

## THE EFFECT OF PATRILocal HOUSEHOLDS ON NUCLEAR FAMILY INTERACTION IN ZINACANTAN<sup>1</sup>

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This paper explores some effects of residence patterns on routine family interaction in Zinacantan, Chiapas, Mexico.<sup>2</sup> Five nuclear families (neolocal households) are compared with five extended families which include the parents of the husband (patrilocal households). In both types of households the routine interaction among women and children was recorded. In this paper, the interaction record is analyzed to see if the differences between the two types of households can be explained by a theory of interaction based on small groups research. Some findings that are not directly relevant to the theory are also examined.

The terms "neolocal" or "patrilocal *household*" are used to remind the reader that my usage of "neolocal" and "patrilocal" is distinct from most usages. I am focusing on residence

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<sup>2</sup> For more detailed information on the family system in Zinacantan, on the ten families that were observed and on the methods used to record interaction, see my doctoral dissertation, "Family Interaction in Zinacantan," Harvard University, 1963; also my article "Interaction Patterns in Zinacanteco Families," *American Sociological Review*, 29 (1964), 540-550. The article is reprinted and translated in Evon Z. Vogt, *Ensayos sobre Zinacantan*, Instituto Nacional Indigenista, Mexico, in press.

rules only insofar as they effect household composition. Thus a neolocal household may be next door to the house of the husband's parents, or the wife's, or neither; and a patrilocal household may consist of a nuclear family and the husband's parents, living on land that has been bought by the husband and is far from all of the family's relatives. This usage is based on the assumption that the behavior among members of a nuclear family depends more on who else is living in their houses than on who is living nearby. This assumption seems to be true in Zinacantan, where each household is fairly isolated. It may well be false for societies in which 1) households are not isolated (e.g., a compound with several houses grouped around a common courtyard where most of the interaction occurs), or 2) households are internally divided into relatively isolated groups (e.g., a house containing several economically independent groups, each with a separate area for cooking, eating and sleeping.)

### *Family Life in Zinacantan*

Zinacantan is a community of about 8,000 Maya Indians, located in the highlands of Chiapas, near the Guatemalan border. About 10 per cent of the population lives in a densely settled valley which is the ceremonial and political center of the community. The rest live in several hamlets of varying sizes and compactness. Each hamlet contains several clusters of from two to 50 houses, with each cluster composed mostly of patrilineally related kin.<sup>3</sup>

Zinacantecos have a distinctive costume, culture and social organization, and are endogamous. All the women and most of the men are monolingual in Tzotzil, a Maya language. Almost all Zinacanteco men are corn farmers who work in the lowlands on land rented from non-Indian Mexicans. The men and older boys go down to the lowlands for several days or weeks at a time, for a total of 75 to 200 days a year.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Evon Z. Vogt, "Some Aspects of Zinacantan Settlement Patterns and Ceremonial Organization," *Estudios de Cultura Maya*, 1 (1961), 131-145.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Cancian, *Economics and Prestige in a Maya Community*, Stanford University Press, in press.



Household composition in Zinacantan is determined primarily by four rules of residence. First, the core of a household is a nuclear family: mother, father and children. Second, when a son marries, he brings his wife home and lives with his parents for about three years or until one or two children are born; then he builds a house of his own next door. Third, one son remains in his parents' house all of his life (preferably the youngest son?). Fourth, no one lives alone and no man lives without an adult woman.

These rules are followed in virtually all cases. Thus the typical Zinacanteco household is composed of a nuclear family or of three generations of patrilineally related kin. However, there are exceptions to the first three rules, caused by death, divorce, lack of sons and intra-family feuds. In a recent census of 246 couples in the dispersed hamlet of Paste', 81 per cent of the couples conformed to the first three residence rules, that is, they lived in *or* near the house of the husband's parents. The most frequent type of deviance was matrilocality, which characterized 17 per cent of the couples. Only 2 per cent of the couples did not live near the parents of either husband or wife. In addition to the reasons for deviances listed above, matrilocality seems to be caused by the husband's desire for social advancement in a situation where his wife's family has higher social standing than his family.

Regardless of composition, the household is the unit of economic cooperation, socialization and interaction. Social contact is usually limited to members of one's own household, nearby relatives and the godparents of one's children. The men of a household own and work their land together. The women cooperate in housework and child care, and the children under about ten spend the day playing with each other and with neighboring cousins.

### *Method*

I lived in each of the ten households for three or four days, during which time I recorded the rate and quality of interaction among family members. In every household, the men and older boys were away working on the harvest while the interaction data was collected. Interaction rates was measured by estima-

ting how long each family dyad interacted in a five-minute period; this was done for about 100 consecutive five-minute periods, or about nine hours. The quality of interaction was measured by placing every act that was observed over a period of several hours into one of fifteen categories, and also noting the initiator and recipient of the act. For example, if a mother asked her daughter, "Where is the pot?" then I would write "Mo-Dau" under the column entitled "seeks information." The 15 categories are formed by combining three resources (information, affection and dominance) with five modes of action (seeks, gives, deprives, accepts, rejects).<sup>5</sup>

The goal in selecting the ten households was to hold everything constant, except that five families would include the husband's parents and five would not. Each household consisted of husband, wife and a least two children, including one child that was still nursing. Five households also included the husband's parents; in two cases, both of his parents, in three cases only his mother. The other five included a daughter between ten and 16 years old, and at least two other children. None of the households contained any people besides the nuclear family and husband's parents (except, of course, the observer).

Nuclear households with older daughters were selected because I wanted to investigate how family interaction would be affected by the presence of a specific kind of woman, the husband's mother. If the nuclear households did not include older daughters, then one could have argued that the interaction patterns of the two types of households differed only because the mothers in the patrilocal households had another woman in the house to help with the work and provide companionship. Since older daughters also perform these functions, this argument cannot be used.

It should be noted, however, that this method of holding constant certain aspects of the mother-in-law's role has some important drawbacks. First, I may be holding constant the most important variables, that is, family interaction in societies with predominantly patrilocal households may differ from societies with predominantly neolocal households precisely because of

<sup>5</sup> This category system was devised by Richard Longabaugh and revised by myself. See his article, "A Category System for Coding Interpersonal Behavior," *Sociometry*, 26 (1963), 319-344.



the effects of an extra co-worker and companion for the mother. My research design would mask these effects.

The second possible drawback is that the older daughter in Zinacantan is more than a helpmeet and companion. Unlike the grandmother, she is usually affectionate and submissive to mother, and very affectionate to the younger children. Differences between the two types of households may be caused by the absence of such an affectionate figure in the patrilocal households, rather than by the presence of grandmother. However, two of the patrilocal households include an older daughter, as well as grandmother, and these households are generally more similar to the other patrilocal households than to the neolocal households.

### *Differences Between Patrilocal and Neolocal Households: Hypotheses and Results*

The hypotheses on how the two types of households would differ were based on casual observation of grandmothers and on a theory of interaction in small groups. During the first year of field work, while I was concentrating on learning the language and the general patterns of family life, I observed several grandmothers, all of whom were extremely dominant and somewhat hostile to their daughters-in-law. In all relationships, a Zinacanco tends to dominate those younger than himself. However, the stream of orders from mothers-in-law seemed greater and the compliance of daughters-in-law seemed more consistent.

I had heard many stories of severe conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, often resulting in the younger family moving out. There were many reports of witchcraft between the two and I also learned that the marriage ceremony specifically refers to the potential for conflict in this relationship, and includes a sermon to the mother-in-law, urging her to be good to the bride so that she will not run away.<sup>6</sup> From all of this I concluded that mothers-in-law were dominating and hostile towards their daughters-in-law, and set about to examine the effects of this behavior on interaction within the nuclear family.

<sup>6</sup> Jane Fishburne, "Courtship and Marriage in Zinacantan," A. B. Honors Thesis, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1962.

If a group member with high status is dominating and hostile, how will this effect the behavior of other group members? Some hypotheses are provided by a theory based on the work of American social scientists concerned with interaction in small groups. The first assumption of this theory is that behavior patterns usually occur in pairs; if the act is known, then one can predict the type of response that will be made. This assumption was applied to three basic dimensions of behavior: affection, dominance and interaction rate,<sup>7</sup> yielding the hypotheses that affection elicits affection, dominance elicits submission and affection covaries with high interaction rate. Specifically, the predictions are that if grandmother is highly dominant and hostile to mother, mother will be submissive and hostile to grandmother, and there will be a low interaction rate between them. If grandmother is affectionate and not very dominant to mother, then mother will be affectionate and not very submissive in return, and there will be a high interaction rate between them. The same predictions apply to interaction between grandmother and her grandchildren. The data from the ten families confirms the hypotheses on dominance and affection,<sup>8</sup> both for dyads involving grandmother, and for other family dyads. The hypothesis concerning interaction rate was not confirmed. However, there was a strong inverse relationship, in all types of dyads, between the amount of dominance from the older member of the dyad to the younger and the interaction rate between the two.

The second major assumption of the theory is that when a person participates in a self-other pattern (such as high dominance-high submission, or affection-affection) he is likely to enact the same pattern with other people. A person may enact different sides of the self-other pattern in different relationships, but the pattern will be consistent. Thus, if grandmother is hostile to mother, mother will reciprocate this hostility, according to the first assumption of the theory. According to the second assumption, mother will also be hostile to her children, who in turn

<sup>7</sup> These three variables were chosen because recent research suggests that they are the basic dimensions of interaction; both theoretical and factor analytical studies indicate that most of the variables that are usually measured in studies of interaction can be reduced to these dimensions. See my dissertation and article, *op. cit.*, for discussion and references on this point and on the theory.

<sup>8</sup> See my dissertation and article, *op. cit.*, for detailed description of how the hypotheses were tested and what results were obtained.



will reciprocate her hostility and will enact the same self-other pattern with each other. If grandmother is highly dominant to mother, mother will be highly submissive to her, and will be highly dominant or submissive to her children, who in turn will take the appropriate complementary role, and so forth. This assumption, then, yields the prediction that all the dyads in a family will tend to be homogeneous; either all hostile or all affectionate; either all authoritarian (high dominance-high submission) or all equalitarian (low dominance-low submission). This set of predictions was confirmed by the data from the ten families.

These assumptions predict how the presence of the paternal grandmother will effect interaction within the nuclear family. If grandmothers are generally dominant and hostile, and older daughters are not, then, according to the theory, interaction within patrilocal households should be hostile and authoritarian, compared to neolocal households. In addition, the interaction rate should be lower in patrilocal households, if not because of the relation between affection and interaction rate, then because of the unexpected inverse relation between dominance and interaction rate.

Table 1, below, presents the average Dominance, Affection, and Interaction Rate Scores for mother-child and child-child dyads, for the two types of households. The Dominance Score, from a mother to a child for example, was calculated by adding the per cent of all acts from mother to child in the categories "gives dominance" and "rejects dominance", and subtracting

TABLE 1  
DOMINANCE, AFFECTION AND INTERACTION RATE IN THE  
TWO HOUSEHOLD TYPES

	<i>Mother-to-child</i>		<i>Child-to-child</i>	
	<i>patri.</i>	<i>neo.</i>	<i>patri.</i>	<i>neo.</i>
Dominance Score	30.7	25.2	14.5	7.1
Affection Score	8.6	5.8	12.7	24.0
Interaction Rate Score	1.4	1.7	1.1	1.5

the per cent of acts scored as "seeks dominance" and "accepts dominance". The Affection Score is the per cent of acts in the category "gives affection" minus the per cent in 'deprives of affection'. The Interaction Rate Score represents the average number of interchanges in a five minute period with both dyad members present.

Five of the six comparisons in Table 1 follow the predictions. The Dominance Scores are higher in patrilocal households than in neolocal households. Given the way Dominance Scores were calculated, this means that relationships in patrilocal households tend to be more authoritarian, with one member of each dyad (the older member) giving most of the orders and the other accepting these orders. Interaction Rates are lower in patrilocal households and, among children, there is less affection and more hostility. Contrary to the predictions, mothers are more affectionate to their children in patrilocal households. It should also be noted that the differences between types of households is much greater in child-child dyads than in mother-child dyads.

In sum, the presence of the paternal grandmother has, on the whole, the predicted effects on interaction within the nuclear family. The high dominance, low affection and associated low interaction rate of the grandmother "spreads" to the rest of the household. The residence rule which produce patrilocal households also produce a distinct type of interaction within the nuclear family, which is less equalitarian, less affectionate and less active than the interaction in neolocal households.

The conclusions in the above paragraph are simple and definite. However, the data on which they are based contain many complexities and ambiguities. The remainder of the paper considers some of the problems and unexpected findings encountered in this study.

### *Five Grandmothers*

The major complication in the study is that not all the grandmothers were hostile and dominant. There was a great deal of variance among these five women. Two were extremely hostile and dominant towards their daughter-in-law. They both told me that their daughter-in-law was a bad woman who mistreated



them and their son. They were both very critical of the younger woman and tried to dominate her. In their behavior towards their grandchildren, they were the most dominant and most hostile (per cent of acts in the category "deprives of affection") of the five grandmothers. One of these grandmothers was a widow, financially dependent on her son; this household lived on land purchased by her son from his wife's family. The widow's attempts to dominate her daughter-in-law met with reserved compliance and cold politeness. The widow was conscious of her lack of power and was afraid that her daughter-in-law would arrange to force her out of the household.

The other hostile grandmother was not widowed. Her son and his wife lived in her husband's house and were partially dependent on him economically. This woman clearly had upper hand over her daughter-in-law and frequently reduced the younger woman to tears through her criticism. The daughter-in-law had left her husband several times every year, throughout their marriage, in part because of conflict with her mother-in-law, in part because of her husband's drinking, his hostility when drunk and his failure as a breadwinner. There is another side to this grandmother that deserves mention. Not only does she produce more hostile behavior ("deprives of affection;" e.g., criticizes, hits, laughs at) towards her daughter-in-law and grandchildren than most of the other grandmothers, she also produces more affectionate behavior ("gives affection"; e.g., praises, holds, laughs with) than most other grandmothers. Compared with other Zinacanteco women, she is emotionally very powerful<sup>9</sup> and freely expresses both love and hate.

Of the three other grandmothers, two are neutral and reserved, and one is extremely friendly. The two "neutral" grandmothers show less affection ("gives affection") to their daughters-in-law and grandchildren than the other three grandmothers; they also have the lowest Dominance Scores and very low rates of showing hostility (the category "deprives of affection"). One of these grandmothers is a widow, who is economically dependent on her son and lives on land that her son bought, far from his relatives. She appears to have less control over the household than the other grandmother, who is not a widow and whose husband is a very rich, dynamic and powerful man.

<sup>9</sup> This woman is a native curer, which may be related to this aspect of her personality.

These two households are linked by kinship, friendship and mutual cooperation. The daughter-in-law of the widowed grandmother is the daughter of the nonwidowed grandmother. Another similarity of these two households is their size; they are the largest in the sample, each containing eleven people. Both households also include several older girls who do much of the housework, and both grandmothers do very little housework.

The remaining grandmother was most unlike my expectations about the behavior of mothers-in-law. She was like a friendly older sister to her daughter-in-law, very affectionate and moderately dominant. She and her daughter-in-law cooperated in the housework and child care, and seemed to have a very relaxed and friendly relationship. This grandmother had been a widow for many years, and was dependent on her son. The household was located near the grandmother's parents' house, on land that was now controlled by the grandmother's younger brother.

These descriptions document the considerable variation among grandmothers. My first conclusion, that all grandmothers were very dominant and hostile to their daughters-in-law, was incorrect, and in retrospect I can isolate one major cause of this error. My original impressions were based, in part, on a series of brief visit to several households, always accompanied by my husband. I later learned that when a strange man visits a Zinacanteco household, the oldest woman present takes charge, especially if she is about fifty or older, for then she is considered to be somewhat de-sexed, and the usual restrictions on interaction with male strangers no longer apply. My original impressions were thus based on a very atypical situation—the visit of a strange man—and the behavior observed in this situation had very little relation to routine interaction in the household. One can only speculate on how often this same type of error has occurred in the work of other anthropologists.

The differences among the grandmothers have important implications for the theory described and tested in the first part of this paper. The predictions were based on the assumptions that the grandmothers would be hostile and dominant, and that these behavior patterns would spread to other household members, resulting in consistent differences between neolocal and patrilocal households. If the grandmothers were not hostile and dominant, then the data in Table 1 do not test the theory, regardless of the accuracy of the predictions.



One approach to this problem is to examine the meaning of the assumption: "grandmothers are hostile and dominant." The terms "hostile" and "dominant" can be interpreted as relative terms, and the assumption can then be restated as: "grandmothers are generally more hostile and dominant than older daughters." This latter statement is only partially supported by the data. The mean Affection Score of the grandmothers is lower than the mean score of the older daughters in neolocal households, although some of the most affectionate grandmothers have higher scores than the least affectionate daughters. The grandmothers also have more extreme Dominance Scores than the daughters in their interaction with the younger children; however, contrary to the assumption, in their interaction with mother, the grandmothers have less extreme scores.

### *Differences among Patrilocal Households*

Another approach is to examine the variance among the five patrilocal households and determine whether the dominance and hostility among mother and children varies with the dominance and hostility of the grandmother. According to the theory, interaction in the two households with hostile and dominant grandmothers should be higher on dominance and hostility than the other three patrilocal households, and higher than the average neolocal household. The household with the friendly grandmother should be lower on dominance and hostility than the other patrilocal households and should also be lower than the average neolocal households. The two "neutral grandmother" households, should be in between the "hostile" and the "friendly" patrilocal households.

The relevant data is presented in Table 2, below. In the table and the following discussion, the grandmothers and households are identified by the labels: hostile, hostile widow, neutral, neutral widow, and friendly widow. The five patrilocal households are listed in order of decreasing hostility and dominance, from grandmother to mother. This rank order is based on my overall impression of the relationship between the two women. The first two columns in Table 2 present the Dominance and Affection Scores from grandmothers to mothers, and the scores generally support my impressions except for the high

Affection Score of the "hostile" grandmother, a highly expressive woman who happened to be in a friendly mood while I was scoring interaction. Her Affection Score and other scores which deviate from the predictions are enclosed by parentheses.

TABLE II

THE DIFFUSION OF SELF-OTHER PATTERNS IN PATRILOCAL HOUSEHOLDS

<i>Household</i>	<i>grmo-mo</i> <i>Dom</i>	<i>grmo-mo</i> <i>Aff</i>	<i>mo-ch</i> <i>Dom</i>	<i>mo-ch</i> <i>Aff</i>	<i>ch-ch</i> <i>Dom</i>	<i>ch-ch</i> <i>Aff</i>
Hostile Widow	5	—1	36	—3	19	0
Hostile	3	(6)	48	2	13	(30)
Neutral	1	2	33	11	9	3
Neutral Widow	0	0	25	7	(16)	12
Friendly Widow	1	4	11	26	?*	18
Mean Score for Neolocal Households			25	6	7	24

\* A Dominance Score could not be calculated for this dyad because I was unable to record enough acts concerning dominance.

The data in Table 2 confirm the theory, with few exceptions. As the Dominance Scores of the grandmothers decrease, the Dominance Scores from mother to child and from child to child decrease; as the Affection Scores from grandmother to mother increase, the Affection Scores from mother to child and child to child also increase.

The relationship of these scores to the mean scores for neolocal households also supports the theory, on the whole. The mean scores for neolocal households are close to the scores for households with neutral grandmothers. Households with hostile grandmothers are more dominant and less affectionate than neolocal households; the household with a friendly grandmother is less dominant and more affectionate than neolocal households.

The column of Affection Score from mother to child merits special attention because, contrary to the theory, the mean Af-



fection Score from mother to child was higher in patrilocal households than in neolocal households (see Table 1). Note, on Table 2, that the Affection Scores are lower than the mean for neolocal households in only two families. However, as the theory would predict, these two families are the ones with the hostile grandmothers.

One way of explaining this data on affection from mother to children is to assume that two contradictory processes are involved. The theory predicts one of them—the diffusion of the grandmother's behavior patterns resulting in the linear relation between grandmother to mother affection and mother to child affection which is evident in Table 2. The second process was suggested by the finding that mothers in patrilocal families interact with their youngest child much more than mothers in neolocal families (in all ten families the youngest child is unweaned and under two and a half). The interaction rates of other dyads besides mother-baby are just a little lower in patrilocal households than in neolocal households. These data suggest that a woman living with her mother-in-law may be more emotionally dependent on her children. Such a woman does not have the gratification of running her own household, and may thus become more involved with her children and more affectionate to them, resulting in a higher mean Affection Score from mother to children in patrilocal households. A woman living with her mother-in-law would be particularly involved with her nursing baby because the fact of nursing make the mother more vital than the grandmother in this relationship.

According to this interpretation, mothers living with their husband's mother *and* father should be particularly dependent on their children, since un-widowed grandmothers have much more control over the household.<sup>10</sup> The interaction data suggest that this is the case. The grandchildren of the two un-widowed

<sup>10</sup> See Dorian Apple, "The Social Structure of Grandparenthood," *American Anthropologist*, 58 (1956), 656-663, for a cross-cultural study that finds an inverse relationship between the authority of grandparents over parents and the warmth and equality of grandparents and grandchildren. Apple would predict that the non-widowed grandmothers, who in Zinacantan have more authority over the parents than widows, have higher dominance Scores and Lower Affection Scores towards their grandchildren than widowed grandmothers. If such a relationship does exist in Zinacantan, it is not strong enough to show up clearly in such a small number of cases.

grandmothers are very obedient to grandmother (per cent of acts in the category "accepts dominance" divided by "rejects dominance"); and they are relatively disobedient to their mothers. These children are also less dependent on their mothers than children with widowed grandmothers; that is, they have low rates of seeking support or attention from their mothers.

There is one more pattern evident in Table 2 that deserves comment: the contrast between the mother-child dyads and the child-child dyads. The Affection and Dominance Scores from mother to child in patrilocal households fall on both sides of the mean scores for neolocal households. Only those mothers with hostile and dominant mothers-in-law are more hostile and dominant to their children than the average mother in a neolocal household, and the mother with a friendly mother-in-law is *less* hostile and dominant than the average neolocal mother. All this is consistent with the theory of the diffusion of self-other patterns. The child-child dyads are different. Regardless of the behavior of the grandmother, the children in patrilocal households have higher Dominance Scores, and, with one exception, lower Affection Scores than children in neolocal households. Note also that, within the five patrilocal households, the relative degree of child-child dominance and affection is less closely related to the behavior of the grandmother. I have been unable to construct an explanation of this that fits with the data.

### *Unexpected Findings: Dominance and Affection among Children*

An unexpected finding in this study was that the relationship between Dominance Scores and Affection Scores varies in the two types of households. In patrilocal households, there is a strong, inverse relationship between dominance and affection; in neolocal households, dominance and affection are unrelated. The submissiveness of the children to each other also varies between the two types of households. In patrilocal households the children comply with the orders of another child ("accepts dominance") three times as often as they fail to comply ("rejects dominance"). In neolocal households the rate of compliance



is only one and a half times as great as the rate of noncompliance.<sup>11</sup>

The submissiveness of child to mother is the same in the two types of households. However, children are much more submissive to their grandmother, than they are to their mother or siblings.

Another interesting pattern in the data is the similarity of the children in the "hostile" and "friendly" households, as compared to the other three patrilocal households. The children in these two households have the highest Affection Scores; they have low Dominance Scores and are not very submissive to each other. In other words, compared to the children in the three other patrilocal households, these children are most like the children in neolocal households; their interaction does not seem to be affected very much by their grandmothers. The behavior of the children in the "friendly" household conforms with the theory: the grandmother is affectionate and non-dominant and so are the children. The "hostile" grandmother also has very high rates of giving support to her grandchildren and daughter-in-law. However, unlike the "friendly" grandmother, she has very high Dominance Scores, has the highest rate of depriving of support, or being hostile, towards her grandchildren, and seemed to me to have a very high rate of being hostile towards her daughter-in-law, even though this does not show up in the interaction data. These findings suggest that affection and hostility sometimes are independent dimensions, and that, as far as the behavior of the children is concerned, the grandmother's rate of being affectionate or emotionally expressive is her most important attribute. A more conservative interpretation would be that the data suggest nothing, since the number of cases is so small.

### *Unexpected Findings: Social Contact*

The two types of households differ in the amount of social contact among household members, as well as in the quality of their interaction. Mothers and children in neolocal households spend less time at home than their counterparts in patrilocal

<sup>11</sup> In all households, most of the orders are given by the older children to the younger children.

households. However, the differences are small except for older daughters. The five older daughters from neolocal households were home for an average of four and a half hours, during the nine hours that I recorded interaction rate and location. The two older daughters from patrilocal households averaged seven hours at home.

The amount of time that the older females are away is not related to the number of females helping with the housework, nor is there a relationship between the rate of absence of one older female in a household and the absence of others. Besides household type, I could find only one other relationship involving rate of absence: in neolocal households, the two mothers with distinctly high rates of absence were the two with the lowest Affection Scores.

The two types of households also vary on interaction rate. When the members of a neolocal household are together, they interact more, with one exception: mother and unweaned child have a higher interaction rate in patrilocal households than in neolocal households. Of the other six kinds of dyads, five have a higher interaction rate in neolocal households, and one is tied. However, in neolocal households, people are away from the house and yard more often, so that the average amount of interaction in any given period of time is slightly lower in neolocal households, simply because there are fewer people there to interact.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

This paper compared the interaction patterns of five neolocal and five patrilocal households in order to ascertain the effect of the paternal grandmother on interaction among mother and children. A theory about the diffusion of self-other patterns predicted that the behavior produced by and directed towards the grandmother would be reproduced in other family relationships. Since grandmothers in Zinacantan tend to be hostile and dominant towards their daughters-in-law, who reciprocate with hostility and submission, the theory predicted, fairly accurately, that mother and children in patrilocal households would be more hostile and authoritarian to each other than their counterparts in neolocal households. The theory also accurately



predicted that the considerable variance among the five grandmothers would be related to the variance among the five sets of mother and children in the patrilocal households, i.e., the household with the most hostile and dominant grandmother also had the most hostile and dominant mother and children.

In addition to the differences predicted by the theory, the data indicated that in patrilocal as apposed to neolocal households: dominance is inversely related to affection; children are more submissive to each other; people spend more time at home, and interact less frequently when they are together.

On the most general level, this study suggests that a very significant aspect of residence rules is their effect on household composition. In an intimate group like a household, the behavior of any member affects the behavior of the others. If a hostile and authoritarian relationship is introduced into the household, these behavior patterns will spread throughout group and will become part of the basic repertoire of behavior learned in the socialization process.