer. Entonces, si este... hay una especie de sanción. Y que pues igual, el gobierno, tanto el gobierno estatal como el gobierno federal, cuando tu eres beneficiado por cualquier dependencia, como son dineros finalmente de la federación, esos dineros los este... van cayendo como en una especie de registro. Te va haciendo un... un registro de datos a donde aparece todo de lo que, con lo que tu has sido beneficiado. Ya sea con empresa, con organización, como persona física o como persona moral.

L: But if you don't return it... well nothing happens as long as you made the purchases that you got the money for. But if you don't buy the, everything that you asked for, they, they have the right to take you to court where you have to return the resource for not putting it to good use. For not having done what you had promised. So... there is a sort of sanction. And the government, the state and federal government, since you are the beneficiary for the dependence, since they are federal monies, those monies are... they fall into a registry. They make like... a registry of your information where all of what you, what you have received as a business, organization, and physical or moral person.

L: In this case, I have been Detalle de Mujer's representative... there are government calls for benefits for businesses. You can participate but when benefits are through the business, it will be in the name of the business. And you have to prove the benefit will get to all the members of the organization. Not equal parts. If you ask for machines, it is because there will be a benefit. In this case, the generation of jobs. When we got the truck, the justification because you have to give a justification for what you ask for and what you need it for. So when we asked for... for the truck it was because we reached the moment we realized that, that even though we could do this of this type of art, we couldn't sell in our community. We had to go out and make a name for ourselves. Because the people in our community well some have the monetary power to make these garments because they are elaborate, as well as, expensive. And... secondly because the people that wear it have the monetary means. So, we, we started going outside of the pueblo, of our community to sell. I discovered that I had to go out and sell.

L: Y en este caso yo que he sido la, la representante de Detalle de Mujer este... hay convocatorias del gobierno que a veces salen para que sean beneficios como empresa. Y tú puedes participar, pero cuando son beneficios por medio de la empresa, van a quedar a nombre de la empresa. Y tu tienes que comprobar que ese recurso tiene que llegar el beneficio a todas las integrantes de la organización. No por partes iguales. Si tu solicitas máquinas por decir, pues es porque va a ver un beneficio de alguna manera. En este caso sería la generación de empleos, no? En el caso de nosotros cuando solicitamos la camioneta, la justificación, por que todo lo que pides tiene que tener una justificación, por que lo pido y para que lo necesito. Entonces cuando nosotros pedimos la... la camioneta es porque, a nosotros llegó la, el momento en que nos dimos cuenta que, de que aunque pudiéramos realizar esta actividad o este tipo de arte, no podíamos vender allí en nuestra comunidad. Teníamos que salir a darnos a conocer. Porque la gente de nuestra comunidad pues una no todas tiene el poder adquisitivo para poder hacer este tipo de prendas porque son prendas muy elaboradas y por lo tanto son caras. Y este... dos porque pues finalmente la gente que lo usa es la gente que tiene el poder adquisitivo. Entonces, pues nosotras empezamos a salir de, del pueblo, de la comunidad a ofrecer. Yo descubrí como, como la, pues la puntita de la madeja no? Porque agarre a salir a vender.

L: At the same time that I asked about resources, I would sell. I would go to the government agencies and what I made, I always wear the clothes I make. So, they would say what a pretty blouse. They are for sale. I make them, how many do you need? Or what do you need? Or, or they would say I would like a blouse but in red or purple or green. I can make it for you. So, that is how I opened and knocked on doors at the same time I would sell. But there was the moment that one recommended you to the other and the other to the other. Our clientele grew.

L: Al mismo tiempo que yo iba y gestionaba, también iba y vendía. Entonces, iba a todas las dependencias de gobierno y siempre pues lo que porta uno pues, yo siempre me visto con ropa que yo me hago. Entonces, ay que bonita esta su blusa. Ay esta muy a la orden. Yo las hago, cuántas quiere? O que necesita? O, o a lo mejor a mi me gustaria tu blusa pero en rojo o en morado o en verde. Te la hago no? Y entonces, así fue como yo fui abriendo y tocando puertas al mismo tiempo que vendía. Pero llegó el momento en la que una te recomendaba con la otra y la otra con la otra y así. Fue creciendo nuestra cartera de clientes.

L: And it got to the point that I couldn't anymore because I was busy all the time. Because I had to go from the pueblo to the offices. In taxi, it would take 15 minutes to get to the stop. From the time the taxi picked me up to the time I got to the center of the city it was 30 to 40 minutes. It almost took me 1 hour. From the time I got to the the place where the next taxi would take me to the offices, it was another hour. That was 2 hours. In the time it took to go to the offices and deliver this and for this person and that person it took almost 4 hours. And I would get home until... I would regularly leave because what i would do would be to get up really early, begin to cut, stop cutting, finish cutting, I would wake my kids up to give them breakfast and take them to school. At that time, my youngest son was in kinder. He started at 9:00am and get out at 12:00pm. I had 3 hours to sew. We came back from kinder and the women and I would sew. At the time, it was

only two other women and I would leave them everything cut. And you sew this and you iron that, and you oversew and you... in a way that sometimes we made up to 5 or 6 dresses in 3 hours. 3 hours.

L: Entonces llegó el momento en el que ya no podía yo más porque me absorbía mucho los tiempos. Porque tenía que yo trasladarme del pueblo a las oficinas. En taxi, en lo que llegaba yo a la parada del taxi eran 15 minutos. En lo que me recogía el taxi y llegaba al centro de la ciudad eran otros 30 minutos o 40 minutos. Ya me llevaba yo casi una hora. En lo que llegaba yo a ese lugar a donde llegaba el taxi y tomaba otro para ir a las oficinas, era otra hora. Eran dos horas. En lo que ibas a las oficinas a entregar exis y tal pedido de fulana, zutana y mangana se te iban cuatro horas. Y regresaba yo a veces a la casa hasta las... salía por lo regular porque yo lo que hacía era levantarme muy temprano, empezar a cortar, dejaba yo de cortar, terminaba yo de cortar, levantaba a mis hijos para darles de desayunar y llevarlos a la escuela. En ese tiempo mi hijo el más pequeño estudiaba el kinder. Entraba a las nueve de la mañana y salía las doce del día. Esas tres horas nadamas tenía yo para coser. Regresaba del kinder y eso era ponerlos a cocer con las señoras, en ese entonces nadamas tenía yo a otras dos, Y yo ya les dejaba todo cortado. Y tu cose aquí, tu plancha allá, tú sobre hilale y tu... de tal manera que a veces hasta en tres horas hacíamos 5 o 6 vestidos. (30:32) En 3 horas.

L: It was 15 'til 12:00pm and I would get my bag, garments, things, pick up my son from kinder and head out to sell. I would buy him a yogurt or whatever I could so we could go sell and deliver garments. We would stop selling garments and we had to eat something. A taco. If they paid us well it was good because we could eat home made food . But if we didn't make money we would at least have a taco or whatever we could. And I would get home with my son at six, seven at night to rest, bathe, change, and do homework. So that the next day, we started the same routine over. So, it was a phase that was tiresome because we didn't have a vehicle. We couldn't save time. We had to tend to all the clients because we couldn't do anything else because we depended on... the sales. That is how Detalle de Mujer's market grew.

L: Agarraba yo y ya era cuarto para las 12:00pm y agarra tu bolsa, agarra tus prendas, agarra tus cosas, pasas por el niño al kinder y te vas a vender. Pasaba a comprarle un yogur, lo que podía a mi hijo para llevarlo a vender y a repartir las prendas. Salíamos de repartir las prendas y pues no nos quedaba más que otra que comer en la calle. A veces un taco. Si nos pagaban pues que bueno porque nos alcanzaba por lo menos para una comida corrida. Pero si no había para la comida, pues aunque sea un taco o lo que podías comprabas. Y venir con el niño hasta la seis, siete de la noche a descansar, medio hacerlo que se bañara, que se cambiara y hacer tarea no? Para al otro día, otra vez empezar esa misma rutina. Entonces, fue una etapa muy, muy pesada porque no contábamos con vehículo, no podíamos este ahorrarme tiempo si ni nada. Teníamos que atender a todos los clientes porque no nos quedaba de otra porque dependíamos de... de las ventas. Y así fue como abrimos el mercado de Detalle de Mujer.

L: So we saw that it was... that we had the necessity of a vehicle and... when INAES made the announcement well at the beginning I didn't believe because I knew that it was a government agency that usually you have to know someone or have support from someone that works there to support your project. If you don't have that, it's wasted

money that you aren't aren't going to do. Why do I call it wasted money? Because you need to have a project manager that presents your project and justifies what you need for your business. So, the project managers usually get 10% from your project's total is the cost of the project. Usually, you give that money at the beginning of the project. Many times you are risking it because if your project gets approved great because you make it back.

L: Y así es de que vimos que era... que teníamos la necesidad de un vehículo y este... cuando se abrió esa convocatoria en INAES pues yo para empezar no creía porque yo sabía que era una dependencia que por lo regular, obligatoriamente tienes que conocer a alguien o tener una gran palanca para que apoyen tu proyecto. Si tu no cuentas con eso, pues es dinero perdido, que no, no lo vas a hacer. Porque lo llamó dinero perdido? Porque para que tu presentes el proyecto y justifiques para que quieres tiene que haber un técnico que haga ese proyecto para que lo plantee y exprese lo que tu necesitas para tu empresa. Entonces, los técnicos por lo regular siempre dicen si usted va a solicitar lo que tenga que solicitar, el 10% del monto total del proyecto, ese es el costo del proyecto. Y ese dinero, lo tienes por lo regular lo tienes que dar desde que te empiezan a hacer el proyecto. No... en muchas ocasiones te arriesgas porque si te sale pues que padre porque lo recuperas.

L: But if your project is not approved, you lose your money. So, I was worried because I would think about investing but not getting approved, I didn't know anyone to approve my project and be... be certain that... that I was going to get approved. So, (sewing machine noise) I found out, at this time I met a young man who worked at Ciudad Administrativa and worked for the state government, he bought me a shirt, I told him my story and he said, "I also make projects in addition to working here. If you want we can submit one to INAES." And it.. And I said, "But I don't have money to pay you." He told me, "don't worry, we can... we can make an agreement, I will submit your project and if they approve your project, you can pay me and if it doesn't get approved, you don't pay me. But if it is approved, in addition to the 10% that you need to give me, you need to a dress, shirt, or a garment to the person who is going to support and approve your project." And I told him, "Sure." And he asked me everything he needed to ask, he told me what documents he needed to submit the project. At this, at this moment we required everyone's documents. I told them we were going to gamble and we were going to as for a truck to transport garments, so we could get around more easily. And that way we could, could widen our market. So they agreed and said yes. And they, they all agreed and let us borrow their documents so I could do this with... in the name of the organization.

L: Pero si no sale el proyecto, pierdes tu dinero. Entonces, era algo que a mi me preocupaba y que yo decía y si inviertes y no sale, yo no conozco a nadie para qué, para que apruebe mi proyecto y tener una... la certeza de que... de que me va a salir. Así es de que...(ruido de maquina) encontré que, en ese entonces conocí a un chico que trabajaba en Ciudad Administrativa y que trabajaba con el gobierno del estado, me compro una camisa, le platique mi historia y me dijo, "Yo me dedico a hacer proyectos además de trabajar acá. Si usted quiere, podemos meter uno a INAES." Y me... y yo le dije, "Pero es que yo no tengo dinero para pagarte." Y me dijo "no se preocupe, podemos este... podemos hacer una cosa, yo le hago su proyecto y si su proyecto sale, me paga y si no

sale, no me paga. Pero si sale, además del 10% tiene que me tiene usted que dar, tiene que dar la un vestido o una camisa o alguna prenda para la persona que me va a apoyar para que pueda salir su proyecto.” Y le dije yo, “Pues adelante. Si ese es el costo, pue si me gusta. Además, a mi me gusta que antes de, las cosas se pongan en claro para que no después, sí es el 10%, mas esto, mas el otro, mas aquello, no? Y yo le dije sí. “ Y ya me dijo todo lo que me tenía que preguntar, los documentos que teníamos que llevarle para que él pudiera hacer el proyecto. Este... en ese momento si requeríamos de los documentos de las, de las socias. Yo les platique y les dije que, que pues nos las íbamos a jugar y que lo que íbamos a solicitar pues era un vehículo para que yo pudiera transportar las prendas, para que yo me pudiera desplazar más rápidamente. Y así íbamos a poder pues ampliar nuestro, nuestro mercado. Y entonces, ellas accedieron y dijeron que si. Y este, y todas accedieron a prestar sus documentos para que se hiciera con este... a nombre de la organización.

L: So, I... the machine I lend them, for example, to Mrs. Margarita and her sister who are the ones who sew, well when they gave us the machine, I told them the machine was no longer... mine, that they could use it like it was theirs since we had gotten the vehicle. Also, the work before they went all the way to my house to pick up work but another benefit would be that we would drop off their work at their house. We would take it, bring it, and pick it up. Or we could see each other at a crossroads or somewhere where it would not be too expensive for their travels. So they would not waste their time. They agreed and they get they reap the benefits and they are aware. At the end, the benefits are for the business. And at the same time, when they need a ride anywhere or whatever, they can ask for anything because it's like they are also owners of the truck. So... they are aware and we also try to provide support unconditionally when they need it. Because they trusted and provided their documents and understand the benefit is for all of us. That is how we work.

L: Entonces, yo este... la maquina que yo les habia prestado, por ejemplo, a Doña Margarita y a su hermana que son las que me cosen, pues cuando nos dieron la máquina, en ese momento pues les dije yo que la máquina ya no era este...mía, qué y ellas podían disponer de esa como si fuera suya a cambio de que pues nosotros conseguimos el vehículo. Y que pues además el trabajo, porque anteriormente ellas iban hasta mi casa a traer el trabajo y a recogerlo, y que pues otro de los beneficios que iban a tener es que el trabajo se los íbamos a llevar hasta su casa. Llevarlo y traerlo y recogerlo. O pues vernos en un crucero o vernos en otro lugar en donde a ellas no les causara tanto gasto, no? Ni pérdida de tiempo. Y ellas aceptaron y así fue como quedamos y pues finalmente a ellas les llega el beneficio y ellas están conciente. De que al final pues es un beneficio para la empresa. Y este, al mismo tiempo de que cuando ellas requieren de un viaje de cualquier cosa, pues con toda confianza este, nosotros les apoyamos parte porque finalmente ellas también son, es como si fueran dueñas también de la camioneta. Entonces este... en esa parte pues ellas están conscientes y pues nosotros también tratamos de apoyarles cuando ellas lo necesitan de forma incondicional. Porque ella nos dieron la confianza de poner sus papeles y de atestiguar de que el beneficio iba a ser para todas. Y si, así es como este... funcionamos.

L: However, there are announcements that are not for groups. It has to be for individuals. As a person you must be registered under government finances, pay your taxes, and be up to date, not owe anything. So, all those types of documents need to be presented so you can benefit from the projects or announcements within the government. So that is how, how Detalle has benefitted from some projects. And that is when we say we are an organization and we work as a team in an organized manner and agreement that it is a commitment but they trust us because they know we are going to make good use of the resources. Because it would not be fair if we got a resource and said we are going on vacation. Or I am going on vacation and they will stay here and work while they see me have fun. So, we shouldn't and don't do that because we have the responsibility of putting our money to good use. They register all that in a state and federal database that documents all the benefits you have received as an organization. So, when you don't have anything negative on your record, they continue giving you and giving you. Why? Because they know that it's not enough, that there are no resources that will be enough for you to say, I don't need anything. So, if it is... they audit, they do many things where they... they constantly supervise you.

L: En cambio hay convocatorias que dicen, para grupos no. Únicamente tienes que ser como persona física. Como persona física, tienes que estar registrada en hacienda, pagar tus impuestos, estar al corriente, no deber, no? No aparecer en el Buro de Credito, que eres una persona que le debe a medio mundo y no paga. Este, todas ese tipo de documentos tiene uno que presentar para sea uno beneficiado de los proyectos a veces o de convocatorias que hay dentro del gobierno. Y así es de que, de que es así de como, como Detalle hemos beneficiados de algunos proyectos. Y es cuando recurrimos honestamente a decir somos organización, y si, finalmente trabajamos en equipo, trabajamos de manera organizada y de acuerdo porque todas están consciente finalmente de que si es un compromiso pero no los dan la confianza de que pues nosotros también vamos a hacer buen uso de ese recurso. Porque tampoco se vale de que me dieron dinero y me voy de vacaciones, no? O me voy a equis lugar y ellas este que trabajen o ellas que me vean como me divierto o equis cosa no? Entonces, tampoco se puede hacer eso ni lo hacemos porque tenemos la responsabilidad de saber que tenemos que dar buenas cuentas. Porque todo eso lo registran en una base de datos que tienen de gobierno estatal y gobierno federal sobre todos los beneficios que tu tienes de organización de todo lo que te dan. Entonces, cuando tu no tienes ninguna observación negativa, te siguen dando, te siguen dando. Porque? Porque saben que no basta, no, no hay recurso que sea suficiente como para que tu digas ya, ya la hice ya no necesito nada. O con este dinero que me dieron ya la hice porque voy a vivir feliz el resto de mis días porque no es así. Entonces, si es un este... se hacen auditorías, se hacen muchas cuestiones a las donde... te supervisan constantemente.

L: And another benefit that is a really good benefit too and that you get for knowing how to apply to resources is... as a government agency when they organize statewide events, well they invite you to sell your products, so you can advertise. We have benefitted in different ways. We have been featured, for example, on.. On the Instituto Estatal de Empleo magazine, as job generators and... we have benefitted with, with this type of publicity because you get to advertise. Another thing that happened whe the brand, Detalle de Mujer, was registered was, was that it was a benefit accessed through the

organization. Because we had to submit the Certificate of Incorporation. And we had to update who no longer was in the, in the organization. Who are the new members? And who is currently working? So... we have to do updates every 2 years. So we do the updates and the last certificate or most recent one is the one presented for this program.

L: Y otros de los beneficios que son muy buenos también y que adquiere uno por el hecho de saber aplicar los recursos como deben de ser, es de que cuando... como dependencias cuando organizan eventos en el estado, pues lo que hacen es invitarte a vender tus productos, a darte a conocer. A, nosotros hemos sido beneficiadas ya de varias formas. Hemos aparecido por ejemplo, en la... en la revista del Instituto Estatal de Empleo, como generadores de empleo y este... hemos sido beneficiados con, con ese tipo de publicidad, no, que te das a conocer. Que otra de las cosas que cuando se hizo es el registro de la marca, Detalle de Mujer, también fue un, fue un beneficio de que se bajo a través de la organización. Por que allí había que poner el acta constitutiva, no? Y se tuvo que hacer una actualización de quienes ya no están en la, en la organización. Quienes son las nuevas integrantes? Y quienes son las que trabajan hasta este momento? Entonces, este... se hacen actualizaciones de actas cada dos años. Se actualizan y la última acta o la más reciente es la que se presenta para este programa.

L: This program has a great package because they make your business cards. In this case they are going to give us the, the signs, that the truck will have promoting Detalle de Mujer and what we do as Detalle de Mujer. So, they are great benefits because they promote you as part of the publicity. You also have the right to make triptychs to advertise... that are relevant to your organization, the activities or objectives of the organization. And all those expenses don't come from us but from the federal government. They sponsor these expenses. The graphic designer designs your cards, the logo and everything. So the same on this, I could have done this as a person, as the owner of the business or as an organization. Since this is registering the trademark and there is a justification why it's called Detalle de Mujer, I wanted didn't want to do it as a physical person but as an organization. Because finally when you, when we now can use the brand labels. We haven't done it and we are waiting for the package where they will give us all these benefits.

L: Y este programa tiene un paquete muy, muy benéfico porque te hacen tus tarjetas de presentación. En este caso nos van a entregar la, el como los anuncios de, que van a ir forrada la camioneta con la, con los anuncios de Detalle de Mujer para que sepan que esa camioneta pertenece a Detalle de Mujer y lo que hacemos como Detalle de Mujer. (43: 34) Entonces, pues si son beneficios pues buenos porque, pues te dan a conocer como parte de la publicidad. También tienes derecho a hacer trípticos para dar a conocer lo más he... relevante de tu organización, las actividades o los objetivos que tiene la organización. Y esos pues, todos esos gastos no salen de nosotros sino sale del gobierno federal. Que ellos son quienes patrocinan de alguna manera todos esos gastos. El diseñador para que te diseñe las tarjetas el logotipo todo eso. Entonces igual lo mismo en esa parte por ejemplo, yo lo podía hacer como persona física, como dueña de la empresa si yo quería o como organización. Como aquí si es el registro de marca y hay una justificación de porqué se llama Detalle de Mujer este pues yo no lo quise hacer como persona física sino a nombre de la organización. Porque finalmente cuando tu,

cuando nosotros ahorita ya podemos utilizar las etiquetas de marca. No lo hemos hecho porque estamos en espera de que nos entreguen ese paquete a donde abarca todo ese tipo de beneficios.

L: But this... that , that benefit comes because Detalle de Mujer is not just one woman, it is may of us. And even though it says Detalle de mujer when someone is curious they will ask, “Why is it called that?” And that’s when you explain and justifies why it’s called that. Or these are times that men will say, “No I don’t want that because it’s clothing for women.” No. It is made by women but we also make them for men. And so... lots of things like that happen and well we also... I think that my business or the business is at this level or has gotten here because we share the most important things. I guess whatever is not important, I don’t tell them it’s going to get done. But when there are things that are relevant and important like these, I try that to have them be protagonists of the story because we are all protagonists. Here nothing... in this aspect no one is worth more than anyone else. It’s like I tell the ones that embroider, this blouse is beautiful, this model is beautiful, but it wouldn’t be beautiful if it wasn’t thanks to you for embroidering this flower in this color. So, the same thing with them. You could embroider manta, embroider a common and ordinary artesanía. But someone is going to appreciate your work more if you pair it with good fabric or a different design.

L: Pero este... ese este, ese beneficio viene porque para empezar Detalle de Mujer es porque no solo una mujer hace la prenda sino somos muchas no? Y aunque dice Detalle de Mujer tienen que, alguien cuando tiene curiosidad te dicen, “Y porque se llama a si, no?” Y entonces es cuando tu explicas y viene la justificación de porque se llama así. No? O hay a veces que señores que dicen, “No yo no quiero eso porque hace pura ropa para mujer.” No. Esta hecha para mujeres pero también hacemos para hombres. No? Y entonces a... muchas cosas así pasan y que pues uno también... O yo pienso que mi empresa o la empresa vamos hasta este nivel o hemos llegado hasta acá precisamente porque tratamos de compartir las cosas más importantes. Tal vez lo que no tiene importancia, hay veces que yo ni si quiera les informo, no, que se van a hacer. Pero cuando hay cosas relevantes y he importantes como estas, trato de que ellas aparezcan como protagonistas de la historia porque todas somos protagonistas. Aquí nada... en ese aspecto si no vale una más que otra, no, sino todas. Porque es como yo les digo a las que bordan, no, esta blusa esta muy bonita, este modelo esta muy bonito, este diseño esta muy bonito, pero no estuviera bonito si no fuera si no fuera gracias a usted qué bordo, que hizo esa flor, que le puso ese color, no? Entonces, y lo mismo pasa con ellas. Usted pudiera bordar manta, pudiera bordar una artesanía común y corriente. Pero nadie le va a apreciar tanto su trabajo, sino es que va acompañado de una buena tela o de un diseño diferente.

L: And the people here have...we are in a country, we are in a state with lots of culture. But there is also ignorance. There are people who are embarrassed to wear a garment like mine because they don’t want to look like an indigenous person who wears that. And there are those that value it and say even though they look at me however they look at me but what is valuable is the embroidery. So, that is what is beautiful about this, that... that there is a difference between what you do, what you work on, or when we see the final

product. And it's even more beautiful when you can express who and how they made it and everything.

L: Y ya la gente al menos acá, a llegado a...a estamos en un país, estamos en un estado donde hay mucha cultura. Pero también hay mucha ignorancia. Hay quienes les avergüenza usar una prenda tal y como es la mía porque se sienten verse como esa persona indígena que usa ese tipo de vestimenta. Y hay quienes si saben valorar y dicen pues aunque me vean como vea pero lo que vale es el bordado. Entonces, pues eso es, eso es lo bonito de esto, que...que si existe la diferencia entre lo que se hace y lo que portamos y o que ya vemos cuando ya está terminado, no? Y más bonito cuando puedes expresar como y quien lo hizo y todo.

L: Well because we all work out of necessity but we all aspire to have better quality of life every time we make a garment or make something. Because we have dreams, aspirations, because we think that well...Because we think our kids don't have to suffer like we did. We explain to them why, what things have cost us or have we have gotten to where we are. Well, they also live it and in some way they also have to sacrifice things because sometimes the lack of resources pushes us to sacrifice our salary that goes toward food or that goes toward the possibility of having a small luxury or to be able to go out or something but we can't do or have those things. Why? Because we have to invest everything, everything needs to be... be saved for tough times. Fortunately, they are aware of it. If they don't completely understand it, at least they... they don't ask for more than, than what you can give them. (Aside: And here, it's this one, there.)

L: Pues porque todos trabajamos por necesidad pero también todos aspiramos a tener una mejor calidad de vida cada vez que hacemos una prenda y hacemos algo, no? Porque tenemos sueños, porque tenemos aspiraciones, porque pensamos que pues, este... Porque pensamos que nuestros hijos no tienen que padecer tanto como nosotros padecemos, no? Por quererles dar algo, algo mejor todavía, no? En mi caso pues yo intento también contagiar a mis hijos. Diciéndoles el porqué de las cosas, cuanto nos han costado tener lo que tenemos o para estar hasta donde estamos, no? Y que pues ellos también lo viven, de alguna forma también este de repente les toca pues sacrificar muchas cosas porque a nosotros ahorita por el momento la falta de recursos este, a veces que tenemos que sacrificar hasta lo que viniera siendo nuestro sueldo para, pues para poder comer mejor, o de repente para podernos dar un lujito o podernos ir a pasear o algo no lo hacemos. Porque? Porque todo lo tenemos que invertir, todo lo tenemos que, esté... cuidar por las, para los tiempos difíciles, no? Y pues ellos afortunadamente pues si lo comprenden, no? Si no lo comprenden del todo por lo menos este... no te exigen más de lo que, de lo que les puede uno dar. (Aside: Y aquí es esta, hay.)

L: So that is the organization of Detalle de Mujer and how, how we work and how we gather, how we see each other and how often we see each other. When we, when there is, for example, I try to pass on unity, the love for the art. So that they do the things that they make or that they are going to make, I tell them this color would go well with... with this tone or this figure but in different colors. Or maybe this seam is bad, you have to be more careful. One pleat is longer than the other or fatter than the other. We have to check all those details because... because what you are making, we are going to sell and we don't know who will buy it. And whoever buys it and if it is well made, they will recommend

us. If it's not well made then they will say don't go there because they do this and that there. So, its good to make sure that we pay attention to those things. We don't make things that are perfect. I have never said, now it's perfect. We are not perfect beings, but we give it our best. The best possible for who, whoever it is can leave happy with the garment or item they got, they bought from us. That's it. (Aside: Let me just oversew this and we can continue.)

L: Pues eso es la organización de Detalle de Mujer y como, como trabajamos y como nos reunimos, como nos vemos y cada que tiempo no vemos, no? Cuando nosotros... digo yo por ejemplo, pues este trato de siempre cuando hay este tipo de encuentros de vez en cuando que nos vemos, yo tambien trato de contagiarles pues la unidad, el hecho del amor al arte, no? De que ellas hagan las cosas en que las que traen pues las que hacen o las que van a hacer pues les digo sabe que este color este se... se veria bonito con este tono o esta figura pero en otros colores. O a lo mejor está costura le quedo mal, hay que poner más cuidado. Una pinza está más larga que la otra, más gorda que la otra. Hay que revisar todos esos detalles porque este... lo que usted está, lo que usted está haciendo lo vamos a vender y no sabemos quién lo va a llevar. Y quien sea quien se lo lleve, si está bien hecho nos van a recomendar. Pero si esta mal hecho, ni vayan alli por que asi y asi hacen en ese lugar, no? Entonces, es importante siempre cuidar ese tipo de aspectos para que pues no, no hacemos cosas perfectas, nunca yo he llegado a decir ay ahora si salio perfecta, no? Porque no somos seres perfectos, pero si lo mejor de nosotros, no? Lo mejor posible para que, para quien sea quien se lo lleve, este, pues se vaya feliz, no, con la prenda o con lo que adquirió, con lo que nos compro. Nadamas. (Aside: Ay ya, dejame nadamas sobre hilo esto y ya le seguimos.)

I: Yes, okay.

I: Si, okay

Part 4

L: Well, when the... the young man from, that told us he would help us elaborate the INAES project and that he wouldn't charge us until we were sure our project would be approved it was that he spoke with reasurance and was willing ti risk his job overall because he he has someone who would help the project approved. And it turns out that one day they call us and tell us "Your project was not approved." I went to pick up the peper. On the document it saud that it hadn't passed because it always... because that agency revises your project and telll you why it didn't pass. They give it to you in writing. So, it's not like you wonder what could have gone wrong. So they specify point by point what... what was not done well. Sometimes its a matter of permits, for example, when you have greenhouses if you don't have a permit from CONAGUA for water use, they don't give it to you. If you don't have a permit or...or the possession of the land or legal possession of the land, things of that nature, they don't give it to you. So, they specify all that in writing. And when they they gave me the paperwork it said there that they had not authorized my project because the tables and statistics about our production and sales was not coherent, did not add up, you understand.

L: Bueno cuando el...el chico de, que nos dijo que nos iba ayudar a elaborar el proyecto de INAES, y que no nos iba a cobrar hasta estar seguro que el proyecto iba a salir

resulta ser que el hablaba con esa seguridad y estaba dispuesto ahora si de arriesgar su trabajo más que nada porque el decía que tenía la persona que, que le iba a ayudar para que el proyecto se realizará. Y resulta ser que un buen día nos hablaron y nos dijeron "Sabe que señora su proyecto no pasó." Fui a recoger el papel. En el documento decía que no había pasado porque este siempre... lo que tiene esa dependencia es de que te revisa tu proyecto y te dice porque no paso. Y te lo dan por escrito. Entonces, no es de que te quedes con la incertidumbre, que pudo haber estado mal. Sino que te especifican punto por punto lo que... lo que no estaba bien proyectado. Hay veces que son por cuestiones de permisos, por ejemplo, cuando son invernaderos si tu no tienes un permiso de CONAGUA para el uso del agua, no te lo dan. Si tu no tienes un permiso o... o la tenencia de tierra o del terreno, la posesión del terreno legal, cosas como esas índole, tampoco te lo dan. Entonces, todo eso lo especifican por escrito. Y cuando entregaron el escrito allí decía que no me habían autorizado mi proyecto porque las tablas y estadísticas sobre lo que producíamos y lo que vendíamos no eran coherentes, no cuadraban, me entiendes.

L: So, I definitely called the project manager and he asked to make a revision to the project. And there definitely had been an error in numbers and that's why there was a problem since it was all done through the computer... They add, subtract and everything automatically and there was definitely an error and they were right that it didn't make sense because there was an error and he didn't catch it. And so, the justification was cleared... Ah, but for that they told me that I would have to solicit the project in writing so that the project manager could make a revision. And that I could do it but that did not mean that fixing it authorized it because it had already been evaluated. The project had already been rejected and there was no way to save the project they... they had already made adjustments over their budget for this year and had authorized projects. And they did not want to give us false hope. That that was it.

L: Entonces este, si efectivamente este yo le hable al técnico y el solicito el proyecto para la revisión. Y si efectivamente había habido un error en una cifra y por eso fue que arroyo y como todo lo meten por computadora... suman, restan y todo lo hacen automático, si efectivamente había un error creo que en el número de prendas que elaborábamos y el coto de las prendas. Por eso no... no había coherencia. Y cuando él solicitó el proyecto, pues se defendió no, que efectivamente había un error y que tenían la razón que no había coherencia pero por que había ese error que había sucedido y él no se había dado cuenta. Y entonces este, se aclaró la justificación.... Ah, pero para eso me dijeron que yo tenía que hacer un escrito para solicitar de que me dieran el proyecto para que el técnico le pudiera hacer una revisión. Y que lo podía hacer pero eso no quería decir que con corregirlo nos lo autorizaba porque ya este, habían pasado por una evaluación. El proyecto ya estaba rechazado y ya no había manera de como rescatar el proyecto porque ya... ellos ya habían hecho ajustes sobre el presupuesto que tenían ese año y ya habían autorizado proyectos para ejecutarse. Y que por lo tanto, no querían que nos dieran esperanzas pues. Que ya hasta allí.

L: But what we could do was make the correction for the next call for projects, for next year. So then, well then... I called the project manager, I told him, he helped me to immediately submit the application, we did it and then she... he called his contact and

told them that it was messed up that with such a small correction that was needed and why couldn't she have given him the chance to fix it before the evaluation. So, she said that no, she couldn't do anything because the budget was set for all the projects. So that day I returned home very sad. And I said I suffered, fought for, carried these documents for many days. For nothing. And I was very sad.

L: Pero que pues lo que si podíamos hacer, es hacer la corrección para la próxima convocatoria, osea para el siguiente año. Y entonces este, pues este... Yo le hable al técnico, le dije, el me ayudo para hacer inmediatamente metió la solicitud, nos movimos y entonces ella... él le habló a su contacto y le dijo que que mala onda por que era algo que no tenía mayor grado de dificultad en corregir y que ella pudo haber dado la oportunidad de avisarle antes de que llegaran a la evaluación final para que el hiciera esa corrección. Y entonces, ella le dijo que este, que pues que si que no, que ella ya no podía hacer nada porque ya tenía presupuestado los proyectos fue lo que ella le respondió. Y pues yo ese día me regrese muy triste a la casa. Y dije sufrí, batalle, cargue muchos días estos documentos. Y todo para nada. Y estaba yo muy triste.

L: I had just gotten home when one of my clients calls me. I met this man in a hearing , it was... he was in charge of an agency, also an agency that gave credits. It was where they gave the Oaxaca fund, the famous Oaxaca fund. And at the end they would send you to the banks. And there was also another program in that same... in that same agency where they gave you resources for sinisters, sinisters of nature.

L: Justamente yo había llegado a la casa cuando me habla unos de mis clientes. Este señor yo lo conocí también en una audiencia, era un este... un encargado de, de una dependencia, también de una dependencia donde dan créditos. Justamente donde daban el fondo Oaxaca, el famoso fondo Oaxaca. Y al final te mandaban con los bancos. Y entonces, también había otro programa en ese mismo... en esa misma dependencia a donde te daban recursos para siniestros, para siniestros de la naturaleza.

L: And the fact that we, like the saying says, "there is no bad situation that results in good." Just when we decide to make a name or ourselves, Detalle de Mujer comes out of the corners of the mountain of San Agustín since we had suffered a sinister natural disaster. In 2011, there was heavy rainfall, heavy or in 2009, I think it was in 2009. I don't quite remember the year, the point is that there has heavy rainfall, part of the hill slides off on the pueblo and that causes everything including tree trunks, rocks, and dirt to fall. So, there were trees in the river and they break all the bridges that connected everyone who lived on the outskirts to the center. And at that time, as an organization we rented a place close to the river, close to the river and the river comes and it takes the bridge leaving the roads without being able to be used and all our clients are from the city of Oaxaca and who went all the way to the pueblo to look for us, we had no communication.

L: Y justamente el hecho de que nosotros, dice el dicho que "no hay mal que por bien no venga." Justamente cuando nosotros decidimos darnos a conocer, Detalle de Mujer sale de los rincones de la montaña de San Agustín es por que nosotros habíamos sufrido un siniestro. En el 2011, vino un aguacero pero muy, muy fuerte o 2009, creo que 2009 fue. No recuerdo bien el año, el chiste es que vino un aguacero pero vien fuertisimo, se derrumba parte del cerro de un cerro en el pueblo y eso trae consigo que se venga entre

el río troncos, piedras, tierra y bueno de todo. Entonces, vienen los árboles en el río y hacen una rompedera de todos los puentes que comunicaban ahora si a todos los que vivíamos en las orillas con los que vivíamos en el centro. Y resulta ser de que para ese entonces, nosotros como organización rentabamos un espacio en, cerca del río, cerca del río y resulta ser de que viene el río, se llevaba el puente dejando los caminos y el paso inservible prácticamente y entonces todos nuestros clientes que eran de aquí de ciudad de Oaxaca que iban hasta el pueblo a buscarnos, pues nos quedamos incomunicados.

L: And there is no way to... we can't go out and sell and they can't get here because we could not cross the river. And unfortunately we lived on the other side of the river. So, that's what made me go out. We had lots of garments that belong to clients who lived in the city. I started to contact them by telephone. Some of them at work and others at home so I could deliver. One reason was because we don't have resources, we didn't have money if we didn't sell. We didn't have money to eat. And the other, well we could not communicate. Although they couldn't go, they wouldn't have access to roads to see us. So, that was what also caused us a hard, hard crisis. Where I saw myself obligated to go out and sell. That is why I expressed this, the situation that had happened to us. Fortunately, the water did not come in because we lived on the high side. And there was humidity and things like that. I think there was only one machine that oxidized and we immediately sanded, cleaned, and painted it so the corrosion didn't continue. It didn't affect the building or equipment. It did affect us in terms of communication so the clients did not return. They didn't return after seeing what happened.

L: Y ya no hay como... ni nosotros como salir a vender ni ellos cómo llegar porque no podíamos pasar el río. Y nosotros desafortunadamente vivíamos al otro lado del río. Entonces este, pues eso fue lo que me hizo a mi a empezar a salir. Por que teníamos prendas de muchos clientes que estaban aquí en la ciudad. Empeze a contactarlos por teléfono. Unos en sus trabajos, en sus casas para entregarles. Una porque no teníamos recursos, no teníamos dinero al no vender. No teníamos dinero para comer. Y la otra, pues era la incomunicación. Y pues ellos aunque no podían ir, pues no podían pasar para vernos. Entonces este, pues si fue eso lo que nos causó también una crisis muy fuerte pero muy fuerte. A dónde fue ya donde me vi obligada a tener que salir a vender. Por eso fue que este, yo exprese este, esta situación que nos había pasado que nos había sucedido. Afortunadamente, el agua no nos entro por que pues vivíamos así como en lo alto. Y pues si hubo algo de humedad cosas asi. Creo que una de las máquinas nomas fue la que tantito se oxido y inmediatamente le limamos, la limpiamos, la pintamos y la corrosión no siguió. No nos afectó en cierta forma en mobiliario o en equipo. Pero si nos afecto en cuestión de comunicación de que los clientes ya no regresaron. Ya no regresaron al ver que no había paso. (10:03)

L: And then, it was there... where I talked with this man and he told me why don't you submit a project? It's not a lot of money what they give you but something, something that they can repay you. Well they... I don't remember how much they gave us, like \$5,000 pesos. A... an amount that was symbolic. At the end, it helps. And, and then it was when I met the man with the sinister natural disasters and who was in that agency. And what he liked that I had with me that day were some dresses and I... he asked to borrow them to take them to his wife so she could try them. And he asked for the pink

and black one and we will see which one she likes. His wife didn't let him return either dress because she liked how they both fit. And... And he authorized me that... that sinister natural resource really fast. And from there we built our friendship and he ordered dressing shirts. And he became a frequent client.

L: Y entonces este, pues allí fue eh... donde yo platique con este señor y me dijo porque no mete un proyecto. No es mucho dinero lo que le dan pero pues algo que le den, algo que le repongan. No ya no.. ya no alcanzo a recordar cuanto nos dieron, como \$5,000 mil pesos. Una... una cantidad digamos simbólica, no. Lo que finalmente pues te sirve. Y este, y entonces fue cuando conocí a este señor de los siniestros y que estaba en esa dependencia. Y al lo que le gusto ese día fue que llevaba unos vestidos y se lo... me los pidió prestados para llevarlos a que se los probara su esposa. Y resulta ser que me dijo présteme el rosa, présteme el negro a ver cual quiere. Resulta ser de que su esposa ya no lo dejó regresar ninguno porque los dos le quedaron muy bien. Entonces el me compro esos vestidos. Y este... Y me autorizo rápidamente ese.. Ese recurso de los siniestro. Y de allí empezamos a hacer amistad y me encargo camisas. Y empezó a ser mi cliente digamos como muy frecuente.

L: And... and from there, on that occasion, I told him, he said "Leti it's urgent that I get a dressing shirt because I am going to have an event, I need a dressing shirt. Do you have dressing shirts that are already made?" I told him "yes, yes I have dressing shirts that are made. If you want you can come and try them. And if they fit you well you can buy it." And he says, "Okay." And he went all the way to my home, learned about the project, and saw the shop. And he told me, "Woah, your shop is huge. Yiu are making a great effort. But I never imagines that it was of this magnitude." Then um, why are yiu here? And I told her well it's because I have already struggled a lot. I have been looking for false credits where yiu sent me with yiu bank and that I can't get them. And that I already went to a hearing and brought it up to the governor. And what did the governor say? Well that he was going o give me cement and because up to there he has not givem me anything, I haven't seen anything clear and we must go on.

L: Y este... y de allí, en esa ocasión él necesitaba una camisa, Le dije, dice "Oiga Doña Leti me urge una camisa, voy a tener un evento, necesito una camisa. No tiene camisas hechas?" Le dije si, si tengo camisas hechas. Si gusta venga y se las mide. Y este, pues si le quedan adelante. Y dice "Bueno." Y fue hasta la casa y conoció la casa, conoció el proyecto, conoció el taller. Y me dijo "Oiga, pero qué enorme es su taller. Qué esfuerzo está usted haciendo. Yo siempre platico con usted y usted siempre me platica sus ideas que está haciendo. Pero yo nunca me imagine que fuera de esta magnitud." Entonces este, porque estas así? Y le dije pues es que ya he batallado mucho. He estado buscando sus falsos créditos a donde usted me mandó con su banco y que no pude conseguir. Y que por cierto ya fui a una audiencia y ya le reclame al gobernador. Y que le dijo el gobernador? Pues que me va a dar cemento y porque hasta allí no me han dado, no he visto nada claro y allí la llevamos.

L: And he says well why don't you submit , submit, to an agency with lost fund. I told him I was tired of doing it. I tried with INAES two different times. On one occasion they asked me for \$5,000 pesos and I gave the \$5,000 pesos and my paperwork was never submitted. When I went to ask, the call for projects was closed. This man left with my

\$5,000 pesos and I never saw him again. And that's it. After, I tried again and they registered me. They gave me a folio to prove they registered me. But they never did the project or gave me anything. So that's it. And now, I found someone who was willing to take a chance with me and told me he wasn't going to charge me for the project, i just want your documents so I can get the information to make your project and get it approved. Don't worry about the 10% of the...

L: Y me dice bueno dice y porque este no mete, no mete a una dependencia a donde sea a fondo perdido. Le dije pues ya me canse de hacerlo, le dije. (12:57) Ya intente en INAES en dos ocasiones más. Resulta ser que en una ocasión me pidieron \$5,000 pesos de los \$5,000 y nunca me inscribieron, no metieron mis papeles. Cuando yo fui a preguntar ya las convocatorias se habían cerrado. Este señor se fue con mis \$5,000 pesos y nunca le vi la cara. Y ya le dije. Despues lo volvi a intentar y resulta ser que me registraron. Que si me dieron mi folio de que me registraron. Pero ya ellos nunca hicieron el proyecto ni me dieron nada. Y así que ya. Y ahora le dije, conseguí a alguien que quiso jugarselas conmigo y me dijo yo no le voy a cobrar por el proyecto yo nadamas quiero que me pase sus documentos que me de la información que necesito para hacer su proyecto y me voy a encargar de sacarle su proyecto. No se preocupe por el diez por ciento del...

(Aside: L&I: Good afternoon. L: Come in. Client: I hadn't seen. L: It hasn't been long since we are here. We are here whenever you like. We make it to your size. These are all for sale. But if you want something special, we can make it. Client: So we know now. L: Whenever you like.

(Aside:L&I: Buenas tardes. L: Pase. Cliente: No la había visto. L: No tiene mucho tiempo que estamos aquí. Aja, pero muy a la orden cuando guste. Sobremedida. Todos estos están a la venta. Pero si quiere algo en especial lo podemos hacer. Cliente: A entonces ya sabemos. L: Si cuando guste)

L: And it was that they got there and... I talked to them about my experience. I... And they tell me, "Did you submit this year?" "Yes, this year." "And what happened, what they say?" I was talking to the director of INAES on the phone on my way here. She called to ask if I knew someone who wanted help and had a project because she still had resources. And I told him then did they tell me that they didn't have anymore resources. And I explained everything that had happened and he said, " Give me your folio number." And I instantly took my paper out and gave him my folio number. Then and there he dialed her number and she took down my information. And he told me that she said she will see me in her office tomorrow. That what needs to be fixed on her project is simple. But I need her to bring \$7,000 pesos to give it to the person who will make corrections to her project. And I told him, " But I don't have \$7,000 pesos." But this is the only opportunity you have to save your project. So, I started looking for the \$7,000 pesos like crazy. I was able to find \$3,000 pesos and the next day I leave. I said God please help me make this person understand that I need their help and that I don't have the \$7,000 pesos.

L: Y este, hay entonces fue que ya llegaron y...ha ya le platique mi experiencia. Le... Y me dice, "Y metió este año?" Si le dije este año. "Y que paso, que le dijeron?" Que venia platicando en el camino cuando venia para aca con la directora de INAES. Es mi amiga y me hablo para decirme si conozco a alguien que tenga un proyecto que quiera yo que

le ayuden porque ella todavía tiene recurso. Y le dije y porque a mi me dijeron que no tenían recurso. Y le explique todo lo que había sucedido y me dijo, "Deme su numero de folio." Y agarre y en el instante saqué mi papel y le di mi numero de folio. Allí delante de mí le marcó a ella y tomó los datos. Y me dijo dile que mañana la espero en mi oficina. Que es muy simple el detalle de su proyecto lo que hay que corregir. Pero que necesito que me traiga \$7,000 pesos para dárselo a la persona que va a hacer las correcciones que necesita su proyecto. Y le dije, "Pero es que yo no tengo \$7,000 pesos." Pero es que es la única oportunidad que usted tiene para rescatar el proyecto. Y entonces como loca me puse yo a buscar esos \$7,000 pesos. Logre conseguir \$3,000 pesos y me voy al otro dia. Y yo dije diosito ayúdame porque tengo que hacerle entender a esta persona que necesito de su ayuda y que no tengo los \$7,000 pesos.

L: And I told them... I went the next day to look... first to look for my clients who owed me, to look for people who could buy garments to get the money. And, well. And then, I had the idea to look for a person, one of my aunts who could get money fast and said she could get it. What time do you want it? I want it for 2:00pm. So, I will see you at 2:00pm. Bring me your address and your ID and I will get it for you. And when she... I had already given her my documents and I said aunt how much interest do I pay? Of the \$7,000 pesos I almost had to pay \$12,000 pesos in interest. I had already given her my documents. And so I told her you know what no, no. I can't pay that amount and I am going to end up owing you. It's better if... don't process my credit. And she said look... Look what about if I ask for \$7,000 pesos. Go and find whatever you can. If by 2:00pm you tell me I found \$2,000 or \$3,000 and don't need the \$7,000 at the moment that they gp interview you to give you the money, you can tell them you know what I don't need the \$7,000. I only need \$2,000 or \$3,000 or whatever you need. I said okay. But at the monet, I will file an application for \$7,000 pesos. It's okay I said. I agreed. But I went at 3:00pm and I had to see the person to give them the money.

L: Y entonces fue que agarré y le dije este... me fui al otro dia a buscar... primero a buscar a mis clientes que me debían, a buscar a personas que me pudieran comprar prendas para juntar ese dinero. Y bueno. Y entonces este se me ocurrió buscar a una persona, a una de mis tías que andaba ofreciendo de alchachar y fui y entonces me dijo si yo te los consigo. Para a que hora los quieres? No, pues yo los quiero como para las dos de la tarde. A bueno pues entonces nos vemos a las dos de la tarde. Traeme tu domicilio, tu credencial de elector y yo te los consigo. Y resulta ser de que cuando me... yo ya le había dado los documentos y le dije oiga tía pero cuánto hay que pagar de interés? Resulta ser de qué de \$7,000 pesos casi yo tenía que pagar \$12,000 pesos de interés. Y entonces ya le había dado mis papeles. Y entonces yo le dije tía sabe que no, no. No puedo pagar esa cantidad y le voy a quedar mal. Mejor este... no solicite mi crédito. Y dice mire... mira qué te parece, hacemos una cosa, solicitó los \$7000 pesos. Ve a conseguir lo que tu puedas conseguir. Si a las dos de la tarde me dices yo ya conseguí \$2000, yo ya conseguí \$3000 y no necesitas los \$7000, en el instante en que te vayan a ir a hacer la entrevista para entregarte el dinero tu les dices sabe que yo ya no necesito los \$7000. Solo necesito \$2000 o \$3000 o lo que te haga falta. Y le dije bueno. Pero mientras te voy a hacer tu solicitud por los \$7,000 pesos. Esta bien le dije. Acepte. Pero resulta ser de que fui a las 3:00 de la tarde y yo tenía que verme con esta persona para entregarle el dinero.

L: I called Angel telling him it had been impossible... that I didn't have \$7,000 that I only had \$3,000. And if she was willing to see me. Because I didn't know her or didn't know who she was and I didn't have all the money. And he told me, "Let me call her and... She is my friend and I don't think she will not understand that you don't have the money." I told him, look if I had that money, well I wouldn't be asking for anything. Buy I don't, don't have the money. So, he dialed her number. And he said that she said to take her the \$3,000 pesos. She will wait for you, since it got late, it was later, he said she is expecting you at 6:00pm when she gets out of work. She will see you then.

L: Este le hable al Licenciado Ángel diciéndole que, qué pues me había sido muy imposible...que yo no tenía los \$7,000 que solo tenía \$3,000. Y que si ella estaba dispuesta a atenderme. Porque pues yo no la conocia ni sabia quien era pero que yo no, no tenía el dinero completo. Y entonces él me dijo, "Déjeme le voy hablar y este... Ella es mi amiga no creo que no comprenda que usted no tiene esa cantidad." Y le dije, mire si yo tuviera esa cantidad, pues yo también ni anduviera pidiendo nada, no. Pero no, no tengo ese dinero. Entonces este, agarro el y le marcó a ella. Y dijo dice que si que le lleve los \$3,000 pesos. Que te espera, pues como nos ganaron los tiempos, ya era más tarde, dijo te espera a las 6:00pm de la tarde que ella sale de trabajar. A esa hora te va a ver.

L: At the same time, my aunt tells me that they are going to conduct the survey, they are on their way to your house. And i told her you what, tell them not to go anymore because I am in the city and that it will be 8:00pm when I get there, if I leave now. And she said okay. I called them and she gave the men my number. And they told me that they had my money already and other stuff. I told them if they could give it to my husband and that I only needed \$5,000 pesos but they said they couldn't leave them with her husband. You have to be...you filed the application and you have to go through the process. We can't give it to another person that is not you. I told them well then I am very sorry but then I don't want the credit because I will not make it on time. So then... we will wait for you. Well, I can't anymore. But the truth was I didn't want to because I was not going to have all the money to pay them back. So... they insisted because they wanted me to be in debt and they wanted to profit.

L: Cuando en eso al mismo tiempo también mi tía dice oye Leti ya te van a hacer tu encuesta, ya van camino a tu casa. Y le dije sabes qué tía , dícales que ya no vayan porque yo estoy aquí en la ciudad y de aquí que llego a mi casa van a dar las 8:00pm de la noche. Y me dijo ah bueno dice. Les hable y ya les dio ella mi número a los señores estos. Y me dijeron no señora ya traemos su dinero que no se que. Si le dije pues si se lo pueden dar a mi esposo ya solo necesito \$5,000 pesos pero este, dice no no se lo podemos dejar a su esposo. Usted tiene que... usted hizo la solicitud y usted tiene que hacer el trámite. No se lo podemos entregar a otra persona que no sea usted. Le dije pues entonces lo siento mucho pero entonces no quiero el crédito porque no me da tiempo llegar. Y enton... no pues la esperamos. No pero es que ya no puedo. Pero más bien, yo no quería porque yo no iba a tener todo ese dinero para pagarles de más. Y entonces este... y ellos insistían porque querían endrogarme, no.

I: Yes.

I: Si.

L: So, I told them fine I am gon to... going to do everything possible to make it. So I decided... I said I will go home and get the money and be back by 6:00pm with the lady. And that's how, how I thought it would hapen. When I was going to get on the taxi toward San Agustín, one of my clients calls me and tells me Leti they told me you came to look for me. I said yes. I told her it was urgent to get some money together and I went to deliver her dresses and ask for her to pay her. She said okay well I am already in my office. If you would like to come, I am already here. And, she owed me another \$2,000 pesos. So I went back.

L: Entonces este, yo agarre y le dije bueno está bien voy a... voy a hacer todo lo posible por llegar. Y decidí... dije voy a la casa recojo el dinero y regreso para estar a las 6:00pm de la tarde con la señora. Y así fue como, como segun yo pensaba hacerle. Cuando me iba subir al taxi para irme para San Agustín, me habla una de mis clientas y me dice Leti me dijeron que me vinistes a buscar. Si le dije. Fíjese que me urge acompletar un dinero y pues iba yo a dejarle sus vestidos y a cobrarle. O dice pues ya llegue a mi oficina. Si gustas venir, ya estoy aca. Y este, pues ella me debia otros \$2,000 pesos. Y que agarro y me regreso.

L: I said that's it... and then I called the men. Look don't wait for me anymore, it is not possible for me to get there. Thank you very much but stop insisting because I no... I am not going to take your credit. I did not get in debt. I went to the other woman. Since I had already told the other woman I only had \$3,000, I said I am going to pocket these \$2,000 and I am not going to give them to her. I am only going to give her \$3,000.

L: Y dije ya... y entonces ya la hable a los señores. Saben que mejor no me esperen, no es posible llegar. Muchas gracias pero ya no insistan porque ya no... acabo de resolver mi problema. Y ya no requiero del dinero. Así que muchas gracias pero ya no este... ya no les voy a tomar el crédito. Y ya no me endroque. Y regrese con la otra señora. Pero como yo ya le había dicho a la otra que no mas tenia \$3,000, dije pues ahora me guardo estos \$2,000 y no se los voy a dar. Y nadamas le voy a dar los \$3,000 pesos.

L: So how it happened, I got there at 6:00pm and interviewed with her and... I told her that I thanked her very much because she could help me. But that... but she said I want to clarify something. And she I told her, go for it. I don't want this to be the cause of a misunderstanding. The \$3,000 pesos that you are going to give me is not blackmail. It's not anything for... for you to think wrong. This money is to pay the person who will make corrections to your project. And from here on, whatever if anyone asks you for money or insinuates anything, let me know. Because we are an agency that is this... and that. We don't lend ourselves to those type of things. I don't know what. (Leti tells this with sarcasm)

L: Y entonces cómo fue, llegue a las 6:00pm de la tarde, me entreviste con ella y este... Le dije que le agradecia mucho que ella me pudiera ayudar. Que pues que....pero ella dice pues es que yo quiero aclararle algo dice. Y me le dije, sí adelante. No quiero que sea esto la causa de un mal entendido, eh. Los \$3,000 pesos que usted me va a dar este no es soborno. No es nada de...de que usted piense mal. Este dinero es para pagarle a quien va a hacer la corrección de su proyecto, si. Y de aquí en adelante, cualquier cosa si cualquiera le llega a pedir dinero o llega a insinuar a decir cualquier cosa,

comuniquemelo a mi, si. Porque nosotros somos una dependencia muy no se que... y muy no se cuando. Nosotros no nos prestamos a este tipo de cosas. No se que.(Leti cuenta esto con sarcasmo).

L: And this time it's an exception for my friend Angel. Angel is a person I appreciate very much. And... and it is why we did this. Don't think we can easily change things. I am risking my job. I am... But I think it's worth doing something for people like you. Angel tells me you are a hardworking person... Okay (sarcasm) I thank you very much. I know you are not going to be disappointed. And you know what you have won the most beautiful dress that Detalle de Mujer has ever made and thank you. And she really convinced me with that.. With the face she told me, with her impression. When I had given her the \$3,000 pesos, I had given her the money and everything, she calls Angel and she... and she tells him this is... is the last time that I help you because how is it going to be possible that they sell expensive dresses and they don't have \$7,000 pesos and I just can't believe it. She says this and that. She shows her claws. She does the opposite of what she had said.

L: Y esta vez es una excepción por mi amigo Angel. Angel es una persona que yo aprecio mucho. Y este... y por eso hicimos esto. Pero no creas que nosotros podemos meter la mano tan facil. Yo aquí estoy arriesgando mi trabajo. Estoy...Pero yo creo que vale la pena hacer algo por gente como usted. Angel me platico que es una persona muy trabajadora...Ah, okay bueno. (sarcasmo) Pues la agradezco mucho. Y yo se que usted no se va arrepentir. Y sabe que se acaba de ganar el vestido más hermoso que puede hacer Detalle de Mujer y pues muchas gracias. Y realmente ella me convenció con esa... pues con esa cara que me dijo, con esa impresión que me causó. Cuando resulta ser de que ya que este... le había dado los \$3,000 pesos, ya que había hecho... que habíamos hecho el movimiento y todo, sale con que... con que le habla al Licenciado Ángel y que... y que le dice por que este... es la última vez que yo te ayudo porque cómo va a ser posible que ellas vendiendo unos vestidos tan caros y que no puedan tener \$7,000 pesos y que no lo puedo creer. No se que y no se cuanto. Y saca ahora si que las unas. Y lo contrario que a mi me había dicho.

L: And then, I tell the project manager... then the project manager says "Hey Leti I had my contact agree to authorize our project." And so I say Fer I didn't call you because they told me that even if you made the corrections, they wouldn't authorize our project. And so, so I met a person who offered to help. I accepted his help. But a person asked me for money to make the corrections. He told me, "Leti for God's sake please tell me what is this person's name." That is what she asked me not to do. That I would not say anything because I am risking her job. I don't think it's messed up Fer but I don't want to tell you... He says if you don't want to tell me the person's name, I am going to tell you the person's name who was supposedly going to help we get your project approved. Her name is... Areli blank and blank. And I said it's the same person who I interviewed with. And he asked, "How?"

L: Y entonces yo le digo al técnico... entonces me dijo el técnico "Oye Leti fíjate que ya conseguí que mi contacto accediera a autorizarnos el proyecto." Y entonces le digo oye Fer yo no te hable porque a mi me dijeron que aunque tu hicieras las correcciones, ya no nos iban a autorizar el proyecto, si. Y este, y entonces resulta ser que yo conocí a tal y tal

persona y me ofreció ayuda. Acepte su ayuda. Pero una persona me pidió dinero para hacer las correcciones. Me dijo, "Leti por el amor de dios dime como se llama esa persona." Le dije pero es que justamente eso fue lo que ella me pidió. Que yo no dijera nada porque estoy arriesgando su trabajo. Y yo creo que no es mala onda Fer pero yo no te quiero decir... Dice si tu no me quieres decir como se llama esa persona, yo te voy a decir el nombre de la persona que se supone que a mi me iba ayudar a sacar tu proyecto. Y se llama... Areli tal y tal. Y le dije pues es la misma persona con la que yo me entreviste. Y me dijo, "Cómo?"

L: Well you know if they ask for money again, don't give them any. Because this and that. Because she already called to tell me that I had gotten my way. That she needed %10 of the project. To deposit the money by tomorrow if I want the project to be approved. I said, "How is that possible?" I said look this is what I had to do to put the \$3,000 together. This is all had to do. And everything she had told Angel. And that Angel had called and told me everything. At the end, she wanted to get money from Angel and money from Fernando for the same project. And so that really... I felt powerless, no? Because how, how is it going to be possible that she is two faced... is what she is. So it... So it was very angering and everything. But whatever happened, they authorized the project and gave us the resource. They asked us to attend a ceremony where all the members of Detalle de Mujer had to be present to receive the truck.

L: Pues sabes que si te vuelve a pedir dinero, no le vuelvas a dar. Porque no se que y no se cuando. Porque ahorita ella ya me hablo por teléfono para decirme que yo me había salido con la mía. Que necesitaba el 10% del proyecto. Que yo se lo deposite mañana mismo si yo quiero que ella autorice tu proyecto. Le dije, "Pero cómo es posible?" Si mira y ya le platique todo el movimiento que hice para acompletar los \$3,000 pesos. Y todo lo que me moví. Y todo lo que Ángel le había dicho. Y qué Ángel me había regresado la llamada a mi. Pues al final esta señora quería sacarle dinero a Ángel y dinero a Fernando por el mismo proyecto, no. Y entonces pues eso si este.. Pues allí yo sentí mucha impotencia, no? Porque digo como, como va a ser posible que ella me de una cara y sea algo totalmente distinto a lo que... a lo que es. Entonces si me... me causo pues mucho coraje y todo. Pero como quiera que sea no lo autorizaron el proyecto y nos dieron el recurso. Nos mandaron a traer a una ceremonia donde teníamos que estar presente todas las de Detalle de Mujer para ir a recibir el recurso para la camioneta.

L: And at... and at the end we gave it and... and after they gave us the truck, Angel went aall the way to the house and made a scene where he seemed to be drunk and he forcibly wanted money. He wanted 10% or \$30,000 pesos. And I told him that I wouldn't give them to him. Because to start of with, Areli said this and that. She had told me not to let anyone blackmail me so I wasn't goin to give him any money. I was thankful he had helped my project get approved. But if he had done it with the intention of getting money, well from the beginning he should have been clear so I could decide whether or not I wanted the favor. And if he knew what her situation was and the situation she was in, he knew she didn't have money to give him. And that we had to have receipts to prove how the money for the project was spent. So there wasn't money to take from and give to him. So... it was that (Aside: Wait, stop for a little bit.) It was that, here is.. That INAES that finally I tell you that I have never gotten a resource without going through trouble. But

yeah that was difficult. It was very difficult because it made me feel worthless that that lady was two faced.

L: Y este... Y al final lo dimos y este... y el licenciado Ángel agarro y ya que nos dieron la camioneta fue a la casa, me hizo un show parecía ser que el iba un poco tomado y quería a fuerza que yo le diera el dinero. El 10% osea \$30,000 pesos. Y yo le dije que yo no se los iba a dar. Porque para empezar Areli así y así. Me había dicho que yo no tenía que dejarme sobornar por nadie. Y que por lo tanto yo no iba a dar el dinero. Yo estaba muy agradecido con él porque él me había ayudado a conseguir este proyecto. Pero que si él lo había hecho con el interés de que yo le diera dinero, pues desde un principio me debió de haber hablado claro para que yo le pidiera o no le pidiera el favor. Y que si él sabía como estaba mi situación y veía en qué situación yo me encontraba, sabía perfectamente bien que yo no tenía ese dinero para darle. Y que finalmente todo el dinero que nos daban del proyecto lo teníamos que facturar, lo teníamos que comprobar. Y por lo tanto, no había dinero para sustraer y darle a él. Entonces este... fue que (Comentario: Paralo tantito) (29:36) Fue que este, aquí esta... de INAES de que finalmente te digo que nunca he conseguido un solo recurso que no consiga una pena pues. Pero si esa fue muy fuerte. Esa fue muy fuerte porque si me indigno el hecho de que esa señora me da una cara y después hiciera otra.

L: Because she was also a very imposing, very imposing person. And so she told me she was from the coast. I offered her a beautiful dress with embroidery from the Isthmus. And she said “no, no, no, no. I don’t want from the Isthmus. I am from the coast. I want you to make me something from the coast.” To the day, I have a corset and a thong that I made for her size, specially for her. But how she behaved, she missed out on a dress from Detalle de Mujer. Because if you would not have showed your nails...like without having taken the bribe and because I was thankful, I would have given her a dress that I would at least have to invest \$1,500 pesos in. And a dress made and for sale could be up to \$2,000 or \$3,000 pesos. And with the fabric and everything she wanted. But how she behaved... To this day, I have the dress. I took off the small beads and said I am going to make other things to, because the woman was really big and it is not easy to sale a dress in that size. But yes... but she behaved really, really bad, no.

L: Porque además era una persona como muy imponente, muy imponente. Y entonces ella me dijo que ella era de la costa. Yo le ofrecí un vestido bonito, de un bordado del Istmo y todo eso. Y ella me dijo no, no, no, no. Yo no quiero del Istmo. Yo soy de la costa. Yo quiero que me hagas algo pero de la costa. Hasta la fecha allí tengo un corset y una tanga que a ella le hice en su talla, para ella especial. Pero así como se porto dije te perdistes del vestido de Detalle de Mujer. Porque si tu no hubieras sacado las uñas...osea sin tomar lo del soborno y por agradecimiento yo le hubiese regalado ese vestido que costaba que sera minimo, le tenía yo que invertir unos \$1,500 pesos. Y ya un vestido hecho y vendido lo puedo vender en hasta \$2,000 o \$3,000 pesos ese vestido. Y con el tipo de tela y todo que ella quería. Pero así como se portó... hasta la fecha allí tengo el vestido. Ya le quite las chaquiras y digo voy a hacer otras cosas para, porque era una mujer grandotota entonces no es fácil vender un vestido de esa talla. Pero si este... pero si se porto muy, muy mal, no. Y eso es lo que, pues lo que obtuve.

L: And with Angel well he went all the way to my house and tried to intimidate us and that well she had sent him and I don't know what. And that if I was gonna give money to the project manager and I was not going to give money to him, he said some ugly bad words about the project manager, that he did not do his job how he should have and that is why my project had not been approved. There would not have been a reason for him to intervene. And then I told him that it was effective, that I was giving 10% to the project manager. First, because he had trust without me asking him, he offered to help me submit a project. Second, he created the project. If you want, it was wrong but the quantity or the work that needed to be rectified did not amount to \$7,000 pesos. Or \$3,000 pesos that I had to give to the lady for putting me in this situation.

L: Y ya con Ángel pues fue a la casa y ya este, y ya quiso pues intimidarnos que pues ella lo había mandado y no se que. Y que porque si yo le había dar dinero al técnico y no le iba dar dinero a él si él unas palabras feas dijo del técnico él no hizo su chamba como debía de haber sido por eso mi proyecto no había pasado. Y si el técnico hubiese hecho su chamba como era, entonces mi proyecto hubiera pasado. No hubiera visto necesidad de que él interviniera. Y entonces yo le dije que yo si efectivamente, el 10% si se lo iba dar al técnico. En primera porque el me había dado la confianza sin que yo se lo pidiera el ofrecio ayudarme para meter ese proyecto. Dos, el hizo el proyecto. Si tu quieres estaba mal pero la cantidad o el trabajo que había que rectificar no era para pagar \$7,000 pesos. Ni tampoco \$3,000 pesos que yo tuve que acceder a darle a esta senora por haberme puesto en esa encrucijada, no.

L: And that finally, the \$3,000 or the \$7,000, I should not have given them if I would have taken my documents and papers and taken the time to look for the president of the republic if possible so they could see the size of the error and the magnitude of why they reject projects. There was another thing, they had told me that the resources had already been allocated. I already did not have the opportunity to resubmit the project even if I made the corrections. They had already allocated the resources. If they already had the resources allocated, why did I talk to her after to tell her if I could submit my project. That says that they are not doing their job like they should be. I had evidence and proof of the time they had given me the paper, of the date my project was authorized. I could have recorded the one who helped me and told me that even if I made corrections, my project would not be approved.

L: Y que finalmente ni los \$3,000 ni los \$7,000, no le hubiera yo dado si yo hubiera agarrado mis documentos y mis papeles y me hubiese dado el tiempo de ir a buscar al presidente de la república si que era posible para que vieran el tamaño del error y la magnitud de que porque rechazan un proyecto. Había otra cosa, que ellos a mi me habían dicho que el recurso ya estaba etiquetado. Yo ya no tenía oportunidad de volver a meter el proyecto aunque se les hicieran las correcciones. Que ellos ya tenían el recurso etiquetado. Si ya tenían el recurso etiquetado, porque después le habla a ella para decirle que si podía meter mi proyecto. Eso quiere decir que ellos no están haciendo su trabajo como debe de ser. Yo tenía pruebas y antecedentes de los tiempos que ellos me habían entregado el papel, de la fecha en que fue autorizado mi proyecto. Yo podía habido grabar al que me atendió y que me dijo que de todos modos aunque hiciera las correcciones mi proyecto no pasaba.

L: And if I really wanted to clarify things, I could have. But that meant making things big. That he should be thankful to his friend. And to tell her that she would not regret helping us but to stop bothering me about the money because there was no money. So, she thought that there were complaints but not from me. The next time she saw me she said, “I don’t want anything from you!” And I told her, “Well, thank you. If you don’t want anything from...” I didn’t think about telling her to return my \$2,000 pesos. But she told me that like that. I don’t want anything from you. They ended up taking her out of her job. She lost her employment. I was very glad.

L: Y si yo quería realmente aclarar las cosas, las podría hacer. Pero era hacer las cosas más grandes. Que así que el mejor le diera las gracias a su amiga. Y que le dijera que no se iba arrepentir de habernos ayudado pero que no siguiera molestando con que quería su dinero porque no había dinero para darle. Y entonces, ella pensó que si hubo denuncias pero de otras personas porque yo no hice esas denuncias. La siguiente vez que ella me vio, me dijo, “No quiero nada de usted!” Y le dije “Pues gracias. Si no quiere nada de...” No se me ocurrió decirle regreseme mis \$2,000 pesos. Pero, pero así me lo dijo. No quiero nada de usted. Ella terminaron sacandola de su trabajo. Perdió su empleo. Me dio muchísimo gusto.

L: And... I gave 10% of the project to Fer. And with Angel, I lost his friendship for a while after I was honest with him. And I told him, “During the time we know each other, you have always told me that you are in the government because you are a person who wants to help people.” That his only interest is to help people. At the end, this so called Areli has her salary and what she is doing is her job. They are are paying her to do her job. She has no reason to exploit, blackmail, or do what she is doing and with the the poorest people of the state. That all of us who go ask for resources is because we do not have any. If we had it, we wouldn’t be there. We don’t have it. That is why we look for help. And it is not possible that you want to... like with your hand at your waist, that you want to take money that is not for you.

L: Y este... A Fer yo le pague el 10% del proyecto. Y a Angel, perdí su amistad por un tiempo que yo le leí la cartilla. Y le dije “Si tú durante todo el tiempo que nos conocimos tú me has expresado estas ahorita en el gobierno porque eres una persona que quiere ayudar a la gente.” Que su unico interes es ayudar a la gente. Finalmente esa tal Areli tiene un sueldo y lo que está haciendo es su trabajo. A ella le le están pagando por hacer su trabajo. Ella no tiene porque estar explotando, sobornando, ni estar haciendo lo que está haciendo y con la gente más pobre del estado. Que todos los que vamos a solicitar recurso es porque no lo tenemos. Si lo tuviéramos, no estuviéramos allí. No lo tenemos. Por eso buscamos ayuda. Y no es posible que ustedes se quieran... osea con la mano en la cintura, quieran agarrar dinero que no les toca.

L: At the end, we have to document how we utilized the resource. If I take another \$30,000 pesos from that resource, it will be \$60,000 pesos that I am subtracting from the resource. I don’t earn \$60,000 pesos from one day to another to say let me take them and I will replace them tomorrow. It is not possible. So, I am sorry Angel. I am thankful what you did for me. And believe me if you did it to be nice...” because he told me “I did it to be nice and you are repaying me the right way.” Am I repaying you the wrong way because I am not giving you the money that you want? Yes. Is that repaying you the

wrong way? Well, believe me that if I give you the money, it will turn to salt and water. If I don't give you the money, God will give you more because you are willing helping. And if you are doing it because you want something out of it, well you are fucked up. You are so fucked up because you are part of the government to see who you could screw over and not to help. And remember that when we met, you said that it was a new government and that it was another story and that it was something else. And you made me believe in you guys. And now you are making me think that you are the same or worse than the rest.

L: Porque finalmente nosotros tenemos que dar cuentas claras de ese recurso. Si yo le pellizco otros \$30,000 pesos a ese recurso, van a ser \$60,000 pesos los que yo le estoy quitando a ese recurso. \$60,000 pesos yo no me los gano de la noche a la mañana para decir los quito ahorita y mañana los pongo. Porque no es posible, si. Así que lo siento mucho Ángel. Yo te agradezco lo que hiciste por mi. Y creeme si tu lo hiciste en buena onda..." por que el me dijo "yo lo hice en buena onda y usted me está pagando con una mala moneda." Te estoy pagando con una mala moneda porque no te estoy dando el dinero que tu quieres? Si. Esa es una mala moneda para ti? Pues creeme que si yo te doy el dinero, agua y sal se te va a volver. Si yo no te doy el dinero, Dios te a de dar mas porque tu lo estas haciendo con la conciencia de ayudar, si. Y si tu lo estas haciendo por interés, pues que jodido estas. Que jodido estas porque eso quiere decir que tu estas en el gobierno para ver a quien chingas y no para ayudar. Y acuérdate que cuando nosotros nos conocimos, tú me dijiste que era un nuevo gobierno y que eran otra historia y que iba ser otra cosa. Y tu me hicistes creer en ustedes. Y ahora tu me estas demostrando que eres igual o peor que los de mas, si. (38:09)

L: My husband was present. He wanted to get aggressive with me. And my husband walked out and asked what was going on? And so he says, I did not know that your husband knew everything. My husband tells him, "My wife does not hide anything from me. I am well aware. And if you want money, then work and earn it not like this. So like you go, do me the favor of leaving my house and never looking for my wife again." He put him in his place and he left. I remember that that day it was raining. Even his truck got stuck in our patio. But he left. He left and I didn't give him a single peso.

L: Mi esposo estaba allí presente. Se me quiso poner como agresivo. Y salió mi esposo y dijo que está pasando? Y entonces el me dice, no sabia que tu esposo estaba enterado de todo. Le dice mi esposo, "Mi esposa a mi no me esconde nada, si. Yo estoy bien enterado. Y si tu quieres dinero, trabaja y ganatelo pero no así. Así que cómo va, haga favor de irse de mi casa y de no volver a buscar a mi esposa." Lo puso en su lugar y se salió. Y me acuerdo que ese dia estaba lloviendo. Hasta su camioneta se le atasco allí en el patio de la casa. Pero el se fue, no. Se fue y yo no le di ni un peso.

L: Lots, lots of time passed and he would send me messages, "Hi Mrs, how are you? And... And I would pretend... I would ignore his messages, I never answered, never anything. When I see him again after opening my store on Morelos. One day he was passing by and says what beautiful clothing. And I was with a young woman and I hid and walked back when I saw it was him. And he tells the young woman, I know a lady who makes things like these. So, then he turns and looks at me. Mrs. Leti how are you? Good. I am so glad you have your store. I hope you are saying that from the heart, Angel.

And then he said, “Look she is Leti and she makes amazing things... she has beautiful designs and this and that...” So the young lady said she wanted a blouse and that she was going to bring her embroidery blah, bah, blah.... No. And this young lady bought two dresses and a blouse and... and then from there we saw each other again and never mentioned the topic. Now, he is buying from me again. But he didn’t tell me anything and I didn’t either. That was that. He finally recognized and realized he was wrong. And on one occasion he text me, “ If it helps you, like... if it helps you in any way to know, Areli was fired thanks to you.”

L: Paso, paso mucho tiempo y me mandaba mensajes, “Hola señora como esta?” Y... Y yo me hacia... le ignoraba sus mensajes, nunca le conteste, nunca nada. Cuando me lo vuelvo a encontrar ahora que abrí mi tienda en Morelos. Un dia iba pasando y entonces dice hay que bonita ropa. Y entonces estaba con otra chica y yo lo que hice fue esconderme y hacerme para atrás cuando vi que era el. Y entonces le dice a la chica, yo conozco a una señora que hace unas cosas parecidas a estas. Y entonces, voltea a verme. Señora Leti, como esta? Bien. Que gusto me da que usted ya tenga su tienda. Espero que me lo digas de corazón, Angel. Y entonces me dijo, “Mira ella es Leti hace cosas padrisimas...tiene diseños bonitos que no se que que no se cuanto” Y la chica dijo bueno yo quiero una blusa, voy a traer mi bordado blah, blah, blah...no. Y la chica esta me compró dos vestidos y me compro una blusa, y este... ya de alli nos volvimos a ver pero ya no menciono el tema. Ahorita otra vez me está comprando el. Pero ya no me dijo nada y yo tambien me hizo la occisa. Y hasta allí. Pero pues yo que finalmente el medito, conoció y se dio cuenta. Y en una ocasion si me mando un mensaje diciendo “ Si le sirve, como... Si de algo le sirve saber, a Areli ya la corrieron gracias a usted.”

I: You didn’t do anything.

I: Si usted no hizo nada.

Interview with Liliana Escobar Garcia:

I: Well, first of all, what you say...well we are in confidence. And what you say...yes, you say something that you don’t want me to write about that, you can tell me and I can do it...I can do it...I don’t, I don’t use it. That’s how we’re going to start. What’s your name?

I: Bueno, primero que todo lo que tu digas... bueno estamos en confianza. Y lo que tu digas... si tú dices algo que no quieres que yo esté escriba acerca de eso, tu me puedes decir y lo puedo... yo lo puedo... no lo, no lo uso. Este... así vamos a empezar. Cual es tu nombre?

L. Liliana Escobar Garcia.

L: Liliana Escobar Garcia.

I: And how old are you?

I: Y que edad tienes?

L: 33.

L: 33.

I: How long have you lived in Tanivet?

I: 33. Cuánto tiempo has vivido Tanivet?

L: All my life.

L: Toda mi vida.

I: All your life.

I: Toda tu vida.

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: Do you have family here in Tanivet.

I: Tienes familia aqui en Tanivet?

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: Who in your family lives in Tanivet?

I: Quien de tu familia vive en Tanivet?

L: My grandmother from my mom's side. And... my aunts from my mom's side as well.

L: Mi abuela de parte de mi mamá. Y... este mis tías de parte de mi mamá también.

I: And about how many aunts do you have?

I: Y como cuantas tías tienes?

L: Well, right now here only one aunt. One aunt, sister of my mom and one uncle, brother of my mom.

L: Bueno ahorita aqui nadamas una tía. Una tía, hermana de mi mamá y un tío, hermano de mi mamá.

I: And they live here in Tanivet?

I: Y viven aqui en Tanivet.

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: And were you... Did they teach you what you know how to do or how was it that?

I: Y fuistes...A ti te enseñaron lo que sabes hacer o cómo fue que?

L: Yes, they taught me. Two years ago, precisely two years that I entered the group because Ms. Maria invited me. And I already learned with... Aleli and with Ms. Araceli. They were the teachers that were coming when I started. With them I... learned.

L: *Si me enseñaron. Hace... dos años, precisamente dos años que ingrese al grupo porque me invitó la Señora Maria. Y ya aprendi con este... Aleli y con la Señora Araceli. Ellas eran las maestras que estaban viniendo cuando yo empecé. Con ellas me... aprendí.*

I: Two years go?

I: *Hace dos anos?*

L: Yes. Two years ago in August precisely.

L: *Aha. Hace dos anos en Agosto precisamente.*

I: Did you know something about sewing?

I: *Tu sabias algo de coser?*

L: Yes, I knew normal embroidery. Normal embroidery, the traditional around napkins and cross-stitching was what I knew. I didn't know how to do applique.

L: *Si, bordado normal. Bordado normal lo tradicional de servilletas y este y el punto de cruz eso nadamas lo que sabía. Pero lo del applique no.*

I: And what you were taught was it through workshops?

I: *Y lo que te enseñaron, fue por medio de talleres?*

L: Yes.

L: *Si.*

I: You went to school?

I: *Este... Tu fuistes a la escuela?*

L: Yes, elementary. Yes, I finished.

L: *Si, la primaria. Si termine.*

I: And now the type of work you do is... What do they do?

I: *y ahora el tipo de trabajo que hacen es... que hacen?*

L: Right now?

L: *Ahorita?*

I: Yes.

I: *Si.*

L: Well the mats [patchwork pieces] that we make. Well, since two years ago, we have made mats [patchwork pieces]. And right now for the...for the project that went to the United States we made aprons and pot holders. Now it is more things because before it was only mats [patchwork pieces].

L: Pues los tapetes que hacemos. Bueno de hace dos años para acá son tapetes que hemos trabajado. Y ahorita para el este... para el proyecto que se fue a Estados Unidos ya se hicieron mandiles y las agarraderas. Ya otra cosa porque primero nadamas eran los puros tapetitos.

I: And the teapots, to cover the teapot?

I: Y las teteras son para cubrir la tetera?

L: Yes. And then the aprons and the handles for the hot things.

L: Aha, si. Y luego los mandiles y las agarraderas para las cosas calientes.

I: And when we talked... When talking about social justice, for you, what is social justice?

I: Y cuando hablamos... Cuando se habla acerca de la justicia social, para ti que es la justicia social?

L: I don't really know.

L: No, se la verdad.

I: You have not thought about that?

I: No has pensado acerca de eso?

L: Not really, no.

L: No, la verdad no.

I: Let me see... the group that you all have, has a focus on women, no?

I: Haber, Este... el grupo que ustedes tienen, tiene enfoque en las mujeres, no?

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: Do you know why or why the focus is with women?

I: Sabes porque o porque el enfoque es con las mujeres?

L: Well, to support their husbands with some income so that their husbands no longer immigrate to the United States. That's the reason why it's on women, so that they... also contribute something to their home.

L: Pues para que apoyen a sus esposos que tengan algún ingreso y ya no emigren para Estados Unidos sus esposos. Por eso es que es con las mujeres para que ellas este... aporten también algo al hogar.

I: And do you have any... any relative that has immigrated?

I: Y tu tienes alguna... algún familiar que haya emigrado?

L: Yes, well my mom's sisters, my aunts.

L: Si, pues las hermanas de mi mamá, mis tías.

I: Your aunts.

I: Tus tías.

L: My aunts, a brother, and one sister.

L: Mis tías y un hermano y una hermana.

I: So, they immigrated to the United States?

I: Entonces ellos emigraron para Estados Unidos.

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: And, how long have they...?

I: Y cuánto tiempo ellos tiene que...?

L: They already have a lot of time. Like...My sster like about 17 year I think. My brother about 15 years.

L: Uuuu... ya tienen mucho tiempo. Como... mi hermana como unos 17 años creo. Mi hermano como 15 años mas o menos.

I: And have you...well since they immigrated, have you seen them again? Have you...

I: Y los has volvido... bueno desde que emigraron los as volvido a ver? As volvido...

L: My sister only one (laughs)

L: A mi hermana una vez (laughs)

I: She came here?

I: Ella vino para aca?

L: Yes. She came here about 10 years ago.

L: Aha. Ella vino para aca hace como diez anos por ahi mas o menos.

I: And she is....well, does she have papers?

I: Y ella es este... bueno ella tiene papeles?

L: No.

L: No.

I: No. So she came and then went back?

I: No. Entonces ella vino y se volvió a regresar?

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: And what are...What are some of the objectives of this collective... or of this group?

I: *Y cuales son... Cuales son algunos de los objetivos de esta colectiva... o de este grupo?*

L: Well...so that we have work as women. And stand for our own self. Not depend solely on the...the husband.

L: *Pues este... para que tengamos trabajo nosotras las mujeres. Y valernos por si mismas. No depender nada mas del... del esposo.*

I: And how often do you meet as a group?

I: *Y cada cuanto se reunen ustedes como grupo?*

L: Well, every eight days.

L: *Pues cada ocho dias.*

I: Every eight days.

I: *Cada ocho dias.*

L: Or sometimes twice a week. Yes, it depends on how we're doing with work. (Laughs)

L: *O hay veces que dos veces por semana. Si depende de cómo estemos de trabajo. (Rie)*

I: And who... how does the group work? Everyone does their own work? Or do they all work on one thing?

I: *Y quien... Como funciona el grupo? Cada quien hace su trabajo? O trabajan todas en una cosa?*

L: No, well yes, everyone does their own work, but for example, when work requires teamwork, it is done in team, it's worked together.

L: *No pues si, cada quien hace su trabajo pero por ejemplo cuando se requiere hacer un trabajo en equipo, se hace en equipo. Se trabaja junto pues.*

I: And right now... do you have some projects that you are working on?

I: *Y ahorita en... tienen algunos proyectos en los que están trabajando?*

L: Yes well... what we are going to do for the Textile Museum and then for November as well, they are going to invite us to an Expo sale in the Textile Museum and we will be working a lot to exhibit our product there.

L: *Si pues en...este lo que vamos a hacer para el museo textil y luego pues para Noviembre igual nos van a invitar a una Expo Venta en el Museo Textil y vamos a trabajar bastante para exponer nuestro producto alli.*

I: And right now the piece that they are doing for the Textile Museum, what is it?

I: *Y ahorita la pieza que están haciendo para el Museo Textil, que es?*

L: Well, it's a piece that's going to talk about our people with the United States border migration.

L: *Pues es una pieza que va a hablar de nuestro pueblo con la frontera de Estados Unidos de la migración.*

I: It's like Tanivet in the United States and in Oaxaca.

I: es como Tanivet en Estados Unidos y en Oaxaca.

L: Yes.

L: si.

I: And also, well for the Textile Museum, they are working with, directly with the textile museum or...?

I: Y también. Bueno para el Museo Textil están trabajando con, con el Museo Textil directamente o... ?

L: Yes.

L: Si.

I: And do they also have a piece that is going to the other side? (6:59)

I: Y también tienen una pieza que se va a otro lado? (6:59)

L: Right now no. The one that we finished last time, the one that talked about immigration is the one that we finished in, in February, I think it was. Yes, we finished that one.

L: Ahorita no. La que termino la ve pasada, la que habla de la migracion es la que terminamos en, en febrero creo fue. Si, esa terminamos.

I: And that was the one that went...

I: Y esa fue la que se fue...

L: To los Angeles. Yes.

L: para los Angeles. Aja.

I: To the SPARC, right...

I: Al SPARC verdad...

L: Yes.

L: Aja.

I: How do you all get resources or have you all obtained resources from the municipality, from the state...

I: Mmmm. Ustedes este como consiguen recursos o han conseguido recursos del municipio, del estado...

L: To work?

L: Para trabajar?

I: Yes.

I: Aja.

L: No.

L: No.

L: No.

I: No.

L: No. From people that have supported us with material donations. From them we have... There are many people who support us, scraps of fabric, thread, scissors. From there because the municipality does not. We do not receive any support.

L: No. De personas que nos han apoyan donandonos material. De ellos hemos... Hay muchas personas que nos apoyan, retazos de tela, hilo, tijeras. De alli porque del municipio no. No recibimos ningun apoyo.

I: Then, you are more or less self-sufficient.

I: Entonces ustedes son mas o menos auto suficientes.

L: Yes, Yes.

L: Si, si.

I: And so some people give you all what they have.

I: Y asi algunas personas les dan lo que ellos tienes.

L: Yes, Yes whatever they can donate to us.

L: Si, Si lo que ellos puedan donarnos.

I: And other things you all have to go buy them.

I: Y ya otras cosas ustedes las tienen que ir comprando.

L: Yes, we buy them.

L: Si las compramos.

I: And the collective participates in community events?

I: Y la colectiva participa en eventos de la comunidad?

L: Yes, Yes we have participated.

L: Si. Si hemos participado.

I: Like which?

I: Como cual?

L: Well, it depends on the events that are going on. If they invite us, we participate. If not, well then no.

L: Pues depende de los eventos que alla. Si nos invitan, pues si participamos. Pues si no, pues tambien no.

I: And here in Oaxaca, have you all gone to some event?

I: Y aqui en Oaxaca han ido algun evento?

L: Well, No...

L: Este... No he...

I: Maybe to a museum.

I: Talvez en algun museo.

L: No, no.

L: No, no.

I: Then this is the first time that you are all going to participate.

I: Entonces esta es la primera vez que van a participar.

L: It's the first time we're going to participate.

L: Es la primera vez que vamos a participar.

I: But you have all already....But you all have already participated internationally in SPARC.

I: Pero ya han.. Pero ya han participado internacionalmente en SPARC.

L: Yes, Yes.

L: Si, Si.

I: In Los Angeles.

I: EN Los ANgeles.

L: Yes, Yes.

L: Si, si.

I: Do you all...use the aspect...or what aspect is held about religion or spirituality in the collective? Maybe in your pieces. I don't know if you all.... If you all use a symbol of religion or spirituality.

I: Este... ustedes he... usan el aspecto... o que aspecto lleva acabo la religion o la espiritualidad en la colectiva? Talvez en sus piezas. No se si ustedes... si usen simbolo de la religion o espiritualidad.

L: L: No, not the one...in our pieces, almost no. No.

L: No, pues no los...en nuestras piezas casi no. No.

I: Almost no. And I saw that there were some pieces with the Virgin.

I: Casi no. Y vi que habia unas piezas con la Virgen.

L: Yeah, yes. Well, we started to work on it because...for our compatriots over there that many...

L: Aja, si. Pues las empezamos a trabajar por que este... para los paisanos alla que muchos...

I: Are Guadalupanos

I: son Guadalupanos

L: They are devoted to the Virgin of Guadalupe that's why.

L: Son devotos a la Virgen de Guadalupe por eso.

I: And...how do you...learn how to do the work...How...how... how has it helped you?

I: Y... Como te...aprender a hacer el trabajo... Como... como, como vez que te ha ayudado?

L: Well, yes it has helped me a lot. A lot because we have obtained income more than anything. Yes, it helped a lot. And we hope that we continue moving forward for our children and our family.

L: Pues si ne ha ayudado bastante. Bastante porque hemos obtenido ingresos mas que nada, pues. Si ayudado bastante. Y esperemos que asi sigamos mas para adelante para nuetros hijos y nuestra familia.

I: What other themes... work in your pieces?

I: Que otros temas este... este, trabajan en sus piezas?

L: Well of the field.

L: Pues lo del campo.

I: Of the field.

I: Lo del campo.

L: Yeah, of the field. Corn, of the animals, that. And aside then about immigration, no. But more, here also work a lot on the field. The corn, the plants that grow in our town.

L: Lo del campo aja. Maiz, lo de los animales, eso. Y aparte pues lo de la imigracion, no. Pero mas, aqui tambien lo del campo trabajamos mucho. Lo del maiz, de las plantas que se dan en el pueblo.

I: What plans grow here?

I: Que plantas se dan?

L: Well, what grows here is corn, beans, chickpeas, that's what people harvest the most.

L: Pues aqui se da el maiz, el frijol, el garbanzo, eso es lo que mas cosecha la gente.

I: And animals?

I: Y animales?

L: Yeah, the animals, the bulls, the goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, that.

L: Aja. Los animales los toros, los chivos, borregos, pollos, guajolotes, eso.

I: Also the schools, talking about a book about corn.

I: Tambien las escuche hablando acerca de un libro acerca del maiz.

L: Like that, that project was when the group started five years ago...they talked, it talked about the history of the corn. Yeah, and they made a book that talks about corn. But that they bought it, a pianist. What's his name? Michael, Michael Neiman, something like that. A pianist.

L: Asi ese proyecto fue cuando inicio el grupo hace cinco anos que hicieron...hablaron, contaron la historia del maiz. Aja, y hicieron un libro que habla acerca del maiz. Pero ese lo compro el, un pianista. Como se llama? Este... Michael, Michael Neiman, algo asi. Un pianista.

I: No, I don't know him.

I: No, no lo conozco.

L: I also don't know him.

L: Tambien yo no lo conocia.

I: Oh...

I: O...

L: That Ms. Marietta brought him.

L: Que lo trajo dona Marietta.

I: And he bought the book.

I: Y el compro el libro.

L: He bought the book. Says that he is the producer of the music of the film, The Pianist.

L: El compro el libro. Dice que el es el productor de la musica de la pelicula El Pianista.

I: Yes, yes, yes.

I: Si, si, si.

L: An already older man with his year. I did not know him until he came precisely a year ago.

L: Un senior ya grande con sus anos. Yo no lo conocia hasta que vino hace un ano precisamente.

I: I also don't know him.

I: Yo tampoco no lo conozco.

L: No. And he was the one who bought the book. That is why we don't have it. Because that one was exposed in all events where we were invited to exhibit and sell our products. That was the main one, the base that was always upfront. But after he bought it, well not anymore. Now we have to do it again. Yeah.

L: no. Y el fue el que compro ese libro. Por eso no lo tenemos. Porque ese se exponía en todos los eventos a donde nos invitaban a exponer y a vender nuestros productos. Ese era el principal, la base que siempre estaba al frente. Pero despues de que lo compro el, pues ya no. Ahora hay que volverlo a hacer. Aja.

I: And why is that piece so important?

I: Y porque es tan importante esa pieza?

L: Because it's the...the base if the town, the fundamental, the corn. Because people live out of that, the people here.

L: Pues porque es el... la base del pueblo, lo fundamental, el maiz. Porque de eso vive la, la gente aqui.

I: And how is corn used or for what?

I: Y como en que se usa el maiz o para que?

L: For...for food, for tortillas, for atole, for that you eat daily in the town, the tortillas. That's what we use it for.

L: Para... pues para la comida, para las tortillas, para el atole, para eso que comes diario en el pueblo, las tortillas. Para eso lo ocupamos.

I: What has been your experience in the group until now?

I: Cual a sido tu experiencia en el grupo hasta ahorita?

L: Well...learn to develop as a woman. I liked a lot the...participate in the group. And well indeed a lot of good experiences. Nothing, nothing bad nor disappointing in the group. Yes.

L: Pues... aprender a desenvolverme como mujer. Me ha gustado mucho este... partidipar en el grupo. Y pues en verdad muy buenas experiencias. Nada, nada malo ni decepcionante en el grupo. Si.

I: And, has there been moments when sometimes maybe there is something difficult or an obstacle?

I: Y no habido momentos cuando a veces talvez hay algo dificil o un obstáculo?

L: No. No, We have worked well so far. We've liked it.

L: No. No hemos trabajado bien hasta ahorita. Nos a gustado.

I: And have you learned to draw?

I: Y has aprendido a dibujar?

L: A bit because it gets difficult for me, yeah, to...(conversation with the group about meetings during the week.)

L: Un poco porque se me dificulta bastante. Aja, para...(Conversacion con el grupo acerca de reuniones durante la semana.)

I: And working as a group, how many women are there?

I: Y trabajando asi en grupo, cuantas mujeres son?

L: Well...we were eight. And right now only five are left.

L: Pues...heramos como ocho. Y ahorita nadamos quedamos cinco.

I: And who are they?

I: Y quienes son?

L: It's Ms. Juana, Ms. Leo, Rebeca, Jenni and I. Only those are left.

L: Es Dona Juana, Dona Leo, Rebeca, Jenni y yo. Esas nadamas quedamos.

I: And how has it been working together.

I: Y como ha sido trabajar juntas?

L: Well, good because so far, we have worked good. There has been no conflict within the group so far.

L: Pues bien poruqe hasta ahorita hemos ttrabajo bien. No abido conflictos entre el grupo hasta ahorita.

I: No, well that's good.

I: No, pues esta bien.

L: Yes, we've worked together as a united team.

L: Si, hemos trabajado en equipo unidas, pues.

I: And, and is there work that one those better than the other one and...? Well, that they complement each other.

I: Y, y hay este algun trabajo que alguna haga mejor que la otra y...? Bueno asi que se vayan complementando.

L: Yes, yes. Always...Well there are some that work better than others, no. Some wore more rustic, others make their things more finer or have ideas. Other ideas and put other...for example, Rebecca, she works more that of migration. To her, she gets a lot of migration...And in contrast I don't, I do not. It becomes very difficult for me. And she yes.

L: Si, si. Siempre este... pues hay algunas que trabajan mejor que otras, no. Unas trabajan mas rustico otras hacen sus cosas mas finas o tienen ideas. Otras ideas y ponen otras... por ejemplo Rebecca ella trabaja mucho lo de la migracion. A ella se le da mucho lo de la migracion. Y en cambio a mi no, yo si no. Se me hace muy complicado. Y ella si.

I: And why do you think so? Maybe because she has experience with that?

I: Y porque crees? Porque talvez ella tenga experiencia con eso?

L: Yes, yes. I think that yes because they talk about that theme in her house a lot. And since she has more family over there. Family goes often, goes and comes. That's why she knows more about that. That theme of migration. But for me, it does make itself a little difficult.

L: Si, si. Yo pienso que si porque platican ese tema mucho en su casa. Y como tienen mas familia alla. Familia va seguido, va y viene. Por eso es que ella sabe mas sobre eso. Ese tema pues de la migracion. Pero a mi si se me hace un poco dificil.

I: Then what is it that you do?

I: Entonces que es lo que tu haces?

L: No, I do the field.

L: No, yo hago lo del campo.

I: The field. And what is it about the field that you like the most?

I: Lo del campo. Y que es lo que te gusta a ti mas del campo?

L: Well everything.

L: Pues todo.

I: Everything.

I: Todo.

L: I really like my town.

L: Me gusta mucho mi pueblo.

I: Well, share with us why...I'm from the city, so let's see.

I: Pues platicanos pues porque nosotros...Yo soy de la ciudad asi qu haber...

L: Well its nice living here in the town because you breathe pure air. One has more freedom than being in a city. I think. One feels more free living in the town. Eat more natural things, nutrient.

L: Pues es bonito vivir en el pueblo porque este respiras aire puro. Esta, tiene uno mas libertad pues que estar en una ciudad. Pienso yo. Se siente uno mas libre estar en el pueblo. Comer cosas mas naturales, nutrientes.

I: That yes.

I: Eso si.

L: Truth (laughs) One sees many things: animals, plants, apart from living, one can go out to see where they plant the corn, the bean, the chickpea and then the traditions that they have in the town are very beautiful.

L: *La verdad. (laughs) Ve uno muchas cosas: los animales, las plantas, aparte de que vive uno puede salir a ver donde plantan el maiz el frijol, el garbano y luego las tradiciones que tienen en el pueblo son muy bonitas.*

I: Like what?

I: *Como que?*

L: The festival of the town. It gets very beautiful. A lot of people come, eh (laughs). Well its beautiful to live in my town.

L: *La fiesta del pueblo. Se pone muy bonita. Que viene muchisima gente, eh. (laughs) Pues es bonito vivir en un pueblo.*

I: And here in Tanivet...Is it recent that the roads were made?

I: *Y aqui en Tanivet, este... Es reciente que hayan hecho carreteras?*

L: Yes, about four years because there were no roads.

L: *Si, como cuatro anos porque no habia carretera.*

I: And, and has that changed how Tanivet was before?

I: *Y, y eso ha cabiando como Tanivet era antes?*

L: Yes, yes. Yes a lot.

L: *Si, si. Si bastante.*

I: How?

I: *Como?*

L: There are more...that enters more...transportation. Because for example, if one looks for it and requests a taxi, they come because before it did not. One would have to walk out there.

L: *ya hay mas... de que entra mas este... transporte pues. Porque por ejemplo si lo busca uno y pide uno un taxi, si ya viene porque antes no. Hay que salir caminando hasta alla.*

I: Up to the entrance.

I: *Hasta la entrada.*

L: And then well more... those who come sell their products here.

L: *Y luego pues ya mas este... de esas que vienen a vender sus productos hasta aqui.*

I: And the prison that's here, has it always been here? No?

I: *Y la carcel que esta aqui, siempre ha estado aqui? No?*

L: No, no it does not have much time. Well yes

L: *No, no tiene mucho tiempo. Pues si.*

I: About how many years?

I: *Como hace cuantos anos?*

L: About ten years.

L: *Uhhhh...Unos diez anos sera.*

I: Ten years.

I: *Diez anos.*

L: Eight to ten years. Around that.

L: *De ocho a diez anos. Por ay mas o menos.*

I: Why did they put it all the way over here?

I: *Porque la pusieron hasta aca?*

L: Honestly I do not know...

L: *La verdad no se...*

I: What choose where to put it.

I: *Que escojen donde ponerla.*

L: Yes, Who know why. Well, that land no longer belongs to Tanivet, they are from Tlacolula. And I think that...

L: *Si. Quien sabe porque. Bueno esos terrenos ya no le pertenece a Tanivet ya son de Tlacolula. Y yo pienso que...*

I: Then it's from Tlacolula.

I: *Entonces es de Tlacolula.*

L: It belongs to Tlacolula. Maybe that's why they put it here because Tlacolula sold there already. It's not Tanivet.

L: *A ella le pertenece a Tlacolula. Talvez por eso la pusieron por que alli ya vendio Tlacolula. No es Tanivet.*

I: Let's come back to the theme of...of immigration. Have you done a piece that is about emigration. Then your pieces are different...they are...

I: *Bueno volvemos al tema de la...de la imigracion. Tu has hecho una pieza que sea acerca de la emigracion. A entonces tus piezas son diferentes...son de...*

L: Yes, yes they are of the field. For example, now that we did the piece that speaks of emigration, fifteen mats together, did you see it?

L: *Si, son del aja de campo. Por ejemplo, ahora que hicimos la pieza que habla de la emigracion, quince tapetes unidos, si la viste?*

I: No I have not seen it.

I: *No no la he visto.*

L: Oh well there the first two pictures are mine because there I talk about the field. I did not do...

L: Ah pues alli los dos primeros cuadros son mios porque alli habla del campo. Yo no hize de...

I: And which and is there some history that the pictures say?

I: Y cual y que hay alguna historia que digan los cuadros?

L: Yes, this one... Well it talks about corn, because there I did my grandfather, my grandmother, I drew in that thing. That he told Marietta the history of the town and of the field when he...that he reached to tell (laughs). Yes.

L: Aja que este... Pues habla del maiz, porque alli hice a mi abuelo, a mi abuelo dibuje en esas cosas. Que el le conto a Marietta la historia del pueblo y del campo cuando el... que alcanzo a contarle dice. (laughs). Si.

I: So there you tell the history of your grandfather in the field?

I: Y entonces alli vas contando tu la historia de tu abuelo en el campo.

L: Yes, in the field.

L: Aja, en el campo.

I: And how many and how many images did you do?

I: Y cuantos y cuantas imagenes hicistes?

L: Two

L: Dos

I: Two

I: Dos

L: Two because each one of us had to do two pieces, yes. And I did those. And the others did the migration.

L: Dos porque a cada una le tocaban dos piezas, aja. Y yo hice esas. Y ya las demas hicieron de la migracion.

I: Why did you decide on those?

I: Ah y porque decidistes este...?

L: Because...Marietta liked the history of the town when it was told by my grandfather. That's why he said it was my turn. Because she had told me about the migration when my dad went to the United States. That he was also went, but that we were small and I really do not remember. So that's what I was going to tell first. But since I talked to him and he told me what his experience was like over there. And I was going to do it but after I told my grandfather the history of the town and the field, he liked it and said that it would be better to do my grandfathers. And it may have become easier for me.

L: Porque este... a Marietta le gusto la historia del pueblo cuando se la platico mi abuelo. Por eso dijo que a mi me tocaba. Porque ella me habia dicho que de la

migracion cuando mi papa fue a estados unidos. Que el si fue tambien pero que nosotras eramos chiquitas yo la verdad no me acuerdo. Entonces eso iba yo a contar primero. Pero ya que yo platicara con el y que me platicara como fue su experiencia por alla. Y lo iba yo hacer pero ya despues que le platico mi abuelo la historia del pueblo y del campo le gusto y dijo que mejor hiciera lo de mi abuelo. Y ya pue se me hizo mas facil para mi.

I: And what is the history of the town?

I: Y cual es la historia del pueblo?

L: Well, he says that here was a ranch that people looking for work. And the landowners gave him work, gave them a place to live. And that's how Tanivet was formed because Tanivet did not exist. And from there the landowners left east, they donated the land to the workers and they became the owners of the land and the spaces they lived at. And that's why the town of Tanivet was formed.

L: Pues el dice que aqui era hacienda que llegaba la gente a buscar trabajo. Y los hacendados le daban trabajo, les daban lugar para que vivieran. Y asi fue como se formo Tanivet porque no existia Tanivet. Y ya de alli los hacendados se fueron este, les donaron las tierras a los trabajadores y ellos se hicieron duenos de terrenos y de los espacios donde vivian. Y por eso se formo el pueblo de Tanivet.

I: And did your grandfather receive land or the relatives of your grandfather?

I: Y tu abuelo recibio tierra o los familiares de tu abuelo?

L: No, my grandfather. My grandfather.

L: No, mi abuelo. Mi abuelo.

I: So then your grandfather came here to work?

I: Entonces tu abuelo llego aqui a trabajar?

L: His parents. And he was born here. That's why he is...he was from here, Tanivet. And his parents came to...to look for work.

L: Sus papas de el. Y el nacio aqui. Por eso es que el es... El era de aqui, Tanivet. Y sus paaps llegaron a... a buscar trabajo.

I: And where do they come from?

I: Y ellos de donde eran?

L: He would said that from somewhere around here. A town I believe called Santa Maria, his mom. His dad I honestly do not know. I do not remember where his dad is from. And that's how they arrived to Tanivet.

L: El decia que de por aqui. Un pueblo que creo se llama Santa Maria, su Mama. Su papa la verdad no se. No me acuerdo de donde seria su papa. Y asi es como llegaron a Tanivet. Mhmm.

I: And you said your dad was the one who emigrated?

I: Y dijiste que tu papa fue el que emigro?

L: Yes, but a long time ago.
L: Si pero aja hace mucho tiempo.

I: And he returned?
I: Y el regreso?

L: Yes.
L: Si.

I: Yes.
I: Si.

L: He returned. It was only one time and he came and he did not go back.
L: Regreso. Nadamas fue una vez y se vino y ya no volvio a ir.

I: He didn't like it?
I: No le gusto?

I: No (laughs)
L: No. (Rie)

I: why?
I: Porque?

L: I don't know. I have not asked him why.
L: Pues no se. No le he preguntado porque.

I: Because it's very different, I believe. In the city.
I: Porque es muy diferente, yo creo. Es la ciudad.

L: Yes. And he has not returned since he came. He did not go back there anymore.
L: Si. Y el si ya no regreso desde que se vino. Ya no volvio a ir para alla.

I: And...And your family right now has gotten a job in Tanivet? Or they have work in Tanivet? Your family and your relatives.
I: Y...y tu familia ahorita a conseguido trabajo en Tanivet? O tienen trabajo en Tanivet? Tu familia y tus familiares.

L: Ehh... Yes, yes. Yes.
L: Ehh... este, si, si. Si.

I: And what do they do?
I: Y que es lo que hacen ellos?

L: Here?

L: *Aqui?*

I: Yes.

I: *Si.*

L: For example, my sister, she works at the zoo, at the box office. My dad, he's a construction worker. He works the masonry, plumbing, whatever comes. Electricity. Thank god they always have work.

L: *Por ejemplo, mi hermana ella trabaja en el zoológico, aja, en la taquilla. Mi papa, el es este contratista de obras. Trabaja la albañilería, la plomería, lo que le salga pues. La electricidad. Que gracias a dios siempre tienen trabajo.*

I: Work.

I: *Trabajo.*

L: Yes. We do not stay out of work. (laughs) And now with this, well...

L: *Si. No nos quedamos sin trabajo. (laughs) Y ahora con esto pues...*

I: And now you work.

I: *Y ahora trabajas.*

L: I have work.

L: *Tengo trabajo.*

I: And how many children do you have?

I: *Y cuantos hijos tienes?*

L: Two. (Manuela and Panchito)

L: *Dos. (Manuela y Panchito)*

I: Two.

I: *Dos.*

L: The naughty of Panchito

L: *El travieso de Panchito.*

I: And how, well how... Do you think your financial situation has been better now or almost the same?

I: *Y como, bueno como... Tu crees que tu situacion financiera este a sido mejor ahora o casi igual?*

L: Well, a little bit. As how we were at first, yes. There is a little more income.

L: *Pues si un poquito. A como estabamos primero si. Si hay un poquito de ingresos mas.*

I: What are the obstacles that you have had in your life?

I: *Cual como vez como son los obstaculos que haz tenido en la vida?*

L: Well, so far nothing.

L: Pues hasta el momento nada.

I: No.

I: No.

I: And how long have you had...well have you always lived in this house, in this land?

I: Y cuanto tiempo han tenido...bueno siempre han vivido en esta casa, en este terreno?

L: Yes. Yes, always since I was small.

L: Si. Si, siempre desde chiquita aqui.

I: Well we finished with the interview and I repeat that everything was confidential. If you have anything else to tell me, you can contact me. We already have....well, we already exchanged numbers and you tell me if you have anything else you would want to add. Whatever. And well, thank you very much and everything is confidential. And if you said something and you do not want me to tell it, you let me know. And already then...Thank you

I: Bueno ya terminamos con la entrevista y te vuelvo a repetir que todo fue confidencial. Este... si tienes algo mas que contarme, me puedes contactar. Ya tenemos... bueno ya intercambiamos numeros y pues tu me dices si tienes algo mas que agregar. Lo que sea. Y bueno muchas gracias y todo es confidencial. Y si tu dijistes algo y no quieres que lo cuente pues ya me avisas. Y ya pues...Gracias

Interview with Marietta Bernstorff:

I: Can you please tell me your name.

MB: Marietta Bernstorff.

I: How old are you?

MB: I am... going to be 56

I: Where are you originally from?

MB: I'm originally from...Chiapas, Mexico...um but I grew up in Hattiesburg, Mississippi...

I: oh...and then?

MB: And then began to go throughout the United States...my mother was not an army brat but she lived like an army brat that was traveling... a gitana, a gypsy so I went to 9

different high schools and uh...went from the south to the Southwest and ended up in California and then came to Mexico. My family is from Mexico.

I: What year did you come to Mexico?

MB: Um, well I mean I've never stopped coming, I've always come every year because my family is from Chiapas...and um but... you know I had this dual nationality before...before it was popping.

I: (laughs) Okay... Do you still go back and forth?

MB: Yes, I think it's the only way to do things nowadays, to go back and forth. Well, Mexicanos anyway... well probably for everybody who lives in other places.

I: So, you are the director of the Mujeres Artistas y el Maiz Collective, right?

MB: Yes.

I: So, how long have they been in existence.

MB: Well, since 2006. We still do projects off and on, changing, moving, it's always altering.

I: Okay, so do you have different groups within the collective or is it a whole collective.

MB: Um no, as a collective we gather when we need to cus we're so big so it depends on the thing or project we are doing...um... the last project we were doing is...is called Conversaciones...eee...I don't even remember the name of it very well right now but it's "*Retazos de tela y conversaciones volando en el aire*/Pieces of Cloth in Conversation Floating in the Air" and that is because we gather, we gather at a kitchen table and begin to talk about art and cloth and tell each other stories as women...And that, um was the last project that...that MAMAZ is working on that started a project with um, with a community um in, in Tanivet and we talked about how to use cloth as a form of expression.

I: Okay, so when did the women in Tanivet start learning...using the pieces of cloth?

MB: Uh, 2010 Noel Chilton, one of the MAMAZ collective girls artist said to me...um we are really looking forward to uh...that if we wanted to visit the village because they didn't have much of anything and that there was a professor, no, a psychologist there working with the women on gender issues. I said sure, let's go. And the reason why I was interested was because the women were farmers, it's a farming community, so we were talking about that and it was a great place to be for that, so we went to that and began the project.

I: Um, so what can you tell me about Tanivet?

MB: Uhh...Tanivet is a community that is uh...was sort of abandoned, it had a rough, hard start to begin with, it was an old hacienda, they weren't really indigenous, they were mestizas due to that it was a big hacienda, they were brought from different places... and they all mixed there so they weren't zapotec which have a huge tradition and had a language. Those were people who were just farmers, uh campesinos... a real sense of the campesino and uh... when I got there I realized that, that the school was really poor and the women had no activities, extra activities, none...not just via their house, the church, walk around the town, the town consists of a total of 5 blocks its all fields, so how much activity can you have in a town like that except be in your home and to pass the days taking care of kids and watching TV or whatever it is. So, I started this project with the women who were interested, not all of them were interested, not all of them understood but a particular group of them, were very, were very interested to see what they could make... And we began to do the drawings, first we did the drawing class to see where they were. The fact that they could draw without ever drawing before was interesting and the fact that they knew how to look at the plants because they could draw from memory was pretty interesting also. So, with that in mind Noel Chilton and I had already started a patchwork project cus we were interested in cloth, well Noel cause she is a great cloth artist and me because I lived in the south, I always liked quilt and thought it was just a cool thing.

I: Did you ever use quilts?

MB: You know I didn't, my mom wasn't a homebody kind of girl. So maybe that's why I always wanted to do it. And I'm still learning... (Interview pauses for break.)

MB: What was your question?

I: *A si estábamos hablando acerca de tu interés por el patchwork.*

I: Yes, we were talking about your interest for patchwork.

MB: *Lo padre del patch o de tela en general es como la historia... Yo soy feminista pero no feminista...como las Latinas, como las Africanas. Es decir una...empowerment of being a woman, empowering women is my interest...um because if my mother and my aunts would have had that opportunity, maybe life would have been better in the long run. Not that they had a bad life but it would have helped a lot and um... so patchwork is fascinating because the history of patchwork and applique, which is what the women in Tanivet use, is really comes from a historical background dating back hundreds and hundreds of years, some in india, some in Egyptian culture where they see quilts...But in all the countries where women have access to cloth and you don't have much money, you are going to figure out how to use it to make clothes, to cover your children, you know, so patchwork was once a tradition of Oaxaca, less than two generations back when grandmothers didn't have much money and they had sacks of flour and they had cotton, they had access to cotton, so they reused it...And uh...I mean women have always been able to do that, so some women knew how to sow and some didn't. Between all that they made things, they lost it as soon as polyester came into play and it was cheap. Nobody was producing cotton anymore in Mexico. Um, big companies were closing that*

produced cotton, uh, I'd say once again it was a bad issue of bad government and what do we support in our country...um they did more import than they did production and so those...fabric, fabrics, *fabricas* were slowly disappearing so they have disappeared. CASA is, was a *fabrica de tela en el centro de las artes de San Agustin*, Toledo's school was once a fabric, what do you call it? A manufacturing place. So, of course seeing all that, you just get... you really... you are amazed at the capability of how women have survived in all sorts of parts of the world and how they've used cloth. Women of all backgrounds, indigenous, cloth that is hand made, cloth that they do in backstrap, cloth that they make, whatever, it's probably the most interesting to me topic of all at this point in my life, I'm very interested how cloth works within the women...and um, Tanivet i figured since they didn't have any money, we didn't have any money to get them materials for them to teach them something else, the best thing we could do was get hand me down cloth and I'm sure we could get needles and we could get thread all given to us so we started the project. Um... by handouts from the community and I began to coordinate other women who were in the city who were textile people, embroidery, sewing, or whatever the topic was to show the women, one class, one topic. So it wasn't gonna take them...I wasn't saying come back and teach me a week or... because I couldn't afford to pay them. But I also thought that knowing how art works, that we interfered with their creativity as they were beginning to learn. They would begin to make things like somebody else and not like their own identity, their own self, they had to create it themselves, it had to come from them, not from somebody else. So, that is why I only allowed the teachers to remain a very short time with them and ask them not to ever comment about what's right and what's wrong just to let them see what could happen. And, so what happen is that they are now major artists and they have their own creativity, it's all coming from them, we just kinda opened the door and they walked through it and went on and their extremely talented. They will become the teacher, you know, some already are teachers of the group. Uh, and it's been a real interesting process to see them use creativity as a form of expression. And I'm... Out of all the projects I've done in MAMAZ, this is probably the best project I've ever done.

I: So, correct me if I am wrong, but um, I feel like this is a response to the social issues that you know that these women have encountered in their lives, right?

MB: Yeah.

I: So what do you think are the reasons these collectives are important and like what is it that maybe women are not getting, you know, I guess by their larger community that we need to have such groups?

MB: Well, um, I think uh, I think it's a, I think artists are the best teachers. Um... all people that do all sorts of crafts or arts, um, are the best examples to have in creativity because everybody else who tends to be far away from creativity tends to be fairly rigid, doesn't explore the concept of what you can do with all these things. If you taught math with creativity, kids would pick it up faster. If you taught reading with creativity, kids would pick it up faster. If you did science that way, if all the subjects in education used art as a tool to use in your class, you'd have a whole different audience, but the teacher

themselves don't know. So, to me, to teach women... this is why the project was so important for me was... I felt that the project... I wanted to show people if I could someone who had no clue about the arts and make them become artists and great artists, that means anyone could do that cus they had the worst circumstances, they were immigrants, they had no money, they had never really heard about the arts in any way...uh...they weren't craftswomen...and they um... (long pause) they were um, women who uh basically stayed at home. The real... but what they said, they said something interesting they said what this project has done for them is that it gave their mind something to do. I thought that was kind of interesting, it gave their mind something, to do that they weren't doing before, taking care of kids, cooking. That it wasn't enough, that's what they were saying. And it gave them a really important level of security because when people began to say how great your thesis is or how great you are, it certainly changes your attitude, your self-esteem. (16:01) So, I think collectives, all the collectives of the arts are really important because one we work together as teams and second because we are sharing information and we can do a lot for numerous people, we can really create an audience for numerous people and show people how to use that. So if, MAMAZ or Mujeres de Maiz or every art form is really inspiring for people that don't have access to it. And our communities really don't have access to it. It, it's, art shouldn't be considered high art or low art...cus that's discrimination. Out and out with discrimination. If you were to be, uh... born in a place of luxury and you had an education to all books of Western thought and you knew the Italian and French painters, well that's a great thing. But if you were born in a community with no access to education in general and had um, never heard about those things, and you start creating something, your art is just as valid as the other person's art because it's truthful. And I think when creators in any historical time were making art, they were making art for themselves and their soul. So who placed the order of who is high and who is low? What is valuable and what isn't valuable? I think it doesn't...I think those are questions that are really out of date in today's time. They shouldn't even be on the table because the way the economy has been...the way the governments and corporate sector has divided everything, they made sure there was more of the "Other" than there was of that very elite group. So, uh, since there's more of the "Other" then "Other" has a stronger need for their own creation, their own art, not what's correct but what is theirs. I mean if we want people to go to museums, if we want people to even care about the arts, then you gotta bring it to them and they gotta understand it. And they can't be conceptual and if you didn't go to school. And even those that go through school don't get it, so it's like it's okay for a certain group and its valid for certain people but not everyone functions the same way. We are all individuals, we're all different mind sets so we should have the right to have whatever we want and however we want it and explain how things work and educate people little by little. Things start turning really beautifully without having to say well that's horrible...or that's no good...or mine is better. This is good art, this is bad art. You know that already turns people off... And with this project I think, it really shows that. It shows that these women can make really fabulous art. And I think they are really gonna do more than...As long as they keep learning, they might turn into painters. I don't know. It uh, it's an ongoing project...Somebody asked me how long will, how long and when will I be finished... I didn't know I had to finish. I thought that... i thought that when you did something for society you just kept doing it because you liked it. I like to do this, so

that's the difference you know...I have passion for it. I believe that people can change and that art is a catalyst to that change. And I'm just gonna show people how many projects I can do that with and then I can say see art is a catalyst.

I: So, um, going a little bit back I know that you were talking about how you started working with a psychologist, so was she like, did she find these group of women or, how did that happen?

MB: The psychologist, the psychologist who is Claudia, who is from an organization called FERGAMI, is a woman, I'd say a feminist herself. I don't know if she calls herself that or not but she wanted to empower women and teach them about gender issues. And so...she was in Tanivet cus she...I don't know how she got there. But she was friends with Noel, one of the women in my group. And she told... Noel told her what we were doing and she says can we do it in this village and Noel told me and I said why not, lets do it. Lets go to Tanivet and do it...And uh, and we did, and uh, she, I think claudia learned, had no idea about the arts and how powerful it was. And I think it made her think about it all... you know like wow, its uh...But not, no one understood, if you don't have the knowledge about the arts, if you've never worked in it, if you have never been around it, you don't realize all the possibilities. My mentor inspirators have always been creative people who either write or make art or social activists in the arts like Judy Baca, Rudy Acuna, those are people who use their art as a form of change...thought...and like them, numerous people. You know, it's a long list of very, uh... But to make a change with the arts is fascinating. It's a whole field in itself, you know. And the women, I think when she got there, she was just, she was just curious about what I was going to teach and how it worked because of when they thought about embroidery, they thought of like a craft, a manual... uh, here they call it *manualidades*, in the United States there isn't a term for manualidades, it's just all craft. But there's high craft, low-craft like they want to say...so back to... so I think she was... they learned as much as the women for the short time they were there, they weren't there very long. We started in 2010 and they left in...due to their project and lack of funding, they had to leave in 2012.

I: So they were there at...?

MB: At the beginning to help the women organize themselves...and um... to help the women like know about gender issues and help them a little bit...but...

I: Were they from the government?

MB: No, no... Independent organization...

I: Non-profit? oh...

MB: Non-profit... No they weren't from the government...um, I mean the government does projects that really don't benefit people in the long-run because they don't study the projects...So somebody should be studying those projects to really know if they are working or not working. Like go to a village...you know they call them *oportunidades*, and you go to the village and they give money, cus they do give money and they give social programs but then they don't follow through so... They give them machines to sew but no teaching and then they...or after you teach, what do you do with them? How do you produce it? We are teaching all those steps to these women. First make it. Find out what the arts is within yourself. What's your culture? Then, let's make a product. How do

you sell that product? And what's your benefit to all that economically? It's like all sorts of sectors, it's not just black and white. It's like all... And I think that's the difference between MAMAZ project compared to a government project. We are specialized, I guess you could say. I want to make sure it's specialized. I want to make sure to teach everything. So that when we leave, they know everything. They are not going to be calling me, they are going to be inviting me.

I: Yeah, I mean, I think it's awesome that you know, they develop skills and they apply them with you and you eventually the hope is that they will be able to do it on their own.

MB: Yeah. And they do now....I mean, uh... They're in, they're in LA for the first time with their kids. We got them an artist visa... Can you imagine not seeing your kid for 10 or 13 years? And being invited as an artist for an exhibit. A woman that never came out of her house, that was never allowed to go by herself anywhere else, that as I said had nothing to do with her mind, all that was locked inside. And now they are invited, and now they have a visa, and they get to see their kids, and they are going to be in interviews, and they are going to be doing TV shows in Los Angeles. I mean, imagine what that does to that community... It's empowering, it empowers everybody, cause all I have to do is empower a few and let the rest do it...they will empower everybody else.

I: So what was the title of the exhibit that they are part of?

MB: The exhibit that they are part of in Los Angeles is called Nuevo Códice: Oaxaca, Immigration, and Cultural Memory, they make the codice, they made textile the Codice, the books, the Ancient books. And we did it in cloth and it's the story of Tanivet and why they migrated to the United States...you know, it's like a whole story about it...and they're beautiful, you know, it's really quite beautiful and we're going to do cloth books. So were... I figure, and I'm showing people that you don't have to wait for the government, you don't have to wait for some things, person that is going to come and give you their lesson. You just have to act... Go for it. And that's sort of the teachings of numerous people in the United States that I worked with...that really, empowerment of oneself really comes from a philosophical base in the United States more than Mexico...Um, philanthropy, social issues, social justice, really came from my education in the United States.

I: Where did you go to school?

MB: I went to school in Arizona and Texas, and uh...I'm hoping to go back to school after this project...I actually want to use it as...to get my something...I don't know what yet. To present it as a project, a full project. And maybe Northridge.

I: Yay.

MB: (laughs) So, uh, I'd like to, yeah, you know just to...you know I hit, I hit the arts around when I was about 20, when I was nine...No. How old was I when I met Eugene Smith? Grand photographer. My mentor, my official mentor to the arts was a man named,

Luis Carlos Bernal. Chicano photographer from Arizona. Professor at Pima College for years... I would say that he was was my inspiration to creativity, he was the one who showed me creativity. And then after that I had... I was in Tucson at the right time for photography, where all the great Masters of photo were there. Eugene Smith, Ansel Adams, Aaron Siscan, Uh Imogen Cunningham, you know it was just... I had access to black and white photography and the arts and all that, and saw a lot of art. Art... Tucson was well...is well known for the arts in general, all of Arizona...And um...And that inspired me to keep going...I don't even know...My mother... I knew my mother drew, I knew she was very talented in music and drawing but I don't think she ever really showed us how to draw nor play the piano...uh, she had us take certain classes you know, but...but I think I got inspired by... by the whole uh, when I arrived to Pima College...and I met Luis Carlos Bernal and he asked me who I was and that started a whole question in my head. And so, it was really interesting, uh, to have him as a, as a mentor all those years.

I: Cool. So how did you answer that question? Did you end up like...

MB: Well now, I say I am a, depending where I'm living at the time, a Chicana Oaxacaquena Chiapanca or a Chiapaneca Oaxacaquena Chicana or a Oaxacaquena Chicana Chiapaneca you know, those things, I am made up of those things at this point cause I'm Chiapaneca by...culture...uh, Chicana by living there, you know, my formative years...and Oaxacaquena because I came at a moment, because I loved it and wanted to know more about it all. So, now it's added on to the uh, history...

I: Can we go back to...?

MB: Yeah...

I: ...to the exhibit in Los Angeles.

MB: Sure.

I: So... so, the opening night, how was it for you all... for the collective, being there?

MB: Uh, it was for me, I don't know if it was just the...um, um...I guess for me, I was happy to see that Dona Juana had...who is the leader of the collective Hormigas Bordadoras because that's a collective in itself, uh, that they really were, that she was, that she reached her dream of seeing her son, that she was presented at this place in California, that so many people came to honor her from her home community, from her whole village and also California...Um, that I felt I had done my mission, my first part of my mission. And uh, for me... I guess I was excited for the artists that came who also got to participate in this and that I told them that they weren't going to be the stars of the show, it was always going to be the women you know because artists they get egos. And um, I said so just know that this show is just about promoting this village, it's about helping immigrants have a voice, and they were all willing to do it, and they were okay with it. You know, uh, it makes them feel good. It makes them feel like they're part of something, plus they get their work placed out there and they look fantastic and uh you know. But it makes sense to them, and um...and that they were happy, the whole thing was just like... I was just really happy that, that I did it. I wasn't, you know, I guess I'm, I'm still processing the whole thing, I'd like to write something about it because... I wouldn't say I was like oh, god I'm so thrilled, no, I just kinda knew that it was going to,

I just knew that if I just stayed on my little road, like an ant and kept working on it, it would happen. So, it doesn't surprise me that we reached the goal... I think when you believe in something as much as I believed in...I wasn't willing to give up on them when I had a lot of chances when I would've wanted to give up, uh, because it became complicated due to husbands or macho husbands you know. Or, themselves when they started blowing it off. I, I just said if you just stay with me, stay with me, you are going to see some big things happen. And that to me was great to see that happen.

I: So how many of the women were able to you know...

MB: go to the Los Angeles trip? 2. (34:37)

I: Okay...

MB: Uh, Cus the other ones either have little kids or one was having a baby, you know... They couldn't, they couldn't move as freely. We are hoping that all of them eventually travel to Los Ange...California or to somewhere in the United States with the show just so that they get a chance to see what that's like...and to see their relatives. It's a subversive way to show governments that it's absolutely absurd not to let people move freely throughout countries....uh, the reason why there's so much problems right now...so many lost people in the world, so many young kids joining horrible organizations is that they didn't have anybody inspiring them to do something else and to find a place, a better place in their selves so they are gonna get, so whoever does it, gets there first to inspire them is the one who wins the person, right?

I: Yeah...

MB: SO sometimes those are bad people. So if they would support the arts, that wouldn't happen, you know. There would be more creativity on the planet and less stupidity. So, um, I uh so I hope we travel throughout the United States, all over the place. I hope they really like it. I hope they really find it fascinating and so on, and so on. And every community I hope I...That they um...people from that community find it great, that their story is told. I hope to give a lot of classes to a lot of immigrants and show them how to use that.

I: So... Back to the show in Los Angeles, who were the two women who got the chance to go?

MB: Juana Martinez and umm...Lionela Grijalva, no perdon, Lionela Arragon, Arragon. Juana's uh, mother, uh...Juana was like an orphan. Juana's father had to work so poor. He went to the United States to work. I am assuming when he went it was the early seventies. Just so poor, that community in those years. And when he got back, his wife had died. He never got to see her again. I don't know what she died of. Uh, Juana was left orphaned...and no money, um, and she worked real hard... But she never stops smiling and she never says she can't. She wants to know how to paint and she want to know how to draw. She wants to know how to do all sorts of things, it's her, it's her personal ambition. She's probably the most fascinating female I have met in a long time. She's a very interesting person, person, you know. She is really worth something to talk about in the future. What caused Juana to be so great?

I: Well, I hope that I also get to talk to her.

MB: Yeah

I: I'm going to find out a bit more about her too.

MB: Yeah, yeah. She's now in Los Angeles.

I: Oh, okay.

MB: But I'm not sure how long she's gonna stay there because she has a visa, so she'll be coming back. She'll be back in two weeks, I believe. When do you go back?

I: The 20th.

MB: Of...June.

I: June.

MB: She might be back by then. But, tomorrow you'll see Leo. Leo had an interesting story because she was extremely neurotic. Uh, depressed, neurotic, nervous. And I think it was because of the loss of her children to immigration, you know...Not really seeing them. First of all, she got married too young. All the women in Tanivet had to get married by the time they were fourteen, fifteen, sixteen... So you don't know what you are getting into when you're that age and you have a partner who doesn't know what he's getting into, and these women had children. And the partner is more like a brother than it is their mate. (I: yeah) It's a very strange...well she was very, her high blood pressure high, she could've easily had a stroke or a heart attack...when she started doing this craft...I take that back. (I: Yeah) This art uh... she... her whole persona changed. And it wasn't til the other that her husband told Judy Baca, who was visiting, "my wife, doesn't take medicine anymore (I: wow) because this art for her has changed her life, has just distressed her." Distressed her and given her a mission...and not only did it distress her but it gave her the tool to see her kids. That's pretty powerful...you know. You'll see Juana...You'll see Leo tomorrow...She can...She's like wow.

I: Was this the woman I think I visited once? And I think she was like I can't do this and I think she was kind of like backing out. And she was kind of like oh no, I just can't do it and I just can't do it. Is that her?

MB: Like a guerita?

I: I think so, I think so...

MB: Leo, she's an older woman of the group.

I: Yeah...

MB: She could be...She's like uh, she always said she couldn't do it, she couldn't do it, she couldn't do it...Well she did it.

I: Wow...

MB: And she has a particular talent. She has uh, what they call *aguja magica*. You do it with uh, one needle. It's fascinating. People from London and people from the States that see this say how does she do that? That's cool, how does she do that? It's not easy, but the fact that she is neurotic and all that stuff, caused her to be able to concentrate and just do that one movement.

I: Wow.

MB: So, so doing this is also a healing tool, for her, for all of them, I think. It's really been beneficial for all of them...to know what they can do. Rebecca is extremely talented. It's uh, one of the, one of the first two women in the group, Rebecca and Juana they're cousins. Extremely talented. She just, her imagination goes far, far beyond anything I can...She's very centered on the immigration issue. So, her stories about immigration are just mind boggling. She's good.

I: And are these stories that she knows?

MB: She investigates, she asks her husband and her family members, watches it on TV and then starts producing, in her head.

I: That's amazing.

MB: Yeah. Because drawing is one thing, but to cut it...She's cutting and she's visualizing...It's really, it's gifted. You gotta be good, it's not easy. I tell you because I've tried, it's not easy. (hahaha)

I: (hahaha)

MB: It's really neat to see them.

I: So... What are some of the things that you've learned from the women?

MB: Um, I guess from the women, uh to be really happy about who you, uh... about life... Juana in particular... I don't know how she smiles everyday. How she's so giving to her kids everyday. How she's so giving to all the, you know just... with all that she went through. She just is one happy human being. I guess from her, I really... She never stopped believing in the whole thing and wondering what it could all bring to her. She's a grand artist, she's a grand dam of culture. (43:31) She... If we'd done this years ago, who knows where Juana would've been... You know, if they had more access, schools were better, you know, she's just like a perfect story... I mean that's uh... So, to me, I think they gave me most of all, the same I gave them confidence, self assurance, self-esteem, uh creativity they gave to me. By just sharing and me going, understanding who they were and what they needed, them understanding who I was and what I was doing. I mean we're just a ball going. It's mutual.

I: How was it at the beginning? Was it a little bit difficult? Was there always...good responses from the women?

MB: Uh...no. It was difficult at the beginning because they had never done something

like that so...Juana never stopped. She believed it all. She tried it all. But it was hard because you know they need money. If you only make 200 pesos a week you need money. This kind of...This tontería, what the hell am I doing this thing for? When they began to sell, when they realized it was an economic potential it was for them...it made it easier, I understood that so I moved it faster and made sure it all sold. And... after they crossed over to the arts, the mujeres, they no longer cared if it sold or not, they were amazed at what they could do. That's the transition from making something because you need money or making something because it fills your soul. An artist has to make art because it needs to fill its soul. So, that's where they are now. (Aside: Let me check something. The Chicano Studies Program at UCLA they started a program of...let me show you...they started a magazine...They started a magazine where they uh, Art and Activism, I am trying to see what...It's called...I hate when it does that...Voz Alta Arts and Activism Scholarships de UCLA. It's really interesting because they did a performance they did all sorts of stuff, they sang, they had a rabbit perform, uh, and uh, they talked about being an artist. It's interesting because they are talking about activism not...because they feel like their voices aren't being heard, they are being told how to make things. You know what I mean. Like we were saying. If you don't have your own art, you are being told what good art is. You know. [I: yeah] So, this was kinda like a reaction to that. Like that other stuff...Like who is that for? [I: yeah] So, it was really interesting. I'm going to pay this and we can walk over and check my car.)

I: ¿Te puedo grabar?

I: Can I record you?

MB: Aha...Go? Tanivet es como cualquier artista. Ellas hacen su obra pero si no hay nadie atrás diciendo a esto, vamos al siguiente a promover, se queda ahí. Igual a cualquier artista. Tiene que ver alguien atrás de ellas si no funciona.

MB: Aha... Go? Tanivet[Las Hormigas Bordadoras] is like any artist. They make their artworks but if there isn't anyone behind them do this, lets promote, they stay here. The same with any artist. They have to see someone behind them or they do not function.

I: Otra pregunta es ¿Trabajan juntas? ¿Si trabajan juntas que hacen? If you work collectively or collaboratively what do you do?

I: Another question is, do they work together? If they work together, what do they do together? If you work collectively or collaboratively, what do you do?

MB: Entre cambiar ideas. Pensar en el siguiente proyecto. El último que hicimos como MAMAZ, MAMAZ es el... la exhibición en el MACO del maíz.

MB: In exchanging ideas. Thinking about the next project. The last one we did as MAMAZ, MAMAZ is the... the exhibit at the MACO[Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca] about corn.

I: Fue el año pasado, no?

I: It was last year, no?

MB: Sí, esa fue la última. Y ahora...quiero hacer algo a ver si me deja Toledo.

MB: Yes, that was the last one. And now... let's see if Toledo[Francisco Toledo] lets me do something I want to do.

I: Y la próxima pregunta es que si son...este, autosuficientes? Donde encuentran recursos? O ustedes usan subvenciones? Do you get grants?

I: And the next question is that if... uh, you are self-sufficient? Where do you find resources? Or do you get grants?

MB: A veces becas, a veces es autosuficientes, a veces...donativo, es de todo.

MB: Sometimes scholarships, sometimes we are self-sufficient, sometimes... donations, it's everything.

I: ¿La colectiva participa en eventos como en la comunidad?

I: Does the collective participate in community events?

MB: Claro.

MB: Of course.

I: ¿Y si la colectiva participa, cómo participa?

I: If the collective participates, how does it participate?

MB: Este...trabajando dentro de una comunidad que pensamos que le podemos dar informacion o ayudar o participan con nosotros como Tanivet. Tanivet es una creacion de MAMAZ. El hecho de que MAMAZ fue alli eh se hace la colectiva de Las Hormigas. Y ahora Las Hormigas pueden participar con MAMAZ en proyectos sociales y proyectos de maiz y de migracion. Siempre va cambiando, no?

MB: Um... Working in a community where we can give information or help or participate with us like Tanivet. Tanivet is a creation of MAMAZ. The fact that MAMAZ went there is how the collective, Las Hormigas, forms. And now, Las Hormigas can participate with MAMAZ on social projects and projects about corn and migration. It always changes, no?

I: ¿En que aspecto lleba acabo la religion o espiritualidad en la colectiva?

I: In what aspects is religion or spirituality part of the collective?

MB: No se toca. [I: No se toca?] Mexico no es una tema que se mete uno porque cada uno respeta al otro de su...Por ley la religion no debe estar adentro de nada.

Educacion...porque digo hay de todo...Los que creen y los que no creen en nada...mejor no tocar la tema. Espiritualidad es personal asi es que no es una cosa que nosotros trabajamos.

MB: That's not touched. [I: It's not touched?] In Mexico, it is a theme you don't touch because each person respects the other for their... By law, religion does is not part of anything. Education... because there is everything... The ones that believe and the ones that don't believe in anything... it's better not to touch the theme. Spirituality is personal so it's not a thing that we work around.

I: ¿Cree que el arte funciona como una herramienta hacia la transformacion?

I: Do you think art functions as a tool for transformation?

MB: Si...Pues como yo hice con las de Tanivet. Allí esta...ese es el ejemplo numero uno... Por que ellas ya son ellas. Asi que esa es... esa herramienta es clara allí. Hacen lo que deben...encontraron su oficio, entienden ya todo de la cuestion que estan haciendo, desarrollando su propio grupo, hacen dinero, todo eso es el mejoramiento de alguien. Se transformaron ellas. Ya con eso es proyecto social de MAMAZ, no? [I:Si.] Ya ellas tienen una fuerza propia que cuando llegamos no habia nada. Digo que cuando vayamos al pueblo ahorita con Manuela va a ver que es este no sigue siendo nada. Pero lo que les paso a ellas adentro eso es lo que...que aunque no tengan nada el pueblo, ellas ya lo tienen. Y eso ya va a cambiar su forma de ver todo...Giving Hope. Giving Dreams. Eso es lo importante...

MB: Yes... Well, like I did with Tanivet. There it is... that is the number one example... Because of themselves, they are themselves. So, that is... that tool is clear there. They do what they need to do... they found their job, they understand everything they are doing, developing their own group, they make money, all of that is the betterment of someone. They transformed. With that, MAMAZ is a social project, no? [I: Yes.] They have a self force that when we arrived there was nothing. I say that when we go to the pueblo right now with Manuela you are going to see that it continues to be nothing. But what happened to them inside is what... that even though the town has nothing, they have it. And that is going to change the way they see everything... Giving Hope. Giving Dreams. That is what is important...

I: La proxima pregunta dice ¿El colectivo establece o reestablece las visiones del mundo de los indigenas nativos?

I: The next question says, “Does the collective establish or re-establish world visions of native indigenous peoples?”

MB: No. A veces temas son con comunidades indigenas pero nosotros no trabajamos eso como una tema personal. Eso es dependiendo del proyecto. Por ejemplo, el maiz, allí si se toca cosmología, se toca rituales culturales de diferentes etnias, así no? [I:Si.] Pero depende de la comunidad a donde estamos trabajando. Por que nosotros no somos... Digo cada organización...No somos alguien que va encima de alguien, estamos trabajando a lado de alguien, es la diferencia. Si vas arriba tu vas tratando...no vamos arriba, vamos a lado a ver que le podemos ayudar para que entiendan que es lo que tienen allí o como mejorar la cuestion de la comida o como eh... Pero usamos el arte, no usamos documentos. Es otra forma de llegar a la gente que sea dominante. No somos doctores ni psicólogos, no?

MB: No. Sometimes themes are with indigenous communities but we don't work with that as a personal theme. That depends on the project. For example, the corn, there we touch on cosmology, we touch on cultural rituals of different ethnic groups, like that no? [I: Yes.] But it depends on the community where we work. Because we are not...I mean each organization... We are not someone who is on top of someone else, we are working next to someone, that is the difference. If you are on top, you are trying to... we are not on top, we are besides to see how we can help people understand what they have and how they can improve things such as food or like eh... But we use art, we don't use documents. It is another way to reach people that is dominant. We are not doctors or psychologists, no?

I: ¿Y que piensa acerca de la conciencia social?

I: What do you think about social consciousness?

MB: Como?

MB: How?

I: Ah, what do you think about social consciousness?

MB: Ah, si tu no tienes social consciousness hoy en día, estas amolado eh. I don't even know how people can't have it. Eso es ser, eso es tomar una parte política muy fuerte. To be a...to be a political, or a social, or I'm not involved, or I don't want to be involved, that's taking a stand. So there is no not taking a stand. You take a stand one way or another. You either get politically involved or socially conscious or you don't and that's also taking a stand, just people don't realize that. Yo creo que muchos por flojera. Y otros por que les da miedo. Pero como no entienden todas las ramificaciones de cada cosa que hacen pues es como votar y no votar. Si no votas el...le das oportunidad a un por ejemplo, llega el mas listo y dice vamos a votar todos por que estos otros no van a votar y gana. Es un poco todo la cuestion social, digo o ayudas o va venir alguien y se va ayudar como lo que hacen en Mexico. Se ayudan los politicos, se aprovechan porque nadien dice nada o porque nadien hace algo. Asi que ya es como una costumbre de fatalism. Hay pues para que si todo va ser siempre igual. Eso para mi es un poco de huev...huevon pensar asi. Huevera, huevera. Si, no hacer nada es fatal para el pais. Prefiero que hagan sus locuras los maestros a que no hagan nada. Por que por lo menos dices bueno, no es lo mejor pero mueven el tapete. No? Pero si estuviera todo calmadito y el PRI hiciera lo que hiciera y robara como sea, digo como hizo hace 75 anos pues es dificil. Digo el maestro podria ser gran cosa...se enfermo la sistema con otros hombres que son muy self-serving. Eso, es por eso que no funciona, podria funcionar, podria funcionar bien padre. Pero ellos mismos, el grupito que los lleba, les vale todos los demas. Asi que asi es la politica igual. De diez, tres hacen algo y los demas no. Se sirven. Los vez y dices que estu...que barbaros , como llegaron a esos lugares? Pues como nadien mas dijo nada pues llegaron. Asi que hay senadores que son realmente estupidos. Asi que digo eso realmente con big S porque realmente no tienen educacion en capacidad. Son ignorantes, bulgares y todo lo demas y llegan. Y esos dicen yo voy a llegar y como nadien me esta diciendo nada, voy. Pues porque otro dice hay para que... Esas son las cosas que digo de social. Si tu no tomas actividad social, no chilles despues por que ya lo...tu lo permitistes. Mexico es problema de Mexicanos. Por ser como dijo? Huevones. Por tener esa... por tener ese pensamiento que no...pues que se hace... Ese es un pensamiento que se ve mucho. Lo vez en la...hay señor pues que hago. Yo soy pobre. No? En las peliculas no has visto que sale. Eso no debe de ser. Por que no es...It's not real. Solo en la mente de la persona que lo dice. Ellas tambien me decian, las de Tanivet, no como que puedo, que no...Ahora ya no las frenas. Por que ya entendieron que es bajo su control lo que ellas pueden hacer, no el alguien, no necesitan a alguien... Ya cambio su vida y eso es lo diferente.

I: ¿Y que significa para ti la justicia social? Social Justice.

I: What does social justice mean to you?

MB: Pues es lo que te digo. Es lo que estoy diciendo. Social justice eres tu y tu que participas que haces, that's social justice. Digo puede ser cualquier cosa academically...pero cada uno tiene que hacer algo si no estamos amolados. Aqui en China, en Estados Unidos, en donde sea. Estados Unidos esta terrible. La pobreza es otro tipo de pobreza. Mas peligrosa porque son mas bravos todavia. Las comunidades negras, las comunidades abandonadas, esos chavos se estan metiendo a ISIS por ser abandonado por un pais riquisimo. Y la gente que quiere ir ayudar a Africa pero nunca ve alrededor de ellos. Asi que es...Creo que se tiene que apoyar tu comunidad primero y de ahi vas si tienes la capacidad y puedes ayudas mas, no? [I:Si.]

I: Hay algo mas que usted quiere agregar?

MB: No, I think I... (laughs) Te dije bastante.

MB: I told you enough.

I: Gracias.

I: Thank You.

Interview with Maritza Alvarez:

I: Alright so I am going to go ahead and ask you a couple of like personal questions and questions about the collective, right. I know like maybe uh...

Maritza: Which Collective?

I: The Mujeres de Maiz collective.

Maritza: Oh, okay.

I: Maybe at the moment you are not completely involved but um you know you also have experiences, right.

Maritza: Uh-huh.

I: I don't know how much you are involved at the moment but maybe like you can answer some of these questions...maybe when you were more active.

Maritza: Okay, yeah...

I: Or if you continue to be active, you can answer questions in that way as well.

Maritza: Okay.

I: Um. And then I also want to let you know that um anything that you share is gonna be confidential. And if you say anything that you would like for mw not to like to write or to share, then you can go ahead an let me know that as well. Um, because overall if we record something it's really up to you to let me know what you want me to share or not to share.

Maritza: Okay.

I: So, with that we are going to go ahead and get started. So, can you please tell me your name?

Maritza: Well, my name is Maritza Alvarez.

I: Can you also tell me how old you are?

Maritza: Forty-seven years old. Soon to be forty-eight.

I: Forty-seven years young, going on forty-eight.

Maritza: That's right. Forty-seven and a number, that's my number.

I: Awesome. Alright. So, are you originally from Los Angeles?

Maritza: Ah, no. I was born in Mexico.

I: Okay, so what part of Mexico were you born?

Maritza: In Jalisco, in Guadalajara but raised in Boyle Heights and East LA since I was a year old, under a year old.

I: Oh, wow. So, so you migrated when you were months old to the states.

Maritza: Mhhhm. 11 Months old.

I: Oh, wow. Awesome.

Maritza: Under my mom's jacket.

I: No way.

Maritza: No. But yeah, under false documents.

I: So, you crossed the border.

Maritza: Mmmhmm. And we got detained.

I: What!?

Maritza: Yeah. My mom, and myself, and my young... my older sister who was two years old. Mmhm.

I: So, what happened? Like, you got detained?

Maritza: Well, we stayed in Tijuana for a little bit until some family from Ensenada came by and helped us.

I: Woah

Maritza: And then I don't know they figured it out and a month later we came back. Yeah.

I: So, do you have any family that lives in Los Angeles?

Maritza: My brothers, my sisters, mom, and my aunt. Mmmhmm.

I: How many brothers and sisters?

Maritza: I have uh, five sisters and two brothers. Yeah, a big family.

I: Laughs.

Maritza: Aha.

I: Um, are you, so alright I also want to ask you a little bit about what was your role within the Mujeres de Maiz women's collective? What do you, maybe what do you consider your role or roles were within that?

Maritza: Mmmhmm. Um I think like I don't remember the exact number of years. Um, but I want to say right off the bat like seven, eight, nine, ten...seven, eight, nine. I want to say at least five years but directly but um mainly there was the core committee, the core members. I was part of the core members and that entailed uh a number of things like uh helping with like for example, select the art pieces for the exhibition or sifting through the poetry. Reading through the poetry submissions, the zine. So, uh that was a part of it as well. But also, uh, during the organizing uh, implementing whatever ideas or suggestions to the core committee to add to the programming. So, for example, uh one thing in terms of for me what was really important from everything that was done, being done was to engage, well two things, three things. One was to engage more, to engage community members outside of the core uh artists and intellectuals. To engage actual community. So, one of the ideas was like why not have it in an area where its dense in community and they had thus built the Plaza Mariachi and nobody has used it before. So, I proposed have a day event out here at Plaza Mariachi because it's an area you know that residents come in and flow. We can engage people. So, so I helped to organize that one the first year when it started there. The other thing is that I wanted to try to engage huh,

from the local, to the national, to the international voice. Um and, in terms of having speakers. So, one of the ideas was why don't we have workshops that are going on are addressing local, national, and international issues you know in this area. And have ongoing workshops, free and available for community. So, it's a form of education, raising awareness and education. That didn't, that didn't like go through fully. Um, yeah. But those were my things. And the other thing was intergenerational. I just thought like okay we need to um... engage artists on an intergenerational level. So, the idea that I had was um, in one of the events was, to bring in artists from one generation, another generation, and then a younger generation and have them do live art, a live mural happening. So, I was able to get that in there at one of the first, in one of the first Mujeres de Maiz events. And that since, has been going on. Because we learn like not matter what form of artist you are, there was always someone who came before you. And I think that why wait until they are deceased to honor them, if they are here now. You know. And there is mentorship. And there is a lot of learning that can happen. And then to see the live art show happening in front of you of mujeres artists is powerful. You know. And then the first mural that was created was powerful, it was beautiful. Unfortunately, uh, it was housed by an artist then something happened and it was got destroyed by the weather and only part of it up because of the weather. Cause there was nowhere to store it cus it was these huge panels, you know. Yeah.

I: Well, it's interesting that you mention that cus at the 20th Anniversary I actually saw like some artists also working on a panel as well.

Maritza: That's it in the video.

I: Oh no, well not. I think it well no. This year uh, at the celebration as well.

Maritza: Oh, yeah. They were out there.

I: That you all like you said keep it going, right.

Maritza: Mmmhmm.

I: It was great to see that.

Maritza: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Pretty much. The other idea I had that I had like worked with too was like having evaluations. We need to know how are people responding. What do people think? Um, you know uh, and have a diverse uh, representation in, in that. You know. Um, I know that because a lot of the founders are artists, and um intellectuals, um I come more from the like even though I consider myself an artist, I don't necessarily consider myself an intellectual because I am not in academia. And even if I was, I kinda wouldn't, but that is just me. But uh, so there is also community organizers, community. I think that there are some strong leaders, strong voices to be found in community. So, we have to like engage them. Because then it seems like elitist to me. Like and that has always been my internal critique and my critique. Like you can't, I understand that like it's important the work that is being done but we need to bring in the community. And

more so now that's been the case. And that's wonderful. They have a lot of wellness workshops that have been going on um, which is really good, no. Yeah. But my idea was like you see that platform was an opportunity to maximize, to maximize dissemination of information and awareness and stuff. Um, the other role prior to that was helping to document. Um, when I was part of a film collective, un and mainly like a lot of mujeres kinda like filming. Un, at some point like you know, being just responsible for that, documenting. My goal every time that I was trying to coordinate that was to get as many mujeres to help documenting. From doing the lighting, to doing the camera work, have women behind the camera. That's changed over the years. That's evolved. Under different leadership, under different decisions. So, but you know. Because I'm not as involved anymore. It evolved at a point where I was not involved too anymore. When I took a back, back, took the back, took a stepped back. Yeah back something.

Both: Laugh. (11:30)

I: Yeah. Okay.

Maritza: Yeah

I: So, you what yiu shared right now you, you have also participated in documenting um events and community, community work that has been, uh taken place.

Maritza: Yeah. Yeah.

I: Alright

Maritza: Well, during the celebrations...

I: Through the celebrations oh okay...

Maritza: The anniversaries.

I: Okay. Well during the celebrations your role had been to document the celeb...Mujeres de Maiz.

Maritza: Ye, Yeah.

I: Okay. With that, I also want to ask you about um your education, your background. So, my questions are: Did you go to school? What level of education do you have? So, those are a couple of questions that are interesting.

Maritza: Oh, yeah. I went to uh, college. High school and then college. Um, I started at UC Santa Cruz but I partied too much, (laughs). At the time, I wasn't ready to leave. I wanted to leave East L.A. badly but I did it for the wrong reasons. Um, I had gotten into UCLA but I didn't want to stay in L.A.

I: That's close.

Maritza: Yeah, it was just too close. I wanted to just leave and it was my ticket out kinda thing. But then, when I got kicked out I didn't want to give up in school, I thought you know you are oing to become a stat because I had gotten into drug use, cocaine. I got started using cocaine a lot for a whole year, pretty deep and I was like oohh. That pretty much got me out. I said I don't want to do that shit because I almost got killed. So, I was

like nope. Ridiculous. So, instead of becoming a stat I said I am going to go home. I am going to take a couple classes at East L.A. college just to be in the rhythm of school which I did. And there, I met a whole other community. Like, Gina, Margaret you know. And somehow I got into organizing there too. I started organizing like police brutality, and I was just like fuck. I just couldn't get out. I have to organize all the time, you know. But, and then uh, I got into UCLA again but I also got into UC San Diego. I thought, you know, San Diego is not too far. It's two hours away. So, I decided to go to San Diego.

I: Mmmm.

Maritza: And then, graduated from there. Organized there. Organized on campus. Uh, started a women collective on campus there called Mujeres Unidas para Justicia Revolucion y Educacion. Um, and it was good and I was one of the co-founders there. It was a great organization that, that the reason that came out was because MEChA at that time, was unwilling to include and look at the issues of sexuality and queerness at all. Really resilient to it. And I thought, that's fucked up. What does it mean? And I asked them does that mean I am going to have to start an organization here on campus that supports that? Am I really going to have to do that? Basically, yeah. That is why me and another student helped co-found MUJER. Um, uh yeah and we had some great workshops. We had Angela Davis come in, Maricela Norte, um uh... Elena Avila came down uh who is now... may she rest in peace. She passed away. So yeah. I did Chicano Studies History and Sociology. Mhm.

I: Alright.

Maritza: Just to go back a little bit, I know that you talked about you and documenting Mujeres de Maiz events, right. So, in documenting, are you self-trained or self-taught? Is this something you learned from other people. How did you learn to, to document?

Maritza: Uh... So, as I briefly mentioned, I was part of a Chicana uh queer, Chicana Indigenous Identified Queer Film Collective. Women image makers. Um, my participation in that collective was, came out of a two reason: strong desire to follow my personal dream, to do photography; and two, to use that medium to help raise awareness and social consciousness in the community. Cus at that time, when that medium was barely like, like digital, digital film making. You know. It was uh not even HD, you know. Um, and I thought wow this is a powerful medium. So, I started enrolling in photography classes and I was really moved by the power of the moving picture. Um, then I took my first film class at LACC while I was working full-time. And I was really intrigued and I said oh shoot, this is it. You're telling a story and the visual. I was like oh, I was swept away. Let's just say I fell in love, deep love. And, and I used to tell myself that I was married to film, you know. So, so, so then, three other women who were part of the collective were like we want to start this. What do you think? Shit, I am down. I was not formally trained. I mean, except for that one film class, I had no experience but I felt like, I was driven by a deep passion. And then, I just dove in. Dove in. I just ploosh. And I stopped working full time. There were some issues in the organizing that was going on and I just finished school full-time. And I was looking for a job in the field anywhere and I didn't care where. I don't care if I take out your trash, I don't care. I just want to be in that arena like 24/7 to learn as much as I can. So, uh I got into uh project involved which is through Film Independent. I became um an intern there. And then, I

got an offered a job to work for Film Independent. And I was like oh hell yeah, reception. I don't care. SO, I was on the ground film maker, professional independent film makers in a building where they had a library filmmaking. And I worked there where they give workshops om film making. All in the independent field. And I was basically immersed in that world. And I was so glad. Even though it was way out, even though it was two hours away. I didn't care. I was like I was in it. Um, so then, that provided a lot of that experience but then I got offered a scholarship to go to film school through Film Independent and the Kodak program film, Kodak Program. It's called the Barbara Boyle Film Scholarship which they would pay my film school for one year at the LA Film School but it meant that I couldn't work cause it's like an intense film school. Do you want it or not? And I was in the process of applying to film schools like AFI, and USC and I thought fuck man... they're going to pay for it and I am just going to get technical experience as a cinematographer cus that's what I wanted. And I said yeah, I'll take it. Mmmhm. So, I took it. So, that's where I got more formal education. Yeah...

I: Alright. So, now we are going to jump into talking a little bit about social justice which you kind of already mentioned. Um, so I guess what is, or what does social justice mean to you?

Maritza: (Deep breath.) It means for me, the basics, having at least the basics met to begin with which is free education, healthcare, and housing, to begin with for me. I don't think anyone should have to struggle to have those basic things so that they could flourish in any field or whatever, whatever they want. And it's also um, an understanding and acceptance of differences.

I: Hhhmmm.

Maritza: Of differences and uh, and room. Safe, safe places to uh, grow and develop, and express oneself whether... in any form through writing... through the arts and it's also economically like uh, fuck its fair wages, you know. Fair wages for families, for opportunities for families. Yeah, that's social justice to me in a capsule.

I: I'm sure, like it could be a lot of other things, right. Alright, so... And with that I do have some more um questions about the collective. However, I know some of these questions are things I can find elsewhere, so if you feel like there is a question maybe I can look at and like you don't necessarily have to answer maybe we can skip it. So, the first one is like why women? Why s the focus women? So, I don't know if you would like to address that or would you like to move on?

Maritza: Yeah. Well, I think just quickly. Well, with women is obvious because there is a great disparity of um representation, opportunity on all levels. You know. And that's been historically been the case where we are and in the world. We are under a patriarchal system and uh very masculine idea that that is the power. You know. And to you, and to support other women.

I: Alright. So, now the following question asks about the collective and what makes up the collective. And so, one of the questions is, “Do you have a mix of working and middle class women? How is your collective composed?”

Maritza: In terms of class, uh I think we all come from, not all, I can't say all because I don't know where everybody comes from. But I think that the majority have immigrant families. Or all, or are migrant families and uh, there's a mix. I think the leadership is a mix too. But, the majority are working class families. Were raised in working class communities. Um, in terms of the organizers from what I know. In terms of the participants, are you also asking in terms of the participants?

I: Yeah. Also, in terms of the participants.

Maritza: In terms of the participants, I think that the majority are. The majority are because it takes place in communities of color, uh in working class communities, historically. But, I also believe in that there could be far more outreach into um the deeper pockets of communities, to have mothers and daughters, more mothers and daughters participate. Um, yeah. That's my take on.

I: What are... The next question is, “What are the collective's goals, objectives, and the mission statement?” I do know that you all have a mission statement and I can find it online and I also do know that you shared some of the objectives and goals that the collective has or that you had in particular when participating in the collective, right. Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

Maritza: Yeah... You know like I shared at the platica, I think that it was with I forget with who... But I thought, I think that it's always good to revisit the vision.

I: Hmmm

Maritza: Um, because we're in ever changing times. You know things change but yet stay the same almost, but they change and they have a different um, they have a different shell but the root is still the same but they look different and they sound different so I think it is important to revisit the mission, and um so that it reflect um, the urgency of the times. Um, the issues that like, it's more generational making sure that we reach out to multi-generational communities, um trans, lgbt, it's all inclusive pretty much, you know. But... but I think that there are pockets in those communities that really may need urgent support. So, I think maybe it's important to like prioritizing right now what, what's really... prioritizing the needs, prioritizing the issues.

I: Okay.

Maritza: I don't know that's my take on it right now.

I: Alright.

Maritza: Mmmhm.

I: Alright. SO, when you were part of the or when you were involved in the collective, “How often did you all meet? Or, how did you all function?”

Maritza: Um, at one point there was like, what I would call, the meetings because it was annual from what I recall there was meetings that would start, the pre-planning committee meetings and then there was, depending on what committee you wanted to be part of, that committee would designate a meeting time. So, like the zine committee would be like meeting at least six months before because um, and at least four months before because submissions were being turned in like crazy and you have to sit down and look through all the poetry, read all the poetry, edit, and then you vote on which one works. And so there’s a theme every year. There’s a theme. So, the submissions would be based on that theme. It’s the call out. And then, the other thing is like um, sometimes it was once a week. Once you were getting closer to the planning, meeting once a week. At least once, yeah, once, two times a month. There was always a call uh, from different mujeres, a proposal to have a retreat to check-in, to see what’s happening you know, because the philosophy is that mujeres need to take care of themselves. But it has to start with ourselves, you know. We cannot put that philosophy out there if you yourself are not practicing it. That was my mentality, you know. A few others too. But, there was always this idea, well there’s too much work to do. We have work and we don’t have time for that. Well, yeah that’s why we have to make the time for it. I mean resources are limited to begin with, you know. But the time like that’s what we have so let’s make the time, you know. Like time is ours, you know. Let’s make the time. But that, I am learning that now. I too, myself was at some point like oh, yeah there’s no time for that. But I realized that you have to make time for essential things because that’s when you can come together and discuss, you know, and ask questions, analyze. Like okay, you gotta come to the table again. Yeah.

I: mmmhm.

Maritza: Sorry if I am not making sense right now...

I: No, no,no, It’s good, its good. Sorry I am taking up your time. If you feel we need to stop, we can also stop.

Maritza: No, no,no I wanna know. I am going. I am just...

I: No, no, no...it’s imoirtant

Maritza: I am not making sense...

I: And what you are saying I think it is important to take care of yourself of ourselves to continue doing the work that we do right. And then often time it’s like, oh I will take care of it later but it’s like no, you gotta take care of it now, you know. If not, your health is not gonna be the best. Yeah, I mean I guess I just had like a mujer from CSUN like contact me because I guess organizing the youth conference wasn’t going that well and then she kinda reached out so I was like you always have resources and you need to come

to us though you know. And then she shared she was struggling. Well, she has an eating disorder that she continuously works though but she was just like over... over-stressed and stuff, so it's good that she reached out cus she needs to know if she reaches out to me you know, I can do whatever I can do, you know. And other people can as well, but she has to reach out to them too, you know. I think it's important that she take care of herself too, yu know in that process which she was trying to do so by reaching out which his good because after all it's a collective effort to make things happen.

Maritza; Right, right... Even helping to take care of each other. Like what power. Imagine the power in the space that you are just there to take care of yourself and you are in a space where it almost reminds me of a sweat lodge, but it's not a sweat lodge, where you are there and everybody is taking care of themselves, there's spirit, everything, right. Well, imagine a space where all women, and it's not necessarily a sweat lodge, but it's in a place that is providing that energizing of the spirit. Whether it be out in the mountains, by the lake. That's so necessary especially by women who are constantly organizing and working. And I imagine that in the past, we were able to that, you know. Again uh, our strength and ground ourselves again. That is the goal. So, that is what some of us were pushing for.

I: It continues to be important right.

Maritza: Right.

I: Alright. So, you already so talked about this. Does the community engage with the community? If the collective has engaged, how has the collective engaged with the community? And I know that you did share that you know, Mujeres de Miaz, did, does, continues to enage with community, however, I know that you did said that you feel that there are certain pockets where they could be reaching out to, right.

Maritza: mmmhm. I think that there's always room for that you know. And I can't say that clearly since I haven't been directly for the past at least four or five years... Yeah. Um, but um uh, I know that since there has been some um engagement in different community areas which I am really happy about, you know. But, I think that even within the organizing, uh committees, there should be community members. Like when I say community members, I mostly think of everyone, but I mostly think of mothers and grandmothers. Mothers and grandmothers. The reason why I say that too is because in the work that I do um there is this one organization that engages them hardcore and it's so beautiful. Like they're really engaged in, in the process of organizing, what they want in their community, what they want at home for their children. Um, they themselves go through workshops, learn leadership skills, like promotoras, you know. Um, so I kinda envisioned something like that like with Mujeres de Maiz. To have leadership trainings, you know. Where we learned from the moms. I am sure they have a lot we could learn from. Reciprocate the, the knowledge. Reciprocate the knowledge. Like I wanna see, like I just don't want to see intellectuals in a panel. I just don't want to see that. Because that is not just what our community is made of. I wanna see the mothers who are organizers,

leaders in their communities sitting in that panel too. I wanna hear what they have to share, what their doing, and how they do it. I don't know...

I: I mean knowledge can be created in different ways, coming from different people. It doesn't have to be top down, but it can be like all around, you know.

Maritza: Yeah and that is one thing Cherrie shared in the panel that I appreciate which is not forgetting the class issue.

I: Yeah...

Maritza: And I think that that is a topic that I would raise if I had an opportunity to sit with the core members today and revisit division.

I: Yeah. I think that that is also important. I think that me being in a classroom with high school students they often feel like here comes, here comes the coach, which is my role in the classroom and like they feel like... I feel like they often kinda feel like, we have authority, I guess the grown-ups in the room. But it's like no, this is you're the classroom. This is the opportunity for you to teach us, you also teach us, you know. Cus we were working on stencils and like one of the students used to spray paint or you know write on the wall, but I was like you know I know I am not perfect in this, I know that you all can also share tips cus of your experience you are also able to share that with me.

Maritza: Right, right.

I: You know, which they did. And if they didn't have experience with it, they just picked it up. I was like dayum. This is powerful. They just picked it up and started spray painting themselves and it's like... Yeah. It was amazing.

Maritza: Wow, wow.

I: Um, um, they created um, they created uh, um a canvas kinda like documenting the history of the farm workers so they used Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and Larry Itliong and they put them together and they put different symbols like that represent the United Farmworkers movement. That was pretty cool.

Maritza: Wow, all sprayed.

I: Yeah.

Maritza: Stenciled?

I: Yeah, stenciled.

Maritza: Oh, wow. How many layers?

I: Just one layer.

Maritza: Oh, yeah... They added the shadow

I: They added the color which was pretty cool.

Maritza: Nice.

I: Yeah, but anyway... Yeah it's powerful to have knowledge created among everyone or shared amongst everyone, no matter where you are coming from because we all bring something to the table, right. So, with that, uh, uh, I also wanted to ask um, from your knowledge, um, you know funding is very important in these spaces and at times there are no funding and like in the arts it's difficult to access funding so, um, "Do you know like if the collective is self-sufficient um or where they get resources or rely on grants? How does that work?"

Maritza: Well, from my understanding now is there has been more limited knowledge on that. Just from what Felicia has shared with me recently. It's that they are applying for grants. So, there are grants they are applying for and they have received grants in the past. To my knowledge, that's pretty much it. And in kind service.

I: What does that mean?

Maritza: In kind service is when people donate their time and their skills.

I: Oh, okay. I didn't know that.

Maritza: Yeah, yeah. In kind donation or in kind service.

I: oh, okay.

Maritza: Like when you are applying for a grant, it will say that what are you receiving that is in kind?

I: oh, okay. So, then when you, when you were also more active within the organization like where would you all get resources?

Maritza: Um, like that in kind.

Both: Laugh.

Maritza: Pretty much, pretty much in kind. There was like, let's say there was a charge for a space um, there would be a time that Felicia and I applied for two grants, small grants. A thousand dollars, no more than five-thousand. This was like through... One of them was though the Neighborhood Council. And another one was through this one organization in South Central that has uh, uh a call for grants and they knew of Mujeres

de Maiz work and they knew the person already and the grant was given to us at the time also, uh yeah.

I: That was great that you were able to access some forms of monies.

Maritza: Tap into each other's monies. And you know one of the mentors too, Linda Vallejo, I recall going to one of her workshops when I was with them too. And she pushes on like applying for grants, you know. And how to apply for grants. And how to apply for funding on 501C3. All that, I am no longer part of that discussion. That, that was a couple years back and I don't know where that is now.

I: oh, okay. Right. Just to get a little bit back to the collective, um, how does religion or spirituality take place in the collective?

Maritza: Mainly through um, what's been taught to us by elders. Community Chicana Indigenous Identified women and men who practice um, traditional um, rituals um, either through Mexica ways or the Lakota, um, the Red Road ways of spirituality. Connecting with the earth and sacred elements, yeah, ceremonies.

I: Thank you. Um, great. Here's a question that's a little tricky, so, does the collective establish or re-establish indigenous world views?

Maritza: Establish or re-establish?

I: Yes.

Maritza: Um, I think that like through the practice of opening up in ceremony and closing in ceremony. And through the art as a vehicle to, to um, to, to, to show the language and the culture. Um, and also through this is general you know, performance, through literature, yeah.

I: Mhhmm.

Maritza: Yeah, yeah. Those are all avenues that have been practiced and shared. A reigniting, a re, a... a reawakening to remember, to remember the old ways.

I: Alright. Now, we are going to jump back to art and art in the collective so do you think that, does art function as a tool for transformation?

Maritza: Um, absolutely. Art does function as a tool for transformation. Absolutely. Yeah... And also, transformation functions as a tool for art. You know. Vice versa. You transform um, and art can be your tool to assist that transformation. Yeah.

I: Alright. So, last but not least, what do you think about social consciousness?

Maritza: Social consciousness. Um, I think that its uh, I think that its uh key to be able to have an opportunity to um raise one's awareness on, on social issues. Uh, here at home, locally, um nationally and internationally. And that consciousness is, can look differently for everyone. But, for me it looks like imagining as the zapatistas would say, "A world where everyone fits." That is um, a social consciousness is important. It's a breath of life to, to create that world. Yeah.

I: So, with that, I would like to thank you for taking your time to talk to me. Um, I feel like my transitions weren't as smooth as they could be. But um...

Maritza: It's okay...

I: Thank you for going through it. In some places, I changed abruptly from one thing to another.

Maritza: No, they were great, they were great questions. So, what are you going to do with them...

Interview with Margaret:

I: Alright, so we are going to go ahead and start with the first question. What are the collective's goals and/or objectives?

M: Um, well you know I feel like our objectives and goals have changed over time because we didn't know if we wanted to be a non-profit or what. So we just sort of uh organically grew. Like we started out as a network, more of a network or support group uh for Chicana artists or for women of color artists in East LA mostly or people who were in that area, locally. And then, It just sort of grew into this more complex... uh... vision I guess, if you wanna say. It became huge... it became much bigger. And uh to where I was more about publishing and making sure our stuff gets out there in a written form you know. Felicia wanted to do more grassroots organizing with women and uh have more of a broader vision that involved all the things we were interested in which was holistic medicine, artistic skills, arts education, all this stuff right that we wanted to include social justice. So, it just kind of uh organically grew. So, now our mission statement is there which is pretty much is set in stone, it's online you can see it online. So we have all these list of things we like to do. And um I kinda had to fight to to keep it focused cus I feel like without that focus it would be much harder to you know.. I guess uh stay uh together. I just felt like it needed more.... There is only a few of us doing this whole thing. So thinking back to organic... We were becoming like this organically grown... grassroots organization, arts, artists, we wanted to fit interests, we wanted to effect change in all these different areas. And then women had all these different needs like they had... Some of us were having children, some of us work. So we wanted to provide those systems of support because of this growing need and this urgency. So really it was really about that. So when you ask me what our goals was, well everybody has their own idea of what that means. But collectively we understand that we have to stay together and we have to help each other and um... um... that there is a need for all

these things for women to have... support, systems, specially creative women. So, we, I think our goals are to provide as much support for women in our communities as possible through the arts, through holistic you know practices, through social justice, all these different things. So... uh, right. So yeah.

I: So that was more or less like your objectives and goals, creating networks?

M: I think so. We created a strong network of women like, who would support and continue to work together for common goals. for any kind of common goals that we wanted to get out there. Women... women as... career women as, for the women who wanted to pursue careers, women who wanted to pursue families, or women who wanted both. And we wanted to be able to provide support for our communities. And um... especially arts education for me. It was about arts education because a lot of that stuff is cutaway in our communities. They took that away. So, where we going to get that? How are we going to express ourselves? We don't have those things and we see the arts is a necessary communicational tool to get our feelings out there, to get our were our experiences. We wanted people to... we wanted to be heard. It was a way to express our voice that was lacking in government, in you know mainstream media, and all the stuff we were shut out of that so we wanted to be able to express ourselves and have a place to express so that we could heal from all these colonizational rooms. There is a lot of stuff that... You know it's hard living in this world, in these communities where we are beat down constantly and historically, and because of that we have so much to deal with. In terms of women's bodies always under attack. And um, so that was really important for us to provide that support. And we all need it. Um yeah, that is our common goal. Our common goal is to I guess, extend internationally as well. To extent that idea internationally. I always thought that that was part of our goal too.

I: So with that, do you all have a mission statement?

M: Yes, it's online. It took forever to make. I mean to develop and really hone. Okay, what are we going to focus on? What are going to do? Because um, because we have so many broad uh, focuses. I don't know it sounds so strange but, we just have so many needs and so many things we want to address. Uh, it was, it really is difficult, so it really took a long time to really create a vision statement that was going to encompass all that we were. An um, that's online. but, Anyway...

I: So, how often do you all meet?

M: Uh, I haven't met with Mujeres de Maiz in a very long time. I would say at least a year. I find it difficult since we all have jobs. I especially do, I have two teaching jobs, so I have no time. Now, I have a family to support now. I just have a lot of responsibilities outside the organization now so it's difficult for me to do much of anything. Uh... I do occasionally consult with them. Formally, I talk to Michelle all the time. Felicia, I will consult with her and we will have conversations about if there are any concerns we will air them out or talk about things about anything or if we want to participate in anything. We just do the best we can. I don't... I am kinda distancing myself right now because I

have so much work. I just don't have time at all. I also uh...for example, this year I am usually very busy making the publication that comes out every year. But this year since we are doing the 20th Anniversary, we decided not to do that. It's just too much. So, that's fine, I am good. I am very busy anyway. Uh, so this is the first year that I haven't... that I pulled away from it since back in 1997 or '98. I kinda pulled away from the first few years and started up in 2006. And from 2006 to the present I have been doing the publication since so...or working with the publication. And this last year we didn't pull a call out. And um, I don't know if we are going to do it next year. I don't know what it's going to look like next year. Hopefully, I will be able to do the project.

I: Definitely. With that, I would like to know how you started Mujeres de Maiz and when.

M: Well, I am not, well I am considered one of the founders I think as a courtesy but I didn't discover Mujeres de Maiz. It was really... It was really Felicia and Claudia Mercado, Felicia Montes. They're really the ones that began this idea of bringing about women in the arts or creating this group. and when they came to me it was... they had already been doing it for a few months. Maybe I don't know almost a...they had already been doing it for almost a year, for i'm gonna say for about a year already and they brought...they brought this idea of a publication and I had just graduated from Art Center so I was pretty like disillusioned because at Art Center it's just Western Art. I was trained as an illustrator. I didn't really have a voice that was really... nobody really saw me as like oh, yeah you can do this, you are a great artist or why don't you blah, blah, blah. I didn't get any of that at Art Center. I got some support but it was just really minimal. And the ones that did support me had passed away suddenly at Art Center. Which was really Interesting, the two people that did.

I: So who were the two people that supported you at Art Center?

M: At Art Center I had... I had...I am trying to think of the two. It was a while ago. Uh, Mark Hartman...Mark...His name was... I can't think of his name right now. I just blanked, Two illustrators. One was murdered and the other one I think passed away from a heart attack. It was Dwight Harmon, Dwight Harmon who was an illustrator, very famous illustrator. Uh, who was very strict but I liked that, I liked strict teacher for some reason I really liked the rigidity and harshness but I never really took it to heart. I just thought oh they are trying to train me, ok. It's kinda like bootcamp for this guy for teachers like him. He was a very bootcamp kind of instructor but when he laid out his uh, commentary, I knew it was real. You know like he really complimented my work or really enjoyed my work, like this is really good stuff. And I was doing stuff that... he asked us to do something original, and so I did and it was like this ojo de dios and you know I had put these things, i don't know, very political, very personal. And he absolutely raved about it, he thought it was the best thing in the class. and the rest of the class was like whatever, like we'll see, people who completely out of touch with that, it was Art Center,rich people go there. so it was like whatever, But he was like so excited about what I was doing, he was like "I've never seen anything like this, this is amazing stuff and blah blah blah," and he would just go on and on about this. So I didn't expect that

response from this white dude, this white teacher. I mean I say that because most of my teachers were white and what they did say ain't much, just you know this and that. and um, so yeah he was really good. Dwight Harmon was awesome, and then later Rey Bustos took his place. But I didn't take his class, but i met Rey Bustos later at Cal State. And we talked a little bit about how he replaced Dwight Harmon, so we kind of connected that way, and Rey Bustos really supported me and my work and um he's a great teacher at Cal State, but Cal State got rid of him for some reason, I don't know why. But, or they didn't support his teaching well as much as they should have, cuz he was a great teacher. Um...I mean he knew how to draw really well. He's a master, especially with the human body, that's very difficult... to master so... yeah... so he was my life, more my life drawing instructors, and then the other teacher, I wanna say his name was... Dwight Harmon, no (interruption) Bern Hobart, wait did I say Bern Hobart or Dwight Harmon?

I: Dwight...

M: Dwight Harmon, ok, I'm getting them confused, Bern Hobart was the one that... life drawing, big thing. Dwight Harmon was an illustrator who created this... I don't know this interesting character. He was the one that was murdered and at an ATM, but there not sure what happened. But he use to give money to people, he was just a really nice person and I think he was just taken advantage of and he ended up being killed. But um.. Dwight Harmon was an (could not transcribe @ 12:34) and he liked my work. He was the only one that pulled me... he was another one where the only two or three instructors that pulled me aside and said "look, this what you gotta do." Blah blah blah. so he really kind of consulted with me about what I should do with my work. Cuz I was having all this... I was having lot of trouble, or I wasn't sure where to go, or how to do my work, cuz no one was responding. So I just kinda tried to do my own thing. So he gave me some really good advice, but um... bern hobart was the real strict life drawing teacher who like... yeah, he was awesome. he was very good to me, but even though he was like yelling at us all the time, but (laughs) like he literally yelled at us in the back. but I always did what he said (laughs). i always followed his instructions. And I learned a lot from him, cuz he was just like that though. So those are the two instructors. And then, Tony Zepeda who was running the Printmaking department at Art Center, is really awesome too. he really supported my work as well. I was kind of quiet, you know, in these classes, I didn't say much. I just did the work I wanted to do and he really liked some of the stuff I was doing. So he also (cherished me). And um.. I was very much into etching. I loved etching, I loved um... working with that medium. So he would really support that-he had other stuff he was teaching us, like he taught us silkscreen, all that stuff right, but um...but Tony Zepeda use to work at Gemini Studios, which is on the West side, you know Rauschenberg all those cats, he worked with those people back in the day. So he was teaching at Art Center, and... so he basically taught me a lot of processors, sugar lift, all this stuff that people don't do anymore and um... I really liked it. It was, it was intense, I would say it was an intense experience, and um... looking back on it I really appreciated it. I'm really glad I did it even though it was really really hard. Even though I had no time to do anything. um...I rarely saw my family, it was that kind of thing, and they lived like right here (laughs). So I never really saw them, it was just... I was always... whenever I

was at Art Center I was just busy, just 24/7, very intense, but I learned a lot of stuff there. Glad I went there.

I: So let's step back to um... talking a little bit more about the collective, I mean thank you for sharing, but-

M: Sorry.

I: No that's good cuz um...

M: I mean that directly impacted my work with *mujeres de maiz* because when I did the zine I took it very seriously, and I used all those, I guess all that to help me push forward. Because I had the skills, I had the computer, I took computer... I took graphic design. I was able to work with it, and um... create something electronically because I think that was one of the first times we had actually done that, to do an electronic uh...version of the zine. So through Art Zine rigidity I was able to pull from that to do it.

I: So that's interesting to hear that despite the fact that Art Center took a lot of your time, you know some of the tools that you learned there were definitely a resources, you know, within the collective.

M: Yeah!

I: Ok, so do you work individually? If so, what do you do individually?

M: Oh you mean, my own work?

I: Yeah.

M: yeah, you know when I do have time, which is really rare these days, I do... I do silkscreen. I don't, I would like to go back to painting at some point, but I pretty much, since I know a lot of media, I do a lot of mixed media. so whenever I get ahold of something or an idea um... I like to do different things. So I'll do painting, drawing, a combination, um... I know how to sew, so maybe I'll sew something. That's what I kind of do today, so like I sew banners, and I print make on them. I do a lot of printmaking on them and then I'll use paper, amate paper which I'm very into right now, I mean I've always kind of been into it, but I've been trying to see if I could introduce it into the stuff I've been doing now and I think I'm successfully doing that now. And I also do a lot of papel picado, um... which was a skill I learned before I went to Art Center, from Plaza de la Raza who had Olga Ponce Ferguson who was teaching these classes at the time um... back in, I wanna say back in the 80's or 90's and...I would say the 90's and so early 90's and my aunt and myself and my mother we went, and we took those classes and we learned how to do papel picado and then I kind of took papel picado another way, I just, I was more adventurous about it. So I kind of moved away from the traditional style, I started using papel picado just to do cut-outs of Summer to Carol Walker um... kind of stuff where I would just experiment and I do a lot of contemporary versions of that and

um... I would also include the grid, which is kind of where the style of papel picado in Mexico sits on a grid and that's how it holds everything in a sphere- uh- in the space. So if your cutting things out you need like a grid to hold things. So yeah, I kind of used some of that, those techniques but I am very loose about it. So... and I tend to just free draw it, I don't plan as much as is usually required. I just gotta free... yeah. I kind of start drawing...

I: You like to live dangerously...

M: Yeah, I like to live dangerously, so yeah, I'll just throw... at which my mom and my aunt always kind of marvel at, because I, they always tell me "how do you do that?" I just throw the paper on top of whatever I'm doing and then I'll just start drawing like cuts and then just planning them out, oh hey this will work, I'mma try this, and then I just cut and see what happens, so... and it usually holds together nicely. I've had very few problems with that technique but through that they're working. But I have so much drawing, signing and I think maybe that's part of it. With so much schooling in the arts and most of my different techniques that are, you know, so yeah.

I: your able to easily map out... what you see...

M: Yeah, I have a lot of paintings and drawings, I kind of visualize things a lot... um... a lot more or a lot easier. I find that whatever I visualize in my head seems to work out anyway, like, "ok, I want this," and it just sort of happens. So I'll usually visualize something first in my head, so I'll see it in my head, and I'll be like "ok this is what I want." And then I'll start it, and sometimes it won't quiet go the way I want, but I'm able to work around those problems. So I'm a quick problems solver. Which is kind of what artists do anyways. So if you do it a lot, you get better at it. yeah.

I: So, uh, do you work collaboratively? If So, What do you do collectively or collaboratively?

M: The only thing I can think of that I do collaboratively and in the arts right now is um... is working on the publication. In other words I do a lot of that. Sometimes...in the past, sometimes I would help with um... with some organizing, or just, you know, things that need to be done, like bring this or that, just practical things. But most of the time it's been through um... the publication. So, for the call out, I'll suggest, does anybody want to help with... planning to throw a call out to people who want to participate in that process, who want to participate in the selection process, in the editing process please feel free to... So I've been lucky to get uh...some people who were consistently-consistent, some people would just come in and do one thing or come and do, oh make this list, and they'll make a list which is so hard, all those little things make such a difference so, and, um, yeah. So I just have that kind of, it's very loose. And whoever participates, we put their names on the um... publication to make sure that they get credit for the for participating. yeah, that's how we do it.

I: So, as part of this collective, are you all self sufficient? Where do you all get resources? or do you all rely on grants? How does that work?

M: Well... I think it's a lil bit of everything. For me, I'm self sufficient, like I grew up my life now to a point where I don't, I don't really need, I mean never really gotten a paycheck to do anything for *mujeres de maiz*, I mean I can't even remember, if I ever have, I don't think I ever have, money was there to give to me, I usually give it to like the printer or the person who helped me design something or people who are you know younger and don't have job-- cuz I always had a job or, I mean I've always struggled, we've all struggled for um... for financial resources and it's been very difficult for all of us, I think, uh... to um... as artists like it's a difficult life. If they go, artists make all kinds of money. Oh, yeah, well some do but, I don't know that any of us really make all that much and um, a lot of it, it's not necessarily consistent, it's not something to rely on, it's just... you know, living from one job to the next, you know, one paycheck to the next. um, right now I'm, I'm lucky enough to be, because I've pursued an educational degree, I work in education. So, um, I've barely been able to scratch off an amount I want, because arts education is not something that people want to invest in or it's just barely being considered at this time. So I'm barely been able, at this point, just to start scratching the amount I really want. So I'm pretty self-sustaining right now. Cuz I don't need anything from *Mujeres de Maiz* financially, but it would have been nice to have or even get paid from what we do, um... Just so we could survive. I would have been happy just doing what we do, and just, you know ok. I just wanna be able to pay my bills and eat, sleep, have a place to live and then do what I do, (Spoke under breath). My life is... I mean my requests are simple, I think everybody pretty much feels that way as well. you know, we all wanna travel, we all wanna... travel in a way that speaks to social justice, or working with other women, other places or you know, so or just to travel to understand what women are going through in this place or... and that informs our work, so we try to think of it collectively as uh... in terms of community. And so we always try, I think all of us try to live that life and live it in a humble way, we're not, we don't wanna be rockstars, I don't wanna be a... I don't wanna you know, buy diamonds. Like I'm not... that's not our way. I don't think that's our way. Um, Ours is much more humble and simple, our needs are very simple, yeah, and part of it practical, very practical. On the other hand, I also feel like, you know, we all see ourselves as some kind of goddess or something (chuckles) I don't know if everybody wants to be a goddess, but within our own personal worlds you know, like we don't know of you want... yeah we don't want to be absurd about our needs. (chuckles) We just want to um... to help... to help others, to help other women and that's... at least what I'm... what I feel, I just want to help, and be part of the solution instead of the problem.

I: So, where did you learn to do what you do?

M: where did I learn to do the what?

I: to do what you do. So, you know, your an artist...

M: Oh!! Well it's a combination of community, like art classes, like first art classes, we all took art classes in the community, like Self-Help Graphics. I learned to do watercolor from Yreina. Um... and then Plaza de la Raza, they taught me, you know, paper cutting. I took art very seriously in high school, even though they didn't take me very seriously in high school. So... but I did it anyway, because I enjoyed it. I learned how to sew in high school. I learned how to... you know I really wanted to know how to make things and do things, just with my hands. I like working with my hands, so I was always looking for things like that. I had taught myself the guitar, some things were self taught, like the guitar, then I knew how to play the guitar, but my father knew how to play the guitar, so I wanted to learn. Um... so things like that, I did somethings through self taught, somethings were... I would say most things were learned too from university when I went to Art Center, it's really where I learned most of my drawing and painting and all that fancy stuff. I really learned how to... you know paint, I learned to paint, learned to draw, learned a lot of things. And, um... so it was a combination, I wouldn't say it was one thing.

I: So... So how is the collective engaged with community?

M: Well... for me, for me it's always mostly been virtual. And we have our event, we have our annual event. In different parts of the community, different spots in L.A. So we usually have our um... our culminating events where we have live performances, and art, and so we put a call out for that in the community, and we just invite everybody from the community to uh... show their work, showcase their work, perform, whatever they want to do, we offer that space, so that's kind of how we reach out to the community. We offer them a space to perform, to put their voice in a creative way or to express their voice in a creative way. And we offer... then we started offering guidance in that, if you needed help, we would start offering poetry workshops, we started offering, you know, things like that to help with that, with people who were struggling, or felt like maybe my voice could be said in a better way or more effective. How can I make... So some people were interested in self-improvement, so we wanted to improve that. Um... so yeah, that's kind of how we reached out to the community. Felicia does most of it, she's on the ground all the time. She's really out there talking to the community, dealing with what, and the ugly and the pretty stuff. This is always, you know, resistance or people misunderstand, or you know women can be so catty (laughs), women can... there's all these envidios, there's always rude things that happen. But I'm glad that were in a place of dia-, where we always want to dialogue. Like ok, well if you feel this way, did you tell us? Or what's the problem? What's going on? What do you think? What do you suggest? Why don't you join our group and make it better? Why don't you join our group and help us solve these problems? So I think our willingness to be open and um... our willingness to try and listen to the women in our group and... listen to their needs, um...at least I try, I try very hard to listen, I try to understand, and that we're all in different places, not necessarily better or worst, but just different places and um... I guess we are trying to be sensitive to that. I don't know if I answered the question.

I: Yeah.

M: (laughs)

I: How does spirituality take place in the collectives?

M: how does spirituality... um... Spirituality takes place all the time, I think, Um... we're from the school of um... ancient indigenous practices, and we all have different backgrounds so... and some overlap of course, um... but we all try to bridge an indigenous sensibility or an aboriginal or mesoamerican sensibility where it's about the earth, it's about the next seven generations, it's about when we have to make big decisions we need to think about the future. Can't just make decisions cuz you want. So it's never cuz we want more, we want more money, you know, whatever, or cuz we want more for ourselves, its about considering the other as well. So, um... I think our spirituality is really um... in that. First my background, my uncle is apache who introduced sweat to me when I was 19 and that lodge has made me feel in ways that were really powerful and so I think that a lot of... and this is before other people were doing it so I just kind of... this is something I did in my family, but um...I think later on as time moved forward more of these practices began to be more known and um... and yeah, it's interesting, and so I think our group has even morphed into this um... this... spiritual way that... um... that is about the earth, we're a sense of the earth, we're about earth religions, or earth practices. Not too much dogma, not into the dogma, but we all have our different backgrounds. I mean my mom's wicca, my dad's like an atheist, you know, everybody has their own, and Claudia practices similar you know, (name of member)practices as well, Felicia is very much about the red road, it's called the red road. um... a Native American Lakota, specifically Lakota mostly. See, I visited and attended several ceremonies, so we go to ceremonies sometimes together, sometimes apart, um sometimes alone. Most of the time I, at this point in my life I go to ceremony at home, you know, I have an altar, I give thanks, that's what it's mostly for, I don't usually ask for things, I just give thanks for what I already have and give thanks for things that are going to come. (her voice goes to low) That are gonna be awesome, cuz it always happens that way, when something always comes and (...) It's kind of where I come from. I think the group collective practices this as well.

I: ok so now we are gonna move a little bit to talk about, to go into talking about you? um... so i'd like to know are you formerly trained and um... and this includes were you trained at an institution? if so, what institution? or did someone in your family or community teach you? I know you kind of already talked about community um... so maybe you can tell us a little bit more about your training at the institution.

M: Well, like I said Art Center was intense. I learned everything there um... I got my BFA, it was my first degree, my first real attempt at degree, so um... being trained as an illustrator was really powerful in terms of omy skill set, like I became very confident but only after I met with Mujeres de Maiz because when I graduated from illustration school from the Art Center, I was... I felt really, I didn't feel that great about it, like it didn't feel like a real accomplishment to me for some reason, I just felt really beaten... like beat down, like aw, am I worthy of this? you know, so I really felt like that, but really wasn't until Mujeres de Maiz came along that said this stuff is great on my god, we can believe

you know how to do all this stuff, wow. After they saw my painting and they were just amazed, they were like this is great stuff. And so that made me to help me feel more comfortable and to keep doing what I do. At some point after I got my teaching degree or my Master's in Education, um...which took me a long time cuz I really got jaded by the educational system, I got really pissed off. I had said, you know what? I really don't wanna do this, and then it took me longer and I ended up going back to it because I do love teaching of course, so i said ok, I'll do it. So I finished it, and then I ended up going to get my M.F.A. a fine art because i didn't know if I was gonna get a job in education because I was about teaching art and there were no jobs in teaching art in the public education system. So I kind of lost hope for a while. But I said "well, I'll go back to school, get my MFA it's a terminal degree, I'll get something. I don't know what, we'll see." Well after I graduate from getting my Master's in Fine Art.

I: Where did you get your Master's in Fine Art?

M: In Cal State LA, so in Cal State LA. I went there mostly because Manuel Aguilar Moreno was there and he knew everything there is to know about the Aztec life, um... I mean in terms of archeology, in terms of art, his really awesome. I took a few classes with him there and I loved it, and I learned so much history with him. He was really helpful with um... with my work, cuz he understood my work, he's like oh thats the tepo. He was able to identify every symbol of my work, where no one else in the school did that and I wish he could have been in my committee, but it just didn't work out. And um... So I didn't get that much training at... as an MFA. I just learned to focus well, which is good, you know I needed to learn how to focus on my project and figure out what I wanted to do and move on. And I was interested in teaching at the college level and so I thought, well maybe I can get either a job here, a job there. I wanted to be completely available for anything so that I can get something. But now I have both, and now I have to make a choice, so it's kind of interesting how I ended up there. I didn't expect that, but... so now I have, I am teaching at the big blue soup, or public education, K-12, and now I'm teaching at the college so now I'm like, "oh my god, it's too much I'm gonna die, so I gotta pick something" um... But I enjoy teaching in general, I learned that you know I just like teaching anything to anyone. Umm... I did some classes, community classes one summer, that was nice but it was a lot of work and um... and I didn't get paid, I did like 10 classes and um...I was just exhausted that summer, but I did enjoy it, it's really nice to be able to give back to my community and I started to think and the reason why I started teaching was because I felt really narcissistic about doing my work. "Woaw. This feels like I'm just really doing it for me and nobody wants this stuff." So um... and then this past fall I sold 3 works in 3 months and I realized "oh ok, So this is something that people might like but I didn't do it because people like it, I just did it cuz I liked it, but it started becoming very exciting so... that's the work I would like to focus on again at some point. Maybe this summer hopefully, i'll be able to do it.

I: So what is that work?

M: it's um... the.. there mobile cutouts so there this mobile cutouts that I use coil, cloth, and now I added uh, amate paper because I wanted to talk about past to the present um... so...

I: was one of them the (Ritz) mobile?

M: yeah, some of them are really big, but some of them are very small. And I started doing the smaller versions of them and now I have these really tiny ones um... that i'm working on. And they're basically honoring past heroes, past women who have you know, inspired or you know, sacrificed, which is um... which is very ancient tradition, to sacrifice so others can live. Um...so I wanted to talk about that, I wanted to talk about um, memory, I wanted to talk about what we can remember because I don't remember a lot of things, I find that memory is you know, it's so fragile sometimes, I feel like our memories could be fragile, sometimes it can be very powerful and sometimes it can be very dark and so um... I wanted the mobile to represent that. So it became this like kinetic work where it just moves, and if it's well lit, and if it's moving freely then it will emit shadows, and I really like that about the work that is kind of um... interactive in a way and I wanted people to think about this things as they saw these images or these little... kind of like ... Altars. What Laura Perez would call our altares right, our altaries. So...yeah, I wanted them to feel like that. So, it looks kind of, coming out nicely, im enjoying it. I miss the painting thou. I do. but I do get to paint on the surface a little bit. I use a little bit of gold paint to bring back that majesty of ancient times with the idea of gold. Honoring that, the preciousness of memory, what we do remember I think is so precious that if we don't, it's like this hole, it's just emptiness. and you don't know. The history of our ancestry, which in our diaspora, is part of our diaspora. So, I'm trying to talk about those things, but I think that happens to everyone. Some of us have more holes than others maybe in their ancestry and uncovering that is... is important.

I: I know, in one of your pieces you talked about Coyoacan, right?

M: Which one?

I: In one of your pieces you talked about Coyoacan...

M: Oh yeah! Coyoacan, that was my grandmother had left me all these fotos and so that's how I started the work. She...

I: So awesome.

M: Yeah, so it's an actual picture of her and um... some friends in front of a car, an old car in Coyoacan. So, um... yeah it was a great picture. Actually my aunt shared it with me cuz she had given it to her and so all the family started finding out I was doing this project so they started sharing the pictures with me, that they have and um...I was like these are great, and that was one of them. And um, yeah, and I'm actually redoing that on amate, now I started silkscreening directly on the amate paper so it looks really good. And instead of black I'm using like a brown, a dark brown, I swear it's like the color of

her skin and I inherited that so I feel like that's part of my... I just love, I love that warmth that the brown brings or that mellow, this warm feeling. So I've been working with that, colors, feelings, memory having a good time. Great work, I love doing it.

I: So I know you answered... I think that you answered the following question. Did you go to school? and what level of education do you have? So I know, that you told us that you went to Art Center, you got a B.F.A. Bachelor's in Fine Arts,

M: yes, yes.

I: and Then you went on to uh...

M: Master's of Education, I got a Master's in Education, not in Cal State LA, I got it at uh... I was working full time at the time, so I had to go to a school, it was a school in Sherman Oaks called National University. I don't like online schooling, I just, it's not my thing, but I like to be in person, in classes. So I took an online course, not an online course, it's an online school, but they also have satellites where you go to an actual class, so I did that for uh... few years so that how I got my M. Ed. which is Master's in Education. I started in Special Education but then I changed my mind. I said no, I wanna teach art, so I ended up teaching art. Then I went to Cal State for some of those classes cuz they didn't have them at the time so um... that's when I took some, I took a class with Manuel and that's when I "oh maybe I'll do a Master's here. Maybe I'll apply and see what happens." It's close by, that's kind of the only reason I took it cuz I didn't have to travel a very long distance and um... yeah and I did. It was great I met some really fun great people. I met Michelle there, I recruited her to Mujeres de Maiz and that's how she ended up with us. um... I met her there and yeah. That's how I ended up here, with all my papers, with all my letters behind my name. but the public school doesn't like to hire teachers with letters behind their names, its a lot of money. (laughs) A lot more money.

I: So then in Cal State LA is where you received your MFA.

M: Correct.

I: Wow.

M: yeah.

I: I didn't know that.

M: Yeah.

I: So I know we also talked about you... doing some com- taking the classes in the community, cuz the next question is are you self-trained or self-taught right, and you talked about your experience taking classes within the community and then also being formerly trained right?

M: yes, right. and um...

I: also teaching yourself, right, like how to play guitar.

M: Yeah, I played guitar um... my family's always been... or the women in my family especially on my grandmother's side, my mom's side um... my mom's side... like when my grandmother use to do knitting, she use to be an amazing knitting master, she would, she worked in Mexico City in a shop and knitted for a living, and so when she came here, she use to be apart of a knitting club that was here in City Terrace, and she would just like be knitting and she would knit with her eyes closed, she would knit while she was watching TV, she would knit while she was talking to us. Just knit, knit, knit, knit the world, and she could knit anything, crochet anything. Um... she would look at something, and be like "oh yeah, i can do that." she just did. She taught my mom, my aunt, my mom and uh... so we all kind of knew... and I, she even taught me a little bit, I learned how to make a scarf when I was young. But um... so we've always been using our hands and my whole family is like that. Um... my mom always crafted things, made things. My mom was very active like that. Like she always made stuff. There use to be this company that made these paints called Trycan, and Trycan (babies) is for fabric paints or like little pens or tubes of paint, and she would just like paint things on clothing and it would be permanent, cuz permanent paint would stay on the... she'd make all this stuff, paint all this stuff, paint on all kinds of different, I mean you can't even imagine, clothing, um... pillow cases, I mean all kinds of stuff, so my mom was always doing things, she made cakes, decorated cakes, she was a homemaker so she was trained right out of high school so the women in my family were very... you know, well versed in the... home economics. And so they know how to sew, they know how to, my aunt knew how to make patterns, um... my mom taught me how to sew, but then I ended up taking it in high in school, so I learned even more. So I was able to... like I sew my own clothes now, so I mean I really appreciated knowing all those things. So knowing all those things was an easy transitions to go into the arts because... oh ok, another way to make something and um... so I was partially self-taught in a lot of ways, um but I was educated formerly and through the community, took all the community classes when I was younger, in the arts, yeah.

I: so what is social justice mean to you?

M: what does social justice mean to me? Wow. um... social justice means that when we're part of a community, we're part of a... I guess a broader idea I guess would be a country, um... that we're all taking care of, that we're taking care of each other the best way possible. but everybody ge-, every country gets to um... fly um with respect to another culture, like I can't make whatever's happening on my culture thrive if it's pro harming or hurting someone else. So for me social justice is about being aware of what's happening in the communities, aware, just total and complete awareness. Awareness, sensitivity, understanding, (coughs) community building, compassion, all those things. And um... great feelings of life, what it takes; a lot of love, a lot of honesty; a lot of truth telling, a lot of willingness to look at um... the faults of our community. Things that are not working, things that are oppressing someone or something, or

someway are not helping social justice. So what it means social justice is about thought awareness, and sensitivity, and compassion, and allowing others to experience freedom without fear, fearing to be themselves, we should be ourselves.

I: so going back to what you last said, how does the collective function and I guess in terms of... I guess social functions, so like do you have a mix, a middle, and work all as one. like how does... So do you more or less know what the Collective consists of?

M: oh my god. I think... our collective has come a long way, um... like like for example Gina, Gina Aparicio and I, like you know, we were, we came out of ELAC. you know, community college before we moved on to our other colleges and I guess we started... everybody started on their communities, you know I'm from City Terrace, Boyle Heights, EL Sereno, I kind of grew up those areas when I was young. So we are from the streets, you know from the respective communities and we all have different experiences, I think that's what makes our group so dynamic and so um... and so amazing because we can see from all these different perspectives and we are able to have more of acceptance of all these different kinds of experiences from women um... I think that's why it works so well, um... Felicia comes from a grassroots organizing background, heavy, you know, her father is like a brown beret, you know, historical. And so she has that background and then you know, Claudia Mercado has this, you know... has another exp- everybody has their own experience. And um... at this point for me, I'm well educated, but we struggled for that education, like it didn't just landed on our laps, we had to make real sacrifices, I had to make a real sacrifice to do this thing and however I don't see myself as better than anybody else. Just because I got an education doesn't mean I can come into my community and say I know how to do this. I know how to take care of you. Actually I don't know, and um... there's people in the community that know best, that know better, that have different experiences and have a different educational background, and different world education or sensibility, Like I said, it's all about awareness and heart, like some of these people have great hearts, beautiful hearts, that's what needs to be honored. (too much noise) heart come forward and say I'm gonna sacrifice for my community and um... I want my community to be a safe place to live. I want there to have food, I want it to have shelter, I want there have amusement, everybody should be in counseling, you know whatever it takes to become a healthy community. and what does that look like? We have to decide that, right? I don't think (gibberish) on authority. We all have skills and we can all offer those skills but, um... I don't, like I said, I don't think any of us are any better than anybody else in the community that's working just as hard, and doing their thing. But on the other hand too I also feel that um... people like us who went through the educational system think this way are sometimes put in the system are misunderstood or undervalued, you know because we do come from this value... this valuable insight about, within institutions that can... can help our communities too. There's ways that we can help and that we hope that we can help and its there so, I just wish that umm... everyone can appreciate everyone's gifts and just work together and fight the good fight, or the fight that's really happening right now where it doesn't matter if we have 10 degrees or one or none, you know, the government is gonna come and squash you and they're gonna take us all so... it doesn't matter. And um... so really it's,

for me it's about coming together, making sure you do it in the best way possible or try to. I don't know if that answered your question.

I: yeah you did. And we did address that... Cuz I think essentially we were trying to understand it's like... you know what, like where do the people in your collective come from, you know, like whether they're middle class or you know "lower class" or, like, I guess, what socio economic background do people come from that encompass the collective?

M: I would say that we all come from a... I don't... like my mom grew up poor so it depends when you are talking about, like, historically in my family there was, my mother had holes in her shoes, like she just, there was a different um... and I knew that, like I knew that growing up, my mother had holes in her shoes, I didn't have holes in my shoes, so you know it's that progression, but also I understood that that happened to us, that we lived this way, so had I grown up not knowing that maybe my sensibility would have been different maybe my awareness would have been different. But having that awareness that ok my family was here and they grew up poor and I'm here and I'm lucky to have these things what am I gonna do with it. you know, so I made this... so my parents were like "you're going to college" or they would go "we want a better life for you, we want you to have a better life." So at least most of us come from that if not all of us. We all come from that. Um... you know, I don't think... my parents grew up living paycheck to paycheck it wasn't like they were super wealthy, my parents didn't own a home until they were older, until I left, until I left for school. They never really own a home, um so yeah, I think everybody has... we're like that, I wanna say we're like that in midway. I don't really wanna say the word middle class but, maybe somewhere in-between.

I: So for you, I guess, how does art function as tool for transformation?

M: how does art function as transformation... um... I never really understood how art transformed until um I got very sick and after a... after a long relationship I had with... cuz after Art Center I had this really long relationship and um... there were things I got from that relationship, and the things I did get from that relationship, I'm grateful for that, that I experienced, but um... there were thing that were not healthy and there were things that had happened to me before that I didn't deal with. So...yeah I went into that relationship not knowing myself basically. and so when I left that relationship, was... it was really traumatic in a sense that financially it was traumatic. I didn't expect him to behave that way about money. You know I had this idea that I had this respect for him that you know, he had some kind of integrity and I knew he kept to his word and when that didn't happened, it devastated me, it devastated my own and then financially i was devastated because because of it so, that opened up other things for me, and then simultaneously, I had started going to ceremonies, my friends started taking me to ceremonies. I went to a bear ceremony and then that completely transformed my life. After that um...I began to literally unravel um... I don't want to call it breakdown or nervous breakdown because it felt more like I needed to go through something, I needed to get passed through something or I needed to undo everything and put it all back

together. And that's kind of what I did. So I undid my whole life and my whole life just completely fell apart to pieces and then I had to pick it up all by myself. So that didn't look pretty, and sometimes it did, sometimes it didn't. And, um... so that didn't look very pretty sometimes, sometimes it looked beautiful and sometimes it was, I was miserable and sometimes I had, one time I had to be put away. so...and that was mostly because other people didn't know what to do with me because when someone cries too long, it's like why are you crying, and it wasn't disturbing to me, I just needed to cry, but sometimes people don't know what to look at or don't know how to look at that, so they put it away. You gotta put it away, you gotta do something, you gotta make it stop, you gotta make her stop crying. And... but sometimes I think we just need to cry. we just need to cry and cry however long it takes. And um... and that made me feel better after I did all that, but it was difficult.

Interruption.

So... so after I got sick. for a long... it took a long time, it was right after 9/11 that things really fell apart and I just lost it. I eventually lost track of time, things kind of... it was very interesting how things just started to uh... my mind just kind of pulled apart, at one point my mind just sort of short circuited and I had to uh... it was almost like being in a coma I guess where you had to reconnect things, like everything got pulled apart and then I had to reconnect everything again but in a different way. So... yeah, it was restructuring my thinking, my life, and during that time i made some paintings and drawings. and um...and that really helped soothe me, to express that, to be able to express that, to be able to talk about it. I did some paintings before, sometimes I did some paintings during. And even the ones before, during before and after, have a story to tell. I had experienced sexual assault before I met my partner at that time. So... never really... I kind of just didn't really want to tell anybody about it. I think I told really one or two people, it was just kind of an off candied thing but I thought "oh you know, I'm over it, I'm fine." And really I wasn't. So reconec-, so falling apart and reconnecting was a ways of deal with that. So I had to rebuild my whole idea about love. Um... who I was, sexually. Who I was... emotionally, who I was in every way. So I kind of rebuilt that whole thing and then making the art, and having the art close to me was very comforting and um... it helped me to be uh...to put those pieces together. And luckily Mujeres de Maiz, the women of Mujeres de Maiz were there, to help me through that as well. So the collective really supported me in every way that you can imagine and that was invaluable to me. So, these are like my sisters, I would do it to them, you know. i would help them too, if they had to go through something like that. So, um... so really that's kind of how, um, how that went about, in terms of art and my relationship to art, um... it's always helped me calm my mind and just settle things which is...I enjoy being with myself. And um... it's interesting that i find people that dont like to be with themselves. it's kind of a foreign idea to me, I'm like, "what?" "don't you like to be by yourself?" So it's hard for me, it would be hard normally, it would have been hard for me to make friends because there a lot of people out there, women out there that want to make, specifically women um... but men too, that don't know how to be by themselves so they need another person to fill that space all the time and I was never a good friend like that, because I was like "well, I like to be by myself sometimes" So it was hard to make, when I was younger it was hard to

make other people understand that I still consider you a very good friend, but I don't have to have you here all the time. Like I can entertain myself. I can... I kind of always been that way ever since I was little. And um... my mom always said "you were very good with entertaining yourself" and I was. I use to make my own things, you know I just start making something, painting something or drawing something, and I would just do my own thing and I had a great time, I-I... I like being alone. I don't mind it. I enjoy both, I enjoy being with people I enjoy being alone. So I think that helped me a lot too and just having that understanding.

I: So um... so let's go a little bit back to perhaps the collective, but... maybe offer yourself, maybe this could also help to talk about you and your work. Why women? Why is the focus women?

M: I didn't grow up with sisters. so, it was just me and my brother, and my brother was very young and I, I had already um... I think I was like 8, when he was born, seven or eight. And so um... and he was just a baby, so, you know, I love my brother, I love my brother, but I uh... I didn't necessarily grow up with him. I did to some degree, like when he was young, you know me and my cousins would play and I remember things that me and my brother would do when he was little, he was my baby, but as um... a pre-teen, I was growing up. I grew up pretty solitary, in terms of siblings. And um... I did have some other like distant cousins that were cool, that we use to hang out, but I didn't have any sisters and um... and the closest thing were my tias, like my aunts and they would talk to me about any kind of problems, especially when you know mom and daughter problems. So I would always clash with my mother, you know, cuz my mother would be um... protective. I so would have to like vent my frustrations out with my aunts all the time. So my aunts were like my sisters too in a way and then um... and then, you know making friends with women was easy for me like I just wanted that, I wanted that sisterhood and maybe that's why you know, I just needed that in my life. And so... um... so... that's how I approached the, joining the organization as well. These are my sisters, you know, we can handle this, we can handle anything. So that's why I guess I really, I couldn't see just the just ending, like ok we are not going to do this anymore, like (laughs). I just didn't see it, I just thought we saw being together, growing old together, doing things all in some-some way all the time, and um... so that's kind of why, and then women's issues as well. I can't speak for men, you know, I'm not a man, um... but I can maybe help women. i'm a woman, I can talk about that experience, there are things that I talk about that women can relate to so when I started hearing that response from my work, from things that I did, um... you know women responded and so... oh ok, like maybe this can help if the idea of telling our stories of, seem to help other women, in that case we should all be telling our stories and seeing how we can help others and um... I know the stories my mom would tell me about herself, would always help me. Um... so I mean the stories were real about her even though she probably tried to keep some of that stuff from me. But, the stories that, she would tell me real stories about herself, stories about her struggle, about this or that, I always felt more respect, and for the most part closer to her. I always thought oh you know my mom was smart for doing that or that was too bad that that happened to her, and I'm gonna work so that that doesn't happened to me, or things like that. So I always tell that it was easier to always talk about

women's issues because I'm a woman and you know, and then it got a little more complex because then you know lesbians and (laughs) bisexuals and you know, so all these things started to because i was more interested in that too because i was like "oh, ok" so I can name myself whatever I want and nothing. And I could be... like I always consider myself bisexual, like i don't know I've met a couple women that I've been interested but it just never went anywhere. And um... it just happened, it so happens that I have a man, you know what I mean. So, um... I kind of feel like that about it, and that everybody should just, you know, love who they love and that's it, it's that simple. So I guess my philosophy of goodness um... be willing to allow people to be themselves and... is important. That always resonated with women, cuz women historically aren't supposed to be themselves, are supposed to be this idea of a society thinks we should do and yeah, and I always thought (gibberish) against that stuff. (laughs) No, I'm not gonna do that. so yeah, just helping those women, get through those times. Brought me a lot of satisfaction.

I: Alright, so now we're gonna go to the next question, which is about the collective. So this is a complex question I think, I don't know it's really weird. but we hope, you know we can work through this, so, does the collective establish or reestablish indigenous native worldviews or does it not need to reestablish for those women who are indigenous?

M: Oh I see. So... ok. yeah! I don't, I don't know that we're a religious organization, I don't see that, I see that we're, we encourage spirituality, I think is different. I think it's a different thing. Spirituality is of course what people make on their own. Um... they have to make their own choice, if it's, if it's, if it becomes in the style of an earth religion then so be it. We encourage that because that's what we're about. We want to protect the world, we want you know protect the resources of earth for the next generations, we want to make sure that, you know, that we have all our basic needs met, that we care for our... animal, our four legged friends you know, we want to make sure that everybody gets taken care of, and that everything is honored, like I can't just go in to your backyard and say, I want this just because I need it, you know it's like the way people think about oil, like I'm gonna get oil because I need oil, but I'm gonna tear up this land and destroy this property just because I need the oil. That doesn't make sense even in a microcosm like I'm not gonna go take your clothes off just because I need those clothes, these are your clothes. (laughs). like you can't, no, that just not even what you do right. So, um... just basic things like that applying them on a macro level and understanding, there is a relationship to that, um... I think that is very spiritual and so when, cuz you're really living what you're talking about. Cuz a lot of times religions or dogmas can just be about words and life doesn't happen with words, words can be a catalyst and, and they can harm and they can create some kind of movement, but in the end it's the way you behave, and how you act and the choices you make. So, for me, I see Mujeres de Maiz as a way of just staying open to this idea of earth religion, we want to encourage your indigenous, what your indigenous ancestors we're about, which is about the earth, and I think we want to encourage that versus, you know, something patriarchal or something that's gonna create some kind of idea that's not about social justice, not about um... environmental concerns, so we're good at kind of wrapping ourselves around that I think

more, and um... I don't think we're here to tell indigenous people who already practice those ideas any... on how to live their lives, I don't even think we consider ourselves an authority. A lot of the times, I think we go to elders, like I usually go to an elder for advice about those kinds of things. I don't want to pretend to know, um... about um... indigenous practices, like I didn't grow up that way, I'm just learning, so... it would be silly for me to go oh yeah i'm gonna teach you all about it. (laughs) like I can't do that. I'm not an authority um, I didn't grow up like that, but there are people who have, who do and who are, which I respect and who I consult, but then again if I do some kind of ceremony for myself that's between me and the creator. I have a right to do that. I have a right to create my own ceremonies for myself. And um... but I'm not here to lead a community into ceremony. The only thing I do is that (legacies) seeing things in a sacred way, holding yourself in a sacred manner, trying so that we encourage practices that involve honoring our basic earth, air, fire, land and water concerns, you know respect for those things, I feel that I can talk about those things but, yeah. It's like I could fight for the Hopi you know, it's like the Hopis are the inner circle, they're the one who know, and we just protect them. And I see myself as them the outer circle and just trying to protect, you know what I know to be true. I kind of see us as like that as well. I'm not saying we're gonna teach you but um... but if you learn something ok. (laughs). You learned something good.

I: So now we are going to into talking a little bit more about yourself. So are you political?

M: I think everything is political, I think life is political and I think just now we are coming into a time when people are starting to understand whereas before it was like, oh I don't want to talk about politics or (effort?) anything you talk about is especially political, if your not talking about politics someone else certainly is and someone else is certainly planning your demise. So you really need to pay attention and if you don't pay attention, that a political stand that your taking, that you don't want to participate, that's your political place, that's you place for politics. but to me everything is essentially political. Anything you do, anything you participate, anything you invest, every time your, if your in the community, working with the community, that's a political act. That comes ready when another person that's very politically about the opposite. So, I think of how we live our lives in community is very political. and in private, in private, um... you know your affecting someone else's life that's politics, to me. When your doing something that affects someone else's life, that is a politics and you have to be aware of what that is and what that means. um... so yeah.

I: And so, do you think your work, your artwork is political?

M: (heavy sigh) I think so because, only because, at first I didn't, at first I was like oh you know, it's personal, this is very personal stuff, but i'm gonna say the personal is very political because just by me being who I am can be a political act. Someone could be like I don't think you could live that way, so then what, then it becomes political. If someone thinks I can't live that way, if someone thinks I can't be who I am, then things are gonna start becoming very political, (they could put me in jail for what I believe in) So, i'm

like well, I guess so, me being this way. Me being out there, me being, talking about the things I want to talk about personally can be very political cuz its in a very public way so... yeah.

I: So how do you approach social consciousness or how do you, what do you see as social consciousness?

M: So I wish I had this amazing answer to that, I'm trying to think. um... So how do I see social consciousness, in terms of... just for myself or

I: Yeah, you can talk about yourself or what is social consciousness and like...

M: Social consciousness, oh yeah, like an awareness, awareness of self, I see it as an awareness of self. you have to be, you have to know yourself really well before you can start, cuz there's people who don't know themselves really well and they start talking about things that they think they know. And so, well, have you looked inside of yourself because you started judging others. So I think that social consciousness would be um... having empathy for others, that's how I see it, like you should have empathy for others, you should, you should think about, we should all think about what it would be like to, you know... to be in a detention center for immigrants with family, could that happen to me? Could that happen to my family? It's happening now, like it breaks my heart, like I see people, whole families in there. What are children doing in a detention center? what's that about? Having social consciousness or understanding what's around you, what's going on, what's happening, I think is really vital. Understanding history is really big, most people want to talk about oh immigration. You know this use to be Mexico, did you ever consider that your gonna have whole families, or generations of families that were here already and that there's at least some kind of relationship between these two countries. Has that ever occurred to you? So... Having a sense of awareness and social consciousness I think is very important, um... without it, your living in a glass house, that's gonna break something, people are gonna get pissed off, cuz you don't wanna look (worn) you don't want to accept things, or you don't want to accept what is, or reach out. We have to live in community, how do you live in community? You have to have social consciousness in order to live in community, and I think that's vital. and I always think that, I have always thought that small communities is better than big, bigger isn't necessarily better, which is the way of America (laughs) but to me it's like bigger is not necessarily better, um... maybe smaller is better for most things. Maybe we do need a big huge system to get rid of... human waste, in the city, but, maybe you know we need smaller government. Maybe we need smaller versions of government, maybe it doesn't have to be this big encompassing thing we all give our money too. Which eventually get corrupted by a massive scale, so maybe it needs to be smaller, so what happens at a smaller scale, we (move things quicker) or the system (something) I mean I'm looking at it in big, in a big way. but, um. Yeah, I think smaller is better. Without social consciousness, it can't function and we just be a robot or enslaved, which I am by the way, I'm totally being exploited but, but at least I'm aware. (laughs).

I: so then I see you overthrowing... the (something)we're gonna be like, oh my god, that's what she was talking about.

M: (laughs) yeah. so anyway.

I: And then going back to um... I know I asked you about you being in the collective and how they sustain themselves or were they sustain themselves. Cuz I know you talked about yourself and being self-sufficient, but in terms of like the collective um were you all also like self-sustained?

M: um... I think everybody has their own um... is having their own struggles with that, um... some of us are struggling a lot with it, some of us are not struggling as much but it's all a struggle. I think we're all exploited, but um... um... in terms of Mujeres de Maiz, we just give our time. It's all volunteer, I would say most of it is volunteer, my whole time there its been volunteer, for the most part, um... and a lot of it its been the hope or working toward something, something bigger, and hopes that oh maybe we could get paid for what we do at Mujeres de Maiz, instead of you know, just kind of dumping our time and energy and money into this, but... we know its created this positive momentum and this um... this... and it's creating this, it's promoting a lot of social consciousness in the sense of you know. Bringing about people's history, talking about creativity, encouraging um young women's, women of all generations to continue to do their work and to you know keep going, and you dont have to be a famous artist to create, we all create in different ways, um... so... I guess... I lost my train of thought, But I guess so... so we've tried our hand at becoming a non-profit, we are waiting for our non-profit status at this point and our goal is to... we've had some grants that are supporting a lot of projects, which we're really grateful for. There's um... and so we're still doing that. We're using a lot of organizations, like we work with Self Help Graphics, we work... so we do a lot of partnering, what's called partnerships which is really popular right now, to be in partnerships with other organizations and do all these projects and stuff, but I think why it took so long for us to be a non-profit is because we didn't know if we wanted to be non-profit. We didn't wanna be um... managed, we wanted to manage our own you know, we wanted our own goal, we didn't wanna be managed by anyone. So and we realize that when it comes to nonprofits, getting money could mean we'd have to compromise in some ways and some of us didn't want to compromise and some of us were willing to compromise, so I guess it's been difficult for that very reason and why it's taken so long to really, or why our organization has lasted this long is cuz we (cant make a position anymore). But um... so when we started as our business, we said no, we are just gonna be our own business and we'll figure it out and we'll use the sale of the zines to just pay for themselves. um... you know kind of just recycling things, so that's why we never really had money because well we just wanna produce this stuff and I'm just gonna have to make a living on my own somewhere else, so that's kind of how we did it. and we've been doing it for a long time. um... but I think the goal, is to accept becoming an entity that's supported completely either by the community or through government grants, I don't know. we'll see what happens. but um... but we just know that we like what we do and we're hoping to be funded the place as possible , it be nice to give jobs to people, I've always had that fantasy, of like oh it be cool to give jobs to all

these women artists, who just wanna be artists and in the community and wouldn't that be cool, and I've always wanted to do that. Like just bring money to our community like that or bring resources like that into our community. yeah, you know what? Youtube is on and you get big, you know whatever it is you need to do, just do your job. Like you don't have to be a slave, just do your job (laughs). And you'll get everything you need, the housing, the, so I've always had that fantasy, but we'll see. Hopefully. We can hope.

I: So with that, do you have anything else you'd like to share?

M: No, not really, not that I can think of. (laughs) Just that I really been very fortunate to work with this women. to um.. grow with them. I've learned a lot, a lot of things. and um.. and they've helped me in so many ways. I feel like it still happening. they're still supporting my work, they've always supported me, they've always cared for me, I love these women um... I love them. I know they love and care for me too. That's kind of why I stay. yeah.

I: Thank you.

Interview with Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes:

I: Don't worry. So we are going to start. What is your name?

I: No se preocupe. Entonces vamos a empezar. ¿Cuál es su nombre?

Lore: Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes.

Lore: Lorena Mendoza-Arellanes.

I: How old are you?

I: ¿Que edad tiene?

Lore: Thirty-nine.

Lore: Treinta y nueve años.

I: How long have you lived in... San... in Etlá?

I: ¿Cuanto tiempo ha vivido en...San...en Etlá?

Lore: It's because I live in San Sebastian, Etlá.

Lore: Es que vivo en San Sebastián, Etlá.

I: San Sebastian, Etlá.

I: San Sebastian, Etlá.

Lore: Yeah, San Sebastian, Etlá. And I have lived there all of my life since I was young.

Lore: Aja, San Sebastian, Etlá. Y allí he vivido toda mi vida desde pequeña.

I: And your family?

I: ¿Y su familia?

Lore: Aha, my family is also originally from there. And they also um, they also have lived in San Sebastian.

Lore: Aja mi familia también son originarios de allá. Y ellos también este ellos también hemos vivido allí en San Sebastian.

I: San Sebastian. Where you trained by a school, institution, or a family member or person from your community showed you how to sew or...?

I: San Sebastian. Usted fue capacitada por una escuela, institución, o algún familiar o persona de su comunidad le enseno a coser o...?

Lore: Well lets say that I at the beginning was... in middle school I had... the workshop that was like um...like another subject that they assign in school. Then, since you can take technical drawing or computers or... Then, I in middle school had to be in Clothing Industry. That is what my, my workshop was called... And that is where I learned like the basics. What a machine is. How to use it. Um make some things, but always with the teacher's help because it was like a subject we had to take, well that is where we started. The three years, the three years of middle school, I had to take it and um I had to study my workshop which was eight hurs, eight hours a week.

Lore: Pues digamos que yo en los inicios estu...yo en la secundaria llevaba este... el taller que como este... como otra materia que te ponen en la escuela. Entonces como puedes llevar dibujo técnico o podía llevar informática o... Entonces yo en la secundaria me toco estar en Industria de Vestido. A si se llamaba mí, mi taller de...Y allí es donde yo aprendí pues lo básico digamos. Que es una máquina. Como la utilizas. Este hacer algunas cosas, pero siempre con la ayuda de la maestra por que como era una materia que teníamos que cursar a fuerza, pues este de allí empezamos. Los tres años, los tres años de la secundaria lo tuve que llevar y este tuve que cursar mi taller que eran ocho, ocho horas a la semana.

I: Eight hours a week?

I: ¿Ocho horas a la semana?

Lore: Eight hours per week because it was twice a week and we had four, yeah four modules per day and even on the third day we had another four modules. And um that is what our workshop was called, Clothing Industry. But well yes there you learn the most basic. Like the most basic things.

Lore: ocho horas a la semana porque era dos veces a la semana y nos tocaba cuatro, aja cuatro módulos al día y hasta el tercer día otros cuatro módulos. Y este así se llamaba nuestro taller, Industria del Vestido. Pero pues si allí se aprende pues lo mas básico. Osea cosas muy sencillas.

I: Like what things did you do?

I: ¿Como que cosas hacia?

Lore: Well um, first well learn how to tell fabric apart. Some because well at the same time because there were many of us well we were, we were like forty I think. And for one

teacher well they taught us from making a display was what they assigned in first year from what I remember. I don't remember everything. Then a display on ball pape and who knows the name of the rulers and um we had to finish as we advanced. Whn third year finished, um we had to already present a garment. And um the thruth is that we didn't do it with care. Or we, we didn't do it with much maybe not ven with much consciousness because you did it because you had to study it and had to complete that subject, you had to do it. It was the same whether you liked it or not. But like that it called to my attention, no. But we had to do it and we spent lots of time with our classmates in a big shop. We talked. Sometimes they would tell us we are going to do certain stitching and while some of us talked and while somw of us used our time wisely. And like well like that the hours passed. And well like to make something well made, that you say well-finished, well I think that no because like to pass the subject you had to present it to the teacher, if there was someone at home to oriento or tell you how you were going to do it or ther... But in my caseI out forth my interest, no. It was at the beginning where I... And that I never thought that it would work with time. After that, that I would really well obtain now, well the income for my family, no.

Lore: Pues este, primero pues aprender a diferenciar el tipo de tela. Algunas porque pues igual como éramos muchas compañeras pues somos, éramos como unas cuarenta yo creo. Y para una sola maestra pues ya nos enseñaban (2:45) desde hacer un muestrario nos pusieron en primer año es lo que me acuerdo. No me acuerdo de todo. Entonces un muestrario en papel ball y a saber el nombre de las reglas y este teníamos que ir abarcando conforme íbamos avanzando. Terminando el tercer ano, este ya teníamos que presentar una prenda. Y este la verdad era que no lo hacíamos con esmero. Ni con, ni con mucha a la mejor ni con mucha conciencia porque lo hacías porque tenías que estudiar y tenías que sacar tu materia, lo tenías que hacer. Igual si te gustaba o no te gustaba mucho. Pero así a mí me llamaba la atención, no. Pues teníamos que hacerlo y pasábamos mucho tiempo con nuestras compañeras en un taller grande. Platicábamos. A veces nos decían pues van a hacer tal puntada y en lo que estábamos entre que unas platicábamos entre que algunas si aprovechábamos el tiempo. Y que pues así se nos iban las horas. Y pues así hacer algo bien hecho, que tu dijeras bien terminado, pues yo creo que no porque como para pasar la materia tú se lo presentabas a la maestra, si había alguien en tu casa que te orientara o que te dijera como lo ibas a hacer o ya...Pero en mi caso yo le ponía un poquito de interés, no. Fue el inicio donde yo... Y que yo nunca pensé que fuera a servir con el tiempo. Después de allí yo fuera a realmente pues este obtener ahora, pues el ingreso para mi familia, no.

I: And when you were... in middle school?

I: ¿Y cuando usted estaba... era en la secundaria?

Lore: Aha, it was in middle school.

Lore: Aja, era en la secundaria.

I: In middle school. And was there someone at home who helped you?

I: En la secundaria. ¿Y había alguien en su casa que la ayudara?

Lore: There wasn't anyone.

Lore: No habían nadie.

I: No.

I: No.

Lore: No. My mother similarly she didn't, doesn't do. She said that my grandmother had showed her some things. And that my grandma did like well like to pull dresses apart. Ans over that mold well she cut it, another one for her and like that she would make her dresses. (Aside: No. The roses right. I haven't seen them. I don't know if they're around.) No, but not at home. And then my sister had the same, the same workshop. There you don't choose it but they assign it. They... Sometimes due to your grade point average, sometimes because they have to place everyone who attends. Because there were many youth who arrived to study at the middle school. There was one or two Young men in each, in each, in each year because no classmates who were men were in our group. We were all women. And if there was one or two it was rare that they would put one or two young men. Because they didn't like it, no. They would say no, out me in technical drawing, put me in computers. That sometimes they were able to switch. But if they had already assigned you that workshop, you had to study that your three years. Like it was almost as if it interested you, you payed attention. But lets say there it, it was something like , like to go um because it was our obligation to do well in our subjects, we had to do it. But there wasn't anyone to help me. I had to look it up or figure it how. Do most of it at school. But we weren't obligated to have a sewing machine at home and everything. What we were able to do during class and there um... But at the same time we were not allowed to utilize the machine the first year but until the secondyear they would show you how to use the machine because they are high speed. They never le tus utilize them. Almost everything was by hand. And tracing and cutting was the most they made us do.

Lore: No. Mi mama igual ella no, no se dedica. Decía que mi abuelita le había enseñado algunas cosas. Y que a mi abuelita si le gustaba pues este haz de cuenta como deshacer un vestido. Y ya sobré de ese molde pues lo cortaba, otro para ella y así se hacia sus vestidos. (Comentario: No. Las rosas verdad. Ya no las he visto. No sé si están por allí.) No, pero de hecho en la casa no. I luego a mi hermana igual le toco la misma, le toco el mismo taller. Allí no lo escoge uno sino te lo ponen. Te lo.. A veces por el promedio, a veces porque tienen que ir ubicando a todos los que llegan. Como llegaban bastante jóvenes de que vamos a estudiar la secundaria. Había un joven o dos en cada, en cada, en cada ano porque no hombres compañeros no había en nuestro grupo. Todas éramos mujeres. Y si había uno o dos era rarísimo que pusieran a uno dos de muchachos. Porque de hecho ni les gustaba, no. Decían no a mi pónganme en dibujo técnico pónganme en informática. Que a veces si lograban cambiarse. Pero si ya te asignaron ese taller, allí tenías que cursar tus tres años. Que era casi si te interesaba mucho le ponías interés. Pero digamos allí fue, fue algo así como este, como para ir este por lo que era nuestra obligación de sacar bien Adelante nuestras materias, lo teníamos que hacer. Pero no había nadie que me ayudara. Tenía que yo buscarlo o idearme como. Avanzar lo más que se podía en la escuela. Pero tampoco se nos obligaban que tuviéramos máquina de coser en la casa y todo eso. Lo que podíamos hacer en la hora

de clases y ya este... Pero igual no nos dejaban utilizar la maquina en primer año sino en segundo año ya te enseñaban como usar la maquina porque son de mucha velocidad. Nunca nos dejaban que las utilizáramos. Casi mucho era a mano. Y este trazos y recortes eso era lo más que nos ponían.

I: And how many machines did you have?

I: ¿Y cuantas maquinas tenían?

Lorena: Like forty.

Lorena: Como unas cuarenta.

I: Did they have one for everyone?

I: ¿Si tenían para todas?

Lorena: Yes. For the majority yes because it was a big man who is still at that middle school because the middle school is not where Leti is um, it is not that is in ETLA. And um, it's a technical middle school. And um it still exists, it's still there, so then I imagine that it's now more sophisticated, they must show them other things. Yes the majority of youth don't leave saying I am gonna dedicate myself to this but it's what they need to do, it's their subject. (Laughs.) Yes but it calls my attention, I like it.

Lorena: Si. Para la mayoría si porque era un señor grandote que todavía está en esa secundaria porque no es la secundaria allí donde está Leti sino este, es una que está en mero ETLA. Y este, es una secundaria técnica. Y este todavía existe, todavía está, entonces me imagino que ahora más sofisticada, otras cosas les han de enseñar. Si la mayoría de jóvenes como que no salen diciendo a esto me voy a dedicar sino porque es tu quehacer, es tu materia. (Ríe). Si, pero a mí me este me llama la atención, si me gustaba.

I: And what level of education did you reach?

I: ¿Y usted a que nivel de escuela llego?

Lorena: Well, I finished high school. I finished, at a high school diploma. I have schooling. But there was no opportunity to study. I made other choices and that's why I left school. Aha, and that, that is why I didn't finish...that I didn't continue studying. Well in terms of my parents, well they supported us. They saw and said that because they didn't want us to stay like them. Always the, their intention was like more like my mom's was that we prepared ourselves, that we studied something. That we would be... to face life, what was coming. But I did finish high school.

Lorena: Pues termine la preparatoria. Termine este, a nivel bachillerato. Tengo mi escuela. Pero ya no habian la oportunidad que si queria estudiar. Yo tome otras decisiones y fue por eso que deje la escuela. Aja y por eso fue de que ya no termine...de que ya no seguí estudiando. Pues en lo que cabe mis papas pues si nos apoyaban. Veían y decían que porque no querían que se queden como nosotros. Siempre el, la intención de ellos como mas como de mi mamá de que uno se preparara, de que estudiara uno algo. De que fuera uno este... para afrontar la vida, para lo que venía. Pero pues yo si termine la preparatoria.

I: And what school did you attend?

I: *¿Y a qué escuela fue?*

Lorena: A eh... I finished my high school in a high school diploma program that is two streets from here because it was specialized. It... its called, it specialized in accounting and administration. And because from there you leave like, like a specialist and then if you want... well you are on track towards your career at a university level of, of um of Accounting or of it could be Business Administrator. I finished my two years of high school. The bad thing is that I didn't put in practice. (Laughs.) But I did... I so have some level of schooling.

Lore: A eh... termine mi preparatoria en un bachillerato que esta aquí a dos cuerdas porque era ya especializado. Él... se llama, es especializado en contaduría y administración digamos. Y porque ya de allí sale uno como, como técnico y ya pues si quieres... bueno va como encaminado a la carrera a nivel universitario de, de este de Contador o de puede ser administrador de empresas. Termine mis dos años de bachillerato. Lo malo es que ya no lo puse en práctica. (ríe.) Pero si me... Si tengo un poco de nivel de estudio.

I: And what is it that you know how to do? And how did you learn to do what you know how to do?

I: *¿Y que es lo que usted sabe hacer? ¿Y como aprendió a hacer lo que usted sabe hacer?*

Lorena: Right now the sewing, no?

Lore: Ahorita lo de la costura, no?

I: Yes. Aha.

I: Si. Aja.

Lorena: With Detalle de Mujer

Lore: Con Detalle de Mujer.

I: With Detalle de Mujer.

I: Con Detalle de Mujer.

Lore: Well um... after we... that like what is it called. That we finished high school I stopped studying for a year. Then, um... then um I started... with the intention that the people didn't stay with that they told me that one of my aunts was going to take a confection course over there with a lady in town, no. And then um... Because I was single and had time I said well I will start going. And my aunt who started going and that wanted to go ended up leaving because she had small children. So I went for a year. So I would go twice a week. And um, she would show me things like um, like um... I could work on fabrics, on skirts, that I learned to take measurements. I learned to um... to... to cut fabric, to trace, to cut fabric, to start to baste if the fabrics are like really, like really slippery. Different type of fabric has to be basted. So it was...

Lore: Pues este... después de que... de que como se llama. De que termine el bachillerato deje de estudiar un año. Entonces este... entonces este empecé... a con la intención de que la gente no se quedara con eso me decía que una de mis tías iba ir a un curso de confección allá con una señora del pueblo, no. Y entonces este... Como yo estaba soltera

y tenía tiempo dije pues empiezo a ir. Y ya mi tía la que inicio y que quería ir se salió porque tenía sus hijos chiquitos. Entonces yo estuve yendo como un año. Entonces iba como dos veces a la semana. Y este, ella me enseñaba cosas como este, como este... podía trabajar en las telas, en faldas, que yo aprendiera a tomar medidas. Aprendiera a este...a... a cortar la tela, a hacer el trazo, a cortar la tela, a empezar a hilvanar si estaban las telas así como muy, como muy resbalosas. Diferente tipo de tela se tiene que hilvanar. Entonces era...

I: What is basting?

I: ¿Que es hilvanar?

Lorena: Basting is like with a needle by hand and passing a large seam and after passing the machine so that the fabrics won't move and everything, aha basting. But um, yes well um I went twice a week like two hours each day. Two hours Tuesday, two hours Thursday evening. And she showed and told me how and then my mom bought me a machine and I started to make a skirt, a blouse and she cut it and told me how. She would say let's cut, she would tell me how to take measurements, and like that little by little it was like I started losing my fear. A, a pillowcase, a drape that um... Like that and then I got married and had kids well I stopped doing it for a long time. I forgot, ah forgot, I forgot because well I was dedicated to caring for my kids, I would dedicate myself to picking them up from school, and to do other activities. And then with the pins I would be scared that they would stab themselves that is why I wouldn't even leave scissors because I would always be scared. And because my kids are close in age, I was definitely dedicated to caring for my kids and being with them. And until now, after time that my youngest daughter is ten well I started doing it again. Like, like a job, no. Or a, like a job for, for um for to have a source of income for my family, no. Ah but I see it like, like employment. Not like, not like before like like a hobby or pass time. Sometimes it would come out, sometimes I would say we are gonna do this and she would tell me we are going to do it like this. But not to do it like...like a or like a business or like something like how could I explain... like with lots of responsibility, no. Between I like it and I would do it. Well now it well let's say here I came to like reinforce like what I maybe what they do at their level. Let's say that it is another type of work because it is a job that is fine and it has to be more because it's for other people and because it has a special price because it's couture. Like um... like something like more, like a better made job.

Lorena: Hilvanar es así como con la aguja a mano y pasarle la costura grande y ya después pasar la máquina para que no se te muevan las telas y todo eso, aja hilvanar. Pero este, si pues este iba dos veces a la semana como dos horas cada día. Dos horas martes, dos horas jueves en la tarde. Y ella me enseñaba me decía como y ya después mi mamá me compro una máquina y ya empecé a hacer que una falda, que una blusa y ella me los cortaba y me decía como. Ella decía vamos a cortar, ella me decía como tomar las medidas, y ya así poco a poquito yo así fue como fui perdiéndole el miedo. Que una, unas fundas, que una cortina que (13:11) este... Ya así luego ya después me case, tuve mis niños pues lo deje de hacerlo bastante tiempo. Lo olvide, lo olvide, lo olvide porque pues ya me dedicaba a cuidar a mis hijos, me dedicaba a ir a traerlos a la escuela, a hacer otras actividades. Y luego ya con los alfileres me daba miedo que se fueran a picar por eso yo no dejaba ni las Tijeras porque me daba miedo siempre. Y como mis hijos se

llevan por poquito tiempo pues este yo ya me dediqué definitivamente a cuidar a mis hijos y a estar con ellos. Y ya hasta ahora después de tiempo que mi hija la más chica tiene diez años pues ya este volví a retomarlo. Así ya, ya como un empleo no. O un, como un trabajo para, para este para ya sacar el ingreso de mi familia digamos no. Ha, pero ya lo veo, así como, como un empleo. Ya no como, ya no como antes como así de que como por hobby o por pasa tiempo. A veces me sale, a veces decía yo vamos a hacer esto y ya me decía vamos a hacerle así. Pero no así agárralo como un... como un ni como un negocio ni como un algo así como te dijera... como ya con mucha responsabilidad, no. Entre que me gustaba y lo hacía. Pues ya ahora ya pues este digamos aquí ya vine a como a reforzar como lo que yo a lo mejor lo que acá al nivel que lo desempeñan. Digamos que ya es otro tipo de trabajo porque ya es un trabajo ya más de este más fino ya si este tiene que ser más porque es para otras personas y porque tienen un precio especial porque tiene una alta costura. Como este... como algo así como mas, ya un trabajo más bien hecho.

I: Yes.

I: Si.

Lorena: Yes. But here lets say like I came to learn new things, new techniques. And I like I would say I have not taken that long. Right now I retook it. And now with certain responsibility and with certain having to it made well , better, try hard, all that. But now. But lets say those were...

Lorena: Si. Pero aquí digamos como vine a aprender nuevas cosas, nuevas técnicas. Y yo como lo dijera así no me a tardado mucho. Ya ahorita como que lo retome. Y ahorita ya con cierta responsabilidad y con cierto de tener que hacerlo bien hecho, mejor, esforzarte, todo eso. Pero ya ahora. Pero digamos que esos fueron...

I: ¿Yes and what does social justice mean to you?

I: ¿Si y este que significa para ti la justicia social?

Lorena: The justice...

Lore: La justicia...

I: Yes social justice. Or have you ever thought about social justice?

I: Si la justicia social. ¿O alguna vez has pensado acerca de la justicia social?

Lorena: Like that I think that... We all talk about justice, we want justice. Lots of aspects in our lives or that we see is that everyone fights for justice. But um like that maybe I had never really thought about it. But I say that it i sum... that it ciukd be... I got confused. But I think it is recognizing the that the work all of that is recognized, that its valued, that its respected, well that it has a value. And that you deserve to be respected by others because you are a human being. And from there springs justice that well each one will, will correspond to where the right of the other person ends, mine begins. So, while you respect me, I will respect you and there will be justice, there will be peace and tolerance I say all of that. Aha, but I say overall that your work is respected ori f you are with your

family, your family well I say more than anything that. I don't know if it is focused on that.

Lore: Asi como tal creo que... Todos hablamos de justicia, queremos justicia. Muchos de los aspectos de nuestras vidas o que lo vemos asi en que todos pelean por justicia. Pero este asi a lo mejor no lo habia pensado asi mucho. Pero yo digo que es este... que podria ser...ya me confundi. Pues este yo creo el reconocer el que el trabajo que desempeña todo eso que sea reconocido y que o en la actividad que tu te desarrollas o lo que tu hagas sea reconocido, que sea valorado, que sea respetado, pues que tiene un valor. Y que mereces ser respetada por otros por que eres un ser humano. Y alli se desprende eso de la justicia de que pues a cada uno le, les corresponde pues tanto donde termina el derecho de la otra persona inicia el mio. Entonces mientras tu me respetes, yo te respeto va a ver justicia, va a ver paz va a ver tolerancia yo digo todo eso. Aja, pero yo digo mas que nada que sea repetado ya sea tu trabajo o si estas con una familia, tu familia pues yo digo mas que nada eso. No se si esta enfocado en eso.

I: Yes you are good. And do you know why the focus is on women, well the collective, group, Detalle de Mujer?

I: Si estas bien. ¿Y sabe porque el enfoque es la mujer o sea en su colectivo, grupo Detalle de Mujer?

Lore: I say because, firstly because here our society well, even though sometimes, even though sometimes one doesn't say they are against them or that, or that one thinks its just feminism happening right now that's reigning, it is not because of that. It is because here in our society, women are now the strong pillar of the family. Maybe not as much as a provider because, that is where the father goes, right? the one that provides and all of that. The woman is always like the one that like sustains, like is the one that is like the roots. That's how I feel. like if she is, she is kind of like the foundation of the family, of the community. And moreso here because, we women are the ones who carry out our work, right. Well it may be because of pleasure, it may be for happiness, it may be because one no longer only thinks about yourself, but now you think about the whole family, not just in ourselves as women, right. You think about your children, about your family. That they are better. It is a dignified way of bringing sustenance to your home and besides it is an activity that one can carry out just as well in their home there next to your children. and your attentive of your family, and your attentive of your home, and the work. That way one is kind of like doing many roles at the same time and everything gets done. And that's why I say that the focus is on women. But it is something beautiful, not because it teaches us a lot. For example, my daughters see me and tell me "oh mom, i think I would like it." Then you have to learn it. then you have to study it, now there are careers, there is everything. and you can do it tomorrow I told them, not like before, like before... because before they would say no, at least learn cuts and tailoring. Even if it's about sewing and all that. A job that you can do at home. But it's not just anything because you need to have the... well maybe the vocation, well the love, well that you like it, love it. That it, that it calls you, the passion, right. For example, my sister took it in middle school, but don't even tell her to if she likes it, or to make a hem, she won't... for other things, dont tell her about this (laughs). We are both sisters, we grew up together but she doesn't like it, I guess, or is it that it doesn't call her attention. So then I tell my

daughters, well they see me and tell me, “oh mom, I think I would like it”. Well then you already need to start preparing yourself. Now there is a lot of, there are now schools, you can now develop it as a vocation, like something more executed, better yet. What do we call it? Like a job. When you already developing it as a profession, I guess, right. You would then be at a different level. Well you would be receiving a better salary or an income the way it should be. Because if you kind of learn it and you kind of don’t, well you can’t do that either. Or for example, for me, if someone comes to my house and asks for a hem, well I can’t charge it the way they charge it here. Let’s say it’s... by the type of finish, by the type of the machine, well is a different type of finish, it is another type of price. Let’s say that it has one price when I do it here, and I do it in my house and it has another price. Well it’s another... well because there we are in the town and only the neighbors or something like that. But I told her, if you get prepared, if you study it, if you are able to develop it like a professional, it will have another, the value will be higher.

Lore: Yo digo porque en primera porque aca nuestra sociedad pues, aunque a veces, aunque a veces no diga uno que esta en contra de o que, o que piense uno que nadamas es el feminismo lo que esta ahorita esta imperando no es por eso. Es por que aca en nuestra sociedad, la mujer ahora si es el pilar fuerte de la familia. A lo mejor no tanto como proveedora porque alli entra el papa, no. El que provee y todo eso. La mujer es siempre la que en como que la que sostiene como que es la que la raiz. Yo asi lo siento. Como que es la, la base como de la familia, de la comunidad. Y mas que nada aca porque pues nuestro trabajo son las mujeres las que lo realizamos pues. No? Pues sera por gusto, sera por felicidad, sera porque uno ya no nadamas piensas en ti sino vas a pensar en toda tu familia no nadamas en uno como mujer, no. Tu piensas en tus hijos, en tu familia. Que esten mejor. Es una forma digna de llevar sustento a tu casa y aparte es, es una actividad que igual uno la puede desempeñar uno en su casa (20:39) alli junto con tus hijos. Y estas pendiente de tu familia y estas al pendiente de tu casa, del trabajo. Asi pues como que uno esta asi como que en muchos roles a la vez y que todo lo despenas. Y por entonces yo digo que por eso se enfoca en la mujer. Pero si es algo bonito no porque nos ensena mucho. Por ejemplo, mis hijas me ven y dicen ay mama como que a mi me gustaria. Pues entonces tienes que aprenderle. Pues entonces tienes que estudiarlo, ahora ya hay carreras ya hay todo. Y tu lo puedes el dia de manan ya le dije no ver como este, como este... Porque antes decian no aunque sea que aprenda eso de corte y confeccion Aunque sea lo de coser y todo eso. Un trabajo que lo puedes hacer en tu casa. Pero no es cualquier cosa porque tambien tienes que tener la... pues a lo major la vocacion, el pues el amo..pues el que te guste, el amor. Que te, que te llame, pues la passion no? Por ejemplo, mi hermana lo llevo en la secundaria pero a ella ni le digas de que quiera, de que haga un dobladillo, ella no...de otras cosas, no le digas nada de esto (Rie). Las dos somos hermanas, crecimos juntas pero a ella no le gusta pues o sera que no le llama la atencion. Entonces les digo a mis hijas, pues ellas me ven y me dicen, “Hay mama como que a mi me gustaria.” Pues y ate tienes que preparar. Ya ahorita hay mucha, ya hay escuela, ya lo puedes desempeñar como vocacion, como una cosa mas realizada mas bien. Como le llamamos nosotros? Como un oficio. Cuando ya lo vas a desempeñar como una profesion pues, no. Ya estarias a otro nivel. Pues ya estarias recibiendo un salario ya pues mejor o un ingreso como deberia de ser. Porque si lo medio aprendes y medio no pues tampoco puedes. O por ejemplo yo si va una persona

a mi casa y me dice que si un dobladillo pues yo tampoco n lo puedo combrar como lo cobran aca. Digamos es un... por el tipo de acabado por el tipo de maquina pues es otro tipo de acabado, es otro tipo de precio. Digamos que lo puedo yo hacer aca tiene un precio y lo hago yo en mi casa y tiene otro precio. Pues es otra... pues por que alli estamos en el pueblo nadamas los vecinitos o algo asi. Pero le dije si tu te prepares, si tu lo estudias, si tu lo llegas a desempeñar como una profesion va tener otra, un valor pues mas alto.

I: In your group, do you have people that are from different socioeconomic statuses like middle class, or working class?

I: En su grupo tienen personas que son de diferentes clases de clase media, de clase obrera o trabajadora?

Lore: Well, I say that in that there's not much of a difference because, because well, I believe that, well I don't know how it will differ, not because... because if its for the benefits it possess or all of that, well I feel that it's not. That we are, well that we are people that, that we are in our own work. Well there isn't one that you would say "well, she is at another level, she is all the way over there." right. Maybe I feel that we are like Dona Margarita, who just the same dedicates her time in the fields, well to everything and the sowing and everything and for example, similarly I with my family, we for example my dad is a peasant. Has dedicated to sowing his land. My mother similarly has her own job, which is to make cheese at home and she has been living from the cheese sales. From over there in the community and then here with them and similarly with Leti, well that there are opportunities, that well there are opportunities for all, it's just that they are there for those who decide to take a step forward. To not be afraid and to say well then if there are other businesses that have accomplished it. I have seen what Leti has done. It seems like she wants to consolidate a surprise and all that. Well that's why I feel that we are in the same level, at the same level. That the opportunity is there for everyone, not just for whoever. (laughs).

Lore: Pues yo digo que en eso no entalla mucha diferencia porque, porque oues yo siento que, pues alli no se como se diferenciaria eso no porque este... porque si es por los bienes que posee o todo eso pues yo siento que no. Que estamos, que pues somos personas que, que estamos en maestro trabajo. Pues entonces no hay una que tu digas pues ella esta hasta otro nivel, esta hasta alla, no. A lo mejor yo siento que estamos como Dona Margarita que igual se dedica al campo, pues a todo eso y a al siembra y todo eso y por ejemplo yo igual con mi familia nosotros por ejemplo mi papa es campesino. Se a dedicado a sembrar sus terrenos. Mi mama igual tiene su oficio de hacer queso en su casa. Y se a mantenido de vender queso. De alla no mas en la comunidad y entonces pues asi con ellas y con Leti igual que pues este las oportunidades este que las hay para todos pero ya nadamas hay el que se decida a... a dar el paso. A no tener miedo y decir pues este sino hay otras empresas que han logrado. Si yo he visto lo que ha hecho Leti. Como que ella a lo mejor ella quiere consolidar una sorpresa y todo eso. Pues pore so yo siento que estamos en el mismo novel, al mismo nivel. Que solamente la oportunidad esta para todos, no nadamas la que quiera. (Rie)

I: And what are the goals and objectives of the collective?

I: *Y cuales son las metas y objetivos del colectivo?*

Lore: The goals. Well um... I think there would be two, right? Or there are various maybe. Well for each one of us it would be different. For example, for me well it would be to keep learning well from them since they know more, right. And that they have dedicated more years to this. So they have more experience and knowledge. Well then, maybe my goal is how I will try harder, make things better, um... so that after maybe I can receive a better salary. And then, for example, so that, how do you say it? To finish the workshop, that there be more jobs for other people. But, as it is I say, that as it is one is not, um... one is not far from the other. It is worse if one works at a time instead of working at the same time in a group because we make the same thing. So... we um, we all help each other, unless you don't want to, then no. Or um... maybe you learn here while we live as women and all that. It's like we, like we identify with each other, right. But the goal maybe in my case would be one, and different in the case of the others.

Lore: Las metas. Pues este... Yo creo que habria dos no? O haria varias a lo mejor. Pues para cada una seria diferente. Por ejemplo, para mi seria pues este seguir estando aprendiendo oues de ellas que saben mas, no. Y que tienen mas anos dedicadas a todo esto. Pues tienen mas exerienciaia y mas conocimiento. Pues entnces a lo mejor la meta para mi es asi como esforzarme mas, hacer las cosas mejor, este para despues a lo major recibir este pues un salario mejor. Y este, ya por ejemplo pues para come se dice para terminar el taller, entonces que haya mas empleos para otras personas. Pero ues en si yo digo que en si no esta muy es este no esta una lejos de la otra. Peor que si cada una trabaja a la vez en grupo porque hacemos lo mismo. Este... todas este, nos ayudamos si tu quieres, no. O este aprende aquí pues este a lo mejor en lo que vivimos como mujeres todo eso. Como que nos, como que nos identificamos, no. Pero como la meta seria como a lo mejor en mi caso una y diferente en el caso de las demás.

I: Yes, how often do you meet?

I: *Si. Cada cuando se reúnen?*

Lore: Well we don't really meet that often as a group. Usually the ones that are there the most are myself, Dona Jacque and with Leti. With them, we are more attentive, more so. More up to date. Now, like Dona Mago, we will see her like this... not like a meeting... because we are working together or because we have to fix some, some problem, well that is not the way. But each one is in her space, but, but at the same time we connect because we do the same thing. For example, if Leti cuts it, puts on the threads, and then she sews it, and then we all work to do the same thing. But we do not meet very often as a group. Mhmm.

Lore: Pues asi como una reunión asi de grupo y todo eso no es muy seguido. Casi las que mas estamos somos con Dona Jacque y con Leti. Con ellas que estemoscon mas al pendiente, mas asi. Mas al dia. Y ya lo que es Dona Mago la vemos pero asi...No como una reunión... de que pirque estemos trabajando juntas o porque tengamos que arreglar algun, algún problema asi pues no. Pero cada una en sus espacio pero, pero a la misma vez nos relacionamos porque hacemos lo mismo. Por ejemplo, si Leti lo corta, pone los

sobre hilos y ya ella lo cose y entonces trabajamos para lo mismo. Pero no nos reunimos asi muy seguido asi en grupo. Mhmm.

I: So then, you work individually? And if you work individually, what does each person do?

I: ¿Entonces este trabaja individualmente? ¿Y si trabajan individualmente, que hace cada persona?

Lore: Well... we work... I don't know how you say it over there. Let's say it is a group where we are all for the same cause. But well um... but yeah um... for example they assign me to whipstitch, iron or yeah. Or assignments that are more under their supervision, since they are the ones that know. That they will tell me just ask me if you don't know. We are gonna cut there, we are gonna do this much of hem. So then, that's when I ask, and there. But um... let's say that since they have more experience, I ask them for advice. And then they teach me and they... the ones that are Dona Jacque or Leti or whoever I am with.

Lore: Pues... pues trabajamos no se como lo pongas alla. Es un grupo somos todas para la misma causa digamos. Pero pues este... pero si este...por ejemplo a mi me asignan sobrehilar, planchar o aja. O tareas asi como mas que son bajo la supervisión de ellas de las que son las que saben. Que me dicen mejor me preguntas si no sabes. Le vamos a cortar aca, le vamos a ser tanto de orilla. Y entonces ya les pregunto y ya. Pero este... digamos que como ellas tienen mas experiencia, yo me asesoro con ellas. Y ya me enseñan y ellas me, lo que es Dona Jacque o Leti o con las que esten.

I: And when do you all work.... or do you all work together? And if you work together what do you do?

I: ¿Y cuando trabajan...o trabajan juntas? ¿Y si trabajan juntas, que hacen?

Lore: We do work together, well for example, now we had a delivery of dresses that were all the same model and different sizes for the people because they were like 6 dresses. Then, um... for example, Leti would cut them and then I would whipstitch them, her husband would iron them. And then would start building and then, and then, at the same time we worked as a team, but not when there is a lot of work, no. And then when not, for example, they will tell me your gonna make such garments, such things, then they will leave me a certain job. But if we are there and... we can all carry out a lot, like if they tell me we are gonna nothing but hems, or we are iron or we are gonna whipstitch and like that. Aha.

Lore: Si trabajamos juntas, pues por ejemplo, ahora que teníamos entregas de vestidos que eran igual modelo y diferente las medidas de las personas porque eran como seis vestidos. Entonces, este, por ejemplo, Leti los cortaba y ya este yo los sobrehilara, su esposo los planchaba. Yo luego ibamos armando y este y a la vez trabajábamos en equipo, pues no cuando hay mucho trabajo, no. Y ya cuando no, por ejemplo, me dicen tu vas a hacer tales prendas, tales cosas, entonces ya me dejan a mi una sierta tarea. Pero si estamos y... todas pues este podemos desempeñar tanta como por me diga vamos a hacer hora a pros dobladillos o vamos a hacer a planchar o vamos a sobrehilar y asi aja.

I: are you self-sufficient? or where do you get resources? do you utilize funding?

I: Son autosuficientes? O donde encuentran recursos? Ustedes utilizan subvenciones?

Lore: um.... for the group in general,

Lore: Eeee... para el grupo en general

I: I don't know if you have spoken with Leti about the resources that Detalle de Mujer has received.

I: No se si usted a platicado con Leti acerca de los recursos que han recibido para Detalle de Mujer.

Lore: Well um... well maybe I don't know in managing because well they have years and I have some months working with her. But yes, they have... they have mentioned it, they have talked about asking for resources, that they are making negotiations or so I won't be able to be here today because I am going to negotiate, all that. But, yes, they do talk with us yes. And so... but that I, that I, let's say participate directly well... I think as a group well that way when the benefit is all shaped out, there will be hopefully a greater benefit. But, well, what we have right now, is also thanks to, to her, for example she gives me employment, and well thanks to her for doing the negotiations and movement. But if she didn't have that resource, she wouldn't be able to give me employment because she would only dedicate herself to maybe few work, because she would be like well I don't have the machines so I can't give other people work. Then, through that resource that she has received, well she was able to give us work in that way. And um... and well also well no, but also well I feel that well we are also not excluded. She does make us, she does make us participate... from what she obtains. And we will participate maybe directly or indirectly. But we participate and we feel it. It's not like if we feel, as if she's the only one of the resources and are only for her and her only and all that. No. because what we think in the future maybe when the workshop is finished, when it is, when that resource is, she gets better resources, has received some other opportunity to receive another, another resource well it will be better and we will have a better place or we will have...

Lore: Pues este... pues a lo mejor yo no se desde administro por que pues ellas llevan años y yo llevo unos meses trabajando con ella. Pero si, si han... si lo comentan, si lo platican de que están pidiendo recursos que esta haciendo tramites o y asi que ahora no voy a estar porque voy a ir a gestionar, todo eso. Este, pero si, si nos platica. Y asi que. Peor pues que asi el, el que yo digamos participe directamente pues... yo creo como grupo pues asi el beneficio cuando este ya todo en forma si que va haber a lo mejor este un mayor beneficio. Pero pues ahora lo que tenemos pues también es gracias a que, a que ella por ejemplo me da empleo y pues gracias a que ella ha hecho esas gestiones y movimiento. Pero si no tuviera ese recurso tampoco me pudiera dar trabajo porque nadamas se iba a dedicar a lo mejor poco trabajo ella por decir pues no tengo las maquinas entonces no puedo darle trabajo a otras personas. Entonces por medio de ese recurso que a ella le han dado, pues este nos pudo dar trabajo de esa forma. Y este, y pues también pues no, oeri también pues siento que pues no tampoco nos excluye. Si nos hace, si nos hace participar... de lo que ella obtiene. Y participamos a lo mejor directamente o indirectamente. Pero participamos y lo sentimos. No es como que nos sintamos asi como que solamente ella es la del recurso y solo es para ella y todo eso. No.

Porque lo que pensamos al futuro a lo mejor cuando ya este terminado el taller, cuando ya este, cuando ya ese recurso ya le haya tocado mejores recursos, haya tenido alguna otra oportunidad de recibir otro, otro recurso pues va a estar mejor y vamos a tener un espacio mejor o vamos a tener...

I: More about your house or....

I: Mas cerca de su casa o...

Lore: More about, more about. Because that's also another thing, because we barely just moved here. Well if I can do it, if I'm gonna be able to withstand, because well it's now far over here where we live. Because it's now far... because I started to go to work with because she is closer from where I live. If you want, I can maybe go back home walking. And I wouldn't waste on passage fee or time either. Because now coming this way it's an hour. I catch the Urban, that one that goes this way, I make an hour and a half when I return home. And well then I didn't say if it's to take an income home but also not to neglect my family either. Not to neglect my kids. It's also not what I. That may be because I didn't have the courage to get out of there close to there. But well now that opportunity came out. Well that's how things came to be, that when I met them, they had already opened the work... the other location they had and they were already coming all the way over here. But only Dona Jacque would come, I hardly came. It was almost difficult at the house because the machine was over there. So then, I would work over there with her and once I would finish I would leave to my house. And over here, sometimes since it is farther, we arrive a little later and we return making more time. And sometimes, I also I say it's also an effort because maybe also being at home I'm not gonna learn what i'm learning over here. Well in some ways it has its advantages and disadvantages, right. And maybe I don't see it as a disadvantage that it is bad, that it is very forced, very like this that I would feel very pressured. Although sometimes my children will complain. They tell me, we are not gonna let you anymore because sometimes I have arrived until seven. I know, they will tell me, mom I'm not gonna let you go anymore because, its because you leave us for a long time. But I tell them, remember just Saturday and Sunday come and I'm with you. I don't do anything else but to be with them. Worst if also you make an effort to... I see it as like learning a bit more. That after all this, I also have a machine that I can also fix with. If not, I go an make a dress like the ones over here. But fixing or things like that, well it will make it noisy. That's why I also like, the pretty things. And then I say that well, that also this way I liked it because if not I would have said that it was too far, well that or the other, but I come and go. But then also when I do it better, there will also be another salary or if i'm satisfied, Ill make it faster, well I guess I have more advantages, right.

Lore: Mas cerca, mas cerca. Porque también esa es otra cosa porque apenas nos venimos para aca. Pues si voy a poder, si voy a aguantar, porque pues ya esta lejos para aca a donde vivimos. Porque ya esta lejos a... porque yo empeze a ir a trabajar con ella porque queda cerca de donde yo vivo. Yo a lo mejor hasta si quieres me puedo regresar hasta mi casa caminando. Y no gastaba pasaje o el tiempo también. Porque ya para aca ya es una hora. Agarro el urbano ese que se va por aca me hago una hora y media de regreso a mi casa. Y pues entonces yo tampoco dice si es para llevar un ingreso a mi casa pero tampoco es para descuidar a mi familia también. No es descuidar a mis hijos.

Tambien es lo que yo no. Eso a lo mejor porque yo no me animaba a salirme de allí cerca de allá. Pero pues ahorita salio esa oportunidad. Pues asi se vinieron dando las cosas de que, de que yo cuando las conoci, ellas ya habían abierto su taller... el otro local que tenían y ya se venían hasta acá. Pero no mas venia Dona Jacque, yo casi no venia. Casi uro estaba en la casa porque la maquina estaba allá. Y entonces yo trabajaba allá con ella y ya terminaba y ya me iba a mi casa. Y acá a veces, a veces como esta mas lejos llegamos un poquito mas tarde y luego también para regresarme también me hago mas tiempo. Y a veces también digo es un esfuerzo también porque a lo mejor también estando en la casa no voy a aprender lo que estoy aprendiendo acá. Pues en cierta forma es tienes sus ventajas y tiene sus desventajas, no. Y a lo mejor no lo veo asi como desventaja que me sea malo que sea muy forzado muy asi que me sienta yo asi como muy presionada. Aunque mis hijos a veces si me reclaman. Me dicen ya no te vamos a dejar ir porque a veces he llegado hasta las siete. Ya se ya me dicen, mama ya no te voy a dejar ir porque es porque tu nos dejas mucho tiempo. Pero le dije acuérdate no mas sábado y domingo ya estoy con ustedes. Ya no hago mas que otra cosa que estar con ellos. Peor pues si también este, es un esfuerzo que se hace para... yo lo veo como para aprender un poco mas. Que pues después de todo esto también me sirve que yo tengo una maquina que también igual yo puedo hacer mejor una compostura. O no voy a hacer un vestido asi como los de acá. Pero una compostura o cosas asi pues si me hace ruido. Tambien por eso a mi me gusta, son cosas bonitas. Y entonces digo pues este, también por ese lado me gusto porque si no a lo mejor yo ubiera dicho pues es que es muy lejos pues es que eso o el otro, pero me voy y me vine. Pero luego también pues cuando lo haga mejor también va a ver otro salario o conforme yo lo hago mas rápido ya, ya tengo otras ventajas pues, no.

I: Does the collective participate in community events? If the collective does, how does it participate? Well, here in Oaxaca, has the collective participate in an event that you know of?

I: La colectiva participa en eventos con la comunidad? Y si la colectiva participa, como participa? Bueno aquí en Oaxaca an participado en algún evento que tu sepas?

Lore: I think Detalle de Mujer has. Me directly, like me going to the expo, where they put... I think that the other time in Dicember, they had comented that they were gonna put a shop... a stand at an expo.

Lore: Yo creo Detalle de Mujer si. Yo directamente, que yo me vaya a la expo, a donde ponen... creo la otra vez en diciembre me había comentado que le había que iba a poner un local... un puesto en una expo.

I: Yeah.

I: Aja.

Lore: And they told me, "it may be your turn to go a couple of days" or something like that. But since there was another person, with her, I thought then I guess I'm not going. But if they participate well and if well I think that is also, that is good because once there is more spreading and that there are more people that know the work that is done over here and then more people get interested. There is more work and well that way we go

into securing more work while they ask for more clothing articles, there we can keep being there working and learning and a little bit more of everything.

Lore: I me dijo a lo mejor te va a tocar irte uno de los días o algo así no. Pero como estaba otra persona, con ella creo entonces yo ya no. Y yo me seguí quedando allá a trabajar e iba haciendo mis horarios normales y pues ya. Pero si participan oyes y este oyes yo creo que eso también eso bueno porque ya habiendo más difusión y que haya personas que conozcan el trabajo que se hace acá y ya más gente se interesa, hay más trabajos y pues de esa forma nosotros pasamos a estar seguros de que haya trabajo mientras le pidan más prendas allí podemos seguir estando y trabajando y aprendiendo y de todo un poco pues.

I: Is there a religious or spiritual aspect in the collective or the group?

I: Hay algún aspecto que lleve a cabo la religión o espiritualidad en la colectiva o en el grupo?

Lore: No

Lore: No.

I: No.

I: No.

Lore: No. No because well, they don't impose anything on us. But maybe that's relatable because for example to... to Dona Leti's sister I met here in that she participates at the same church as I do. We are Catholic. I met her from afar, because she was always involved in her parish. And then because of an aunt, I would always go because of an aunt, she would always participate in that. For one thing or another I would go to the talks. Or she would say it would be our turn to give doctrine classes and then I would go. And then that's how I met Dona Jacque and then that's why one day I was talking that I was coming from school from seeing my son, I think I had gone to a meeting, then she was coming, she was going to the shop that they had. And then, I started to talk to her. It's cuz I position her from where I saw her because she use to study at the parish and I don't know what else, and that my aunt used to participate there and all that. And, and that's when she told me that they were looking for someone to work over there. We make these garments, we dedicate ourselves to sewing and all that. Make sense. And then I told her that I was no longer working, that I didn't work in anything that had to do with that. And um well I did say I was interested and that maybe... I explained like she explained to me that they did things, well that they stylized clothing. And then I saw that Leti talked to me the first day, that I gave her my number and she gave it to Leti and the next day she called me and told me, I'll see you tomorrow and we will do the test and what not. And when I saw everything they did I told them that well it is a beautiful job and it's high end sewing. A job that is... that is well done and that is beautiful. And then maybe they don't, well they don't impose anything. That is how our coming together came to be, that maybe I would position her, and she said I have a sister that she dedicates herself to, and after that work started coming out, little by little I started going up with Leti.

Lore: No. No porque pues no nos impone nada. Pero a lo mejor eso nos relaciona porque yo por ejemplo a... a su hermana de Dona Leti yo la conocí en eso de que participa en la

misma iglesia que yo. Nosotros somos Catolicos. Yo la conocí a ella de vista porque, porque ella siempre estaba este relacionada en su parroquia. Y entonces yo por una tia yo siempre iba con mi tia, ella siempre participa en eso. Por una o por otra yo iba a platicas. O ella me decía nos toca dar doctrina y ya yo iba. Y ya por eso a Dona Jacque yo la conocía y ya por eso ya un dia platicando que yo iba de la escuela de ir a ver a mi hijo, creo que había ido a una junta, entonces ella venia, ella iba para el local que tenían. Y entonces, ya me ouse a platicar con ella. Es que yo la ubico de vista porque estudiaba allí en la parroquia y que no se que, y que mi tia participaba allí, todo eso, no. Y, y ya me dijo es que estanos buscando a una persona que quiera trabajar alla. Hacemos estas prendas, nos dedicamos a corte y confeccion todo eso. Me explico. Y entonces le dije yo ya no estaba trabajando, que no trabajaba en nada que tenia que ver con esto pues. Este le dije que si pues si me interesa y a lo mejor... Le explique asi como ella me decía que hacían las cosas, pues que ropa estilizada. Y después que vi que el primer dia que me hablo Leti, que ya le di mi numero y se lo dio a Leti y al otro dia me hablo y me dijo nos vemos manan y hacemos la prueba y no se que. Y cuando vi todo lo que hacían le dije no pues es un trabajo pues muy bonito y es de alta costura. Un trabajo este... que si bien hecho y que esta bonito. Y entonces a lo mejor no nos este, pues no nos imponen nada. Por allí se dio el acercamiento de que a lo mejor yo la ubicaba a ella, y dijo yo tengo una hermana que se dedica a y despues de allí ya salio el trabajo, poco a poco fui subiendo allí con Leti.

I: You think art can function as a tool for transformation? Or in this case, you think the work that is done here can function as a tool for transformation?

I: ¿Cree que el arte funciona como una herramienta hacia la transformación? ¿O en este caso cree que en los trabajos que hacen aquí, este, funcionen como una herramienta hacia la transformación?

Lore: What we do here?

Lore: ¿Lo que hacemos aquí?

I: Yes.

I: Si.

Lore: Tools. Well yes because, because well there is... once all the design work is done, the, the form of the finishings, the works, all this, its... well they no longer see it as... as an art, ok, the embroidery is an art, right. And after that, well it has even more value. Well because the of the fact that the finisheings is utilized for her, that is, that all the all are finished together, they have another value. Then it is transformed, no. Then, yes, yes, there is a transformation and well right now i was telling you about this, this type of knitting I tell you, its I told you that this one has a name, right. I tell, its cuz this is an art. Just the same, about a neck fixing that I saw I told her all that type of work is not easy. And maybe many, some people that do not know or even I when I saw the shawl made of silk, I would say, but it looks like that very elderly like that and I didn't really know the reality that it was an expensive shawl, right. That it is a piece of work, when they explained to me and they tell me, what it takes the whole process, well yes. And well sometimes its things that just by looking at them you don't value them and even if they

are from over here sometimes they don't value it. And then after that you start to like, to like get into this that you start knowing and you start understanding the richness that is in your here, in your state, well you say it is because we are really rich in art in the people it is an art. It is an art that they should really good for. They are pieces of work very well done. It is something I say should be valued even more, right. And yeah, well, and well I think that if there is... we are in need of that, right, still... a little more of understanding towards that. But yes, it transforms there. And and the art well yes it does transform.

Lore: Herramienta. Pues si porque, porque oues ya este... Ya al hacer todo el trabajo aca en el diseño, el, la forma delos terminados, los trabajos, todo eso, este... oues ya no lo ven como un, como una artesanía, bueno es una artesanía los bordados, no. Y ya desoues de eso pues ya tiene mas valor todavía. Pues porque el hecho de que ella que se le haga ese acabado que se estilize, que se, que se hagan todos los acabados ya juntos, ya tiene otro valor. Entonces se transforma, no. Entonces, si si hay una transfirmacion y pues en si ahorita le decía de este, de este tipo de tejido le digo, este es le dije que este es el tiene su nombre, no. Le digo es que esto es uno arte. Igual allí lo de un cuello que vi pues le dije todo ese tipo de trabajo no es fácil. Y a lo mejor muchas, algunas personas que no conocen o hasta yo cuando vi el rebozo de seda decía yo pero se ve asi como viejito como asi y no sabia en realidad que era un rebozo caro, no. Que es un trabajo, cuando ya me explican y me dicen en si lo que lleva todo el proceso pues que si. Y este a veces son cosas que asi a la vista no las valoras y aunque sea uno de aca a veces uno no lo valora. Y ya despues que te empiezas a como, a como a meter a esto de que vas conociendo y te vas dando cuenta de la riqueza que hay en tu aca en tu estado pues tu dices es que la verdad somos ricos en arte en las personas es un arte, es un arte que deben de pagárselos muy bien. Es un trabajo muy bien hechos. Es una cosa que digo debería de ser mas valorada todavía, no. Y ya este, y pues yo creo que si este... nos hace falta eso no, todavía...un poco de mas conciencia hacia eso. Pero si allí se transforma. Y que el arte pues si lo va a transformar.

I: Does the collective establish or reestablish an indigenous worldview?

I: ¿El colectivo establece o reestablece el mundo de los indígenas?

Lore: Establish? How would it be?

Lore: ¿Establece? ¿Como seria?

I: Mmm. What it means is that if, that if... that if the group maybe in the group if maybe there is a way that... maybe tries to, to give recognition to the culture or things that are practiced or that practice the indigenous people or yeah?

I: Mmm. Lo que quiere decir es que es que si...que si el grupo talvez en el grupo si talves haiga alguna manera en que este... talvez trate de, de dar a conocer como la cultura o las cosas que se practican o que practicaban los indígenas o si?

Lore: what do you mean to give recognition?

Lore: ¿Como que ahora lo den a conocer?

I: yes, yes, yes. like if this group does the effort to try to, to present or explain or envision the world of the indigenous people? Like maybe the way indigenous people see the world.

I: Si, si, si. Como que si este grupo hace como el esfuerzo para tratar de cómo, de cómo presentar, o explicar, o este las visiones del mundo de los indígenas? Como la manera en que talvez las personas indígenas ven el mundo.

Lore: Well I think that, that it would be like, for example, we are close to the city for us it is not very complicated. Well, although for me, imagine that its an hour away from here from my house. But let's say, right, nothing compared to those people that make these, that make those embroideries, that are so right, but so deep in. One can't even imagine it. I think it takes 8 hours. They have to walk and I don't know what more all the way over there. And I tell myself, well sometimes they take on the worst load because they do it and then they have to go out and sell it or come all the way over here to the city and offer it. And so if they get paid well for it, and if they don't bargain so that they give it cheaper. And then, and then I say that we should value the things because maybe here in the city as if, as if it makes more, like if you don't give it the importance it should be, right. The value it has. But yes the people who make them are from small faraway towns. And well yes, that their art they... Maybe they themselves don't even know what they have, no, because if you ask them for a cheaper price, they will give it to you as long as... well because it is there necessity, right. And the necessity to take to their community. It's an illusion that they come to sell it, right. And if not, and if there are no people that will buy it at the price that they wanted it is not justified for all the time they take to do the work. And for everything that it means to them. I think that in the Trikis embroideries they put all the, what is the life of people, right. They, they stick it on the huipiles. Yeah, there story since their childhood, then if they are married, if they are, if they are single, that if and everything. And then when they leave to... when they are near their deaths, that's how they go sticking everything right. Those are things that should be, that should be given more value. Everything well more than anything recognizing it. Let's say that here in what I have seen, well over here well it's... well the company does try to... well that it is justified. And that's why they have to sell it at the price that it is so that, well so that over there they, so that the benefits go where they should go. So that it won't stay just because in the... because over here you could buy it and a person goes and resells it for a more elevated price. And then the price, the person who made it earned the minimum. That's where there should be more of an understanding, no? And fight for that not to be part of that. Because it is about giving value to things. And to the, and to the people that sell them. So yeah, but well they are the ones that take um... well the ones that should be earning more still, to come out winning. The ones that... the ones that are sticking their art on the embroideries.

Lore: Pues yo creo que, que seria como, por ejemplo, nosotros estamos cerca de la ciudad para nosotros no es muy complicado. Este aunque oara mi has de cuenta esta a una hora de aquí a mi casa. Pero digamos no, nada comparado con esas personas que hacen estas, que hacen esos bordados que están hasta no pero metidísimos. Ni so le imaina uno. Creo son ocho horas. Tienen que caminar y no se que mucho hasta alla. Y digo pues ellas son las que a veces se llevan la peor parte porque ellos lo hacen y luego tienen que salir a venderlo o venirse hasta aca hasta la ciudad a ofrecerlo. Y si bien se

los pagan y si no les regatean para que se las den mas baratas. Y entonces, y entonces yo digo que deberíamos valorar las cosas por que a lo mejor aquí en la ciudad como que, como que hace como mas, como que no le tomas la importancia que debería, no. El valor que tiene. Pero si las personas que lo hacen son de oueblos muy alejados. Y oues que si, que su arte ellos lo... A lo mejor ellos mismos ni saben lo que tienen, no, porque si les piden el precio mas barato lo dan con tal de que... porque oues hay tanta necesidad, no. Y necesidad de llevar a su comunidad. Es la ilusión que vienen ellos a venderlo no. Y si no, y si no hay personas que se lo compran al precio que quieran no lo justo que es por todo el trabajo por todo el tiempo que se llevan. Y por todo lo que significa para ellos. Creo que en los bordados Trikis le ponen toda la, lo que es la vida de las personas, no. Lo, lo plasman en los huipiles. Aja, su historia desde que son niños, luego que si son casada, que si son, que si son solteras, que si y todo. Y luego cuando ya se van a... cuando ya se acerca su muerte, asi todo eso lo van plasmando ellos no. Son cosas que deberían, que deberíamos darle un valor mas. Todos pues de reconocer mas que nada. Digamos que aquí en lo que yo me ha dado cuenta, pues acá si pues este... la empresa pues si trata de... pues de que sea lo justo no. Y por eso tienen que venderlo al precio que es para que, para que pues alla la, para que el beneficio llegue a donde debe de llegar. Para que no se quede namadas en el que... por que aca puede que lo compre y una persona va y lo revende a un precio mas elevado. Y entonces el precio, la persona que lo hizo gana lo minimo. Alli si debería de haber mas conciencia, no. Y luchar por eso no de no ser parte de eso no. Prque se trata de darle valor a las cosas. Y alos, y a las personas que lo venden. Si, pero ues si son los que llevan este... los que oues deberian de ganar mas todavía, de salir ganando. Los que lo... los que están plasmando su arte en los bordados.

I: Yes, good, and what do you think about social consciousness?

I: Si. Bueno. ¿Y que piensa acerca de la conciencia social?

Lore: Well the... what they said about the lack of consciousness we don't give it things value but that we should value them more so that, so that that way well it gives more value to things, right. Real value that we should be... well we should... well contribute right. Contribute our, our grain of sand that so the things... so that it is given the value... that they are conscious that it isn't just any job, that it's not just whatever. Because I would tell her that I had read, that I had barely read to Leti that had just read that if you work with your hands you are a laborer, right. If you work with your hands and your mind you are an artisan and if you work with your hands, your mind and heart, well you are an artist. Those people are artists because they are not the ones that do embroidery. And maybe here too, I mean maybe over here... well also, well also... we carry it out like an art form, right. But even more so the one that does the embroidery because over there it is taking shape, suffering, their life, their emotions, their feelings, many things, right. Then, that should be like something that is more appreciated well but right now I feel that there has been a change from 2 or 3 years ago when they didn't give it much importance, to now. No now if a dress with, with that type of embroidery and all of that has a high value and all that. Yeah, because it has, from their creating consciousness from the person that embroidered, then the person that designed it, then the person who cut and sewed and all that. So then all of that has to, has to, gives it value. Because it is not just

one person who does it all. It is many people who intervene so that it can arrive to sales. But, but in a way I think there is still needs, has changed, it's not like that, now, now the women, many women start to recut the suit. But before they would say no just the women of the Istmo because they do it. Hey, butu we are all Oaxaquenos. And now we are Mexicans, right and everyone. It's just that sometimes we do not get interested. But we are rich in art, that we are rich in culture and all that, well we are. But sometimes we have not discovered one hundred percent now have we. Once there is that, once there is that consciousness, that day will wake up and say well it's true right. They should value the things. Because maybe they only value one garment of a certain label or place that is sent or that the people because they have a certain label, right, that the palomita, right. That is the maximum, the maximum that you see me. But if you knew what really has value.

That is where feelings, there emotions and many other things.

Lore: Pues de...eso que decía que por falta de conciencia no le damos el valor a las cosas pero que este deberíamos de valorar más para que así, para que así este pues se le del valor a las cosas no. Valor real que debemos de... pues nosotros de...pues aportar no. Aportar nuestro, nuestro granito de arena que para que las cosas... para que se le dé el valor... que sean conscientes de que no es cualquier trabajo, que no es cualquier. Porque yo le decía que había leído que apenas había leído a Leti que apenas había leído dice que si trabajas con tus manos eres un obrero, no. Si trabajas con tus manos y tu mente ya eres un artesano y si trabajas con tus manos, tu mente y corazón pues ya eres un artista. Esas personas son aristas porque no son las que hacen el bordado. Y a la mejor aquí también yo digo a lo mejor aca... también este, también este... lo desempeñamos así como un arte, no. Pero aun mas el que hace el bordado porque alla esta plasmado, sufriendo, su vida, sus emociones, sus sentimientos, muchas cosas, no. Entonces, eso debería de ser así como una cosa mas apreciada pues pero ahorita yo siento que ya a abido un cambio a lo que a lo mejor hace dos o tres anos que no le tomaban importancia. No ahora si un vestido con, con ese tipo de bordado y todo eso tiene un valor ya alto y todo eso. Si, porque tiene, ya desde allí esta haciendo la conciencia desde la persona que lo bordo, luego la persona que lo diseño, luego la persona que lo corto que lo cosio que todo eso. Entonces todo eso tiene que, tiene que, le da el valor. Porque no solamente una persona es la que lo va a hacer todo, no. Son bastantes personas que intervienen para que eso llegue a este ya a la venta digamos, no. Pero, pero en si yo digo que hace falta, ya cambio, ya no es eso que ya ahora ya las mujeres, muchas mujeres se ponen a recortar el traje. Pero antes decían no nadamas las del Istmo por que ellas lo hacen. Oyes pero somos Oaxacaquenos todos. Y ahora somos Mexicanos, no y todos. Nadamas que a veces no nos interesamos. Pero de que somos ricos en arte, de que somos ricos en cultura y todo eso, ous lo somos. Pero a veces no lo hemos descubierto al cien por ciento, no. Ya que haya ese, que haya esa conciencia, ese día va a despertar y decir no pues es que si no. Debe de valer las cosas. Porque a lo mejor no badamas valora a una prenda de por cierta marca o lugar que lo envían o que la gente porque tiene tal este que ous la marca no, que la palomita,no. Ese es uy lo máximo, máximo que me veas. Pero si supieran que lo que realmente tiene valor. Allí están los sentimientos, sus emociones, tantas cosas.

I: Quality also.

I: Tambien la calidad.

Lore: also the quality, right. so then, but if I do think that but now there has been a change to what we lived before. Because now all the women now want to contribute like that with lots of pride and stuff. They already realized. We're now waking up from that sleep. But if I think that there is something more missing. And the more it gives to know well we kind of start doing more, like more consciousness, right, of what matters and the effort done, right.

Lore: Tambien la calidad, no. Si entonces, pero si yo creo que pero ahora si a habido un cambio a lo que viviamos antes. Porque ahora si todas las mujeres ya lo quieren aportar asi con mucho orgullo y todo. Ya se dieron cuenta. Ya vamos como despertando de ese sueno. Pero si yo creo que ahora si falta mas. Y entre mas se de a conocer pues mas como que vamos ir haciendo como que mas, como que mas conciencia, no, de lo que vale y del esfuerzo, no.

I: do you have more to add?

I: ¿Tiene algo mas que agregar?

Lore: Yeah. Well that I am grateful for the opportunity that was given to me because maybe I didn't um... maybe here the didn't ask for certain, well certain, like in other places where you go ask for work and that they ask for a resume. certain like what could it be...

Lore: Si. Pues de que estoy agradecida de la oportunidad que se me dio aca porque a lo mejor yo no este... a lo mejor este aqui no me pidieron cierto, pues cierta, como en otros lugares de que vas a pedir trabajo y que te piden un curriculum. Ciertas como que podrían ser...

I: Certain experience

I: Cierta experiencia.

Lore: what could it be? how certain experience

Lore: Que podría ser? Como cierta experiencia...

I: Like courses?

I: Como cursos?

Lore: Yes, that's it. Like to have a certain ability so you can execute. But here they didn't tell me well since you don't know much, since you don't have the knowledge or anything, all that, well we won't give you the opportunity. But they did give me the opportunity. So I always relate it to my life to what my parents inculcate in me. Maybe sometimes I do say it is the time, its cuz of my children but I start thinking but that's how I'm gonna move my children ahead. I am happy but sometimes I tell myself i am like in a good environment, they gave me the opportunity, well I feel like I'm with family. I feel good, I don't feel like I'm pressured. So then I think that well I should also give thanks for that because it is also a job in which I have also learned, I am learning. So then, I like it. I feel comfortable with them, with Leti, with her, with Dona Jacque, well, yeah, well to thank them for the opportunity to participate and be part of this group that with the fact

that I was not in the beginnings with them, that I feel like that different to them, no, I feel the same to them, I feel comfortable, I feel content and um... it like gives me like, like courage to say we can do it, and how things are beautiful and maybe I want to make a dress like that, or like this. So then it's like yes, like they are, like they motivate to keep going with them. To be given more. To be given more, to tell them I can now do it faster, now give me more garments, and I do them and I earn a little more and all that. So then I think yes, yeah well give thanks to the opportunity and... and well and well their patience too. (Laughs). Well because, that's why there is also, well I say that it's that right. I say it's that. And well also that I am also happy when my work comes out right, when they put it on. They are satisfactions, the are um and also um, like they motivate me to say now I want to make one for my mom, now one for me or for my daughters, and all that. So then it is now a motivation, something beautiful. And well all that I also wouldn't have found it in another type of work that i would do like that, very routine based maybe that would not be it. Because well I feel that they opened their doors to me. And well they also well, I have felt comfortable and also i like the working environment. Well thank them for that.

Lore: Aja eso mero... Como que tengas cierta habilidad para que tu desempeñes. Pero aquí tu digamos no me dijeron oyes como no sabes mucho, como no tienes asi los conocimientos ni nada, todo eso, pues no te damos la oportunidad. Pero si me dieron la oportunidad. Pues yo siempre lo relaciono a mi vida a lo que yo me han inculcado mis papas...talvez a veces yo so digo es que el tiempo, es que mis hijos pero a veces a si me pongo a pensar pero a si voy a poder sacar adelante a mis hijos. Estoy contenta pero a veces digo como que estoy en buen ambiente, me dieron la oportunidad, este me siento asi como en familia. Yo me siento bien, no me siento asi presionada. Y entonces yo creo que oyes eso también pues agradecerlo porque pues también es un trabajo en el que yo este también he aprendido, estoy aprendiendo. Entonces, me gusta. Me siento agusto con ellas, con Leti, con su, con Dona Jacque, este si, pues agradecerle la oportunidad de participar de ser parte de este grupo de que el hecho de que yo no haya estado del inicio con ellas este, me sienta yo asi diferente a ellas, no yo me siento igual a ellas, yo me siento agusto, yo me siento contenta y este...como que me da asi como, como animo a decir si se puede, y que bonitas cosas y a lo mejor yo quiero hacer un vestido asi o esto asi. Entonces como que si, como que si son, como que me motivan a querer seguir con ellas. A que me den mas. A que me den mas, a decirles ya lo hago mas rápido ahora deme otraas prendas y las hago y ya gano otro poco mas y todo eso. Entonces yo creo que si, si este pues agradecerle la oportunidad y... y este y pues la paciencia también. (Rie). Porque oyes este, por eso también este, poues yo digo que es eso, no. Yo digo que es eso. Y pues también este que yo también quedo contenta cuando queda bien un trabajo, cuando ya se lo ponen. Ya son satisfacciones, son este y también este como que me motivan a decir ahora quiero hacerle uno para mi mama, ahora uno para mi o para mis hijas y todo eso. Entonces ya es una motivación, es algo bonito. Y entonces pues este todo eso también no lo hubiera encontrado en otro tipo de trabajo que yo hiciera que fuera asi pues muy rutinario talvez no habría eso. Porque oyes yo siento que me abrieron las ouertas. Y pues este también este, me he sentido agusto y también me gusto su ambiente de trabajo. Pues eso agradecerles.