Glossary

agencia: The smallest political entity, usually a village.

agente: Leader of an agencia; one of the autoridades.

autoridades: The political leaders selected during the annual assembly in each village.

ayuntamiento: The building where the offices of the autoridades are found.

cargo: A duty taken on by participants in the system of usos y costumbres; part of the civil/religious hierarchy.

confraternidad: A gathering of large groups of non-Catholics from different congregations over a period of several days.

distrito: A political entity between the state and the municipio. In Mexico, distritos are found only in Oaxaca.

Evangélicos: Evangelicals

expulsados: Expelled ones. This term refers to non-Catholics who have been expelled from their communities for being non-Catholic.

fiesta: The combination of folk-Catholic and political events that are the high point of Mixtec village life; part of the system of usos y costumbres.

hermano, hermana: Brother, sister; also, what Evangelicals call each other.

localidad: A census category; it includes places with one residence as well as cities.
mayordomo: The highest post on the religious side of the civil/religious hierarchy; sponsor of the fiesta.

municipio: A political entity between the distrito and the agencia.

Ñuu Shaavi: Land of rain; the name Mixtecs give to their homeland.

Ñuu Vicu: Land of clouds; the name Mixtepecos give to their village.

pipa: A tanker truck that carries water to places not hooked up to any water agency or well.

presidente municipal: Political leader of a municipio, a political level above an agencia.

remittances: Money sent by migrants to their home communities. Remittances may also be goods and/or cultural knowledge brought back to the home communities.

servicio: Literally, service. Dar servicio (to give service) refers to the requirement that each family in a community contribute labor and goods for free to the community in order to maintain membership.

socios: Members of the families of the fiesta sponsors who contribute money, goods, and labor to the fiesta.

tequio: Corvée labor, provided by members of each community. Every family must contribute one family member for one day each week.

usos y costumbres: The name given to the system of the civil/religious hierarchy; the traditional government of Mixtec villages.