



# La fiesta de los tastoanes: Critical Encounters in Mexican Festival Performance

*Olga Nájera-Ramírez*

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Each year, for three days in September, the citizens of Jocotán, an ancient indigenous community near Guadalajara, Mexico, symbolically reenact the Spanish conquest of Mexico in mock battles between Santiago, the patron saint of Spain, and the Tastoanes, the leaders of the indigenous resistance. Paradoxically, the Jocoteños honor Santiago, their special protector, and incorporate both Christian and indigenous practices and beliefs in their fiesta. Employing the concept of hegemony, the author explores what the festival means culturally to the community and shows how it enables Jocoteños to adapt to Christianity and to resist the social order it symbolizes. Through the festival, Jocoteños address their collective identity, the preservation of their folk culture, and their relationship to the social-political power structure of Jocotán. Students of Mexican culture and of syncretic religions worldwide will find this study stimulating and informative.

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