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Masculinity, Gender, and Power in a Mayan-Kaqchikel Community in Sololá, Guatemala

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Masculinity, Gender, and Power in a Mayan-Kaqchikel Community in Sololá, Guatemala

by

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Dedication

To my lovely mother, Teresa Choy Ajquichí, thank you for your love; and to my brothers and sisters.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my infinite gratitude to the FORD Foundation and CIRMA. The former for its generous economic support to pursue my Master's degree at the University of Texas, at Austin; and the latter for selecting me as an International Fellow and providing me with the necessary tools and administrative assistance that I needed to incorporate into the academic system in the United States. I also want to express my gratitude to Gloria González-López for accepting to be my advisor to work on this thesis project, and to work with someone who needed a lot of attention while thinking and writing in English as a second language. Gloria's guidance and insight helped me to carefully analyze the data that I had collected during my fieldwork. She taught me the necessary skills to elaborate a thesis that follows the structure this document illustrates. Her suggestions also helped me to appraise individuals' voices, while at the same time respecting their knowledge, wisdom, and life experiences. I also want to thank Sergio Romero for accepting to be my second reader and for being understanding and supportive.

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Abstract

Masculinity, Gender, and Power in a Mayan-Kaqchikel Community in Sololá, Guatemala

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How do self-identified heterosexual Kaqchikel men in the rural areas of Sololá attain status and power in their relationships with women? This question is explored here by analyzing different masculine roles in various social spaces. The complexity of masculine identity requires a meticulous analysis to assess the extent to which the masculine role and identity has been or not a determinant factor in the social and personal development of both women and men in the communities. This exploration also allows us to see the different expressions of masculine identities and evaluate their current role in society. I learned that the Kaqchikel men I interviewed find their social power and status in part through well-established, old ideologies and belief systems, as well as their perception of a biological superiority, which they justify by their hard work in agricultural activities. Based on this socially constructed beliefs and practices, men emphasize the passivity of the women and their social absence – their subordinate status in society. However, the authority of the men is not limited to their remarkable role as leaders and head of the households; it also encompasses pernicious acts such as domestic violence, which is still highly prevalent in contemporary Sololá. This project also explores these men's perceptions about: (1) the women living in their communities, (2) the low level of education of these women, and (3) the justice system that is still weak and flawed. While all of these are indeed prevailing problems in the communities, women are challenging to an extent all the practices and beliefs associated with the authority of the men.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines power dynamics in gender relations in a Kaqchikel community in Sololá, Guatemala. It explores how rural, working class Kaqchikel men create and socialize contemporary forms of masculinity in various social institutions such as the school, the family, the local committees, and the church. It also explores how male dominance is related to the social positioning of the women in these communities. Generally, men enact particular forms of masculine identity, which have positive and negative aspects. Thus, this study engages with this complexity of masculine identity and highlights the relevance of these types of studies among indigenous communities in modern times.

The three broad venues of this project are: (1) the social institutions (the structures of power where men produce and reproduce male dominance), (2) the detrimental aspects of masculinities in gender relations, and (3) the men's perceptions of the current social status of the Kaqchikel women. Masculine identity is a personal conception that men develop about themselves. It takes place within the context of social relations, including but not limited to those that take place in some kind of "opposition" vis-á-vis the women in their lives (Connell, 1987). Generally, masculine identity is intimately related the concept of gender role, which is defined as the public expression of one's personality. Thus, a man defines his male identity through a process of biological differentiation as well as socialization, which take place in the context of family life, community engagement and culture and society at large (Connell, 2005; Chodorow, 1978).

Generally, studies conducted across Latin America have emphasized issues like the so-called "machismo," as well as gender violence and gender disparity. Moreover, a few studies on the topic of masculinity have been addressed in indigenous societies within the Mesoamerican region. Indigenous feminist organizations in particular have emphasized class

and ethnic relations (Cumes, 2008; Macleod, 2011); and just a few of them have focused specifically on masculinity. For this reason, I would like to contribute to the understanding of these men's lives, masculinity, and gender inequality in these communities and explore potential solutions to the problems associated with it as well as questioning power dynamics wherein men have social advantages over women.

PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT

This study involves personal, social, and professional commitments. First, it is motivated primarily by personal reasons. I think it is necessary to conduct research on gender within these communities because most of the research conducted in indigenous communities focuses on class and ethnicity. At the same time, the Kaqchikel men take for granted the social problems related to gender and see them as natural components of the culture. Men associate such problems with ethnic or class relations; however, I believe that it is also associated with gender relations because being a Kaqchikel man means having certain privileges and prerogatives over women. Unfortunately, this notion of being a man –mostly in rural areas– does not only mean enacting the masculine role; at times it supposes engaging in acts of violence, practices of discrimination based on gender, and the subordination of women, which constitute the issues of debate in feminist circles in Guatemala (see for example: Valenzuela, 2001). Kaqchikel men are not alone in this process: research on men and masculinity illustrates the ways in which men living in Western societies may rely on violence to develop a sense of manhood (see Katz in Kimmel & Messner, 2007, 549-571).

Secondly, the social reason of this study is to open a debate about the many aspects of masculinity. As I have stated, there are very few studies about masculinity despite the violence and subtle forms of female subordination, as well as the social problems that the society faces in current times. However, I do acknowledge that masculinity is not always

related to pernicious aspects of gender, because just as there are men that take advantage of their gender privilege, there are those who reject the use of violence and other forms of subordination practices and gender oppression.

Finally, this study has professional motivations. This research is the result of an academic training that allows me to apply my theoretical and practical knowledge to a real community problem related to power dynamics in heterosexual relationships. With my professional achievement, I have a commitment with my community, which is to question matters that we rarely inquire in the family or in the community. I see the necessity to tackle the topic of masculinity and explore its different integral components, especially those that are pernicious to women, children, and vulnerable people, and that ultimately impedes efforts to achieve gender equality and social development.

In this thesis I make two main arguments. First, a Kaqchikel man heavily relies on his physical qualities, cultural practices, and systems of beliefs to maintain dominance in a heterosexual relationship. Secondly, in these Kaqchikel communities masculine identities are largely associated with detrimental components such as violence and other male practices that endorse the subordination of women. Thus, it restrains the effort to achieve gender equality.

LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Sololá is one of the 21 political and administrative divisions of Guatemala called *departamentos*, located in the southeast part of Guatemala City. Sololá is made up of nineteen *municipios* (townships) with their respective political administrative centers and corporate powers. Sololá is one of the nineteen *municipios* and is the administrative seat of the department; it is surrounded by 4 villages, 8 cantons, 72 hamlets, and 4 barrios (wards) in the urban area. A village is a group of houses larger than a hamlet and smaller than a

township, situated in the rural area. A canton is a subdivision of a township established for political and administrative purposes. Finally, a hamlet is a small settlement, generally one smaller than a village, situated in the rural area. I conducted my research in six of these *hamlets* (caseríos) in the outskirts of the town of Sololá. According to recent official statistics, there were about 63,973 inhabitants in the township of Sololá in 2002 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística or INE). About 10% of them live in the urban area and the rest in the rural area. Sololá has a racially and ethnically diverse population. The last census, which took place in Sololá in 2002, officially recognizes two main ethnicities: the Ladinos[1] –non-indigenous people – (3,574 inhabitants) and three Mayan communities: Tz'utujil, K'ichee', and Kaqchikel (60,399 inhabitants). I worked with the Kaqchikel people in the rural area of Sololá. At the national level, the state of Guatemala recognizes the existence of three main indigenous communities or pueblos indígenas: Maya, Garifuna, and Xinca that coexist alongside the pueblo Ladino. The pueblo Maya particularly is made up of diverse socio-cultural expressions of a common root, among them the Kaqchikeles. In this thesis I use the terms indigenous and Maya indistinctly, given that there is not a consensus about each term. The term Maya in particular has a political connotation, as it constitutes a historical claim of rights of identity. For me, the concepts of indigenous and Maya make reference to the same culture and population that have lived in present day Guatemala for several thousand years. It is also important to note that in Sololá, the primary identifier of an indigenous person is language, which is Kaqchikel. Accordingly, this concept also refers to the ethnic identification of a person. Thus, a person can be identified as a Mayan-Kaqchikel.

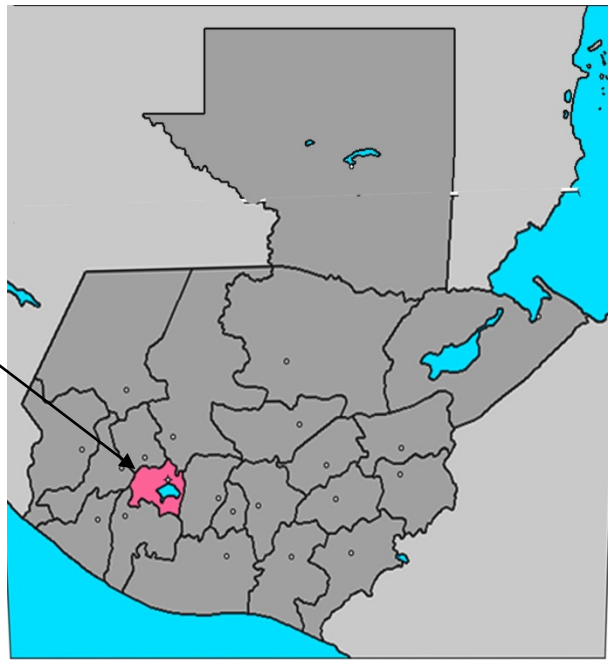
[1] The term Ladino should be understood as non-indigenous or a non-white as considered by the local elite. For more reference see Gonzáles-Ponciano, Jorge Ramón (2005) "De la patria del Criollo a la Patria del Shumo: Whiteness and the Criminalization of the Dark Plebeian in Modern Guatemala" PhD. Dissertation. The University of Texas at Austin.

The economy of the Kaqchikeles is based on agriculture, tourism, and handicraft. Many people take advantage of the climate, which is suitable for producing crops such as corn, beans, and vegetables. In recent decades, the Kaqchikel people –men and women– have entered into paid labor as employees of public and private institutions. Many others, mainly young men, have migrated to other countries especially to the United States to earn a living and bring their children up properly in Guatemala.

The Kaqchikel people share the region with the Ladinos who live mostly in the urban area. This thesis looks at one community in particular and does not discuss the ways in which ethnic/racial boundary making has been historically established in the country. That discussion lies beyond the scope of this thesis but I hope this project will enhance our understanding of the lives of working class rural men who are Kaqchikel, especially within the context of family life and community engagement.

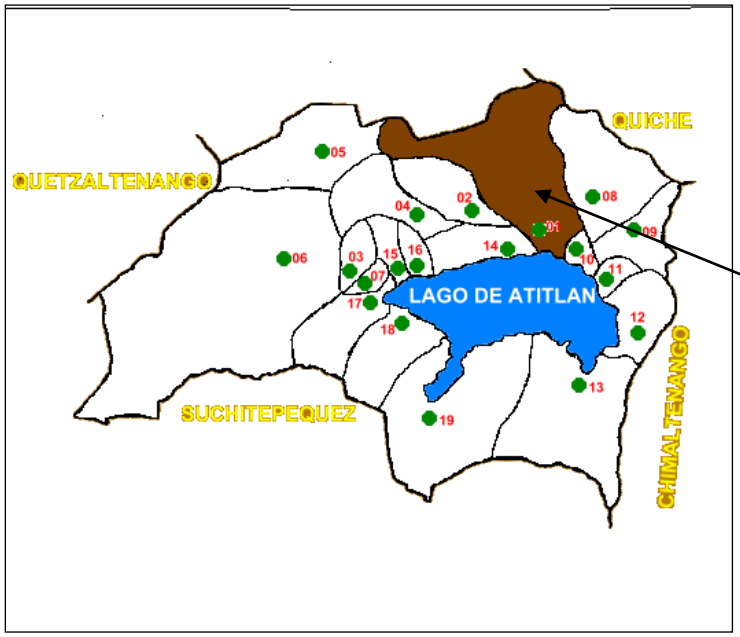
Map No.1: Guatemala and Sololá

Department of Sololá



Source: Diagnóstico Integral Municipal de Sololá 1998

Map No. 2: Sololá and its surroundings



Township of Sololá

Source: Diagnóstico Integral Municipal de Sololá 1998

Townships of the department of Sololá

1	Sololá	11	Santa Catarina Palopó
2	San José Chacayá	12	San Antonio Palopó
3	Santa María Visitación	13	San Lucas Tolimán
4	Santa Lucía Utatlán	14	Santa Cruz la Laguna
5	Nahualá	15	San Pablo la Laguna
6	Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán	16	San Marcos la Laguna
7	Santa Clara la Laguna	17	San Juan la Laguna
8	Concepción	18	San Pedro la Laguna
9	San Andrés Semetabaj	19	Santiago Atitlán
10	Panajachel		

Source: Plan de Desarrollo municipal, 2002-2010.

Political Administrative division of the township of Sololá

Cantons	1 El Tablón 2 Xajaxac 3 Chaquijya 4 Chui Kel 5 Xekel 6 Pujujil 7 Chwaxik 8 Saqsiwan
Villages	1 Los Encuentras 2 San Jorge la Laguna 3 Argueta 4 Pixabaj
Hamlets	76
Barrios (Wards) in the Urban Area	1 El Calvario 2 San Bartolo 3 El Carmen 4 San Antonio

Source: Diagnóstico Municipal Integral de Sololá, 1998

METHODOLOGY

The analysis in this study draws from ten semi-structured, retrospective interviews conducted between May and July of 2013 with ten married, heterosexual men. I deliberately chose to work only with rural heterosexual Kaqchikel men because of the limited time I had to collect my data. Further research should address the topic of homosexuality, male-to–male relations, and indigenous-ladino male relations in Sololá. The objective of my project was precisely to study heteromasculinity in Kaqchikel communities, hence the reason I studied heterosexual men.

For this research, I engaged in formal interviews with the informants using an interview guide that I had designed for that purpose. The interview guide consisted of a list of several open-ended questions with which I covered twelve topics that included courtship and marriage, family life, decision making, education, extramarital relationships, paid employment outside the home, alcohol consumption, among others. The Institutional Review Board at the University of Texas at Austin approved this study on April 11, 2013.

The interviews ranged from two to four hours. I conducted seven interviews in one session and three of them in two sessions because these informants scarcely had time to spend interviewing. All of the interviews were conducted in the Kaqchikel language, which is the language the interviewees speak. I am familiar with the language and the cultural practices of the region because I was born and raised in the Kaqchikel community. This in turn helped me to add greater details to enrich the analysis.

I recruited the interviewees by using snowball sampling, which consists of asking the first participants to assist me in identifying other potential subjects. However, first I contacted the Office of International Affair of the Municipality of Sololá to help me find the men in the rural area for my research. They kindly contacted me with the first Kaqchikel man willing to participate in the interview. After the first interview, I asked him to assist me in

identifying other subjects. He then contacted me with an acquaintance of him who met the characteristics for this study. When I could not contact another man through the snowball sampling technique, I went back to the Municipality to see if they suggested other men to interview. I followed this procedure until I finished the ten interviews. Two of the men that I had previously contacted through the Municipality and to whom I explained the nature of the research canceled the interviews at the last minute, alleging that they were very busy with their work. I think that it was not easy for these men to allow a stranger to enter their homes and share their private lives with him, especially in a time when illegal activities are affecting the tranquility of the families. For others, it might be difficult to share their stories, especially when they are wrought with domestic violence or extramarital affairs. At the same time, I am aware that any cancelation of the interviews at the last minute could have other explanations beyond discomfort.

Each participant and I discussed a consent form that they approved verbally. Seven of them received a small monetary compensation. Three of them did not accept the monetary compensation, saying that they wanted to collaborate with me in my research, which they believed could be useful for other younger students in the community. I interviewed ten participants from May to July of 2013. During this time I was able to establish contact these men through local Municipality representatives and set up a date for the interviews. Besides the personal interviews I conducted, I attended two meetings per invitation of one of the participants and witnessed as well several events, including a committee election and a wedding where men had a relevant participation.

The men ranged in age from their early thirties to their late fifties, though most were in their mid-forties. All participants lived in the rural areas in the outskirts of Sololá. Most of the time I went to their homes to conduct the interviews, and only on three occasions I asked informants to come over to my house for the interviews. Later I realized that it was better to

conduct the interview in my "own space," because there they were more open to express their feelings and felt free to talk about their private lives. Whereas in their homes, they were somehow restrained and sometimes barely could manifest their feelings in the presence of either their children or their wives, especially in moments when I had to address them questions such as whether or not they had extramarital relationships or if they beat their wives.

Before the interviews, I asked for permission from the informants to record the conversations using a tape recorder, to which they agreed. This allowed me to listen to the conversation later and transcribe them verbatim, using electronic files. Everything they said was in the Kaqchikel language, although some informants employed code-switching between Kaqchikel and Spanish as a way to show their fluency and proficiency in Spanish, given that this language has a symbolic association with modernity and cosmopolitanism. This in turn shows the dynamic of language pluralism in this society. Parallel to the transcription file I used two more files. In one file I registered my perception of the informants, that is, I wrote about how I perceived them upon meeting them for the first time or at my arrival at their homes, what the atmosphere was at that moment, what was outstanding for me, and so on. In another file, I freely wrote about specific yet relevant topics that I deemed would be useful for my further analysis.

Another important point to mention is that none of the informants had a high school diploma with the exception of one that had an advance degree in business. Seven informants attended school for a couple of years and only two out of ten did not attended school even for a single day. This does not mean, however, that they did not know how to write or read. Some of them were very skillful in reading, especially the bible, and jotting down notes related to important dates or the materials and supplies for their work.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This project is based on the assumption that there are many kinds of masculine identities in the Kaqchikel communities of Sololá that are configured and shaped largely by historical conditions and social and cultural practices. By masculine identity, I am referring to a net of social relations that is constructed around a performed gender identity. Masculinity is socially constructed and reproduced through daily interactions. The main feature of this gender identity is that it is embedded in power relations. Thus, masculinity is equated to domination and aggressiveness in contrast to femininity that is generally linked to submission and passiveness, based on my reading of influential Western intellectuals (Connell 2005; Bourdieu 2005; Gutmann 2005).

Masculine gender identity has many expressions. Most of the time, regionally socioeconomic forces shape men's expressions of masculinities, as shown by González-López (2005) while exploring the lives of Mexican immigrants in the United States. She identifies two modalities of patriarchy, which she calls rural and urban patriarchies. The former term refers to a more intense expression of patriarchy and gender inequality that appear in small provincial locations; whereas the term urban patriarchies designate a de-emphasized gender inequality more commonly seen in larger metropolises. In these urban contexts, women are exposed to a variety of circumstances such as education and training, which are useful tools for them to challenge gender inequality (p. 92). Both terms capture the image of Kaqchikel male identity. First, the rural patriarchy illustrates the lives of many Kaqchikel men living in the communities. Secondly, the urban patriarchies illustrate the changes that men experience when they migrate to the urban centers or to other countries for employment opportunities. However, these two forms of patriarchy are not fixed or rigid, in fact, urban patriarchies might promote intense expressions of gender inequality affecting the

lives of women living in large urban spaces, as González-López (2005) illustrates in her study.

The construction of these gender identities determines in part the structure of male dominance in different spaces of socialization. This configuration has turned the social system into a patriarchal one that regulates and controls the relative status of women and men. As a social group, men have power over women. At the level of heterosexual relationships, power and control dynamics are still present but may become more complicated — a woman may contest them. This kind of analysis gained significance in the last two decades as research has uncovered important understandings about different forms of being masculine and, most importantly, the social and political forces enacting upon that identity (Gutmann, 2003).

In gender studies, the concept of masculinity has more than one meaning. Instead of linking the idea of masculinity with one way of performing maleness, scholars conducting research in Latin America, such as Fuller (2003) and Gutmann (2003), have argued that a man's experience of gender is not only determined by his sex but also by the place he occupies within racial, ethnic, class, regional, and institutional space. Accordingly, several works have demonstrated multi-faceted features of masculinity in different locations. For instance, colonial registers have demonstrated the position of Black and indigenous men and women in a highly racialized context in which simultaneous forms of oppression operate. In this context, Black and indigenous men have been ignored or denied from entering certain public spaces by the dominant society since the time of slavery and colonialism (Ponciano, 2005; Johnson, 2011; Collins, 2000). In other studies, academics have explored histories of women, transgender people, and transsexuals that assume masculine identities (Halberstam, 1998). Above all, for the interest of this study, there are prolific analyses about masculine

identities played out by heterosexual men (Connell *et al*., 2005; Kimmel *et al.,* 2007; Bourdieu, 2001).

These approaches on masculinity allow us to analyze it in specific temporal and spatial contexts. For example, the current form of being a man —or "ser hombre"— in Sololá differs significantly from the ideal of manhood a few decades ago. This change in social life is due to various reasons and one of them is the impact of domestic appliances, which men could not categorize under a specific gender rubric. I also have observed in Sololá is that the men that were born before the 1980s express reluctance to take responsibility and engage in household chores. They refuse household chores as a way of emphasizing their sense of manhood. Younger men, mostly those who were exposed to a formal education, however, are much more critical of the unequal relations between men and women and therefore they are a little more willing to share some household chores, such as mopping or sweeping. This change in attitude is probably the result of the new social adjustments caused by globalization that is changing traditional forms of family. For example, young men in Sololá are becoming involved with family life as they are 1) studying (as opposed to working full time in agricultural fields), 2) working part time, or 3) even losing jobs, which force them to take on household responsibilities. Furthermore, they are exposed to new ideas and information brought by the mass media, thus changing their perspective about gender differences. For example, interviewees highlighted the necessity to change cultural patterns and learn from Ladino men who are portrayed on the national television as the ones that were more engaged with domestic life, although some Ladino men told me that it is not always the case.

On this topic, Seidler (2006) states that, "with the widespread use of computer technologies worldwide, many young people have access to the Internet and to a diversity of aspirations and definitions of teenage experience" (p. 20). Growing up in an increasingly globalized world, young people seek a different form of life from that of their parents.

Similarly, Haraway (2003) has argued that the new economy has changed the gender division of labor through the intensification of the feminization of work. The economic system prefers women especially Black and indigenous as workers in factories, because "they are much more susceptible to being manipulated and exploited in the wage economy" (p. 26). In addition, men in developed and developing countries are becoming much more vulnerable to permanent job loss. However good or bad the impacts of these global changes in society, people are gradually becoming aware of these enormous changes in gender relations and their implications in society. Therefore, for this research I ask the following research questions: How do Kaqchikel men develop a sense of masculinity in their local contexts? For these men, what are the assumptions or beliefs around masculinity? In what ways are those assumptions produced in the Kaqchikel communities? And what are their implications in gender relations affecting the lives of women? Accordingly, studies of masculinities are an attempt to provide answers to the above questions by grappling with issues of power in the relative position of men and women, whether in terms of patriarchy, sexual asymmetry, women's subordination, male dominance, or physical violence.

Scholars of different fields, such as those of sociology, anthropology, and gender studies are developing analyses of gender relations in different contexts and social settings in order to provide useful insights into these issues. In this consideration, theoretical approaches such as the Western, Latin American, and indigenous feminism perspective, among others, have enriched the topic and have shed light on the dynamics behind gender and its various constituencies. In the following discussion, I will try to connect three bodies of literature that were created in different contexts. The first corresponds to the literature of masculinity produced by some Western scholars who highlight the nexus of masculinity with male hegemony and domination. By Western literature I mean the scholarship produced mainly in the United States and some European countries.

The second body of literature corresponds to studies of masculinity conducted by scholars in Latin American countries. These scholars stress the nexus of masculinity with *machismo,* and identify some of the theoretical and empirical challenges of using this concept (Gutmann, 2006; González-López & Gutmann, 2005). In this study I do not use so much the term of *macho* or *machismo* because the informants do not use it. Instead, they use expressions such as "mama' achï," (the big man) "itzël achï" (the bad man), "ajch'ayonel" (the batterer) to refer to the man that engages in sexist or violent practices. Finally, the third body of literature corresponds to the studies produced by Mayan feminists in Guatemala. Most of these indigenous intellectuals draw on a Mayanist discourse when they discuss gender and masculinity. The Mayanist discourse is a new academic proposal that emerged within the pan-Mayanist movement of the 1990s as a way to voice their concern, worry, or feeling about issues that are affecting the life of indigenous communities (Cumes, 2008). They do so by combining different elements of the Cosmovisión Maya[2], such as the notion of complementarity, harmony, and equilibrium to study society (Pu Tzunux 2007; Cumes 2008; Macleod, 2011).

WESTERN LITERATURE ON MEN AND MASCULINITY

Power relations do not take place exclusively in class struggles, as suggested by a Marxist analysis of social relations, but rather in every social and cultural space where personal interactions among individuals exist (Rubin, 2011). Rubin argues that Marxism fails "to fully express or conceptualize sex oppression" because Marxism sees "humans beings as workers, peasants, or capitalists" and in this kind of analysis the concepts of man and woman are not very significant. This assertion challenges the classical notion that disparity and

[2] Cosmovisión Maya is a philosophical current that addresses the everyday life of Mayan people. It offers a variety of social values, principles, and precepts that can contribute for the creation of equal relations between men and women, as well as the construction of collective processes in indigenous communities.

subordination exist only between social classes or racial groups, such as the point of view of the 1960-revolutionary project of the Liberation Theology in Latin America. This was a political movement of the 1950s and 1960s that involved many countries in Latin America including Guatemala. This movement selectively combined Catholic theology and elements of Marxism such as class struggle, private ownership of the means of production, and critiques of capitalism (Gutiérrez, 1974). In this radical movement, the political pretention was to liberate the subordinated people from unjust economic, political, and social conditions. However, in the process it dismissed the liberation of women from gender oppression. This historical event showed that disparity and inequality exist also among singular settings that include households either in capitalist and non-capitalist societies (Pirrini, 2007, p. 99). Scholars attempting to understand these imbalanced power relations have argued that masculinity plays a key role in gender relations, because it determines power and domination in households (Kimmel, 2007; Bourdieu, 2005; Connell, 2005).

The concepts of *hegemonic masculinity* proposed by Connell (2005) and *masculine domination* by Bourdieu (2001) are useful to understand gender dynamics. Their arguments are not meant to address non-Western societies, but I found them relevant for particular purposes of this study. The concepts of hegemonic masculinity and masculine domination explain, in part, the persistence of the mechanism of patriarchy in society and women's oppression.

On the concept of hegemonic masculinity, one of the succinct definitions in the literature is from Connell. Borrowing the notion of hegemony from Gramsci, Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice, which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 2005, p. 77). In this sense, hegemony entails the exercise of power, force, symbolic

violence, and the manipulation of the system of values and beliefs of a society. Connell goes on explaining that cultural hegemony is the pattern of practice that has allowed some men to dominate women and other subordinated individuals. The current characteristic of this masculinity is that it has been assumed to be a normal practice and a normal pattern in society. This ideology legitimizes the subordination of women through cultural practices, institutions, and persuasion. Men have not only developed domination but also have maintained it in the political, social, and cultural arena. This is evident in the configuration of gender in the workplace, school, and church, which are "substantively, not just metaphorically, gendered" (Connell, 2005, p. 73). This configuration has tragically led men in many societies to commit aggression, murder, harassment, misrecognition, and coercive force towards women and other individuals stigmatized as deviants (Butler, 2004).

This structure of power is determinant in the construction of masculinity because it assigns and allocates specific spaces and resources to both men and women, yet it largely favors men through what Connell (2005) calls the "patriarchal dividend", that is the various way of benefiting from patriarchy without fully meeting the normative standard of masculinity. Given the patriarchal nature of many societies, this hierarchical structure prevents gender equality because it holds women in a disadvantaged position. For Connell (2005), the structure of male domination operates in four dimensions. The first one is related to power. He argues that there are two kinds of power: institutionalized power and discursive power; both are dispersed throughout most capitalist societies. The second dimension concerns production, which is tied to the gender division of labor and the notion that men are more suitable for engineering and practical work, whereas women are more suitable for household work, secretarial work, and human services, all of which have less economical rewards. The third dimension is related to the emotional relations, which is linked to sexuality. This dimension suggests that men are supposed to do manual work and women

public relations work. Finally, the fourth dimension is embedded in symbolic practices. The core concepts in this area are patriarchy and hegemony. Both operate in social organizations in a subtle way by imposing definitions and defining morality because "hegemony involves persuasion of the greater part or the population, particularly through the media, and the organization of social institution in ways that appear natural, ordinary, and normal" (Roberson & Suzuki, 2003, p. 5)

Thus in most patriarchal societies, men hold hegemonic positions in the organizational structures such as the house, institutions, and organizations worldwide. Such institutions and organizations include transnational corporations and the international media, where men hold positions such as diplomats, ministers, generals, managers, entrepreneurs, and executives. This is possible in the context of the global economy and under the presumption that men are the only ones capable and suitable for those positions. Connell calls these arrangements "the transnational business masculinity," in which "men construct and maintain their hegemonic power at the international level" (p. 23).

Men also hold symbolic power through hegemony and domination. Bourdieu (2001) notes that the structures of masculine domination "are the product of an incessant (and therefore historical) labor of reproduction, to which singular agents (including men with weapons) and institutions (i.e. the family, the church, the educational system, the state) contribute" (p. 36). He goes on explaining that there are several forces behind that domination, but two stand out: constraint (by force) and consent (by reason) (p. 37). By constraint, he means all forms of mechanical coercion that are exerted by men in order to reaffirm their place in the social hierarchy, and by consent he refers to forms of "voluntary, free, deliberate, even calculated submission of women to men" (p. 35). This analysis opens up a discussion of dominant topics, such as that of the morphologic division between the sexes that endorses gender inequality through the sexual division of labor.

Western scholars have brought to debates the relationship between the sexual division of labor and male domination and suggest that both concepts should not be separated from our analysis. Chodorow (1978), for example, states that, "the sexual division of labor and women's responsibility for childcare are linked to and generate male dominance" (p. 214). In addition, gender, sexuality, and the body are part of the process of control in work organizations (Acker, 1990). This perspective argues that specific roles that women and men learn through their lives have negative effects on women because it produces sexual inequality and not simply differentiation. Social arrangements establish the private realm as the domestic world of women and the public realm as the social world of men and thus produce inequality (Chodorow, 1978). Indeed, recent studies conducted in the United States have shown that men resort to a wide range of strategies to resist sharing the household chores. For instance, Francine Deutsch (in Kimmel & Messner, 2007) has explored the sophisticated strategies men use to resist sharing the chores such as the use of passive resistance, strategic incompetence, praise of the innate skill of their wives, adherence of inferior standards, and denial. However, in certain homes in the United States, women have emphasized their assertive strength in order to convince their husbands to share the household chores. Deutsch's research shows two kinds of masculinities. She identifies the first as the one that takes advantages of the position of his wife by relegating to her most if not all the household chores through several indirect strategies. The second is the "reasonable masculinity" or the "equally sharing man," who has come to realize that, "sharing duties in the household is a matter of justice and fairness" (p. 401-407). Scholars such as Deutsch offer an important insight into the changes that western societies have undergone with regards to the sexual division of labor, male domination, and gender norms.

The sexual division of labor appears to have a correlation with the division between the sexes (Bourdieu, 2001). In native or indigenous societies—usually identified as

"traditional" in the literature—the division between the sexes plays a fundamental role in assigning the place of men and women. Bourdieu in particular posits that the division of the sexes appears to be the order of things; that is, the representation of both sexes is present in the whole social world and in objectified states. He says, for example, that the house is a place where "every part of which is 'sexed'" (p. 8). The sexual division of labor supports these natural and normal principles where specific assignments, places, times, and instruments are assigned to men and women. Bourdieu notes that women are assigned the most monotonous and menial tasks, so they "become what they are according to mythic reasons" (p. 30). Since this process has been naturalized throughout history, "women and men remain unaware that it is the logic of the relationship of domination" (p. 31). Fortunately, along with Bourdieu, women's movements, scholars of gender studies, and feminists have challenged these false beliefs and the institutional arrangements that negatively affect not only women but the society as well.

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ON MEN AND MASCULINITY

Many anthropologists have approached the topic of masculinity in Latin America. One common characteristic that these scholars have identified in their studies is the notion of *machismo*, that is a conscious mechanism of power of a determined form of masculinity that operates in society. Despite the extensive amount of research on the subject, there is no a consensus over the concept of machismo in the existing literature. Some argue that the concept of machismo is a controversial term given that it universalizes and exaggerates male behavior (Baca Zinn, 1980). Others state that machismo is particular from the ranching culture of Latin America, since the word "el macho" can be as easily used to identify a male in a group of animals as to identify a man who is led by his sexual or aggressive impulses, or who shows a disdain for physical safety (CDawley, 2013). Still, others have argued that

machismo is the cult of virility, aggression, sexual prolificacy, and control over women. In general, machismo has been depicted as an attitude with which a man shows his hyper-masculinity by aggressive, violent, and sexually prolific behaviors. A macho man controls his wife and expects her to raise the children and take care of the home, all the while serving him (Anderson, 2008). In short, this paradigm has dominated the gender studies literature in Latin America, although some scholars have exposed the problematic and obsolete nature of "machismo" as an idea (González-López & Gutmann, 2005).

Lancaster (1994) examines the so-called machismo among mestizo men in shantytowns in Managua, Nicaragua, while analyzing different expressions of masculinity in late 1980s. He explores the system of power in a variety of domains that includes international relations, community, family, gender, race, and sexuality. Through a Marxist analysis, Lancaster argues that the defeat of the Sandinistas in the late 1990s presented a big challenge to the government and the population. As a result of that political situation, men immigrated to other countries, especially to the United States to help their families economically. Facing this development, Lancaster argues that several things happened, but one stands out concerning masculinity: "as life got harder, men often abandoned their wives or *compañeras* (companions), burdening them with all the economic and social disadvantages that awaited households headed by women" (p. 14).

In the same research, Lancaster shows the vulnerability of the macho men when facing economic hardships. He states that under such circumstances men tended to immigrate to other countries with new expectations. Lancaster also highlights the paradox of the macho men: they did not face the hard situation that the family was undergoing; instead, the macho men avoided these problems by migrating in large numbers to other cities or abroad, where they were far beyond the reach of the New Family Law and child-support. The former established that in case both parents worked, household maintenance and family care –

including housework- was the responsibility of both parents (p. 18). Lancaster makes the point that Nicaraguan women saw these men as hypocrites because they understood colonialism, and economic exploitation in a class context, but not in the sexual context within the boundaries of the family. In this sense, men find more possibilities and excuses to leave their families behind, which was something that women would not do. Lancaster calls it a brittle structure of machismo where women and children carry the load.

The term *machismo* is also related to behavior, discourse, and social practices. In some contexts machismo connotes violence because it is the ideal form of aggressive masculinity, and in other contexts *machismo* connotes passive control and power over women and vulnerable individuals. Sometimes the practice of *machismo* is the practice of masculine rhetoric such as the language of penile intromission. Lancaster notes that in Nicaraguan Society, the macho rhetoric is evident in the following expressions: "*Te voy a hacer verga, me hizo verga*" (I punched you, he dicked me) (p. 46). Thus, in the culture of machismo the penis (*verga*) is necessarily an organ that is potentially violent and equated to domination.

In a similar study, Gutmann analyzes the macho stereotype associated to the typical dominant man in México. His analysis aimed to corroborate if the so-called "Mexican macho" was still in place. However, throughout his study, he discovered that the stereotype of Mexican macho had different meanings to people from different places. In this way the notorious drinker, wife beater, and womanizer had been turning gradually into a transformed man, the man that sometimes took charge of the household chores, and even may be found carrying his children or the children of his neighbor.

Machismo is a complex concept. For some, it may represent the image of the New Man or the "hombre de verdad" that emerged as a consequence of social revolutions (Lancaster, 1992), migrations (Menjívar, 1999), or religious conversions; the latter is the experience of some men in Colombia whose wives play an important role in pacifying and

transforming their husbands (Brusco, 1995). For others it is the image of the father or husband as the family's absolute authority and the man with sanctioned rights to abuse or to beat his wife (Gutmann 2006). Both forms of the macho men converge in most societies. At the same time as I have stated, new gender identities -other than the stereotypical macho male- have emerged from social, economic, and political dynamics of the present times, and these men are a product and manifestation of the fluid culture in Latin America.

Other Latin American scholars of gender studies have identified a core set of ideas about the male body in the concept of machismo. Machismo is largely based on the notion of male dominance and performance in heterosexual relations. For example, González-López and Gutmann (2005), while tracking down the genealogy of *machismo*, have shown that *machismo* is an ambivalent concept that has different meanings for people of different age groups. For instance, for older generations, *macho* connotes the man that is responsible for the financial welfare of his family, and for younger generations, *macho* is someone who is prone to beat his wife (Ibid, p. 1329). This latter notion is the prevalent belief in Latin America society because it is linked to ideas of aggressive behaviors, hard drinking, womanizing, and wife beating.

A common feature of machismo is that it relies heavily on the notion of heterosexuality as the ideal form of masculine identity, although sometimes it finds itself under threat notably when the macho men are in other social contexts such as the experience of rural working class men that migrate to urban enclaves (Barrios-Kleé & Artigas, 2003), or to other countries where women gain agency and feel more "stronger" than their male partners. (Menjívar, 1999, p. 609). Nevertheless, machismo as well as masculine hegemony holds power in gender relations. Hegemonic masculinity generally draws on the symbolic violence to maintain its dominance whereas machismo sometimes resorts to physical and aggressive behavior to reaffirm its position of dominance in society. By understanding the

broader, Western ideas of masculinity and comparing these with gender identities found in narrower geographical areas such as Latin America, this paper will use those regional and demographic identities to compare with the notion of Guatemalan and Kaqchikel-specific definitions of Masculinity.

GUATEMALAN LITERATURE ON GENDER AND MASCULINITY

In the following section, I will discuss how foreign and local scholars have looked at gender relations among indigenous communities. In "La ley que llevamos en el corazón", Eva Kalny (2003) documented aspects of gender relations between two Mayan communities in highland Guatemala: the Sacapultecos and the Chiquimulas. She poses that that the main goal of couples upon getting married is to have children and cope with the challenges of everyday life, but at the onset of their relations they have "a clear distinction of their roles and responsibilities as parents" (p. 69). Kalny also points out patterns of domestic violence in these communities. For example, a Sacapulteco man in particular "indulges himself the right to control and punish his wife" (p. 72). For a woman in these communities, masculine domination never ends because a woman changes from being dominated by the authority of her father to that of her husband upon getting married.

Interestingly, the Sacapulteco and the Chiquimula men shared similar kinds of work and have the same commitments as the Kaqchikel men. According to Kalny (2003), a Sacapulteco and a Chiquimula man: (1) carries out work in the agricultural field, or works as market vendors, or day laborers in the coastal plantations of Guatemala; (2) does physical demanding work such as carrying the firewood from the forest; (3) live with only one woman for the rest of his life; (4) should moderately correct his wife without battering her too much; and (5) does not have another woman or any love affair (p. 122).

In case that a man failed to honor his commitments and obligations (e.g. collecting firewood), his wife took on those responsibilities; however, a Sacapulteco or Chiquimula man would never do a woman's work if she refused doing such work. Kalny portrays these men as hardworking men, yet violent and sexist. Unlike some of the Kaqchikel men that I interviewed that wanted to see their wives well dressed and pretty, some of the Sacapulteco and Chiquimula men do not allow their wives to dress in ways that may make them potentially attractive to other men. In fact, a Chiquimula man–driven by the force of jealousy- could even prohibit his wife to wash her face or take a bath because, in the man's interpretation, "she would do it for her interest in other men" (p. 78).

Because domestic violence was rife in these communities, people have organized and developed strategies for conflict resolution. Among the people that could intervene in conflict prevention and resolution are the members of the Consejo de Ancianos and the religious authorities–members of the Acción Católica. Like the organization of the COREDS in Sololá (Communal Organizations), the religious authorities of the Sacapultecos and Chiquimulas studied by Kalny "could enter a house without previous notice and inform themselves of the situation of the couple." (p. 84)

Other scholars have looked at the emergence of new pattern of gender relations when indigenous people migrate to urban cities across the country or to other countries such as the United States (see for example Barrios-Klée, 2003 and Menjivar, 1999). Barrios-Klée states that traditional gender relations undergo substantial changes when people from rural areas migrate to urban ones. She explores two groups of women: the Tzotziles de los Altos Chiapas and indigenous women in Guatemala who have migrated to the local cities. When these women arrive at the city, they find a diversity of informal employment that they did not find when they were at their "traditional habitat" (p. 32). Women then realize that both share responsibilities in the household and share the role of the breadwinner. Women also consider

the access to education as a possibility to personal development and to generate an income for the maintenance of the members of their families. Barrios-Klée provides a useful insight at the articulation of class and gender relations in the Guatemalan society by showing that women gain power when they find economic and educational opportunities in the cities, something that they just dream of in their local environment.

Similarly, Menjívar (1999) illustrates new social patterns in the lives of indigenous and ladina women that lived in Los Angeles California in the late 1990s. She argues that gender relations among indigenous Guatemalans were relatively more egalitarian than among their ladino/a counterparts (p. 611). She points out that, "employment has been seen as a source of women's increased bargaining power and control over resources, which, in turn, is believed to be the basis for personal liberty and more egalitarian relationship within the household" (p. 610). Ladinos and indigenous people perceive differently job opportunities in the United States. For example, ladino men perceive that their reputation is at risk when they do not get employment but their wives do. This situation has negative consequences in ladino couples because "at times men turn to drinking out of frustration at failing to fulfill their socially expected role" (p. 612). She states that this creates conditions ripe for domestic violence. In contrast, the indigenous men saw women's employment as an opportunity for both to get ahead. In this way, Menjívar's analysis shows that indigenous men change attitudes and behavior when they find themselves in other contexts and are surrounded by different cultures.

Moreover, in "Identidad Masculina entre los Kaqchikeles," Chirix (1999) examines the ways in which social institutions, such as the family, school, and the church shape masculine identities in the Kaqchikel region of Chimaltenango. She introduces the machismo paradigm to make the argument that there are several kinds of masculinities such as the paternalists, providers, breadwinners, as well as the *macho*, aggressive and violent man. Like

machismo, class and ethnic relations have had negative impact in the lives of women. These forms of oppression affect the integrity of women and the development of their personal progress. For Chirix, women are oppressed in three ways: for being women, for being indigenous, and for being poor. Chirix as well as the other women of her generation should have experience firsthand the difficulties of being indigenous women in a very polarized ethnic environment.

Chirix recognizes that there are men who are not necessarily linked to violence and aggressiveness. She identifies those men as responsible, paternal, and even vulnerable. She has identified new forms of masculinities such as "los hombres reconstruidos" (the remade men) because they are committed to social changes and gender equality as a way to advance the progress of men and women. Chirix argues that it is time to question the supremacy of masculinity in order to challenge the dominant masculinity and to construct new masculine identities (p. 85).

Not all studies conducted by indigenous scholars critique patriarchy and machismo through the less of feminism because, some argue, feminism is a theory and ideology of Western societies. Other local scholars critique foreign practitioners especially anthropologists conducting studies in Guatemala. Pu (2007), for example, a Mayan intellectual, criticizes studies conducted by foreign researchers who emphasize gender disparity in indigenous societies. She makes the argument that indigenous men in Guatemala have been traditionally portrayed as violent and patriarchal. However, Pu disapproves this point of view and states that foreign anthropologists and some Guatemala feminists have misrepresented the real Kaqchikel men and therefore disdained the Mayan culture. She says that, "the use of Western feminist theory may generate aberrant conclusions that do not correspond accurately to the reality of the Mayan women [people] in Guatemala" (p. 53), that is to say that nothing is true about the image of the violent men and the victimized women as

oppressed, excluded, passive, victims, submissive, and obedient. She indicates that many feminists victimize the women when they are not victim of oppression. For example, she states that if a woman stays at her home, this does not necessarily mean that she is deprived from her liberty. For a woman, the house is a space where she gains power; where she learns aspects of life; and where she exerts control over her children and her daughters in law (p. 57).

Rosa Pu, as well as the majority of Mayan feminists, draws on a Mayanist discourse, that is a lengthy written or spoken discussion of various elements of the Mayan knowledge, to discuss gender. They elaborate a philosophical approach of the Mayan culture to suggest that in the Mayan society there is no gender inequality, because the principles of Mayan culture have been designed in such a way that do not allow gender disparity. Pu says, "The Mayan society is regulated by an holistic vision of society. It considers the individual and society through two fundamental notions: the equilibrium and the complementarity of the [opposite] elements that make up the whole society" (p.32). Similar to Pu, most of the local scholars have not tackled the topic of masculinity; instead they talk extensively of the various elements of the "Cosmovisión Maya" such as the social duality, equilibrium, and harmony among couples.

The overwhelming preference of Cosmovisión in gender studies has to do with the experience that the indigenous population has had with colonialism and discrimination such as the case of Pu or Chirix. Thus, scholars highlight positive aspects of the Mayan cultural heritage and underplay its pernicious aspects such as domestic violence and patriarchy, which are allegedly elements brought by the Spanish colonialism. However, gender oppression also operated in Prehispanic societies through the system of patrilineality, which allowed the succession of political and social power through the male line (Joyce 2000).

For local feminist scholars and feminist groups (such as KAQLA 2003, Asociación

Maya Uk'ux B'e 2010, and Asociación Pop No'j 2009), gender oppression is a colonial heritage stemmed from the gruesome acts of the Europeans at their violent arrival in the American continent in the sixteenth century. Emphasizing class/ethnic relations, KAQLA, a Mayan feminist group in Guatemala, for example, argues that the several colonial institutions of the Spaniards such as the Catholic Church, and the political systems of coerced labor called Encomienda and Repartimiento[3], imposed gender oppression. They identified western culture and its people as the oppressors, disdaining the men's current roles in the system of oppression. KAQLA says, "the oppressor is the right wing, the western pride" and the victims are "the indigenous *pueblos*, the peasants, and the Mayan women" (p. 31). The women of KAQLA added that the mass media and people reproduce the culture of the oppressor in these days "through 'unconscious images,' the mind, and the imaginary we have" (p. 11). So does the church when it teaches "we have to suffer here on earth to gain the kingdom of heaven" (p. 23).

Maya Uk'ux B'ey (2010), another Guatemalan feminist organization, argues that the subordination of women is product of the acculturation, the process of evangelization, and lately, the impact of globalization. In this way, they state, "the men forgot to provide affection and [show] the values of affection" (p. 23). Interestingly, Paredes (1967) makes a similar remark when he talks about Mexican machismo—a culture that has enormously influenced the indigenous cultures through the Mesoamerican region. He points out that gender inequality may have originated in the conquest, when Hernán Cortés and his conquerors arrived in present day México and raped Aztec women. He concludes that

[3] Encomienda was a colonial institution that ordered the distribution of indigenous people among the Spanish colonizers. Indigenous people had the obligation of building houses, working the land, grazing the animals of the Spanish people, and providing periodic tributes to the Spanish Crown. And the Repartimiento was a political system that obliged indigenous communities to provide a quarter of their healthy men each week to work in the Spanish farms. For more reference see Hill, Robert M. II, 2001. *Los Kaqchikeles de la época colonial*. Editorial Cholsamaj.

Mexican machismo is a very old practice and has existed for at least five hundred years (Paredes, 1967, 66).

Rosemary Joyce (2000), however, counters the previous arguments. In her book "Gender and Power in Prehispanic Mesoamerica", she extensively analyzes gender relations in Prehispanic Mesoamerican societies through the iconographies and pictographs found in monuments and figurines. She shows that in a patrilineal society such as the Aztec and the Mayan, women were oppressed by the kinship system by which women were "deprived of agency…[and seen as] objects of marriage negotiations controlled by elders" (p. 34) as well as the political power of the nobles (p. 22). As an example, Joyce notes that in scenes that involve food presentation, "women's participation is usually reduced to the offering of a place of maize breads or the pouring of a bowl of drink by woman whose position, costume, and gestures present her as dependent on a major male figure" (73). This and other examples could be added to the fact that the role of women in Prehispanic society was reduced to servant and subordinate.

Some indigenous scholars do not consider this reality of the history and tend to romanticize and idealize the Mayan and Aztec culture, portraying them as genuine cultures of gender equity. Recognizing the unbalance in gender relations among the Mayans, for example, would undermine the legitimacy of the Mayan's image of a glorious past they have just recently recovered after the Peace Accords in 1996. For this reason, I argue that the imbalance power among the Mayan women and men that ultimately led to the male dominance and female oppression was not founded upon the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century. Rather, it has been implemented for time immemorial, certainly since the origin of the sex/gender system (Strauss, 1995; Rubin, 2011); the European contact reshaped it giving it different features. Therefore it is important to take into account several elements when analyzing masculinity in gender studies. It is also important to take into account the

philosophical perspective of the Cosmovisión Maya, which dictates that each sex has specific roles to fulfill, and neither role implies subordination or oppression of women. But is has to be under a rigorous analysis because as the material conditions of the communities are changing, so do the gender relations. Secondly it is important to take into account the historic progression of the culture over time. Certainly the Spanish invasion caused a social convulsion but it did not originate women's oppression.

Some scholars have harshly criticized this perspective arguing that Guatemalan feminists are idealizing the Mayan culture by not questioning the dominance of men and the oppression of women. Regarding this trend in Mayan literature, Morna Macleod (2011) notes that Mayan intellectuals have done well in stressing class relations, but they have dismissed the central point of their critiques on masculinity. For Macleod, Mayan feminist put the problems concerning gender in the background. This Mayanist discourse happens precisely in middle of the neoliberal multiculturalism movement and in a society characterized by social polarization and ethnic tensions. Macleod argues that "it is an example of the double standards of feminist intellectuals because they idealize the Mayan culture, at the same time that react in a defensive way and tend to form alliances with the Mayan men unquestioning their dominance (p. 137).

Nevertheless, the work produced by the local scholars on gender and masculinity is very valuable; but we need a deeper exploration of that male identity concerning the problems, controversies, and paradoxes that such a concept entails. Furthermore, questions have to be asked to see whether or not the perception of masculinity and masculinity itself has changed over time in these indigenous communities. Further research must investigate if there are aggressive or violent male behaviors in other Guatemalan communities that have changed over the years due to the progressive insertion of men into the labor market, the widespread of global information to which people are exposed, and the proliferation of

fundamentalist churches that have gained a great number of followers. If we assume that there are important changes promoted by the world economy, masculinity in Mayan culture should be changing as well. This perhaps is the future work to be done in a country like Guatemala, but particularly in a community like Sololá where the topic of masculinity has been barely explored.

In the chapter 1, I analyze different aspects of masculine identity in a heterosexual relationship. The vital component of this gender identity is authority, which endorses and legitimizes the power of a married man in a household. I will also look at how the authority and power have a correlation with the material recourses such as the land and property that a man usually earns through hard work or inherits them from his parents. Once the man acquires such material benefits, he is responsible for the wellbeing of the members of his family. He is expected to provide guidance for his children, bring them up properly, and earn a living. Besides his responsibility as a family protector and provider, a man holds political and civil responsibilities with local organizations and committees. A man then embodies and embraces masculine traits that come with these social roles. Nevertheless, despite the effort of some to meet the normative standard of masculinity, some fails in their attempts because, at the moment of their marriage, they do not own house, lack a permanent job, or a formal education, which are vital aspects in the construction of a man's authority.

In chapter 2, I discuss the perception that the men have of the current social status of the women in the communities, taking into account that the majority of the indigenous people suffered from extreme poverty, unemployment, social subordination a few decades ago. I will also succinctly discuss how the armed conflict among the insurgent groups and the army cause a structural changed in the communities. Despite the fact that the insurgent groups could not depose the power of the army and ruling class, this internal conflict paved the way of a social change. For some men, this conflict opened up a broader participation for "our

people" in the political spaces, something that had not happened prior to the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996 between the army and the insurgent groups. In this chapter, I also discuss the new social dynamics that bring the domestic appliances into the division of household labor. These domestic appliances such as a gas stove or a coffee maker are affecting or changing old cultural practices; for example, men suffer fewer stigmas upon using them. In the chapter 3, I approach the topic of alcoholism, domestic violence, and extramarital relationship. The men emphasized that alcoholism and domestic violence were rife a few decades ago. However, they stressed the fact they the attitudes of the majority of the men have changed over time due to religious transformation and personal commitments. In the conclusion I offer my final reflection on the study and discuss its limitations as well as my aspiration for a future study.

Chapter 1: Masculine identities

…yitk'o pa jaxik, achil k'ari' rit jun ixoq xa yatek'amax al. Si xawil jun ajinan, yatirb'an *tratar bien*, n-an achïl jun r-jk'wal chawä. Majun *problema*. Xa jojun *familias* yekiri', po k'o yek'ijma yekiri' ta. Yab'a pa jaxik n-an *aprovechar* a jinan y si utz rujolon awxjayil, *majun problema*, o manï, nb'ij chawä, "-kab'in, rin chwachoch yink'o wa y nkanun jun ak'exel, rit jat". Ri' yatirb'an *maltratar o menospreciar*. Po majnan ta rk'a chawachoch k'o wa, utz nab'ij cherä, si nawajo' yaje', kaje' o si manï jat kab'in. Po majunta mo' nab'ij kiri' si chrachoch riyä yitk'o wa. Rumä ri' maxib'a ta rin. (Armando)

…If you move in to the women's house, it is as if you were a woman because you accept to go there. If your father-in-law treats you kindly, you may become as one of his sons, no problem! But there are just a few good people, because the majority is not good. And if your wife is a good person, there is no problem! Otherwise, she would tell you "-Take your stuff and leave the house, I am in my house and I will find another man, you go away!" She may have a mean disposition toward you. That is why it is not the same thing if you bring her to your own house…[in that case] you can tell her "-if you want to stay here, stay, if not, take your stuff and step out of my house" But you cannot say that If you are in her house. That is why I did not move in with her. (Armando)

Armando, a well-educated 33-year-old man, was proud of refusing an initial offer from his wife to move in at her parents' home. Before they got married, about three years ago, she insisted that she would like him to live with her in her parents' house. But knowing the consequences of such a move, he rejected that enticing offer. So they lived in their own home as a couple. He told me that he made the right decision because moving in with her would have implied a real threat to his authority as a man. Now Armando has mixed feelings for two reasons. One the one hand, he is very disappointed about his life because his wife abandoned him about fifteen months prior to the interview, taking with her his one-and-a-half year old daughter and most of the things they had bought together. He said that they started having problems soon after they got married because his wife had a strong personality and she complained about the amount of work she did, and that she wanted to go back to live with her parents. Armando was shattered from this failure because his initial hope was to establish a family. On the other hand, he was deeply jubilant and proud of himself because he

did not put his authority at risk. Despite the fact that his wife left him, he is confident and sure that soon he will find another young woman.

Most of the men I interviewed had the same idea about establishing their own homes and bringing their wives to move in with them. The core concept at stake here is authority and power of a man in a particular place: the house. As I will examine in this chapter, the authority of the man is grounded in cultural and ideological practices. The house appears to be one of the spaces where ideology and practice converge, and the space where a man exhibits the full range of his authority; the latter is in turn supported by conventional values and actions such as responsibilities, obligations, commitment, political and civil participation, outdoor activities, and decision-making, among others. In this chapter I will explore the spaces and practices that allow the construction of specific masculine identities such as those that rely on authority and power. Traditionally, masculine identity has been defined as opposed to femininity and to other forms of vulnerable male identities. This study confirms this definition and contends that the Kaqchikel men to whom I talked resort to a variety of strategies to acquire power and gender relevance, which is not always related to physical violence. These strategies encompass cultural practices, assumptions, religious principles, physical strength, prowess, skills, and abilities in outdoor activities.

I will also include the concept of unfulfilled masculinity that refers to disappointed men who were not able to exert their alleged authorities in a relationship. In almost every society, boys and men are pressured to fulfill a standard of masculinity characterized by power and dominance (Connell 2005). However, in these communities, the men at times find themselves in crisis of identity when their wives challenge their authorities, especially when men lack property, a house, formal education, and a stable income. The loss of authority is very common in modern society, in particular when modern women *transgress* the boundaries of acceptable gender norms to achieve freedom and control.

Most of the literature on masculinity in gender studies focuses on indicators of gender inequality, such as the authoritarian impulse of the men in some societies largely linked to sexism and patriarchy (Lancaster, 1994, Gutmann 2006; Kimmel *et al,* 2007). But different from these claims, Guatemalan scholars affirm that there is an accepted norm of masculine identity within the Mayan communities. These scholars began to acknowledge that masculinity has specific expressions and positive aspects. They argue that there has been a substantial change in masculine identities due to external forces such as the impact of globalization in rural communities and the result of harsh criticisms prompted by masculine studies of the 1980s (Cumes, 2008).

This chapter examines the ways in which the Kaqchikel men develop their sense of masculinity and explores the social spaces that allow these men to construct and to socialize these identities. I aim to answer the two following questions: What kinds of contemporary masculinity prevail in these communities? And, in what social spaces do men create and socialize their masculine identities? Men's interpretations of masculinity illustrate the following two-fold thesis. First, within the context of family life, the Kaqchikel men create a variety of masculine identities through practices and discourses. These identities rest upon socially trained attitudes and values in this patriarchal society. And second, social institutions (the house, the church, the school, and the local organizations) allow the construction of a myriad of masculine identities, and this in turn allow men to enter the structures of power that exist in various social contexts.

SECTION 1. THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OF THE KAQCHIKEL MEN

What does it mean to be a man in the Kaqchikel community? The answers vary. For some informants to be a man is to be able to marry and establish a family. It also implies being able to own a house, inherit property from one's parents, set the rules for the

household, and be able to control the expected passiveness and submissiveness of the wife. The man's position in the household and in society should be respected as the ancient principles demand. Contrary to the standard definition of masculinity in most literature of gender –the man that exercises violence, flouts safety measures, or defies danger with reckless behavior- (Bourdieu, 2001, 52), the Kaqchikel men define themselves with concepts of respect and protection toward the members of their families. These men gain respect and reverence for having a land or a house. In the following section I will discuss the importance of these possessions for the Kaqchikel men.

A) "If you bring her to your house, you can command and say 'now, we both will go out…:'" Owning a house

Benito, a 60-year-old day laborer, said assertively "If you bring her [the wife] to your [own] house, you can command and say 'now, we both will go out to the field to pull up the weeds and to water the crops.' The couple then will work together and found a family." For Benito, Armando, Mateo, and other men in this study, owning a house is a fundamental aspect in the construction the masculinity, given that the house is an appropriate place to exert authority. In Benito's case, he assured that part of the success in his marriage was to have a house, regardless of its size, because it gave him authority and certain level of power to rule his family.

The authority of the man stems from other sources such as his capacity to afford the cost of a wedding. In the Kaqchikel community the man has to pay for the cost of several events prior to the wedding celebration. Cultural and religious events should be performed and celebrated such as the *jaqb'al ruchi' jay* (the fist meeting of both parents), *k'utnik* (asking the woman's hand), *solonik*, (wedding arrangement), and *k'ulanen* (wedding). Armando, 33, brags that he was able to afford such activities, and he spent over 35,000 Quetzales (equivalent to $4,500 US dollars) for his wedding celebration. He said that he

bought two cows, many boxes of soda, and paid for bus rides for the guests. However, he regrets the separation that happened a year-and-a-half later. He says, "it is a good idea to have a great wedding party if the couple understands each other... I spent all my bank savings on the wedding and I still spent more in the court trial." Although Armando spent a great deal of money on his wedding celebration, his marriage lasted only a year and a half. To make matters worse, his well-educated wife registered a complaint against him asking to share his property with her.

Mateo, a 60-year-old local vendor, shared a similar story of a marriage followed by a separation. He said that he spent about 15,000 Quetzales (around $2000.00 US dollars) for the wedding of his son Macario. They had a two-day party, but the relationship fell apart a few months later. Mateo said, "It was all an absurdity from her part because she did not want anything [she did not obey the order of her husband and her parents-in-law]. Of course, we did not want to screw her up [to command her just for pleasure], but she did not like to stay at home, she just liked to go out and hang out." Mateo held a pricy wedding for his son, however the woman was not a stay-at-home wife as Mateo and his son wanted. Indeed, Mateo's expectation was to have an obedient daughter-in-law, and who would play the role of a submissive wife as it happened with the majority of the married women in these communities. For them, this expectation had validity because both of them invested time, money, and effort to bring her to live with them. Furthermore, the expenses they incurred did not imply a simple cost but an investment in the authority of the man; but, this was shattered shortly after his wife left him.

Interestingly, not all informants have had a wedding that did not promise a permanent relationship; the majority had stable marriages. Despite the marital separation that some men experienced, they were proud because they owned their own houses and held expensive wedding celebrations. Besides owning a house, other material goods are seen as measurement

of masculinity. For example, acquiring household appliances has become the goal of young people including those who have left these communities. There are no reliable local statistics that show the number of people who have migrated from this Kaqchikel area to other cities or countries to find employment. However, there are a considerable number of men who have looked for job opportunities in other cities or countries. Some estimate that there are over a million Guatemalans living in the United States due to poverty and political violence since the 1970s (Menjivar 1999, Batz 2010). Most of these migrants wish to buy a lot of land and build a house while working abroad. Many of these young men have built houses because of the social pressure they face. Some have humble or even opulent houses. Now luxurious houses of cement block are being built everywhere. Some are as tall as of four stories, and have as many as fifteen individual rooms. Mateo, for instance, was surprised when talking about the houses migrant men build in the community these days. And while giving me advice for the success I could have if I study hard, earn a degree, find a job, build a house, and eventually get married, he told me of a young neighbor who just recently migrated to the United States. He said, "My young neighbor over there had no wife when he migrated to the US, and that guy just recently built a splendid house, and he still has no wife, who knows what woman he will marry!" For Mateo the house constitutes a man's symbol of pride and success. However, not all men have had the same opportunity to work abroad and build a house. Others, especially day laborers (like most of the informants), have not gone to other places to look for employment and build conspicuous houses. Instead they have humble houses. And there are many other men that work in the villages or in the urban areas to buy at least a plot of land.

B) "We got 5 *cuerdas* but we gave only 1 *cuerda* to our sisters:" Inherited property

Many of the respondents of my study argued that inheriting property from their parents was more important for a man than for a woman. Pedro, a 48-year-old farmer, shared, "We [the brothers] got 5 *cuerdas* [a measure of land] but we gave only 1 *cuerda* to our sisters. We did this in the absence of father who had already died. Our mother agreed with our decision." As illustrated by Pedro's account, property is a crucial indicator of the imbalance of power between men and women.

In her influential essay, *The Traffic in Women, Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex*, Gayle Rubin (1975) argued that inequality is a commonplace in Marxist analysis of class relations. However, Marxist analysis has directed little systematic attention to this factor especially in the analysis of the positioning of women and men in every society. In Guatemala some Mayan feminists have emphasized gender relations and questioned this imbalance in the distribution of land among women and men. They argue that men and women alike are capable in the management and ownership of property (Oneida 2009, Chirix 1997). Indigenous scholars in particular challenge and question, old-fashioned practices such as the unequal distribution of property, which most of the time favors the Kaqchikel men by allowing them to obtain a good portion if not all of the property.

The regime of inheritance involves many considerations in Sololá. For example, I highlight here the parents' overwhelming preference to pass property onto their male offspring. There is a general practice of inheritances. Such practice dictates that, however small the land is, it should be divided among the children of both sexes. However, this division is characterized by an unequal apportionment among the male and female offspring. The men I interviewed said that they had huge responsibilities because they ran their households and their children's lives. Accordingly, men should have a tract of land to work on and grow their crops. The local customs included the distribution of the parents'

belongings upon their death, and all possessions that go from a small utensil to a wooden textile loom. The distribution of belongings seems to be characterized by equality but this does not happen with the distribution of land.

Most informants stated that inequality in the distribution of inheritance was a prevalent practice in the past and of their parents but not these days. The notion of gender equality, which probably precedes the Peace Accords in the mid-1990s, was the predominant discourse of informants, may have been promoted by the social changes that the *pueblo* Kaqchikel experienced during the 90's, especially after the government and the guerrilla signed the Peace Accords in 1996 to end the internal armed conflict that lasted 36 years (Fischer 1999; 92). However, the discourse of equity did not mirror in the everyday practices. There was still an unequal apportionment of property in a subtle way. Mateo, for example, said that he has already shared his property among his children and he gave two-and-a-half *cuerdas* to each of his 4 sons, and 1 *cuerda* to each of his 6 daughters. When I asked him about the reason behind the difference in distribution of property among his children, he resolutely stated that it was not an expression of inequality. He gave 1 *cuerda* to his daughters because he paid for his daughters' education. He skillfully avoided commenting that he also paid for the education of his sons, who received double the amount of property. Despite the fact that most of the parents agree that equality should rule in the distribution of property, in practice this does not happen.

C) "Like in the church there is a hierarchy, so does in a family:" The father sets the rules in the household

"A law must be established at home. Like at the church where there is a hierarchy, so does in a family," expressed Mateo, a 60-year-old man who fathered 10 children. He claimed that rules and orders must be obeyed in his family. As part of everyday life, the father, more than the mother, is the person who establishes the norms and rules in the family. Mateo is one

example of these men with the authority to set the rules for his family. Mateo is a respectable K'amol B'ey at the community, that is, an honorable communal and religious leader whose purpose is to guide and give advise to young people. Mateo generally served as a godfather (K'amol B'ey) to people, especially for those in need of baptisms, weddings, or confirmations, and most of the Christian rites. He said that he changed radically to this kind of life about 20 years ago when he became an active member of the Catholic Church. Before that he had been an alcoholic who disrespected, humiliated, and even beat his wife. Now he has a discourse of gender equality. Mateo shared:

> "Women and men have the same rights. I say so because now I know the word of God. In the past, women did not have rights for me. I said, 'she [his wife] does not know anything', 'she is a woman', 'she can't speak up.' That is what I used to say in the past."

But despite his great effort to show that equality reigns in his household, fundamentally between him and wife, as well as between his male and female children, unequal relationships are always present. His authority as the head of the house supports subtle inequalities.

Mateo recounted to me that he has the control at home. One aspect of this control is that his grown daughters and sons must work and contribute economically and equally to the family economy. He said, "I see that the women (daughters) and the men (sons) hand over their wages to me… But it all depends on the authority and the rule of the father. It is like the church where there is a hierarchy of authorities, so is at home." Mateo pointed out that his unmarried son and two middle-age daughters give him their wages, thus he controls money management. If a woman or a man needs to buy something for herself or himself, he or she has to make the request to him. He said, "Sofia for example has handed over her wage to us [Mateo and his wife]. When she is paid, she gives her salary to us. If she needs money, then

she only lets us know how much she needs, so we give her that amount of money. If she says that she does not need anything, so we save that money. …She has helped us, and so did Aura." Besides his daughters, the last unmarried boy also handed his money to Mateo. The rules that Mateo has set may function but only to the benefit his sons. For example, when his son Macario got married - a marriage that ended in separation- his brother and his three middle aged daughters all paid for the wedding celebration. The money he collected from his children was used not only to hold the wedding celebration but also to build the houses of his sons, to buy land, and to do other small projects, such as maintaining the farmland or the livestock around the house.

Setting the rules also implies singling out the son that will inherit property and do specific household chores. Mateo told me that his 19-year-old *ch'ip* (the youngest of his sons) will inherit the house. In many households, the *ch'ip* are spoiled children, and the ones considered vulnerable, thus the one deemed to inherit the house of his parents. In other families, the son who faithfully stayed alongside his father during difficult times inherits the house. In any case, the house is given either to the faithful or the vulnerable son, but never to any of the grown daughters, even if they helped him considerably, much like Mateo's daughters. Mateo's daughters are expected to obey his authority, do well in their lives by observing cultural principles, and eventually "*yeb'a pa jay*", move in to a man's house when they get married.

In regard to setting the rules at home, Cesar, a 47-year-old separated father who raised his 3 children, talked to me about how he allocated and established the duties of each of his children. He said, "When I am at home I tell what each of them has to do. I say, 'Francisco, when you come home at 1 or 2 a.m., you have to fill the water barrels. You [to his older daughter] have to do the cleaning in the rooms, and you [to his youngest daughter] have to wash the dishes, and each of you has to wash his/her own clothes." Children usually do the

chores without the father to resorting to punitive action; the commands of the father imply that an order is a mandate. At the same time, this kind of father-child relationship implies the instilment of notions of gender practices through the authority of the father. By allocating the tasks for his children, a parent conveys the notion that there are specific roles for his sons and daughters. Normally boys learn masculine roles associated with demanding physical labor, while the girls learn the roles associated with the private domestic world of women (Chadorow 1978; p. 214). Women and men however remain unaware that this division between the sexes is the logic of a relationship of domination (Bourdieu, 2001; 30).

D) "If the woman has the authority at home, that marriage will fail:" The authority of the husband and the passiveness of the wife

Majnan ta chï jun achï nb'ano' *dominar* ruxjayil, manab'ij ta cherä chï kan nab'an *discriminar, menospreciar*, xak'a k'o *autoridad* pan aq'a, tataqa' y tana' atix rit nawaj cherä, manï ta. Rit xaxu' nab'ij cherä chï, -rit ma utz ta nab'an yare', komï kere' nqab'an y tanmaj tintzij… tus yari' utz nb'an (Armando)	A man should dominate his wife [as opposed to a wife dominating her husband]. It however does not imply that you discriminate or underestimate her because you have the authority, for example, having her doing whatever you want her to do. No, it is not like that. You only tell her–you'd better do this, now you should do this and please obey my orders… This way, the marriage functions. (Armando)

Armando, a 33-year-old man, expressed a standard discourse of male domination. As he finished the above statement, he asserted, "But if the woman has the authority at home, that marriage will fail." He saw the supremacy of the man as necessary for the marriage and the family to function. He stated that a man should resort to a sort of "soft power" that does not cause any physical or psychological injury, but that is strong enough to establish the boundaries of power among a husband and a wife. Virtually all of the men I interviewed stated that the relationship among a couple should be based on respect and love. But certainly this relationship of respect and love is sometimes based on the unbalanced power among the couple. If the woman questions or challenges this unbalanced relationship, then the couple may end in a momentary separation or divorce. That was exactly what happened to Armando,

who recently separated from his wife fifteen months ago. From his perspective, his wife was *jun ixoq kowan q'aq' rujolon* (a woman of strong personality) who was against conventional regulations that he set at home. He said that she constantly challenged his authority due to the advice she got from her parents, the formal education she received, and her ability to earn a wage. During their short-term relationship (a year and a half), he always tried to have control over his wife in terms of what she should and not do, but in the end this did not work for him.

Most of the men I interviewed relied on a basic paradigm promoting gender inequality: the authority of the husband is imposed upon the wife in subtle ways so that it does not cause any marital conflict and potential separation. For example, one day while I was interviewing Celso, a 42 year-old gardener in his room, his wife carrying her baby came in and politely asked me about the nature of the study I was conducting. I answered her question and also decided to ask her about the year when she was born because it was the topic we were discussing in the interview. But before the woman answered my question, Celso decisively interrupted saying that she had been born in the late 1950s. Celso's quick intervention struck me. Then I looked at the woman again and addressed a direct question. This time I asked her about the place where she was born. And again, before the woman uttered the first words, the man said that she had been born in Sololá but raised in another community. I stubbornly tried another question until the man finally realized that I wanted the woman to answer my questions directly to me, with her own voice. These interventions made me aware of the accurate time and the appropriate moment to ask questions either about the woman or about the man. In addition, it was interesting to me to observe that some men could think that their wives were imprudent, inaccurate, and even wrong in their answers.

On another occasion, something similar occurred. I interviewed Mateo in the presence of his wife. During the interview, I did not address direct questions to her; however,

she aptly intervened when matters concerned her, especially when I took the risk and asked Mateo challenging questions about their past as a couple. I asked him if he had ever beaten his wife, for instance. And I turned to the woman as she decisively entered the conversation to answer my questions. But as she was saying the first words, Mateo accelerated and gradually raised his voice overshadowing her intervention. At first I considered Mateo's intervention as natural and spontaneous given the sensitive topic we were discussing. However, as the conversation went on it became very uncomfortable for me when I realized that Mateo did not let the woman finish subsequent interventions. Sometimes they talked to me at the same time. In one of the woman's interventions, she attempted to answer the question of whether or not they have had problems of jealousy. And Mateo in a very kindly manner interrupted her saying, "*Nan* [Madam], it is getting dark in this room, could you please turn on the light." She stood up and walked over to the switch on the wall near the door as she was expressing a few sentences. As her voice lowered in tone, Mateo resumed the conversation. Later that day when I was transcribing the audio, I counted the interventions of the wife, and to my surprise she was interrupted fourteen times during the two-hour interview before she went to the kitchen. The woman had only two successful interventions in which she expressed complete ideas. This phenomenon is very common among couples. Bourdieu calls this phenomenon "symbolic violence" because it is a calculated submission, "it is ethnic, gender, cultural, or linguistic by which the man restates his position in the hierarchy of gender power." (Bourdieu 2001; 37)

In short, when considering power dynamics in these heterosexual relationships in this particular place, it is important to point to one of the most important topics: the authority of the man and the passiveness and submissiveness of the wives. As illustrated, men's interventions prevented women from expressing their own ideas about things that concerned

them. The men considered that what the women tried to say was meaningless and unreasoning.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBLE FATHERS

"…yin tat-aj, yin *responsable* pa jay, chrij nujk'wal, chij nusamaj, chij nu-*gasto*… Ruma ri' nbix ojer chi xak'le' jun *compromiso* xaya' chawij, maxu' taxama' pa jun ixoq, ri' nrajo' ruway, rutziyaq, rajal raq'on, casi jontir nrajo'. Rin yin ach ik'o jun *compromiso* chi nutzuq ri ixoq. Ri ixoq ntel tzij rchi pa jay, nch'aj atziyaq, n-mas pan awachoch, jontir k'ari' nb'an kwent riya, ruma ri' nkib'ij rimosoi' chï riyä jun "ama de casa". Rb'anun k'ari' kwent jontir pa jay. (Iván)	I am a father and I am responsible for the things at home, for the care of my children, for my work, for the expenses… That is why people in the past used to say that when you get married you undertake all kinds of responsibilities. It is not only that you bring your wife to your house. Because she needs food, clothes, medicine, almost everything. I have the responsibility of feeding my wife. The wife is a stay-at-home woman. She washes my clothes, cleans up the house. She takes care of all these tasks. That is why the mestizo people call her "ama de casa" (housewife), which means that she takes care of everything in the house. (Iván)

The traditional model of marriage and family is still prevalent in many rural communities where the informants live. This model suggests that the father is the one that works outside of the house while the woman works inside. Each of them has specific responsibilities and obligations. Iván, a 47 year-old farmworker, stated that he was responsible for his 7 children and his wife. He was a hard working man and did not know anything else but how to work the land. He lived in a house that was seriously deteriorating; the house had floors made of clay. Besides that, the house had no more bedrooms than the one that the couple occupies and another room for his 6 children who ranged in age from sixteen to two years old. Additionally, their house lacks services such as an adequate bathroom and a shower. But despite these limitations directly resulting from poverty, the family seems to live in harmony and joy judging from the playful children that were chasing each other around the house, the nonalcoholic father, and their aspirations such as the education of their children.

Upon my arrival at his house, Iván kindly welcomed me and surprised me with all his knowledge and wisdom about life, cultural diversity, history, and colonialism, even though he was not exposed to any formal education. That afternoon he told me that he just came back from work, which was very hard because, as he said, "the worker has to endure either the hot or the cold days." He added that as a farmworker, he has to bear the stings of the insects, plants, or simply to resign himself to eating a cold lunch that he has taken with him. Articulating his knowledge about paid work, he said that the women can also do hard work in the fields. However, the man decides to do it because he has the physical strength and the prowess to do it. And sure enough, Iván took advantage of all these male physical features. At times he went out to the field accompanied by his three sons who helped him with the work after school. Given that most rural areas are based on subsistence economies, which is an agrarian economy based on production for consumption rather than exchange and where the households serve as both the unity of production and consumption, the division of labor is very noticeable. And from this social arrangement emerges different responsibilities for each parent toward their children.

The subsistence economy allows each parent to have not only different but specific responsibilities, especially in regard to education and knowledge of men and women. Iván reflecting on his responsibilities in his house said, "a woman is equally intelligent as the man. Just take a look at a female teacher; she is equally intelligent as a male teacher." He then added:

> "If I do not pay the education of one of my children, they will not be able to feed themselves. For example, my son may look like a man, but he isn't because he can't speak [Spanish language]. You may feel sorry for him. That is what happens to me when I come across a Mo's [a male Ladino]. I do not know what to tell him. And the

same thing happens to a woman. That is why I say we have the same rights [for education]"

Iván, like many other informants in this study, sees education as the parents' first and foremost responsibility to provide their children. They emphasized their responsibilities toward them because they see that they are constantly negotiating their lives in a highly gendered and racialized context. These men draw on discourses characterized by gender equality to differentiate and highlight the *now*, "what we are doing today", from practices of the past -the practices of "our fathers and mothers." Ivan further explained this when he decisively highlighted the difference as follows: "Our father and mother dismissed the rights of women, they looked down on them." Later he added, "For me, women and men have the same rights. So both have to go to school. A girl also needs food as you and me." For Iván, ancestors made the mistake by not providing education for their female children. He criticized favoritism and stated that he was committed to the education of his daughters and sons alike. Along with the high expectations and responsibilities for the men in regards to the education of their children, they also expressed concern for the well-being of their children in the household.

A) The responsible father

The majority of the men fathering children stated that they were responsible for the well-being of their children and their wives, however in practice that was not always the case. I use the term "responsible father" to refer to the fathers who work hard to provide food to the family and take on the financial obligations in the household. These fathers may express their affection toward their children; however sometimes express less affection to their wives. The main goal of these responsible fathers is to ensure that their households are well supplied with food and vital services such as drinking water and electricity.

An epitome of this type of father was Benito, a 60-year-old day laborer. He earned 50 Quetzales ($ 8 US dollars) per day, which was a low payment, when most of the men charged 60 Quetzales or more for a day of labor. Interestingly, Benito not only charged low, he also did all kinds of jobs from carpentry to farming. He said that there are many people who request his services. Referring to his responsibility at his home and with his wife, he says, "When I make money, I show it to my wife and say, 'Mama, this is the money I made, this is the money I found [earned]. Now, this is to buy our firewood, to pay the electricity and water bill, to pay the telephone service, and to cover our expenses.' I pay every service at home." Benito's words suggest that fathers are responsible for paying the bills and purchasing domestic items for the home. Fathers also decide how, when, and for what purposes the money they earn is spent.

Conversely, the responsibility of Benito's wife was to make sure that this money was used appropriately and wisely according to the budget. Thus earning an income and spending it are different roles that bestow certain levels of power between the couple. The capacity of the man to make money implies that the woman should stay at home doing the housekeeping and taking care of the children. Similar to Benito's story, Fausto, a 44 year-old vendor, assured that he has the ability to work hard and thus cover all the expenses at home, so that the woman would not have to go out to look for a job. Furthermore, he observed that the woman could not work outside for a wage because she has many responsibilities with her children at home such as making their clothes and preparing their food.

Fathers like Benito and Fausto commented that they have a strong commitment and responsibility to their wife and children. In the same vein, Cesar told me that he devises strategies in order to show his children that he is a self-confident father who is able to meet the needs of his children even during hardships. He said that the children ask for food when they are hungry or money when they have to buy something for their classes. And he always

figures out how to meet those needs. Armando is another case. He separated a few months ago from his wife but he continues to fulfill some responsibilities for his one-and-a-half year old daughter. He said his wife filed a suit against him and he was ordered to pay 500 Quetzales (around $60 US dollars) every month for child support. More than a forced alimony, he sees it as a moral obligation toward his daughter because he loves her. Almost all respondents defined themselves as being responsible with their families in some way. This was due to the positive connotation that the word responsibility has and because it situates the men in respectable positions in society.

B) "It is a hard job because it demands the security guard to stand up all night long:" The hard working men

Roj ach-a' kan roj nqab'an *mantener* qa *familia.* Kiri' xkib'ij qatit qamama'. Tus xanajyowaj rwach ixoq ri', rumä ri' manataq ta pa samaj. (Iván)	We [man] feed our families. That is what our ancestors told us. [Because feeding requires hard work] we do not send the women to work to the fields. We feel passion for them. (Iván)

Iván, a 47-year-old farmworker, talked to me about the type of work he does in the agricultural fields. He also said that most of his work is related to growing crops, which is not an easy task. But he said that he has to do it because it is exclusively a man's responsibility. Hard work is a fundamental characteristic of working-class men who are in the frontline of the fights to sustain their families especially across developing countries (Sassen, 2001). In Latin American countries such as Nicaragua when "life gets harder," men tend to emigrate to other countries especially to the United Sates to help their families economically (Lancaster, 1994). In Guatemala in particular, men from the rural areas –mostly indigenous– tend to migrate to urban enclaves to join the informal sector of economic activities or simply serve as steady paid-wage laborers in institutions or businesses (Falla 2007). While Kaqchikel working-class men have jobs outside of the house such as local vendors, builders in private construction projects, security guards, and day laborers, many women and girls *still* do

unpaid domestic work like fetching water, collecting firewood, and serving as principal caregivers of younger siblings and the elderly, among other menial tasks. Currently rural girls attend schools and many women have jobs as teachers in local schools (Oneida Rodas, 2009). But the types of housework girls and women do at home are mistakenly branded as easy works vis-á-vis the paid and difficult work that the men do outside the home. This creates an enormous backlash for society overall in terms of progress and development, considering the increasing number of the population. According to a XI Census conducted by the Insituto Nacional de Estádisticas (INE) in 2002, Sololá numbered 63,973 in population (Ajcalón Choy, 2011). 41, 865 of them lived in the rural areas and the rest in the urban area and about 90% of them were Kaqchikeles and the rest were non-Kaqchikeles. From the overall figure, 31,051 were men and 32,922 women. If we put these figures under gender scrutiny, analyzing reproductive labor in particular, we see that unfairness and inequality are ubiquitous. The theory of gender organization, for example, has argued that reproductive labor has negative consequences on women (Acker 1990). The concept of reproductive labor covers biological reproduction (mothering) as well as the work necessary for the reproduction of families (Chodorow 1978; 209). The latter encompasses menial and unremunerated activities such as preparing food, cleaning the home, rearing children, and providing emotional support for adults, among other activities. This day-to-day work that women and girls do are taken for granted and are not seen as work, remaining invisible under the patriarchy.

Informants affirmed that they do the valuable work -the work that required strength and skills. Iván, 47, for example, had the notion that a man does the hard work as a way to protect a woman from the harshness of the weather. He said, “We [men] feed our families. That is what our ancestors told us. [Because feeding requires hard work] we do not send the women to work to the fields. We feel passion for them.” He then added that women would

not be able to work with the heavy tools men use in the cultivation. He stated, "When it is the raining season, the *azadón* (hoe) gets heavier as it gets covered with mud, and when it is windy you cannot see and breathe." He also told me about other responsibilities that only men are capable of having. He recounted that a year ago people in the community formed a local committee and they wanted to include women in the organization. And surprisingly women refused to participate. He said that women knew in advance that it was not easy work for them especially when they have to attend long-lasting meetings in distant places. He says, "You [a man] can go to the city and have a talk with the engineer, governor, or mayor [because the man speaks Spanish]. When you come back you summon the members of the committee for a meeting. You tell them, 'We have a meeting this afternoon'. But the meeting requires a good deal of time." He implies that a man is capable of addressing governmental officials and approaching local people, something that a woman would not do by herself because of language barrier (paradoxically, in the end government officials may become deceitful and untrustworthy).

On the topic of physically demanding work, Cesar recounted his own experience. He said that a few months ago the company for which he worked hired a woman to occupy a security guard position. However, the woman had to resign the position because it temporarily required her to work at night. He said, "It is a hard job because it demands the security guard to stand up all night long. You have to be attentive in case a customer needs information and you have to make your nightly rounds. So the woman that was hired did not stand that kind of work and because she had children who needed her assistance." These stories illustrate another way in which the Kaqchikel men in Sololá construct their masculinities and where institutions promote gender segregation that create disadvantages for women. The discourse of physical strength is used as a justification by the men who rely on these ideologies to make sense of their identities as men, husbands, and fathers.

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AND CIVIL FUNCTIONS

The involvement that men have in the public sphere allows them to hold certain privileged positions such as K'amol B'ey (Communal Advisor), leader at the COREDs (Communal organizations), alcaldes auxiliaries (local government assistant), or politicians. To occupy such positions they need to have certain knowledge, skills, and abilities such as mastery in the Spanish language. The majority of the men I interviewed did not have a formal education. Armando (33) was the only one with the highest academic achievement because he almost finished his *licenciatura* (the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree in the US system) in business in a private university in Sololá. And Mateo, 60, by contrast, was the only one that did not attend even a single day of school. The average number of years of formal education for most of the informants was 3rd grade. In spite of these apparent limitations, for them, formal education was not a requirement for being a leading figure in the community. These men agreed that honorableness and a civil career are crucial factors to be a K'amol B'ey (communal advisor).

A) "I have served as a godfather for many couples. Perhaps there are 20 couples or more to whom I have served:" The K'amol B'ey

The K'amol B'ey [pl] are men who lead and inspire others, particularly young people. They have a long trajectory of civic services within the community and have worked pro bono in different social spaces especially in religious ones. Usually a k'amol B'ey plays the role of a godfather for people in Christian rites. For that reason, they have a wide knowledge on Christian principles relating to ethic and moral values. Furthermore, many have knowledge of local laws, in particular on topics relating to marriage, separation, divorce, and others. For the most part the K'amol B'ey are people who belong to a particular generation, they are men over 50. Although they do not brand themselves as K'amol B'ey, people identify them for their commitment to the people and the kind of work they perform in

their communities. It is important to mention that the K'amol B'ey, which is a social status, is exclusively reserved for men, therefore no woman is known as leader or K'amol B'ey in these communities.

Benito and don Mateo have been K'amol B'ey for many years serving as godfathers for several religious rites, among them, marriage, baptism, and confirmation. Sometimes the k'amol B'ey have to make sure that the couples fulfill their responsibilities, obligations, and commitment to one another. Benito, for example, told me that a few days prior to the interview, he had to take care of a delicate issue with a young couple for whom he had served as a godfather when they were married. He recounted that a young man wanted to expel his wife from his home because he discovered that she had established contact on the phone with another man. He said that he reprimanded the woman for such shortcomings and managed to convince the man to give her another chance.

Similarly, Mateo, also a K'amol B'ey, expressed an enormous understanding of human rights and gender equality, stating that the religious and civil marriages encourage couples to work together and to equally assume the responsibilities and the obligations at home. I asked him about what he tells couples when he gives advice. He says, "I, the godfather, tell the woman [who gets married], 'Now take care of yourself and your husband. Do not betray him. Now you become a *Nan* [Lady] and you are not a *q'opoj* [girl] any more.' And then I tell the husband, 'A few days ago you were called Nazario, but now you will be called Don Nazario, your name has changed. And then I turn to the woman and tell her, 'Now, you woman, be responsible. Get up early to prepare the food of your husband and bring it to his work place, in the cultivation, or in the *milpas*. Ask him where he wants you to take his food.' Then I tell the man, 'You man, just because you work outside it does not mean that you flirt with another woman…' 'You woman have to be under the order of your mother-in-law." Mateo's account implies that a K'amol B'ey has to have a discourse full of

wisdom and advice. He has to be coherent with his practice so that he legitimizes his authority. Although women are meant not to have power in a relationship, they do have power when they are in their own house and with female newcomers. In Mateo's account, we see that the mother-in-law may exercise a certain degree of power over her new daughter-in-law who is adapting to the dynamics of the house, and is in her first steps to become knowledgeable about the major responsibilities of a wife.

The K'amol B'ey not only gives strong advice but serves as a communal judge as well. Given that the majority of the people in the rural area do not have an easy access to the courts located in the urban areas, they resort to local authorities, among them the K'amol B'ey, to seek for a solution to their problems such as physical violence, alcoholism, infidelity, delinquency, misconduct, and so forth. For example, the K'amol B'ey is expected to solve problems that married couples may have. Most of the time their advice is to encourage and strengthen communication among them, but they never suggest a separation, although it sometimes happens. Contrary to the K'amol B'ey of the past that used to engage in alcohol consumption, the contemporary K'amol B'ey are strongly opposed to this practice. This change in attitude may have been caused by the harsh criticisms prompted by religious movements such as the renovación carismatica católica y evangélicos during the 1970s and 1980s who strongly opposed the consumption of alcohol in religious and cultural activities and questioned the "*legalidad moral*" of the brotherhoods in which the k'amol B'ey*s* had a major role (Barrios 2001; 125)

During the interview with Benito, 60, I asked him how he became a K'amol B'ey. He said that he has been a leader and advisor in his community for about 20 years. He has participated in workshops and committees, and that participation has brought him knowledge of how to be a respectable man. The K'amol B'ey is a male identity by which certain men

showcase and share their virtues and their wisdom with the purpose of leading young people or couples to a joyful life.

Here I would argue that the K'amol B'ey becomes what Connell has identified as the 'hegemonic masculinity.' I find the idea of hegemonic masculinity important for the current study since it is a theory of gendered power relations. Connell argues that the most visible bearers of hegemonic masculinity are always the most powerful people. They are individual holders of institutional power (Connell 2005, 79). In this particular case, the K'amol B'ey identity can be deemed as hegemonic masculinity in so far as the K'amol B'ey play a crucial role in religious institutions and cultural activities and have power over younger men with limited-life-experiences.

B) "This village does not allow women to form part of the CORED:" CORED s and Committees

"The committees I have been in are: Comité de salud, apertura de camino, agua potable, CORED[4], directiva de iglesia católica, alcalde comunitario, asociación de Mercado…" Pedro proudly stated in Spanish when I asked him what local organizations he has served. Pedro was a 48-year-old farm worker and vendor, father of 5 children. Precisely the day we met, I realized that Pedro had an overwhelming responsibility in the community. Despite the fact that he did not attend school at all, he had an unquestionable role of leadership in his community. At that time he served as the president of a local religious group and was also a member of one of the 105 organizations called CORED (A communal orgranization). The positions at the COREDs are time-consuming and *ad honorem,* that is, without a monetary compensation. He held those social responsibilities as a way to serve the communities as others have done in the past.

[4] CORED is a fictitious acronym for a local organization. In the consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board, I promised to protect people's identities by using pseudonyms and fictitious names for organizations. I also use fictitious names to identify the men I interviewed.

The Committees and the COREDs are two different local organizations that work in parallel. The Committees are organizations that take care of the local and public services such as potable water, road cleaning, municipal sewer, and so forth, while the COREDs are organizations in a much larger scale. The latter are in charge of collecting all the proposals and petitions that come from the committees. Then leaders prioritize and select the proposals to turn them into projects according to the law, and with the approval of other organizations: the COMIDEs[5] and COJUDEs[6], other strong organizations along with the COREDs. One characteristic of these organizations is that the majority of their members are men. Informants recall many reasons for the overwhelming participation of men and the lack of participation of women.

Small commissions, such as the commission of security, local surveillance, or conflict solutions, compose these organizations. And men mostly occupy these spaces. Conversely, the participation of women is largely in the Comisión de la mujer (Women's Commission), Junta Escolar (board of education), Escuelita de la Fé (religious board for children), and maintenance. To an extent, this has facilitated the integration of women in political organizations. Women that participate within the other commissions such as security, environment, road, or water are widows who are relatively free from watchful partners. Interestingly, women who participate in male dominated organizations show a strong commitment to service by attending the scheduled meetings. I also realized that geographical location is key: the farther the communities are from the center of the town, the less opportunities women have to participate. This is due in part because the long distance and lack of transportation make it difficult for women to attend the meetings; thus, only men become involved. In some villages specific rules exist that prohibit the entrance of the

[5] COMIDEs is a fictitious acronym for a local organization.
[6] COJUDEs is a fictitious acronym for a local organization.

women in the COREDs. I asked Celso if his wife has ever been member of the CORED and he said, “This village does not allow women to form part of the CORED. Only men participate. Men rotate in the positions. We make sure that only men are in front line of work. We are pursuing projects. We [the members of the CORED] have been 4 years in the positions and our project is not completed yet. We want the rest of the road to be paved.” It is evident that the preference for men in these organization is enormous and supported by the belief that only men are capable of perfoming such kinds of jobs. Although there are other factors that may restrict the participation of women in these organizations.

Most, if not all, informants expressed concerns about the lack of participation of women in these organizations. They argued that women’s rights should be observed in every private and public space and that equality should reign in the committees. They were aware of the unequal opportunities for women in the committees. Celso, for example, told me about the number of women in the organizations, “There is not much. See, this year there are just 2 women among 83 alcaldes comunitarios (communal mayors) in Sololá. And among the local CORED of the village Yaxón there are only 3 women out of 15 members.” After that he added, “We already know about that [the inequality]. If you complain about this, people would tell you, ‘Women are not capable [to carry out the projects].’” It is interesting to see how most of the informants blamed their neighbors, organizations, the violence, the lack of time for women, and other factors as the real causes of the limited access and participation of women in these organizations. At the same time, men argued that the men, more than the women, were talkative and had social leverage as well as leadership in the organizations. They said that women tended to be quiet; they neither talked nor gave opinions during the meetings. Pedro, a 48-year-old farmer, affirmed this saying, “They [women] are allowed to participate in the meetings but they are afraid of giving their own opinions.” On the same topic, Armando stated, “They would participate in the organizations if they have strong

personality, character, and determination. All depends on the degree of their formal education." Others informants affirmed that women did not want to participate in the committees because they did not want to attend meetings held at night. Others added that women have children to take care of and above all, their husbands were less supportive when it was about participating in groups dominated by men. Thus several factors restricted women to become political actors in their communities. This enforces male power as they have an overwhelming participation within the organizations.

SECCION 4: "WHY DID I FOLLOW HER? WHY I MOVE IN TO HER PARENTS' HOUSE?" UNFULFILLED MASCULINITY

Rin man tzolij ta wi' xik'le', po ntzolij wi' rumä aki tq xintzqilb'ej al. Atux rumä xa pajaxik xib'a wa. Rab'on xkiya' nuna'oj, "la yala' mautz ta" xecha', po jun b'enaq ran rk'a ri ixoq, rumä ri' nab'an "meter pata". Ri xkib'ij nutat/nunan chwä, po xa wchï rin xq'ax y kiri' ma utz ta xeb'enk'sa'. (Arturo)	I do not regret of having gotten married, instead I regret of the fact that… why did I follow her! Why I moved in to her parents' house! My friends give me advice saying, 'That is too bad what you did'. But you know, when someone is in love with a woman… That is why I screw up. My parents told me why I did not follow their advice. For that reason it did not work out for me. (Arturo)

With a deep pain, Arturo, 36, father of 3 children, shared with me a "disastrous" decision he made when he got married around 17 years ago. He said that he did not have a house of his own at that time so he had to move in with the woman's parents. As it happens in many parts of the world, a man prefers to live in his own house because living in the woman's house presupposes losing a man's authority. In such a situation, a woman can end the relationship without significantly disturbing her housing situation. (Maldonado, 2012).

Arturo made and sold *juegos de lógica* (logic games made of wood and wire) at a tourist area in the center of Sololá. When I first met him, he was offering his products to curious people passing by. He kindly attracted their attention by explaining the new game and the aims of some of these games. "I have a game for you" he told a couple, "If you cannot solve this, it means that you do not love each other," showing them two entangled

hearts. The couple looked at each other and started laughing and hugging. The couple gave it a try and ended up buying the riddle game. Arturo told me later that selling logic games was his work because he could not find stable work in any institution, organization, or private company due to the level of his education. He barely completed 5th grade. The day of the interview I told him that I had private and personal questions for him and that he had the right to answer them or not. But he immediately replied, "Yes…I will answer all your questions." I realized that he was looking for a way to vent his sadness and frustration but also to let me (and other people) know about the disastrous consequences that one might go through if not taking the right decision. He told me that he was not living with his wife anymore so he felt certain freedom to express his thoughts, but he also expressed sadness because he missed his three children.

His wife, a Catholic woman, decided to end their 17-year-relationship about three months prior to the interview. He said that she decided to end the relationship because Arturo had a disorder of the central nervous system characterized by reiterative loss of consciousness. But "it was not a natural illness," he said, meaning that he was not born with it. He strongly believed that it was the result of witchcraft and blamed his mother-in-law for it. "I have a painful headache, but it was the 'work' [witchcraft] of my mother-in-law, who strongly opposed to our relationship because I was not a *maestro* [teacher] as my wife. I fend off the spell by kneeling down and praying or go to a Mayan priest to ask for protection," he said.

Arturo's wife, raised in the Catholic faith, was employed as a teacher in a local public school. After work she served in her small store and a pharmacy that she established a few years ago. Arturo said, "…The woman [his wife] has money, for that reason she mistreated me. She has power. The money gives her power. We have separated several times before because I barely make money, and then we reunite again." From this perspective, the woman

was more likely to dismiss her male companion as long as she considered him a burden and not a supporter. She was in her own house —or at least in her parents' house— with her children, ran a small business, and had a stable and paid employment. Arturo saw this as a "threat" to his authority. Often a woman does not end her relationship when children are in the midst of marital tension and when she depends on the man's income. Sometimes, despite the violence that a woman faces, she endures it because of her children and her economic dependency. But as soon as the children grow up and a woman finds a job, she may end an unbearable relationship. Although this happened in Arturo's family, it doesn't happen in many families.

Despite the long period of Arturo's relationship, he said that, he could not have control over his household because he was not in his property. In fact, his wife constantly threw it in his face as he explained, "I could not say anything. If I argued, she said 'If you want to stay here, stay here, if not, grab your stuff and get out of this house' She said it to me because I was not in my property [my own house] She got up the nerve to say that. Probably she is right because she is in her parents' property." Arturo and his wife had constant fights during their relationship because Arturo lacked a house, also because he lacked formal education. He added, "If I were a teacher [as his wife], she would not have thrown it in my face that I am uneducated. We were at the same level [of education]. She would not see me as worthless. It is better if you both have the same level of education. That is why I say that it is necessary education for the boys and for the girls alike." The long relationship was a bitter experience for Arturo. Contrary to other men in the community that suppressed their wives with a simple gaze or with an increasing tone of the voice, Arturo could not do much. Arturo found himself vulnerable and without much possibility to accomplish the prototypic role of a man with authority. He did not succeed in his expected role or perhaps he failed to succeed because of a simple decision he made long ago, which he still enormously regretted.

Unlike the case of Armando who preferred to lose his family but not his authority, Arturo gave up and now was paying the high cost of his 'wrong' decisions. One of the biggest problems that Arturo faced in his relationship was his disempowerment upon arrival at his wife's house. For him, this relationship implied an unequal power relation in terms of who "knew more" and who didn't, who found a decent job and who didn't. For him all these differences favored and gave the woman certain power to make their own decisions. Indeed, scholars of gender studies argue that besides financial independence, women in almost every society who used to be looked down upon can gain power when they get a suitable education, training, or paid employment (Gonazález-López, 2005, p. 84). In his book *Against Machismo* (2008), Josué Ramirez argues that progressive change in gender relations is associated with migration to the city and increasing rates of higher education (Ramirez, 2008, p. 30). Similar changes were occurring in Arturo's relationship, which have reshaped the conventional image of gender relations that he and other men used to have.

Arturo identified another problem in his relationship. He said that he wanted personal autonomy. "They [his parents-in-law and brothers] want you to do what pleased them," he asserted. His words suggest that what he wanted was independence and freedom. In a patriarchal society, these kinds of family relationships may create tensions and, eventually, problems between the couples. The woman may gain agency and leadership to an extent, but the man may lose power, authority, and self-esteem. At the end of our talk, Arturo was assessing the possibility to return with her wife, but he was also considering the possibility to establish a relationship with another young woman, preferably one with no formal education.

Most of the Kaqchikel men tend to maintain their authorities and therefore their respectability at all costs in heterosexual relationships. A wrong move, an unexpected event, a stubborn behavior, or simply the vertiginous renegotiation of gender relations may pose a

threat to masculine identities especially to pernicious aspects of masculinity associated to dominance, control, sexism, and violence.

The interviews with these men seem to suggest the existence of several expressions of masculinity, and two of them stand out. First, masculinity may have a "good" or positive dimension, which implies the correlation that exists between the physical power of men and the danger/hard work they perform in order to feed their families. The second, in contrast, is related to the negative dimension of masculinity, that is masculine identity tends to resort to practice of domination. From this perspective, men tend to believe that only they have the rights, opportunities, privileges, authority to thrive, progress or advance in their interests, subordinating the women as part of this process. This aspect is challenged especially when they move in with a woman, putting at risk their presumed social standing and reputations.

As illustrated, the men I interviewed identified the "threats" to their sense of masculinity: the power of domination they have as men may be compromised as women challenge their authority within heterosexual relationships. Most of the men I interviewed agreed that by no means it is a good idea to move in to the women's house or to marry a well-educated woman. Among the interviewers, only Arturo "made the wrong decision" of deciding to live in the house of his well-educated wife. Informants mentioned several reasons why men decided to move in to a woman's house. Some of them were madly in love with the woman at the outset of their relationship, so they followed the women. Others mentioned the lack of money to afford a wedding celebration. The informants feared going to the woman's house because they may be mistreated, losing command, and autonomy. In addition, it is a risk to a men building a house in the woman's lot because at any time they can be kicked out. Or they have to share power and authority with the woman, and with the other men such as the father-in-law or brothers-in-law. Informants also commented that a man put at risks his masculinity if he marries a well-educated woman. Well-educated women are more prone to

register complaints if they are mistreated, something that uneducated women are less likely to do.

Armando told me that one day he was so angry and on the verge of beating his wife, but he calmed down after reflecting about the consequences of such action: "That is the disadvantage of having a well-educated wife," he stated. And then he added, "…an uneducated woman, no matter how much you beat her and then tell her, 'go away', but she would not go away, because she has no place where to go." He missed the past of the "good old days" when men had absolute authority in their own houses,

> Everything has changed. In the past, the men dragged their wives by their hair. They beat them when they were drunk. It is not the same in these days. Women are more abusive and take advantage of the situation. Now they say, "I also have rights, I will leave the house". It is as if they were given a lot of rights, and for that reason they are deviating… [from the alleged norm]. They do not respect the authority of the man anymore.

Armando considered that the beating to a woman is a necessary part of her well-mannered correction at home and to keep the order in the house that the man wants to establish. Only in this way, the man is respected and considered the head of the house, especially when he is in his own house. In the same line, when I interviewed Mateo, he share with the same idea in regard to the law and the respect of a women toward the authority of the man: "it is good the existence of the law [which protect women's rights] but women have to respect the authority of the men, but what is happening today? Today women say whatever they please and you as a man have to obey it, if not, problem arises".

Like Amando and Mateo's frustration, there are others that share the same reaction, arguing that the power is being disputed when a man is not living in his own house. In such a situation, the man vacillates between recognizing and respecting the active role of the woman

and her incipient authority in a household. But as we have seen this may become complicated as the man is located in a context in which his power is questioned and challenged.

CONCLUSION

Masculine identities are created and produced in different social contexts and are supported by practices and beliefs. With regard to social spaces, the rural Kaqchikel man finds the house as the main locus to exert his authority and power. With regard to cultural practices, a man benefits enormously when he inherits property from his parents, something that rarely occurs with the woman. And in relation to beliefs, the authority of a man means that he is the only one that has the say and the power to make decision. These patriarchal relations subordinate the women and at the same time place the men in a dominant position.

The Kaqchikel men that I interviewed rejected emphatically gender violence and affirmed that they respected and supported their wives and their daughters. They also affirmed that a successful couple knows how to set and respect the boundaries in a relationship; so, a man can set the rules for his household given that his authority is recognized and legitimized by the members of his family.

The Kaqchikel men acquire authority when they affirm and play out the role of responsible fathers. The women are also responsible for taking care of the house and their children, but the Kaqchikel men claim that they are the ones that go out to work in the fields; they are the ones that have to bear the bad weather; or they are the ones that risk their lives in difficult or dangerous jobs. The Kaqchikel men express that their work are more difficult than those of their counterparts. So, they can have control over their wives or repress them whenever they show signs of freedom or leadership. The responsible fathers have the authority because they are the family breadwinners; they are the ones that bring the food to

the table with their hard work. The commitment and responsibility of the fathers toward their families gives them the chance to have autonomy and leadership in their relationships.

Another male identity explored in this chapter is the hardworking man. Many asserted that only men do work that demand prowess, skills, knowledge, and physical strength among others. One of the difficult works in the rural area is the work performed in the agricultural fields. Besides planting or gathering the crops, the men have to carry the heavy packages of crops to their house or to the market and this, they asserted, is exclusively the work of men. Similar to the difficult work in the fields, other jobs in the urban area are also difficult. For example, Cesar, 44, said that it was not easy to work as a security officer and neither for his female coworker. He said that the business where he works gave employment opportunities for women to serve as guard securities. However, they soon quit that kind of work. In fact the first woman declined soon thereafter because it demanded physical resilience. He said that despite the fact there are job opportunities for women, they soon quit because it is hard work. It is work that just men can do. Either in the villages or in the urban areas, men dominate most of the works.

In addition to the hard-working man, there are religious, civil, and political local authorities. Men occupy the majority of these positions. There is a belief that only the men have the knowledge and the necessary prowess to hold those posts. In these communities only a few women occupy some local positions such as the person in charge of Bible studies for the children or the person that takes care of the breakfast for school children. This gender division of occupation outside the home contributes to the acquisition of power and dominance by men.

And finally we saw that a man did not fulfill successfully the role of authority in their households. The case of Arturo illustrates this aspect of masculinity. He expressed his disappointment and disillusionment with life because he gave up his authority, but at the

same time he recognized the factors that led him to fail in his attempt to find a family and assume the masculine role. First, he did not have his own house, so he had to move in with his wife upon getting married. Second, his wife had an advanced level of formal education. For him, his wife's education gave her certain power to make her own decisions. And finally, his wife also had a stable income and ran a small business.

In this context, a wife's education and stable job represented a threat to a man's authority. For many the traditional model of family, the authoritarian man and the passive woman, may be a little dated or unworkable. These changes may have been the result of political commotions that the Kaqchikel community underwent during the 90s –the decade of the "despertar indígena" (indigenous awaking) and the end of the internal armed conflict in 1996. In the next chapter I will address the political commotion that took place in the 90s and its relation to the new social positions of women according to the interpretation and perception of the Kaqchikel men.

Chapter 2: Men's Perceptions of Women's Lives

> In the past, women trekked to fetch water from the river; but now, they have 'potable water' in their houses. In the past, they did not have *pañal desechable* (disposable diapers) [for their babies]; but now, there are *pañal desechables* everywhere. Who do you think is paying for all of these things? The man! He has to pay for them… So, today women are better off. In the past women had to wash the cloths of their babies in the river; but now, they have a washbasin [in their homes]. Even more, there are Kaqchikel people that have a washing machine. And who do you think is paying the electricity bill? The man! He pays the electricity bill, as well as for the gas of the stove, for the *pañal desechable*, and the *leña* [firewood]… -- Benito

> With the new women's rights [the new laws that protect women], you [a man] are worthless. Women treat you with disrespect. For example, when I say something to her [his wife], she says 'I have rights too' [I can also decide for myself]. They are given a lot of rights. Do you think that it's OK? No, because they do not respect what you say. If you dismiss what they say, then the problems arise. -- Armando

For the Kaqchikel men the social and material conditions of their communities have changed remarkably in recent years. This happened mainly after the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996 when many communities across the country benefited from a surge of national and international aids as well as an increasing participation of indigenous people and groups in the political arena. As a result, they affirm that the women live in much better conditions when compared to women of previous generations. These days, these women and men have electricity, potable water, tools, and domestic appliances, schools, roads, among other things. Because of historical marginalization, abandonment and neglect by the state, or lack of municipal budget, these communities had not had developed a history of strong urbanization, and therefore remained in poor conditions.

The social change that happened recently also included the recognition of fundamental human rights and professional development of women prompted by El Acuerdo de Identidad y Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas (Accord of Identity and Rights of Indigenous Communities), component of Los Acuerdos de Paz (the Peace Accords). The Kaqchikel informants said that women should advance professionally and contribute to the

improvement of the current condition of society. Interestingly, they also stated that women should respect them and their authority because the burdens are on their shoulders. As illustrated in the epigraph, Benito noted the ways in which the living conditions of women have improved, at the same time, however, he identified men as those who "pay the price" for these changes. Like Benito, Armando also believed that women's rights and career development are important aspects of society but he advised that women shouldn't dismiss the men's authority in a relationship. Previous research in Guatemala City has found that people support the formal education of both the men and the women because: "education empower them," "both should develop professionally," "education brings prosperity in the family," "intellectual progress is not a matter of gender," etc. (Fajardo Andrade, 2006, p. 50). And further research has found that when women have formal education they have easy access to employment and money. This automatically gives them certain autonomy and agency. The Chiquimula men, for example, "perceive education and autonomy [of women] as a challenge to the exercise of their control and power" (Kalny, 2003, p. 123). These men experience a contradictory consciousness because it is difficult for them to adopt the prototype of masculinity inherited uncritically from their ancestors. Instead, these men are confronted with a transformative and practical consciousness different from the orthodox one (Gutmann 2007; 170).

This chapter examines the ways in which men perceive and interpret the current status, living conditions, and well being of women in contemporary rural Sololá. In particular, I ask the following questions: what do men think about the social and political status of women in their contemporary communities? Do these practices and positioning represent a challenge to men's domination in specific contexts such as the socio-political, economic, and family spaces? Why and how? How do men make sense of all of the above? At the discursive level, the Kaqchikel men I interviewed celebrated the achievement of

women (girls, adolescent, and young adult women) and pledged their commitment to advancing social change. They affirmed that they were responsible for the education of their children, and in particular of their daughters. These realizations are not easy for them, however; they are concerned about the different ways in which women's social and political advancement may compromise their patriarchal privileges as men. These men echo the experiences of some working class men in Mexico, who according to anthropologist Matthew Gutmann (2007) experience a form of "contradictory consciousness." This concept refers to contradictions between consciousness of gender identity that men inherited or "absorbed" uncritically from the past (e.g. the prosaic image of the man as the procreator) and consciousness that men developed in the course of practically transforming the world. This contradictory consciousness might not be exclusive to the men because women may also experience a similar process, a dynamic that is beyond the scope of this study and deserves special analysis.

The following explains the ways this process unfolds for the men I interviewed. First, they become aware of the social and political advancement of women by comparing the past *versus* the present, that is, they contrasted the past with the current social context in which women live. For them, education brings changes and they want real changes especially in the lives of their daughters –opportunities that they themselves and their wives did not enjoy in the past. In regard to their wives, men affirmed that they were better off compared to the lives of their grandmothers, mothers, or sisters. They say that these days, they share household chores with their wives and said women benefit from public services such as electricity, *molinos de maíz* (grinders of corn), transportation, and schools. Second, men make sense of women's advancement within the historical context their communities and country have experienced, including but not limited to a 36-year civil war, women's access to education and political participation, and the increasing yet limited visibility of indigenous women and

men in local, national, and international politics. Third, men develop a special awareness of women's life experiences as they compare women's hardship while doing housework vis-à-vis their own paid employment outside home, selectively share or "help" with household chores (which may involve the use of appliances associated with technology and modernity), and expose their fear of being ridiculed by others if they become involved in household chores traditionally assigned to women. And fourth, men witness women's access to a legal system that seems to favor them vis-à-vis men (especially in cases of domestic violence), which may trigger their concern about losing their authority within their marital relationships and their families. Men similarly learn about women's reliance on practices such as witchcraft, sorcery, and the use of herbs to cope with marital and family conflict and tension, and identify the fears of losing their mental or emotional well-being.

SECTION 1. NARRATIVES OF THE PAST VS. THE PRESENT

"In the past people suffered because they did not have electricity. They use candles or *chaj* [ocote pine] during the nights. There were no nearby *tiendas* [grocery] and people had to fetch their water from the river… In the past, people suffered a lot," asserted César, a 44-year-old separated father raising his 3 children. He continued describing the situation of the women in the past, "At 5 pm, women cooked the corn. When it was cooked, they waited for it to cool down. At 8 pm, they ground it on the *ka'* [millstone] finishing this work until 11 pm, then they went to bed. At 4 am in the morning, they got up and began making the *tortillas*. The men got up at 6 am to go to work and by that time women had already prepared the food and tortillas. This was the everyday routine for the women."

Like César's account, many other informants recalled the hardship that they or their parents underwent a few decades ago. Many of these informants, if not all, witnessed the changes that occurred prior and after the end of the civil war in Guatemala as well as the

impact of the expansion of the global market during the 1990s, as discussed in the Introduction.

A) "Why do you sit on the chair? You are not a man:" The changes in time

Julio worked as a vendor at a local market in the town of Sololá. He almost completed his *bachillerato* [the equivalent to a high school degree in the U.S. system] in electricity but he did not finish it because he soon got married to a woman of the same age around 15 years ago. They had 3 children, and all them were boys because, as he said, he knew "how to father just boys". Julio and his wife worked as vendors in separate locations in the market and this, he said, has helped them to succeed economically. He assured that he had two "humble" houses, a car, and many tracts of land. They acquired such things because they worked hard and because they observed the advice of their ancestors (e.g. avoiding polygamy, consuming alcohol, respecting one another, etc.). He also was very critical about other practices, especially those related to the unequal responsibility between the men and the women in the division of domestic labor.

Talking about the present and past times, he said that he knew men who avoided sharing the household chores with their wives because they still conserved the old ideology of gender differences. Contrary to others that believed that household labor was a shared obligation, he said that he "helped" his wife at home whenever he could. He explained, "There are men who do not share the household chores in their homes. They still maintain the old ideology of our ancestors. But for me the men should share the tasks and we [he and his sons] practice it." His words suggest a new form of gender relations that may happen in some households, which differ from those in the past. Men such as Julio may have come to realize that sharing the household chores is a matter of justice and fairness, something that did not occur or occurred but very little in the past. And at times the answers of men were simply a

discursive strategy they resorted to whenever they were questioned about their responsibilities in their homes. This may be true given that studies conducted in other societies such as the United States have shown that men often resist helping their wives by resorting to a myriad of strategies that include passive resistance, strategic incompetence, use of praise of the innate skill of their wives, the adherence of inferior standards, and denial (see Kimmel 2007; 402). This certainly happens in other societies. In any case, Julio seemed to be critical of the ancestors' practices –practices that disdained gender equality.

The old days also encompass a complexity of social and gender relations. In this context, it refers to the precarious conditions of the communities as well as harmful ideologies and beliefs toward women, such as the belief that women were worthless when compared to men. It can also refer to the conditions of the rural areas in decades previous to 1990 when people lacked the main infrastructures (e.g. roads and schools). This forced men to be involved in certain kinds of activities (e.g. going to school, or going to work) in places outside their communities because they were more capable to walk long distances, while at the same time required women to stay at home doing specific activities. In terms of infrastructure, Julio said, "In the past, full-day-schools were located only in the downtown area of Sololá. We did not have school here [in the village]. But about twelve or ten years ago a school started to function here, so my sisters enrolled there. Schools have just begun to function here. If we didn't have schools, I do not know what situation we would be in today". Julio regretted the lack of schools and consequently the lack of education in the past. And he told me that four of his five sisters could study there and then finished their high school in the urban area.

For Julio and for many others the formal education was very important for women and for men. Unfortunately, education was not accessible for girls in the past because the schools were located far away from the communities and because many families undervalued

education saying that "it is enough only to know how to read and write." They believed that "the children turn to be lazy and therefore may resist to work in the agricultural field (Chirix 1997; 35). Some families preferred to see their sons and daughters working in the fields or doing something "productive," rather than just sitting in a classroom.

With regard to the ideas about education in the past, Fausto, 44, father of 11 children (3 daughters and 8 sons) said, "Men used to say, 'We have been capable of putting food on the table despite the fact that we do not have formal education. People said it was better for children to work in the fields than to go to school." Contrary to his ancestors' beliefs, he saw education and work as fundamental aspects in the life of his children, regardless of gender. In an effort to pursue changes in his family, he said that he helped his daughter to finish her high school and, at the time of the interview, his daughter was about to start her Bachelor's degree. He said,

> I have a daughter who just finished bachillerato. Next year she will begin her *Licenciatura* [undergraduate]. I helped her… In the past I did not pay for the education of my first three children (2 daughters, 1 sons) because I was in ignorance [in the old belief] and because I could not afford their education. But one day I heard that an organization was providing funds for students, so I encouraged her to apply for funds so that she could pursue her education. She got the scholarship and began studying. She passed all her classes until she finished bachillerato. Now she works as a teacher. She is 26 years old and says that she does not think about getting married soon but pursue a higher degree.

Contrary to past times, men like Fausto these days are more committed to the education of their children provided that they have the money to afford the cost of education. As Fausto explained, he did not pay for the education of three of his children because of *ignorance* and lack of money. But once he found an opportunity, he helped her daughter to

pursue her studies. Furthermore, he helped her to make decision by herself, to obtain economic stability through her work as a teacher, and to achieve status and respectability in her community. I asked Fausto why he considered he was "ignorant." He said, "Our ancestors said that women should stay at home. Therefore they believed that formal education was not necessary for them. But everything has changed. Now, women and men do the same kind of jobs. Women are not afraid of jobs any more." He was satisfied about the changes in traditions that disadvantaged women, and he implied that he was not ignorant any more. For him, ignorance was just a matter of the past.

Past and present narratives also refer to obedience to a father's decision with regard to marriage, particularly arranged marriage. Arranged marriage was a very pervasive practice in the past. Arranged marriage refers to an old practice in which the marital union between a man and a woman is consented and contracted by their parents and not by the couple. Many informants referred to it as a practice with many advantages and others considered it with disadvantages. Informants told me that at the time of the interview there were rare cases of arranged marriage. But some still remembered the decision that their parents made for them a few decades ago. Benito, 60, recalled, "In the past, my father commanded me. He told me that that was the woman to get married with and that was it. And you had to take her, either you liked her or not." Benito had a hard time accepting the decision of his father, but with a sheer bliss in his face he expressed that it was worth it because they have been together for 40 years. Arranged marriages may have been a factor that largely contributed to social stability and cohesion of these communities. However, it often contravened the personal interests of young men who wanted to make their own personal decisions. Indigenous women (daughters and mothers) were expected to stay out of contractual discussion, which is reserved for men. However, these women have historically resisted patriarchal domination and some of them

such as the mothers-in-law have had a certain degree of influence in the households (Kalny 2003).

While reflecting about other practices of the past, informants criticized the servitude and some prohibitions for women and considered them as nonsense practices that just lead to women's subordination. These kinds of servitude happened mostly among heterosexual couples. For example, husbands and the sons often took for granted that their wives or their daughters had to cater to them once they were at the table to have the meal. Women not only had to prepare the food, they also had to supply other things such as the salt, the spoon or fork, or the water to wash their hands so that the men did not have to go outside to wash their hands. César told me that a few years ago he had witnessed one of these scenes while he was visiting a family:

> In the past women offered their husbands lukewarm water [once the men sit at the table] so that their husbands did not go outside to get the water. One day I was with a family and the mother said to her daughter "Meches hurry up, give your father the lukewarm water so that he can wash his hands here [in the kitchen]." Later they realized that I no longer had the same custom, it was just a custom of the past.

César expressed his disapproval for the fact that the man could not go or did not want to go outside and get the water himself. He pointed out that the custom has changed and he did not have that kind of custom anymore. In the same way, Iván recounted practices of the past that he also disapproved. He said,

> In the past, only the man sat on a chair, the woman sits on a bedroll on the floor. That was the custom of our ancestors. A woman was not allowed to sit on a chair because she was a woman. People used to reprimand a girl if she sat on a chair. They said, "Why do you sit on a chair? You are not a man." Customs of the past were very

different [compared to today's customs]. Now everything is different. Women and men alike sit on chairs.

Iván's words highlight remarkable changes that have occurred in many families. Those changes, however, have not only been the result of changes in attitudes of men and women but also the result of broader changes in the social traditions and in the economy. For example, some affluent families I visited had kitchen furniture. And the majority had household appliances. With furniture and domestic appliances, women no longer sit on the floor nor spend many hours preparing the food. As people are getting paid employment in the villages or in other places, they are more capable of improving the condition of their houses and with this their families are adapting to new practices.

Men frequently drew on the narratives of the past to contrast the current conditions in which they live. In this discourse, they emphasized the unbearable material conditions of the past associated with poverty, hardship, and adversity, as well as poisonous ideologies that contributed to maintain women in subaltern positions. They said that the past is synonymous of ignorance, an aspect that affected many people, even themselves, but they seemingly have successfully overcome it.

SECCION 2: "WE FOUGHT THE WAR FOR THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND MEN:" SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE CIVIL WAR

One of the factors that contributed to the new social configuration of Sololá was the political upheaval of the 1980s and 1990s. This uproar was the consequence of several political and social factors, among them are: (a) the historical struggle since the 16th century; (b) a bloody war that lasted 36 years, which ended with the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996 between the government and the insurgent groups; (c) the "sociological awakening" of the indigenous people in the early 1980s (Fischer et al. 1999, 92) (d) the emergence of indigenous personalities in the political arena such as Rigoberta Menchú Tum, who was

awarded the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize; and, e) the election of the first kaqchikel man, Pedro Iboy, as the Mayor of Sololá in 1996, among others events.

These events also contributed to the empowerment of local women in the political milieu. The traditional scheme of gender relations experienced a substantial shift especially after 1996. Kaqchikel women began to occupy pivotal positions in public and private institutions and organizations. For example, Dominga Vásquez was the first Kaqchikel woman to occupy the position of Alcaldesa indígena (indigenous mayor) in Sololá for a two-year period in 2004 (Castillo Méndez, 2008, 109) and Elena Yojcom appointed by the president was the first woman to occupy the post of Gobernadora Departamental of Sololá (governor) in 2008. Other women have become active actors in their communities occupying positions such teachers in public schools and private employees.

The men's narratives examined earlier referred to that social transformation and the struggles of the immediate past. These historical events have made possible this paradigm shift towards the configuration of new gender relations. I have to state however that if the conditions of women have changed it has not been only and simply because of the eagerness and wiliness of the men to pursue such end, but they are also the result of structural reorganization at all levels and aspects that occur locally and globally.

A) "We fought for our rights and for women's rights:" The gender and racial conflicts

"In the early 1980s we fought a war. We fought for our rights and for women's rights," stated Iván with an energetic tone of voice. He referred to the 36-year civil war that took place between the army and insurgent groups in the past decades. And the war certainly marked the onset of a broad social change in the Guatemalan society (Metz, 2011, 16; Velazquez, 2005, 42). He told me that at that time he did not want to join any armed group for fear that his family could be killed. But he later was convinced of the objectives of the

insurgent groups and he finally became one of their active members. He said that one of the reasons why the guerrilla existed was to claim fundamental human rights for the *pueblos indígenas* (indigenous communities) who had suffered from exclusion and subordination for about five hundred years. "Those mountains you see, the land of the coast, all the extension of Guatemala belonged to our people in the past. There were no *mosoi'* (Ladino) in the past, but upon their arrival they took our good land," affirmed Iván when he was talking about the history of Guatemala and the way in which the Ladinos appeared in history. He said that the indigenous people were worthless for the Ladino and so did the women for the Kaqchikel men.

Iván identified two main problems in the past: gender and inter-ethnic relations. With regard to gender relations he recounted, "In the past the women were worthless for the Kaqchikel men. And we [the Kaqchikel men] were worthless for the Ladinos. We did not have value for them. They saw us as worthless." Although the Kaqchikel women still occupy a subordinated position in society, the men, like Iván, are now much more aware of these unequal relations and reject any form of gender oppression against them. However, the Kaqchikel men still wield subtle practices of power and dominance through what Bourdieu calls "the symbolic violence" and a few men still use physical violence against their wives.

Bourdieu (2001) conceptualizes the "symbolic violence" as kind of domination that is "gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communications and cognition (…), recognition, or even feeling" (p. 2). I identified the following three main venues where symbolic violence is exerted: the social arrangement, the ideologies, and the common beliefs. With regard to social arrangements, the women have been confined to the household tasks, which prevent them to go outside to work, study, or simply to attend training workshops (such as women's rights, environmental conservation, Cosmovisión Maya, handicraft, etc.) as those promoted

by different institutions in Sololá. The second venue of symbolic violence concerns the predominant ideologies that control social practices, thus placing the women in a subaltern position. There are ideologies that restrict and limit women's actual physical movement within spaces. For example, they cannot jump or pass over any object such as the broom, the ax, the corn, the beans, and so on, because it is said that it is against the cultural principles, whereas for the men there are no many restrictions. And finally there are common beliefs that dictate that the Kaqchikel women do not have the intellectual capacity to hold a pivotal position in the organizations in the communities. Despite the fact that often the women consent to the exercise of symbolic violence, according to Bourdieu, it is not the women's fault, but rather the structure of male domination.

As I have indicated the physical violence is also an ongoing problem in rural communities practices presumably by the so-called neighbor. This kind of violence seems to be an acceptable method of maintaining control, resolving conflict, expressing anger or frustration. Often the men use violence to restrict the women's freedom to work, improve their status, or pursue a career. The majority of the men interviewed condemn reprehensible practices of subordination and oppression, yet they shared that their neighbors still perpetuated this sort of violence.

It is important to note that the dominion of the Kaqchikel man is the house. However, they resent a substantial loss of power when they are in other contexts such as among the Ladino people. This happens because the portrayal of the indigenous man in history has been characterized by the colonial notion of the 'primitive', 'savage', or 'pagan' (Peláez 1970; Ponciano 2005). He has been seen as a vulnerable man due to his subaltern position in the socio-racial hierarchy. They respect the culture of the Ladino but reject any forms of domination that is exerted against them. For Iván the topic of inter-ethnic relations had an

enormous importance because those tense relations have prevented the Kaqchikel men to enjoy certain privileges and opportunities in the political sphere in Sololá.

Indeed, before 1996 no indigenous man had held the position of Mayor of Sololá. It was not until 1996 that Pedro Iboy won the election and become the first Kaqchikel Mayor of Sololá. The presence of Pedro Iboy in the city council involved changes in the perception of people. And for Iván this was the result and the success of the internal war. During the interview, Iván decisively asked me the following question, "Who do you think is at the *Municipalidad* (the city council) of Sololá now?" And then he immediately answered his question, "It is our people. Now we even have indigenous women in the Congress. These are the goals for which we fought the war. If the guerrillas hadn't started the war, we would still be in the same conditions. You were not asking me these questions. You were at the army right now." The people like Iván barely enjoyed the benefits that came from the end of the war. For him, success implied that younger generations enjoyed certain advantages, such as the possibilities to study and to find paid jobs in the government or elsewhere.

For men like Iván, the conditions for the Kaqchikel people have improved because they have opportunities they did not have in the past. Iván in particular was proud of his active participation in the guerrilla movement and he saw with satisfaction the positive aftermath of the war as men and women alike are becoming important political and social figures in Sololá. For him the inter-ethnic struggle brought positive changes in gender dynamics as well. In the past, indigenous men and women living in Sololá were considered worthless, now they are becoming the leading forces of their communities; women were not seen only in their homes, now they are in Congress.

B) "The law is giving a lot of freedom [to the women]:" Political participation of women

"If a woman has a formal education, she can decide to either work at home or in a public space [in the government]. Sometimes an uneducated woman has to work at home because she cannot apply for a formal job. But a woman with education can go outside and look for a job because she already has the knowledge," said Benito when I asked him about his perception of the political participation of women. He believed that knowledge that women acquire through their training that is part of formal education, this was a key aspect in their lives. With knowledge, they can enjoy certain confidence and freedom to cope well with people and find a space in areas other than the domestic sphere. However, many men did not see this progress of women as a positive development. Sociologist Emma Chirix, for example, argues that many indigenous men in Guatemala do not want women to have an education because women with education do not ask for permission from their husbands when they go somewhere, claim their rights to hold a job, and keep money with them (Chirix, 2003, 69). In the perception of men, education was an important tool for social development, but they did not agree when women used it to claim their rights or to enjoy a relative independency.

Other informants mentioned that even some women with little or no formal education were participating in the local organizations called COREDs, especially in the *Comisión de la mujer* and in religious committees. Many women participated in these committees because their husbands were working in other cities or countries. The informants praised women who involved in education, training, and workshop attendance. The informants saw these as important tools and skills that women should have and learn, increasing their confidence by obtaining a better command of the Spanish language and losing their fear when they speak up in public meetings or make decision in the committees. However, the knowledge that women

are obtaining in their new roles, for some men, should be understood as a tool of power to occupy non-traditional spaces but not to question men's dominance or authority. For instance, a little disappointed about the new social positions of women, Armando said:

> These days the women are attending training workshops. So they are acquiring knowledge and changing their minds. They are learning articles [of the laws] that allow them to look for other men if they do not agree with their husbands. Those articles do not command the couple to take care of each other or to bear each other, as our ancestors told us. Now women do not mind it! The law is good but it is giving a lot of freedom [to the women]. So they are taking it to their advantage.

Armando's words suggest that the "knowledge" that women were obtaining was contravening some men's interests. Women were using this knowledge to defend their interests and rights or even to file a lawsuit against their husbands, usually for harmful behaviors against women. Sometimes the former wives asked for divorce and obliged their husbands to share their properties with them. And this was precisely what happened to Armando. Armando´s wife, a local teacher, filed a complaint against him and asked his house on behalf of his daughter. Armando told me that he lied to the judge by telling him that he did not have property.

The majority of the informants praised the education and knowledge of the women. They celebrated these present social conditions, but at the same time they wanted to revive an unforgettable past when women *respected* the men, that is, when women were more submissive to the man's order and control. These Kaqchikel informants experience a contradictory consciousness, that is to say, a contradiction between the image of the prototype man –the dominant man- of the past and the emerging image of the critical man that raises awareness about gender relations (Gutmann 2007).

SECTION 3. DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR

For these men, women's household labor was by no means perceived as "easy" or "bad." However, what men perceived as bad was the fact that most of the time only women did the household chores and this prevented them (mostly girls and young women) from carrying out activities outside their homes such as going to school or attending workshops. Men acknowledged the fact that women enjoyed less freedom because of the many duties they had to take care of at home and, for them, this represented a social problem. But the men somehow managed not to share those household chores with the women. Some men stated that women worked more than they worked, because there was no a regular schedule for the women as opposed to fixed schedule of the men. For example, the men regularly started working from 7am to 4pm or from 8am to 5pm and after that hour they were free. Other male informants said that they "helped" with the household tasks, but sometimes the fear to be ridiculed by the community prevented them from sharing the household tasks. Doing the household chores is important in the process of the material reproduction of the family itself (Gayle, 2011, p. 162). But usually only women do the household work. This has determined to a certain extent the social status women have had in society. In the next sub-topics I will discuss the perception and practice of men with regard to the household chores.

A) "A woman's work is more numerous than the man's:" Sympathetic discourses

"They [the women] work more than us [the men]. When we leave the house in the morning, we go to do just one kind of work, but they have a lot of work at home. They go back and forth. They do not rest during the whole day, but until they have set up the things for the next day. I learned that during a training workshop hosted by the Municipality sometime ago. They [facilitators] taught us that the work women do is really hard but we [the men] in the past used to say that they did not do any real work," said Pedro with a tone of remorse. He acknowledged that the responsibilities and obligations of women at home were

numerous too. For him it was crucial to attend the workshop to learn something that he had not learned, despite his familiarity with the household labor. Ever since the mid-1990s, several institutions such as the Municipality of Sololá, the Municipalidad Indígena (Indigenous Municipality), Defensoria de la Mujer Indígena (Defending office of Indigenous Women), and Defensoría Maya (Mayan Defending Office) organized these workshops for men and women to raise awareness of the need to recognize women's rights and revitalize the Mayan culture. At the national level, the main topics of these workshops were Cosmovisión Maya (a philosophical point of view) and Gender (Asociación Pop No'j, 2009, p. 5).

Other informants acknowledged that the work of women at home was monotonous and difficult and that women barely had time to rest. Armando talked about the difference between the work of a man and that of a woman as follows:

> When a man finishes his work in the afternoon, he goes to his bedroom and rests. But a woman does not rest during the day… A man rests after going out to the fields to take care of the crops. But that does not happen for the woman. A woman has to prepare the meal and the coffee. She has to wash the dishes and do the cleaning. Even after dinner she has to wash the dishes, close the door of the kitchen and then she goes to bed.

According to Armando's account, women were confined to the same routine every day. While the men enjoyed certain advantages such as a time to rest, to go with their friends, or to watch television after work, women had to work long hours and virtually all day and all week, even during the holidays. César told me that the men enjoyed resting during the holidays, Christmas, or cultural festivals (patron saint's days). But the women did not enjoy these holidays at all. On the contrary, these days meant that they had to do a lot of work. For

the women there was no time to rest. Informants also mentioned that the women were the last that went to bed and the first to get up in the mornings.

In one of the successful interventions of Margarita, the wife of Mateo, she said, "A woman's work is more numerous than the man's. For example in the morning, the man has his breakfast and goes out to his work. But you [a woman] have to wash the dishes, clean the house, wash the clothing of the children, feed the animals –the chickens, the cows, the lambs, the pigs, etc. Then you begin preparing the meal for lunch and then the meal for dinner. This is the work of a woman everyday. It is even worse if you do not have potable water in your house…" Then Mateo interrupted her and continued the conversation with regard to the many tasks of his wife at home.

In most of the interviews I had with men, they recognized that the work of women was complex, for it required time and determination. They praised their wives for doing such complex and difficult work. However, men were unwilling to share the household chores because of the force of shame and stigma by their neighbors. And this had a negative consequence because the women were prevented from participating in other social and political activities. For example, Marta Julia, a local activist of women's rights, told me that a few years ago the Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena (Defending office of Indigenous Women) –the institution for which she worked- organized a workshop for women around the topic of women's rights. During the activity she received a phone call from a man, a husband of one of the women attending the workshop, and in a very upset tone told her to stop wasting the women's time because they had a lot of work at home. What Marta Julia told me contradicts the fact that some Kaqchikel men were committed with the women's development. I found that the sympathetic discourse they articulated very well had to do simply because it was an interview and they were merely putting on an egalitarian appearance for my benefit.

B) "We took turns in doing the dishes. But sometimes we forgot about it:" Sharing household tasks

Arturo, the street vendor of riddle games, recounted the past days when he still shared the house and the tasks with his wife. I asked him if he ever helped his wife and his daughter with the tasks, and he said, "We [Arturo and his son] took turns in doing the dishes. But sometimes we forgot about it. When we forgot about it, my wife or my daughter ended up doing it." For Arturo sharing the tasks at home was not a mandatory obligation but rather an option. In these communities as in other parts of the Western world, men "help" their wives with household chores. Although he believed that he and his son should do the dishes, but they managed to dismiss or "forget" about it. Studies on masculinity have shown that boys in other societies such as the United States grow up and develop a sense of boyhood by denying and repressing their connection and relation to activities perceived as "feminine" such as washing the dishes (Chodorow 1978, p. 114). In many societies the boy is categorized as "someone apart" who tries to disconnect himself from what is identified as the "domestic sphere" (Kimmel *et al*, 2007, 401-407).

Other informants recalled other factors for not sharing the household chores. For example, Julio, father of 2 boys, stated that he usually came from work really tired, so he could not do many chores in the house. He said, "Sometimes I came back really tired from work. So [for me] the duty of a woman is to do the domestic work and to cater to me, to serve me the coffee. After work you do not want to do anything [because you are tired]." He mentions that tiredness is the main reason for which he does not share the household tasks with his wife. He implies that once he was back from his work, his wife should cater to him because he already did the hard work.

Sometimes I found it difficult to ask questions to the men about their involvement in household chores because they reacted with apparent discomfort. When I asked such a

question to Iván, he suddenly lowered the volume of his voice to the point that I barely could hear what he was saying in the room where only he and I were talking. After a few sentences he skillfully and strategically changed the topic. He began talking about the kinds of work that women and men did in the south coast of Guatemala during the 1980s. He said, "These days there are men who help their wives. But it depends on the men. You can do it if you have good intentions, you…(inaudible voice). I remember that in the past men and women did the same kind of work. We went to the south coast to work…" This quote shows that informants like Iván struggled to answer to me when I asked about these issues, in part, because my questions might have confronted them with what they have always taken for granted: the traditional gender roles shaping the lifestyle of families for centuries. Furthermore, for Iván, sharing the household chores with his wife was a matter of his own decision but not an obligation for him because he played his role as a hard worker in the agricultural field. I did not ask Ivan specifically why this kind of questions bothered him, but I realized that an interview in his own house was very uncomfortable for him. Despite this difficult environment for him, I kept asking other questions because this was one of the complaints of many women in Sololá to whom I had talked personally, especially those that work in organizations, but also the informants themselves saw this as a social problem that should be tackled.

Fortunately not all informants fended off my questions about the involvement of the men in the household chores. There were men that explained to me various reasons for which they shared the household tasks. For example, Mateo mentioned that it was a sign of pure love when the couple worked together. Benito saw this as a revolutionary change in the man's attitude, given that in the past there was no man helping his wife at home. He believed that changing gender roles were a consequence of the influenced of the Ladino men on the Kaqchikel men, who allegedly were more involved with the domestic work. Iván on his part

referred to this involvement as 'the new sign' of a religious bet. He said some Kaqchikel men affiliated with the Evangelical Churches were more prone to get involved in domestic chores than those who did not go to these churches. And Arturo said that the men that did certain domestic chores such as cooking or cleaning were exposed to other cultures in other cities, such as those that went to work in the capital city.

The informants found many reasons by which they explained that the men got more involved in the household tasks. But what I found very interesting was the role that the domestic appliances played in the household. The Kaqchikel men felt more comfortable sharing the household work by using the appliances and utensils. These objects turned out to be an important ally for the men. Although most of these objects are associated with femininity, they are also associated with modernity and progress. Given that these men wanted to improve the situation in gender relations and at the same time, invest in masculinity as a site of legitimacy, they found that by using these utensils they could achieve both objectives. Next I will discuss the roles several domestic electrical appliances and other utensils play in the new configurations of gender relations.

C) "I sometimes sweep and mop my room:" Gender neutral labor

"While she cooked, I took my daughter and played with her in my bedroom. When she finished preparing the dinner, I took my daughter to my wife to nurse her. Then I was free to do other things like to serve the coffee. That way, we helped each other," expressed Armando, when I asked him in what way he helped his wife before they separated. He told me that he missed the days when they were living together and claimed that he did help his wife by taking care of his daughter or serving the coffee. Like Armando, other informants told me that they did household chores such as preparing the coffee, sweeping and moping their rooms, something that men of older generations would not do.

People differentiated the daily tasks and weekly tasks between the women and the men. For example, the traditional daily duties of women are:

- Washing the cloths (by hand)
- Cooking meals
- Wash dishes
- Everything related to childcare
- Clean up the kitchen and the rooms
- Feeding the domestic animals (dogs, cats, pigs, chickens, cows, so on)

And the daily tasks of the men are:

- Working in the agricultural field or as vendors in the market, or in a private company.
- Collecting the firewood
- Fixing the house or the tools for their work

Besides the traditional work of women, there are some neutral household chores that are performed by both women and men. These labors are free from any association with or dependence on a specific gender and associated with the use of synthetic materials or domestic electrical appliances. For example, Julio used the mop. Mateo used the gas stove to prepare his food or his coffee. Julio and César told me that they and their respective wives used the textile loom or the sewing machine to make or to patch their children's clothing. Sometimes they found it difficult to say if these machines were women or men's tools. They used these machines indiscriminately without putting them under a specific gender rubric. Although many tools have been traditionally associated with femininity, some are not such as the gas stove, the blender, the coffee maker, and the sewing machine. Instead, they see them as gender neutral and fancy tools easy to use. The sewing machine in particular plays an important role in the households.

Julio and César told me that they and their wives did the same kind of job using the sewing machine. Julio indicated, "A few years ago we used the sewing machine. I learned how to make bags and I taught my wife how to make it. She soon started working with the sewing machine." Although the work on the sewing machine was not considered a traditional work, it was interesting to see how men used it without compromising their masculinity. César told me a similar story. He remembered the times when they were still together and shared the sewing with his wife. He said, "We both used the sewing machines. She made blankets and curtains to sell and I made typical apparels." So, this couple saw the sewing machine as a gender-neutral tool with which they could do the same kinds of work.

I realized that the Kaqchikel men were more committed with certain kinds of tasks in their homes when these machines or domestic appliances were available to them. I also realized that men carried out certain tasks only when these activities represented a particular benefit for them. For instance, men mopped the room if it was their bedroom. They used the sewing machine if this activity represented an economic benefit to them. None of these men told me that they had prepared a meal for the family, or cleaned the room of their children, or took care of the elderly in the family. Contrary to the women's labor that represented the interest of their whole families, the men's labor represented their own individualistic interests. They said they avoided carrying out certain activities because of an important social force: shame. People tended to judge and stigmatize them if they did domestic chores, including the ones considered gender neutral. In the next section, I will discuss shame in the lives of these men and how this shaped their involvement in certain activities in their homes.

D) "Only women do that kind of stuff, man!" Household work and Shame

"In this community men still feel shame when they do the household tasks. This happened to one of my neighbors. People told him, 'Hey man, you are not a woman. Only

women do that kind of stuff. Only a woman washes the clothes of her children.' This is what people told that poor guy," expressed Celso when he was talking about one of his neighbor who decided to go to the river to wash the cloths of his children. He stressed the word shame when I asked him about his thoughts regarding the interventions of men in domestic tasks. He also told me that there were very few men that do the household chores because of the fear of being ridiculed by others in their community. For that reason, he said, the men in his community did not even touch a single thing associated with what has been considered the women's tools or tasks. These patterns in attitudes among the Kaqchikel men resemble what Gutmann (2007) found in Mexico when he was exploring masculine identities. The Mexican young men who were more engaged with the household tasks were stigmatized and called *mandilones* (the men bossed around by women) because they shared the housework with their mothers or wives. Although the concept of *mandilón* is considered as the positive opposite of macho, the young men did not accept this label. They did not identify themselves neither with macho (associated with aggressiveness) nor *mandilón* (men dominated by women) (p. 222).

Because of the fear of stigma and shame, the Kaqchikel men in particular were more likely to hire a woman to do the household chores for them when their wives were not at home or if they were sick. Shame prevented the men from carrying out some activities such as washing their own clothing or preparing their own food. The Kaqchikel men relegated these activities to their wives, daughters, or other women. In this way, they said, they did not compromise their masculinity. The concept of the shame had much power to the point that it shapes gender relations and enforces the gender-based division of labor in these communities.

I identified two forms of how people ridiculed the men. First, the same Kaqchikel men I interviewed mocked and ridiculed their neighbors who did "women's work," such as

shopping, or picking up their children from school. For example, Julio claimed that the men who did those types of work must be crazy, or they were under the influence of a curse. Second, they said that the same women of their communities admonished or made fun of the men who shared the domestic tasks with their mothers, wives, or their sisters. Some informants claimed that the shame was the greatest force that prevented them from sharing the daily housework. The informants illustrated this in different ways. César, for example, found it "ridiculous" that a man went to pick up his grandson from school. He told me that one day he witnessed a woman telling her husband that it was time to pick up their grandchild from school. For him it was an "absurd idea" and considered it a "woman's work." For him it was not a man's job. A man's job meant that he did the heavy work. Similar to César's idea of gender work, other men expressed their disagreement and disapproval when the woman went out to work and the man stayed at home taking care of the children. They saw these "reverted" gender roles as something "abnormal." They believed that these men were under the force of a spell, which was presumably performed by their wives. These informants also considered that the other men were deviating from the typical male prototype.

The women in the neighborhood may also ridicule the men who performed "women's work." Celso recounted that once he went to the river near his house to wash his clothes because at that time he did not have his own potable water. There, he said, the women questioned and mocked at him: "What a wife you have that sent you to do her washing? Why didn't she do the washing? They [women] always made fun of you," said Celso very disappointed and with sadness in his voice. He explained that he went to the river because he saw the necessity of doing the washing. Instead of getting approval from helping his wife, he was the target of taunt from some women in the river. In order to avoid such brazen mocks, the men, like Celso, whenever possible, avoided sharing household tasks, and this also played

to their advantage because it gave them a good excuse for not sharing the tasks in their homes. Thus, the men that engaged in traditional household chores felt that they were at risk of being exposed to ridicule by both men and women in their communities.

Celso's story reveals the complex dynamics and paradoxes involving the various responsibilities of a couple within the household. Interestingly, there are not many negative consequences for the men when they avoid sharing the household tasks. The only direct consequence for the men is probably that they cannot have their meal on time because of the amount of the household work of their wives such as taking care of the children, washing the clothes, cleaning the house, and preparing the food. But other than that the men do not complain because what matters to them is how much they invest in their sense of masculinity, that is, how much they get away from the household chores, and how much they can be perceived as the *mama' achï* (the big man) in their communities. The women, of course, as reproducers of gender roles themselves, have internalized these beliefs that prevent contributing to a more egalitarian household division of labor.

Given the limited participation of the men in their homes and their great demand for good services, for instance, when the men want their meal on time and their cloths clean, women often find these relationships as contentious. Some relationships become more intense especially when the husband exercises physical or psychological violence towards his wife. Next, I will talk about how the informants conceive and interpret legal norms and other practices (like sorcery) on which they draw to overcome men's privileges associated with their power, dominance, or their violent behaviors.

SECCION 4: WOMEN'S PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES AS THREATS TO MAN'S AUTHORITARIANISM.

When the Kaqchikel women experienced problems of domestic violence or other abusive behaviors, they were more likely to ask for assistance from a local or an urban

institution located in the center of Sololá, about 7 or 9 kilometers away from their community. Some women however resorted to other practices to confront these marital difficulties. These practices include sorcery or herbal potion in an attempt to change their husbands' temperament. Historically, practices such as sorcery were common in these communities. Sorcery (hechiceria or brujeria in Spanish and I'tz or samaj in Kaqchikel) is an underground ceremony performed by a man called Ajq'ij or Aji'tz (sorcerer). People wanting to cast a sorcery on someone go to the Ajq'ij or Aji'tz to ask him to do a *samaj* (work) for them, taking with them candles, flowers, incense, eggs, liquor, among other things. The Ajq'ij or Aji'tz does the *samaj* by burning the gifts in a special ritual and evoking evil spirits. The common expressions of an Ajq'ij are "hopefully he will become an alcoholic; hopefully he will have a bad accident; hopefully he will die, etc." (field notes July 12, 2013). All this practices were repressed in the past. The establishment of the Renovación Carismática Católica (An organization of the Catholic Church) and the Protestant movement during the 1940s and the 1980s respectively had such an influence that suppressed all practices associated with alcoholism and sorcery (Barrios, 2001, p. 370-371). But, some women and men still resort secretly to the practices of sorcery.

A) "Now if your wife beats you, the court does not believe you:" The reverted violence

> My wife abandoned me unexpectedly. She just left home without saying a word. I went the to the Juzgado (court) to register a complaint against her for *abandono de hogar* (abandoning the home). But they [the court officials] did not receive my petition. Now if you go to the court and say that you wife beat you, the court does not believe you. Now both the educated and uneducated women have more rights than the men. Armando

As discussed earlier, Armando is a young 33-year-old professional and had a challenging marital life. He spent a great deal of money on his wedding, but his marriage did not turn out right as he expected. His wife left him unexpectedly after a year and a half of living together. Armando told me that his wife did not leave the house because of violence, but because of a disagreement between them over the amount of household chores that she did and the strict rules he tried to establish at home. His wife did not only left home with her 18 month year-old daughter, she later made him appear in court where she asked for a divorce and to split his properties between them. He was upset because the court accepted his wife's complaint, but not his. For him this legal struggle was an expression of an inverse violence because "now nothing happens when your wife beats you."

Reflecting on these issues he said that he found it difficult to understand and to accept why the current legal system is favoring certain "improper" actions of women and underplaying or even rejecting a husband's complaints. The justice system, for him, was focusing on the sex of the person rather than on the nature of the problem itself. Consequently, there was no doubt for him that certain women's interests colluded with the legal system to the detriment of the Kaqchikel men. The justice system apparently supported and endorsed the women's complaints more than the men's.

Similar to Armando's experience, Cesar, a man that raised his 3 children, recounted that he filed a complaint against his wife for "abandono de hogar" (abandoning home) without any apparent reason shortly after she left home. However, the case had no progress at the court. He believed that most of the time the officials of the Justice system blamed the male complainant even though it was not always the man's fault. He regretted the fact that that they were married because, only so, his wife had the right to ask him to split the property. The men, like Armando and Cesar, assured me that they did not use of violence

against their wives. However, history shows that violence was very common in these communities and women managed to do something to halt this trend.

The Kaqchikel women, on the other hand, found new practices and strategies to avoid, reject, or move away from problematic or unbearable relationships. For example, a very recurrent issue in heterosexual relationships is gender-based violence, which may include different forms of violence against women. Also there are other strained relationships that women avoid, for example, when men want to impose strict rules on their families. These relationships force the women to be in a submissive position in the family, something to which the Kaqchikel women would not accept easily anymore. Women seek various ways to move away from these relationships by abandoning their home or kicking out the man such as the case of Arturo. However, any action that a woman may take in that regard is seen as a rebellious action. Men such as Armando disapproved of these actions arguing while stating: "our ancestors did not do that," "those decisions undermine our cultural principles or traditions," or, "our ancestor tolerated each other."

Despite men's criticism of such actions, Kaqchikel women accessed various spaces where they can obtain professional assistance and support. Among those spaces were the *Juzgados* (courts) or *oficinas de la mujer* (women's affairs), both located in the urban area of Sololá about 7 or 9 kilometers away, where women received legal support. Another space was the COREDs located in the village. The COREDs provide women who are victims of violence with advocacy and support. In either space, the presence of women is more visible now than before. Any legal action that women took outside their homes could be seen as a real threat to a man's alleged authority, or authoritarianism, in extreme cases. These actions could involve a separation or a divorce. Usually for a man a separation was less devastating than a legal divorce because a separation involved losing a wife and the children. But a divorce involved losing the children and part of the property as well.

In cases of violent relationships, the CORED –the organization that dealt with these kinds of problems- wrote a letter where it described the type and nature of the marital problem. Then the woman took this letter to the courts located in the urban areas of Sololá. Pedro, a member of the CORED, said with respect to the letter, "The CORED knows the situation [of violence] first. Then the CORED [the chairperson of the CORED] writes a letter to a woman that she can take to the court [as proof that the woman was beaten by her husband]." Pedro stated that the woman's complaints have greater validity if she obtains a letter from the CORED. It is important to mention here that women approach the *Juzgados* (courts) when they speak Spanish (as opposed to only Kaqchikel), or when there are Kaqchikel officials in the *Juzgados*.

In regard to the command of Spanish, Fausto reflected, "Times have changed and it is different from the past. In the past women were mistreated. It is because they did not know how to speak [command the Spanish language]. Now women are gaining respect from the men." For Fausto, the concept of "knowing how to speak" has a power dimension for women, because it does not only mean that women can speak in Spanish, but also means that they have the chance to access nontraditional spaces like the court. Women are empowered when they speak Spanish, and when they speak up. For women, Spanish is becoming a pivotal tool to defend themselves against offensive partners, and this language is generally associated with education. This linguistic tool provides them with certain agency to access public spaces. A woman can head toward the courts or the COREDs to sue complaints against their spouses for inappropriate behavior or violent actions, even to ask for a divorce. Women then can receive support from the courts or the local organizations.

Divorce, women's complaints, and women's access to local institutions are more and frequently discussed by these men. Next, I will examine some of the practices women engage

in, including but not limited to witchcraft[7], sorcery, herbal formulas, or the "woman's medicine," to influence or change the bad or sexist tempers of their spouses.

B) "Their wives give [their husbands] their *medicine:*" Sorcery and other practices

A few informants feared that their wives might perform curses or evil rituals aimed to challenge their authority. These practices included sorcery performed by an *aj-itz* (sorcerer) or herbal formulas prepared by the women themselves. Sorcery and witchcraft mean the same thing. As a member of this community who has witnessed these practices, I define sorcery here as the use of supernatural power over another through the assistance of evil spirits. Sorcery and witchcraft are definitely evil and powerful. In many indigenous societies, sorcery and evil formulas were considered to have magical energy to influence or control the mind, temperament or character of the targeted individuals (Frazer 2009). Eight out of ten informants said that they have never been victims of such malign forces, but they did know people or have heard about cases of men who have suffered the consequences of these practices. For instance, Armando and Arturo believed they had been victims of sorcery. Armando said that his wife might have performed sorcery against him in retaliation, because his wife could not obtain part of his property (specifically the house).

With regards to the *medicine*, Julio told me that he had learned about some men who had been victims of such *medicines,* prepared presumably by their wives. The concept of *Medicine* refers to a secret herb or other formula that a woman may prepare and give to her husband as a way to cope with his bad temperament. *Medicine* appears to be, at least semantically, harmless, but informants considered it evil and powerful. Julio shared with me the warning he gave to his wife one day as they talked about "the medicine." He said,

[7] Witchcraft is the practice of black magic that includes spells and invocation of spirits to cause harm on someone else.

> There are women who have prepared the medicine for their husbands. I have seen big and strong, but dumb men, who say anything or do nothing when their wives mistreat them. For example, when their wives do not give them their meal on time… One day I decided to tell my wife, "If one day you decide to prepare a medicine for me to *cut off* my wisdom and to become like a dumb person, you will commit a crime and God won't forgive you."

Julio feared losing his masculinity and authority if he inadvertently took a secret potion. He relied on fear of God to warn his wife of the consequences that she might face in her afterlife. Like Julio, most of these informants feared that women prepared magical herbs or secret formulas to damage the mental and emotional well being of men. Julio said that he knew for a fact that some married women placed magical herbs under the pillow of their husbands. It is believed that the herbs have the power to exert an influence over the mind or change their husband's character. Julio said, "Women know several secrets. It is not only the medicine (herb) that they use. Some women put drops of their menstruation in their husbands' coffee. So, you [they] will turn into an idiot forever. That is very sad." For Julio, some women not only resort to traditional magic herbs but also to other resources equally harmful. Julio and other men have a huge fear because of these practices. What Julio shared is evidence that the women that are at a disadvantage in terms of power utilize these secret practices as a way to cope with troubled relationships.

Besides preparing potions, sorcery is very common in indigenous communities and people perform it for different reasons. Some people use this practice because they wanted to avenge an offense. But in power and gender relations, it was interesting to see how some women may resort to such practices to inflict harm on the offending men. As Frazer (2009) – a Scottish anthropologist studying magical and religious beliefs across the globe– said that people seek to "harness occult forces or evil spirits in order to produce preternatural effects in

the world" (p. 54). Other people perform sorcery only because they do not agree with them or they do not like them. Arturo, for example, believed that his mother-in -law cast a spell on him because he was an uneducated son-in-law. As a consequence of the sorcery, he lost his mind and eventually his family. According to the informants, when the men were under a spell, they turned into passive men – or fools - men who lost their sense of authority.

There are many reasons why some women resort to practices of witchcraft and secret home practices. Similar to Ladina women that resort to Tarot and Astrology for sentimental, economic, and health problems, indigenous women generally resort to witchcraft, herbs, or other secret substances as a way to cope with oppression or violence in gender relations. Thus, secret practices may represent an alternative solution to their problems especially when 1) they are frustrated because they are at a disadvantage in terms of power, 2) the culture oppresses them, and 3) they cannot access the system of justice easily for the language barrier. For some women, these secret practices are useful, feasible, and the only options they have when society does not give them an answer to their problems.

CONCLUSION

According to the informants' interpretations, the current social status and well being of women in their communities is due to two main factors. First, they affirmed that there have been radical changes, such as political and social reform among the Ladino population in Sololá, which have led to new configurations of inter-ethnic and gender relations. In effect, there are different factors that contributed to these changes, particularly with regard to the social and political status of women. These include the 36-year civil war and the subsequent signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, which brought ideological shifts and infrastructural transformations, mainly public schools and communication and transportation (i.e., paved roads). Second, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, indigenous public figures emerged, such as

Rigoberta Menchú, the 1991 Nobel-Peace Prize winner. Menchú is a K'ichee' woman influential in the early stage of the Mayan movement. Her presence in the political sphere brought transformative perceptions in indigenous communities, locally and internationally. For example, in 1996, a Kaqchikel leader, Pedro Iboy, won the elections for Mayor of the *Municipalidad Oficial* of Sololá for the first time in history. In 2004, Dominga Vásquez was the first Kaqchikel woman to be elected as mayor for the indigenous municipality. The indigenous municipality has been a stronghold of the Kaqchikel community since the colonial times, which works in parallel with the *municipalidad oficial*. Pedro and Dominga and the communities they represent became pioneers of radical changes in the national and local level as well as in the social imaginary of the region and the country.

Along with these events, the expansionism of the global market during the 1980s also played a major role in the process of social transformation. For example, the introduction of technology and other electronics associated with modernity (e.g., radios, televisions, and domestic appliances) shaped marital relationships and the life style of families in Kaqchikel communities. In addition, the surge of migration of men to the United States also contributed to the social transformation of households headed by women. Sometimes women received remittances from absent men, so they invested part of the money in the education of their children. Moreover, at times some women run a small-scale business such as a *tienda* (grocery store) or a *farmacia* (drugstore). Given this context, the Kaqchikel men elaborated a unique discourse of the past vis-à-vis the present as they reflected about the current status of women in their culture. In their reflections, informants expressed an ambivalent, apparently contradictory discourse. On the one hand, men identify the importance of traditional beliefs and practices such as respect for their ancestors, the value of knowledge and wisdom parents pass onto younger generations, and the value of cultural principles with regard to morality and ethics, among others. On the other hand, they rejected beliefs and practices that

subordinated and underestimated women such as ignorance, violence, alcoholism, or gender inequality. Furthermore, men had mixed reactions with regard to specific cultural practices, such as arranged marriages. Some believed that arranged marriages work after all, as exemplified by the couples in arranged marriages that have lasted. While others believed that arranged marriage has some disadvantages at its core: it only took into account the decisions of parents and ignored the couple's.

The Kaqchikel men claimed that there were ideological and structural changes that contribute to the new configuration of the society, the lives of women in particular. They argued that in the past they had mistreated women and girls in their families, and even beat them at times. But now they endorse and support their progress as they prioritize things like a girl's education. They explained that their wives and their daughters are better off these days. Additionally, the men say that they are in charge of the utilities bills and the expense of the education of their children (son and daughters). In this way, they are complying with their obligations as men and the head of the house.

The Kaqchikel men praised these changes; however, they wanted to make clear that there is a gender boundary with regard to power. That is, men celebrate the advancement of women but they do not want to compromise their privileges as men: women's improvement should not be a threat to the masculine power and dominance in the household. They perceived their wives' (or daughters') formal education and progress with pride. And they assertively stated that they still have the authority as men. In other words, education and progress of women are good but it should not represent a threat to a man's authority. Women should not threaten men's properties, nor resort to practices that control male-sexist temperaments or behaviors, mainly those that support the patriarchal culture.

Chapter 3: Gender inequality, Violence, and extramarital relationships: other male practices

…rumä chï k'o ajawanai'l, nato' ak'laj, naya' ru q'ij. junan yixk'o. si ntoq' ak'al, tach'elej ta wjk'al, po ojer manï, rin nkib'in rchï, chï majun ta nan nto', majunta ak'al nch'elej… xtinto' ta, majun. Ri' rusamaj ixoq, kiri' nb'ij rin ojer. – Mateo

When there is love [in a relationship], you help your wife, you recognize her rights. If one of your children is crying, you cradle him. But in the past, I did not help my wife. I didn't help her at all. I did not cradle a child. 'It is a woman's task', I used to say. -- Mateo

Other male practices refer to those practices that are traditionally associated with patriarchal masculinity and are contrary to feminist goals of sexual equality, personal autonomy, and freedom from domination. Naturally the Kaqchikel men believe that such male practices contribute to gender inequality and consequently to the oppression of women. They discursively reject such practices and embrace a constructive kind of masculinity. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, a stunning generalized change in men's behavior and attitude took place in recent decades due to several factors such as the adaptation of the Kaqchikel men to new economic activities, religious transformations, and the influence of the mass media in their lives. For example, Mateo highlighted that the religious conversion that he went through a few decades ago was something that changed his life and his interpersonal relationship, in particular with his wife. Now, love, responsibility, and respect are recurrent concepts in his story. Like Mateo, other men assured me that in the past time they lacked expressions of kindness and affection toward their wife and their children. But they have changed and have adopted new attitudes.

Despite the progressive discourse of the informants, I realized that violence and discrimination against women are still prevalent practices in the communities. I also realized that the informants did not tell me if they still engaged with such practices, so I could not confirm my assumption. Unexpectedly, the same informants led me to confirm that such

practices were widespread but perpetuated by their neighbors, not by them. So, these informants blamed their neighbors for engaging in violence and gender inequality.

Research in gender studies has generally highlighted negative cultural attributes of masculinity. Such attributes include inequality and patriarchal practices such as hatred, aggression, or contempt against homosexuals, women, or the less powerful (Connell 2005; 18). Patriarchy is one of the main concepts in studies of masculinity worldwide because it is a structure supported by ideas, beliefs, prejudices, symbols, and customs through which men dominate and oppress women. Research conducted in Latin America and in Guatemala has emphasized specifically the culture of machismo (sexism). Conducting a research in the Nicaraguan mestizo society, Lancaster states that machismo is a system that occupies and defines the institution of the family. For him machismo is a form of power relation because it structures inequality and differential prerogatives in society. Asociación Pop No´j (2010) in Guatemala states that the mass media promote machismo and the indigenous men internalize that culture and replicate it in their home through violence (p. 7). Thus violence appears to be effective mechanisms through which they can keep women in a subordinate position and assert their dominance. Similar studies have shown that indigenous women have sometimes been subjected to racism, domestic violence, mistreatment, humiliation by abusive partners, even rape, such as those committed by the army during the internal armed conflict as a tactic during the torture sessions or just before killing the victim (Metz, Cristina 2011, p. 81).

In this chapter I will explore the ways in which the Kaqchikel informants perform and interpret patriarchal and gender inequality. I am interested in discussing how the informants engage themselves or conceive gender inequality, violence, alcoholism, and extramarital relationships. I ask specifically these two questions: How do the Kaqchikel informants conceive patriarchal practices? And how do they reframe their discourses with regard to gender inequality and violence? The men's perceptions and practices illustrate the

following two-fold thesis. First, some practices of men have changed over time. In the past they used to engage in practices of discrimination and violence against women, but now, they are more critical of such negative practices. Secondly, although the men's commentaries refer to past practices or the practice of the 'other,' I argue that there are a few men in this community that still resort to violence to seize control over the lives of their wives.

SECTION 1: "I WAS THE FIRST TO SAY THAT SHE HAD TO REMAIN SILENT:" GENDER INEQUALITY

Mateo: Rub'anun ka manï, ojer ka ri ixoq majun ta ru derecho, majun ta ru taman, "majun ta rutaman" kiri' nb'ij rin ojer, "ri' xa ixoq, ma tq'ajan".	Mateo: In the past for me the woman [his wife] did not have right. 'She did not know anything' I used to say. 'She is only a woman. She remains silent'…
Nan. "rin yin achï" kiri' nek'ari' ntel ri'. (jijiji)	Nan (his wife): 'I am the man' he said (chuckle)

Gender inequality is part of a large structure that operates in society. Rubin's analysis (2011) of the sex gender system does is not meant to address non-western cultures but it is important to note how she associates universal inequality with innate male dominance – forces that maintain patriarchy– (p. 40). She argues that gender inequality has nexus with sexism, which is a form of discrimination on the basis of sex, especially the oppression of women by men. The sexist attitudes of men may stem from stereotypes, beliefs, and misconceptions about women.

Some men stress their masculinity by performing specific activities and roles. Scholars argue that this is very common in patriarchal societies given that gender roles and gender identities correspond like two sides of the same coin (Chodorow 1978; 174). A man generally defines himself according to his role, which is the public manifestation of his personality (for example, strong, firm, fearless, and so on). Thus, performing "feminine" roles (for example, cooking or rearing the children) may compromise the man's sense of masculinity. It is believed that expression of emotions toward children and domestic activities correspond only

and exclusively to women. A man often avoids expressing his emotions or performing domestic activities, which are also part of his responsibilities as some informants assured me during the interviews. Unfortunately in contemporary societies the validity of the sex/gender system allows the permanence of a gender hierarchy, and this in turn allows sexual inequalities (Rubin 2011). Thus, male dominance and the sexual oppression of women are the roots of the oppression of women and other vulnerable members of the family such as the children.

A) "I do not have milk to nurse a child:" The absence of affection

"When we were children, it never happened to him [his father] to hold us in his arms. He said, 'a woman has to take care of her children. I do not have milk to nurse a child'" said Armando, a little disappointed. Armando's commentary of the absence of affection from his father toward them illustrates aspects of the life of many men in the community. Like Armando, Jorge and Iván also described their fathers as men who did not want to express their affections toward their own children not because they were tired after working in the fields as one may presume but because they were, what they called, the "mama' achï" (the big guy).

It is interesting to see in Armando's father, for example, two contradictory aspects of fatherhood. On the one hand, Armando stated he had a very responsible father. His father was strongly committed to providing them with education and property to secure their future. On the other hand, he explained that his father did not express his emotions such as love, care, and fondness toward his children and probably toward his wife as well. For him, holding his own children in his arms was not part of his responsibility, but his wife's. In indigenous communities it is very common that parents show less affection toward their children as they

grow up. It is also common that girls and women receive even less affection than boys (Chirix 1997; KAQLA 2003).

Cesar told me a similar story. His father was an ill alcoholic and violent man. Cesar recounted, "He [Cesar's father] never showed us affection. He was always busy with his work. He never came to me and congratulated me. He never asked me if I had problems or how I was feeling, nothing! He never hugged us, never…" The sadness in Cesar's commentary illustrates a generalized repression of men's feelings, especially those men that engage in alcoholic consumption and violence. Showing love implies necessarily expressing the inherent "feminine aspect" of his personality. In this particular case, however, it does not mean that Cesar's father necessarily rejected his children; he only rejected the expression of feelings toward them. The lack of affection is very common in the culture of machismo in many countries in Latin American or in the culture of the "mama' achï" of these communities. Lancaster (1994), for example, found interesting aspects of machismo in a mestizo society in Nicaragua. He argues that machismo is not only a form of arbitrary power, but it is also a social structure that regulates relations among men, women, and children. And that machismo operates through a myriad of practices such as: hard drinking, excessive gambling, womanizing, and wife beating (p. 39). Similarly, the macho-like "mama' achï" is an aggressive and virile form masculinity in these communities.

When I talked to Iván, he mentioned that in the Kaqchikel culture there was a poor expression of affection. Interestingly he expressed a difference between the culture of the Ladino and the Kaqchikel people. He indicated that the Ladino men were more prone to show love to their children. "Sometimes you see a Ladino father walking down the street holding hands with his daughter" commented Iván. Conversely, he indicated that the Kaqchikel people avoided the expression of affectionate feelings because culturally it was a way to show respect toward their children. For example, for Iván, kissing a daughter could have a

bad connotation. It may imply that the father has "ulterior motives" or sexual advances. He said, "Have you watched on the news of fathers raping their own children?" Iván was referring to the increasing number of cases of fathers in Guatemala who have sexually abused their own children. Sometimes the children cannot report to the authorities about such abuse because they were threatened by the abusers or by their own mothers.

This problem that Iván mentioned may have a great impact on how people build their relationships with the members of their families. Cases of abuse that have happened in the communities or that they have heard on the news may be one of the main reasons why the Kaqchikel men avoided having close contact or showing affection toward their children. Sometimes this lack of affection was a matter of a culture respect. They avoided transgressing the boundaries of gender roles, taking for granted that the role of the wife is to take care of the children. However, this lack of affection may have a sexist expression insofar as the fathers rejected doing certain tasks or simply sharing the responsibility with their wives such as the childcare.

It is important to note that some men dealt mostly with gender inequality. They challenged negative aspects of masculinity, affirming that they showed affection toward their children. Emma Chirix (in personal conversation) shared with me her endeavor to construct a more humane, authentic, and affectionate masculinity. She said, "I told my husband, 'Please, now you will bathe and touch the children.' I also command my children to hug my father [Chirix's father] because he would not show affection toward them first." For Chirix, touching, hugging, and kissing are gestures that we have to "revive." Similar to Chirix's conception of a new form of masculinity, some men were committed to an alternative form of masculinity –the men of integrity or the transformed men of value.

Like other men, Benito assured me that he has been committed to changes in attitude toward his children. He expressed the following: "there are men that say 'the woman should

take care of her children', but I do not think that way. When my children were still little, I took care of them. I do not feel ashamed. But, you know, there are men that say 'Oh, it is not my task.'" Benito may have become aware of the consequences when a man does not share the childcare with his wife. Despite the harsh criticisms that he may face in the community by other men who considered him as deviant, he stated that childcare was part of his task. Benito also mentioned that fear of shame was a factor that prevented men expressing affection. This prevents some men from taking care of their children. Mateo is one of the men that recognized that the men should intervene in what has been wrongly labeled as the feminine tasks to equilibrate the household responsibilities with their wives.

Thus, masculinity among the Kaqchikel men has a variety of expressions. One aspect of it is the attitude of a man that avoids any interference into the roles labeled as "feminine." There are several beliefs that support the difference, for example, the common belief is that the man does the public labors, while the woman does the private ones (the woman stays at home rearing the children or keeping the house). Other factors that endorse the difference are the cultural shame or respect to the role of the opposite sex. The consequence of such difference is gender inequality, at the same time that subordinates women. Gender inequality has diverse expressions. Sometimes gender inequality reaches the level of violence because a sexist man is prone to commit violence against his partner. The ideology of gender superiority of the man opens this possibility to the practice of violence. Next, I am going to discuss two aspects of violence against women.

SECTION 2: "WHY DON'T YOU BEAT YOUR WIFE?" DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Rin xinch'ay wxjayil, kum ma nana' ta, ya ch'ayon, yab'ojoj, yayoq'on, yatkik. Es que la le aguardiente nsach a jwis. B'in manï chawä, chqtzij nab'ij, karnaq manï jun wnaq, tzij yatapon chi tqjay, natar rchi' rachoch. Rin xinb'an, xinapon kere' qa, xinyoq'o' jun vecino, xin yoq' chjun kela' qa.
--Iván

I beat up my wife. When you lose the sense of reality [under the effect of alcohol] you beat up your wife; you curse. The alcohol makes you lose the ability to think. You say whatever comes to your mind. You may go to someone's house and tear down the door of his house. I cursed many people in my neighborhood when I drank.
--Iván

Domestic violence is commonplace in patriarchal societies. Many studies associate domestic violence with alcoholism (Camacho *et al* 2012). Gutmann (2006), for example, says that it has been common to equate being a macho man with at least periodic public inebriation (p. 174). The informants, however, rarely referred to violence as a public manifestation of their male identities, but rather, they expressed that violence was a practice of their neighbors and argued that stemmed from different reasons. Here I will examine two modalities of violence linked to the neighbor's aggressiveness. The first one has to do with the alcoholic man who was prone to batter his wife. Another modality occurred when the man perpetuated violence without being under the effect of alcohol. In such cases, informants said that the men committed violence because their wives were not as attentive at home as they should be at the arrival of the men after work. Violence also occurs when the man has a paramour outside the home, so he beat his wife in order to cause her despair.

In the following section I will talk about two ways that men commit violence according to the interpretation of the informants.

A) "I beat up my wife whenever that bitch does not follow my rules:" The alcoholic and violent man.

The consumption of alcohol beverages was a tradition in the Kaqchikel communities of Sololá. This practice however diminished during the 1990s mainly because of the religious campaigns for people's conversions to the new life. Before that date the Kaqchikel men had a lot of excuses to drink. For example, people celebrated pompously many religious activities

throughout the year such as the day of each of the 13 important Catholic saints of the *cofradías* (brotherhood); in such activities they drank compulsively and uncontrollably. By consuming alcohol, they neglected many aspects of their family's lives that include the well-being of their children. They even engaged in acts of violence against their wives. Arturo recounted me that he still lived in the culture of alcoholism, but when he eventually quit drinking he faced peer pressure and suffered from mockery. He said:

> "When people drink at a cantina, they start telling you many things. Once they told me, 'hey, why you stopped coming to the cantina? Is that true that your wife does not allow you to get out of the house anymore?' And I told them, 'Yes, my wife does not like me to drink anymore.' And they went on, 'Well, why don't you beat your wife? I beat my wife whenever that bitch does not follow my rules…' There, at the cantina, the men start talking about women. They give you the courage to go home and beat your wife"

Arturo recounted that he grew up in the culture of alcoholism. He explained that many parents in the community prepared the *cuxa* (homemade liquor) and forced their children to drink the liquor with them. That is why the majority of the informants had problems of alcoholism, but they stated they have overcome it but with some consequences. For example, it was ridiculous for Arturo's friends that a woman told him not to drink any more since it was the tradition. For them, the woman has no authority to tell her husband what he can or cannot do. The denigration of the woman by the expression 'that bitch' is a mere act of bringing her to her 'original' position –the position of the subaltern in the gender regime. For Arturo's friends, the man should show her what the consequences are when she is questioning his agenda or when she is not behaving as she should, or when she does not follow the rule of the man, or simply because she opposes the practice of alcoholism.

The quintessential space of the alcoholic men is the cantina. In the culture of alcoholism, the *cantina* is a space where young alcoholics support and encourage each other. In Sololá these small establishments of cantinas abound and are generally designed to have a friendly, relaxed, and comfortable atmosphere. The alcoholic men prefer these places because there they can spend time idly with friends, sharing experiences, dreams, success, failure, stories of women, and so on. Unfortunately, if someone wants to stop drinking, as in Arturo's case, his friends may categorize that endeavor as a regression in the construction of his masculinity; it is also perceived as a shame because the man is responding to his wife's suggestions. For Arturo's friends, a man is the one that commands authority and uses violence because he is at liberty to use that violence as a tool to assert his dominance. However, Arturo said that he could not beat his wife because "he was not living in his own house," so he felt he did not have that kind of authority. This was the main factor that prevented Arturo from beating his wife and his children when he drank in the past.

Other men that I interviewed shared similar stories with regard to alcoholism and violence. Cesar for example said that he used to be a heavy alcohol drinker. However, he never reached the level of violence in his relationship. Fausto said that he only beat his wife once because he was still in "ignorance;" that is to say, he had not yet become a Christian. Iván used to be an incurable drinker and a batterer. He said, **"**When you lose the sense of reality [under the effect of alcohol] you beat up your wife." He confessed that he beat his wife several times. He quit drinking about seven or eight years ago, but he admitted that he beat his wife a couple of times after he stop drinking. Mateo, the K'amol B'ey, now a transformed man, said that when he drank in the past he turned into a "furious bull." He recalled that he was so violent that he could grab a *machete* and hurt his wife, children, even his neighbors, because, he said, he "lost his consciousness." Celso also said that in the past he battered his wife. The day of the interview he exalted his wife's resilience during the time of

violence. “My wife endured all the violence. She really withstood me,” recalled Cesar with certain remorse and shame of a cruel past. And Benito was the other informant that drank a lot in the past, but he never beat his wife.

The common characteristic of an alcoholic is the practice of violence against his wife and his children. Violence was commonplace in rural Sololá due to the complex culture of violence that the men inherited from the past and the absence of a Court of Justice in the rural areas. Men believed they had the power to control, suppress, and abuse their wives. In addition, the majority of women had no formal education, so they did not know what steps to follow to report when they suffered physical abuse. They even were unaware of the existence of their fundamental rights. And women did not know how to speak “the language,” which is to say they did not speak Spanish to report cases of violence to the institutions of justice located in the downtown of Sololá. Often these women had to endure violent partners because they had children whom they could not abandon easily. A few of them looked for support from the K’amol B’ey or their parents. Lately women have looked for assistance in the COREDs or to women-related institutions as I have explained in the previous chapter.

Here I have succinctly talked about domestic violence committed by male partners. A man in his desire to be in the dominant position resorts to violence when he is under the effect of alcohol. He believed that he *possessed* the woman over whom he has to control and suppress. Next I will discuss violence perpetuated by the non-alcoholic men.

B) “That man beats his wife frequently:” The non-alcoholic yet violent man

In a rural society characterized by a sexist and patriarchal system, it is very common that the exercise of violence against women happens also when men are sober. The informants mentioned several reasons why other men or the neighbor engaged in acts of violence.

When I asked Pedro if he had known non-alcoholic men that used violence against their wives, he confirmed it and said that he knew several cases of men using violence against their wives in the village. He recounted for me a specific case that he knew. He said that he was part of the organization called CORED and that the organization recently received an anonymous grievance of a woman who was the victim of domestic violence. Pedro said, "We [the members of the CORED] were summoned to deal with that problem of violence. That man beat his wife frequently. He wanted to make life impossible for her so that she departed from the house. That way he could bring another woman," Surprisingly, contrary to what one may expect, this man was not under the effect of alcohol. His interest in another woman was the main reason for unjustifiably battering his current wife. This was very common when the men had extramarital relationships. Usually men do not express overtly their desire to end their marriages because they have made a public pledge to take care of their wives, but when they want to end their marriage, they express that message through violence, which is not justifiable whatsoever. Generally a man commits violence against his wife when consuming alcohol, but several cases have showed that the sober man also perpetuates violence by beating and kicking out his current wife.

With regard to gender violence, Gutmann (2006) explores machismo and masculine practices among mestizo men in Mexico to find that violence is integral to their masculine gender identities, and they often take little or no responsibility for this violence (p. 174-180). Gutmann also observes that the informants' accounts of battering revealed a pattern of denial, minimization, excuse, and justification. Male violence in gender relations happens in many societies and cultures. Like the macho men in Gutmann's research, the Kaqchikel men find any reason to use violence and draw on any justification to be free from punishment.

Almost all the informants referred to male neighbors as the ones that are prone to perpetuate violence in their homes. However, it was not always the case. On one occasion, I

came to know that Iván still beats his wife. One day I was on the bus heading to an activity in downtown Sololá, when a woman who was Iván's neighbor and whom I had met when I went to Iván's house approached me and told me about a tragic incident that just happened in Iván's house. Very frightened, she recounted that Iván had just recently battered his wife. "All occurred because of a child" she plainly said. Her explanation was really succinct, because she did not know the reason or reasons for the battering; she only knew that "he [Iván] wanted to beat his wife to death." She said, "riya kan kamik tz'e' nrajo' cherä ru xjayil" (He wanted to beat his wife to death as one kills a dog. Following the day of the incident she also told me that members of the CORED arrived at Iván's house to deal with the problem of domestic violence. Iván did not allow the men of the CORED to enter his house. From the main door, he began to shout angrily at them, telling them to take care of their own business and not to meddle in the affairs of other people. This tragic episode drastically contradicts the progressive and sympathetic discourse Iván had expressed. After the first interview with him, I had the impression that he was really a 'new man' as he portrayed himself, but it seemed that he was simply answering my questions about masculinity in a nice way. I wonder: to what extent was he providing the answers I wanted to hear? This is with no doubt an important methodological concern in this project, one that requires special attention and that I aspire to explore in more depth in future research in these communities. In fact, he was seeking to provide the answers he thought I wanted to hear. If I had presented as a "regular guy," he would have felt free to address more directly what he actually thought and did. This event is also evidence that sometimes it is difficult for the CORED to intervene and deal with serious problems like Iván's case because the COREDs cannot take punitive measures against perpetrators of violence.

Why did a sober man beat his wife for an insignificant discussion? Analyzing this case of violence, I realize that the answer may have three aspects. First, domestic violence

was a generalized practice in communities where there are no strong institutions of justice that safeguard the state of vulnerable people who can be victims of injustice. Women can report the incidents to the COREDs, but, as I have stated, the perpetrators know that the CORED lacks a systematic and a punitive Code, that is to say, the COREDs cannot sentence the defendants or take them to jail. Second, the beating, battering, or psychological abuse that men inflict implies that the men have absolute authority in their home. And third, the woman apparently does not have any authority to question the action of the man. Iván may have interpreted the intervention of his wife between him and the child upon the start of the fight as a mere act of transgression of the established gendered boundaries. Although Iván stated in the interviews that he did not commit violence anymore, he still did due to the ongoing culture of violence that allows him to engage in such acts.

Other informants mentioned other reasons why some men committed violence against their wives. For example, they said that it is because of 1) "a poor service that the wife offers at home;" 2) the lack of attention to serve her husband; 3) the lack of love and affection toward her husband; 4) because the wife does not dress up as the man wants; 5) the wife is very jealous; 6) the wife is becoming overbearing and she does not obey the command of her husband, and so on. In some cases, where the man and the woman have the same level of education or the man is living in the house of the woman, the man tends to restrain his violent behavior. Unfortunately this does not happen in many households because the woman lives in the man's house and because she lacks the ability to speak the Spanish language and does not have the so-called "knowledge;" that is to say, she is unaware of her rights.

SECTION 3: "THEY DO NOT WANT SOMETHING FORMAL" EXTRAMARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

"You may take another woman because your wife no longer serves you as you want. She no longer does things with good disposition. She may serve your food or not," expressed

Iván with a resolute tone in his voice as he was explaining one of the greatest reasons of why the men sometimes decide to look for other women. Iván, like the rest of the informants, affirmed that he had not had an extramarital relationship. H stated that he knew several cases of extramarital relationships in the community. The cases of extramarital relationships that I am going discuss here are cases of the "promiscuous neighbors."

Analyzing the informants' accounts, I identified four different patterns of extramarital relationships. The first pattern consists of cases where married men have a paramour outside their homes. Most of the times, these men are not happy in their relationships, so they resort to physical abuse to make life impossible for their wives so that they flee the house. Only in rare cases the men leave the house. In this pattern the extramarital relationship does not have a strictly sexual objective, but rather the men search for casual and harmonious relationships where the women express love, kindness, or simply dress up as the men like.

Talking about these kinds of extramarital relationships with Armando, he expressed the following, "I had the same thought [of having an extramarital relationship] because we had problems. At that moment I wondered why other men looked for other women or why they beat their wives, and I said that it was because they [the women] change their way of thinking and their character." Armando recounted that one day he was on the verge of beating his wife because she refused to accept 'the orders of the house' and because she was so jealous of him to the point that she prohibited him from talking to his mother and sisters. The force of his outrage made him think of two possibilities: to redress his wife through a battering "as most of the men do" or to look for another relationship to compensate for the lack of love and understanding in his household. Fortunately, neither the battering nor an extramarital relationship occurred in his household because of his wife's early 'escape' from the house. Armando's commentary suggests that the main reason for this type of extramarital relationship is because of problems they encountered in their marriages.

The second pattern consists of cases of philandering men or "womanizers." The majority of these men do not want to engage in formal relationships with someone, but they like to have several partners at the same time. They like to live this kind of life because of their sexual drives. Talking about this topic with a young man in the community who liked to spend pleasant moments with women, he said, "That is what the buddies do; they do not want something formal [a formal relationship]." In fact, many young men engage in short term relationships because they do not want to enter into formal commitments. This young man that told me that had impregnated a woman while he was cohabiting with another woman. I asked him what he did when he was in trouble and he replied, "I reflected about it. I went to the capital city to work for a while, and then I came back. I try not to go out whenever I can." His commentary suggests that men who have more than one woman seek strategies to hide from the women, especially when they notice that they their relationships are becoming problematic. These men look for relationships on the fly, although sometimes these relationships last years.

The third pattern that I identified happens when married men have other women outside their relationships. These men prefer to have a wife at home because she performs the household tasks. Because they do not seek a separation, they do not necessarily beat or abuse their wives. They simply look for sexual adventures outside their marriages. Julio for example said, "The women on the street are beautiful. You easily fall in love with them." Julio contrasts the good-looking women on the street with the wife in the home. His words suggest that if a man has another woman outside the home it is because of her beauty, not because of problems he may have within his current relationship.

Benito criticized these men and blamed them because, in his words, "It is the men's fault if the women do not dress up pretty." He added, "If the women do not take care of themselves it is because the men do not provide them with the necessary things to do so."

Benito expressed his concern because the men neglected their wives who do not earn money and do not have the means to take care of themselves. For him, the men's lack of care for their wives is the reason why women do not dress appropriately and maintain good personal hygiene. When this happens the men may be on the lookout for other women. Benito said that it is very easy to notice when there is someone in between the relationship. For example, the man does not show affection toward his wife or he may complain for no reason; he is not polite to his wife anymore; or he does not provide the monthly household expenditure to the woman because "he has another woman." The men that have extramarital relationships tend to show sentiments of rejection. Such expressions increase gradually until they reach the level of violence.

And finally, the fourth pattern I identified has to do with the men in polygamous relationships. These men have two or more women who live in the same house. Sometimes each woman has her own house. They consent to and approve these kinds of relationships even though the practice of polygamy is not tolerated and illegal. Despite these restrictions, some men still engage in polygamist practices. Cesar and Celso told me of cases of polygamy in Sololá. Cesar recounted the case of a man who had two wives who lived in the same house. He recounted, "Salomon Solares has two wives in the same house. These two women respect each other. The youngest woman calls Nan to the first one." (Nan is an honorific title used before the woman's name). In the Kaqchikel community, polygamy is not common but it happens. Celso also shared another story, "Fernando Cumes is another man that has two wives. He has one wife in a beautiful house on the other side of the river and has another who is living in the center of the town. They do not love him; they just love his possession." Similar to Celso's account, there are other men who have multiple relationships because of their economic power. The characteristic of these relationships is that the women consent to share the same husband with other women without any apparent problem.

Despite being condemned by the religious and political people, extramarital relationships were still prevalent in the communities and seemed to be highly linked to the man's practice than the woman's, although the latter also happened but to a lesser extent. As I have discussed earlier, extramarital relationships are not always associated with violence but they certainly inflict a psychological damage to the women especially when women have children and have no other options than bear the situation. The types of extramarital relationships discussed here also shows the power dimension of gender relations, that is, the men have more chances to have a lover because of their economic power or simply because they enjoy more freedom than their wives, that is to say, they can go outside and meet women, or go to other places when their extramarital situations become problematic.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have discussed 'other male practices' of the Kaqchikel men. These men stated that they changed in attitude and behaviors a few decades ago. This claim is important for two reasons. First, it is a clear manifestation of the big changes that the Guatemalan society underwent during the 80s and 90s, which included the men's determination to a change in practice and attitude such as leaving behind the pernicious practices and focusing on the future of their families. Secondly, I found it interesting because in their discourse they created the "other." The other or the neighbor refers to the subject that contradicts the personality of the informants. This "other" is the one that engages in the current sexist practices, and therefore the one that should be punished and admonished.

Another important point that I mentioned here refers to the patriarchal practices that underestimate women ideologically or physically. In this patriarchal culture it is easy to see how men dismiss certain tasks considering them as exclusively women's labors. That labors include childcare or simply the act of holding a child. If some men are incapable of holding

their own children, they are also incapable of showing affection, love, and fondness to other members of their families. During the interviews, some indicated that they were the "mama' achï" in the past, and other indicated that their parents were the "mama' achï." But the majority stated that the sexist or "mama' achï" were their neighbors.

I simplified these dimensions and expressions of masculinity in two parts. On the one hand there are the positive aspects of masculinity, with which the majority identified such as the responsible father or the hardworking man. On the other hand there are the negative aspects of masculinity that I focused on in this chapter. This is the aspect that is associated with the oppression and discrimination against women, and this encompasses necessarily violence and patriarchal practices. Despite the fact that the informants affirmed that they no longer engaged in such practices, violence was still pervasive in the communities perpetuated either by their "neighbor" or by them.

One of the main factors that instigate violence is the consumption of alcohol. The informants argued that they committed violence in the past because it was the tradition of the people and because they lost consciousness when they were under the effect of alcohol. Other informants commented that sober men also committed violence. In such cases a man beat his wife because 1) he knew that she could not or was unable to register a complaint before the authorities; 2) she could not abandon her children; 3) she does not know the procedure or the steps to follow; 4) or she cannot speak in the Spanish language, etc. In these ways, the man is at liberty to commit violence against her, perpetuating one of the most reprehensible acts in society.

And finally, I talked about the promiscuous practices of the men. None of the informants affirmed of being in an extramarital relationship, but they did know people engaging in such relationships. I talked about the four types of promiscuous practices: The first pattern is when the man finds his relationship unpleasant and for menial problems, he

feels forced to look for another relationship. The second pattern, the most common, is when the man has several partners at the same time but he does not want to engage formally with any of them. This is exclusively the case of the womanizers. These men want to have casual relationships with sexual aims. The third pattern happens when the man falls in love with "the beautiful women" on the street. So, the man engages in an extramarital relationship. Often in these cases the man does not want to end his relationship; he simply wants to have a sexual adventure outside his home. And finally, there are the polygamist unions. In these unions, the women or the wives consent to and approve of sharing the same husband. Sometimes these wives live in the same house, and sometimes they live in separate houses.

These are the men's practices in the Kaqchikel community of Sololá. Unfortunately, they are practices associated largely with the negative aspects of masculinity; therefore, they are practices that should be eradicated in society because they impede the personal development of the women, children, and the vulnerable people. They also have negative impacts on society overall, insofar as the women are prevented from contribute with knowledge, efforts, and resources to the construction of a more fair and humane society.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis I have explored potential answers to the questions that I posed in the introduction related to masculinity in a Kaqchikel community in Guatemala: What form does masculinity take in the local context of this indigenous community? What are the assumptions or beliefs that men have learned about masculinity and manhood? In what ways are those assumptions produced and reproduced in these cultures? How and why all of the above shape gender inequality in these families and communities? With such questions in mind I embarked on this research project, through which I got different results and answers. First, I want to reiterate that these indigenous communities are made up mostly by nuclear and extended families. The former concept refers to a married heterosexual couple with their unmarried children. And the latter concept refers to families where grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins live in the same house or nearby. The life of these families is based on a traditional or subsistence economy, where they produce crops for self-consumption. Secondly, I want to make it clear that all these societies are neither monolithic nor static, but rather, subjected to constant changes and adjustments through time. They change gradually as the process of globalization is affecting them. Hence, new forms of social relations are emerging as the individuals are questioning old-fashioned systems that do not suit anymore to their interests.

Marx once stated that, "the mode of production of material life determines the social, political, and intellectual life process in general" (in Habermas 1981, 14). This statement is true and applicable to these societies because the 'material life' of these communities and their gradual transition to the capitalist system has shaped new forms of social relations, including those of gender. For instance, the fact that the man is the one who goes out to work in the fields and the woman is the one who stays at home taking care of the children is not a

disposition or predisposition of the man, and much less it to be considered as women's oppression, as I personally believed, but rather it is an adjustment to the current material life. Accordingly, the social relations of these societies should be analyzed with a particular theoretical framework and be carefully analyzed with a western perspective because it could distort the analysis (Pu, 2007). Next I will present my conclusion and findings of the three analytical chapters.

In chapter 1, I analyzed the features of masculine identity in these communities and showed how they are produced in different social contexts such as the home and the political and civil committees. I found that the sense of being a real man is highly related of having property and owning a house, which could be of luxury or humble. Given that these communities lack houses or rooms for rent, these men then are obliged to have their own house built on a land assigned by their parents, although sometimes the couple live in a room their parents assigned to them. Once the men have their own houses, they take command of their families, act with absolute authority, and have control over the life of their wives and children. Sometimes these men develop a strong sense of masculinity to the point that their actions reach violence. Most of these men followed that particular image of being a man, and until very recently these schemes were questioned by women, especially by those who have had an education. From the ten men that I interviewed, two recounted to me that they had a difficult time to decide where to live upon getting married, weather or not they lived in the their own house or in the woman's, which most of the time turned out to be the house of her parents. The case of Armando stands out. Despite the insistence of his wife, he did not accept her offer to live with her in her father's home. Although they separated 15 months later, Armando knew beforehand that he would fail to exert his authority if he moved in to live with her family of origin. Arturo is another informant whose case contrasts to that of Armando. He accepted the offer from his wife, who was educated, and he went to live with

her family. He stated that he failed tragically because his wife and his mother-in-law mistreated him, and therefore his authority as a man was not respected. This happened not only because Arturo was not living in his house, but also because he was not educated like his wife. In his view, he did not conform the gender norms that predominate in the communities.

Another important finding discussed in this first chapter was the way in which the men define their masculine identity. I attempted to answer this question on the basis of the previous concept that I had about masculinity. In line with previous definitions proposed by authors such as Connell (2005) or Candace & Zimmerman (1987), these men define their identity in relation with their roles in society, which are an outward manifestation of their personality such as their behaviors and appearances. Thus, the men identified their masculinity in contrast with and in opposition to what society has established as the ideal behavior for women. They also define their masculine identity with salient virtues such as responsibility, commitment, and care. Furthermore, I found that because the 1) lack of transportation, 2) the women's low level of formal education, and 3) the women's enormous responsibilities at their homes, the Kaqchikel men are the ones assigned to take up the political and civil posts in the locality. I also found that the more distant a community is located in relation to the urban center of Sololá, the less opportunities women have to become members of the committees. Nevertheless, the women have participation in other committees such as the *Juntas Escolares* or at the committees of the church (treasury and cleaning services), where they are expected to do "emotional work" such as expressing obedience and submissiveness as salient virtues of a woman.

In the chapter 2, I examined the perception of the men about the current status of the women. The men articulate a retrospective account in which they make it clear the big changes that the society in general and the Kaqchikel communities in particular underwent

after the 1990s. During this time several events took place, which favored the social changes. On the topic of gender identity, the men found it difficult to play the role of a local or rural patriarch like the image of their parents or their own images before they left the 'ignorance', that is to say, before they became of Christian faith. Inspired in Gramsci's theorizing, Gutmann (2006) has identified this phenomenon as "contradictory consciousness" because the masculine image that the men inherited from their parents —as well as the privileges that come along with it— may contradict ideologies promoting gender inequality in contemporary society, for example.

It is also interesting to see the men's perception of the current living conditions of women in their families and communities. For them it is hard to accept that the society has changed to such extent that women are having astonishing participation in public spaces. The Kaqchikel men complain that the participation of women in spaces is giving them a lot of liberty to act on their own, something that did not occur in the past. Despite these changes in gender relations, the Kaqchikel men praised the social transformation caused mainly by new infrastructures (roads, transportation, and schools), services (electricity and potable water) and domestic appliances, among others.

Interestingly, in these communities gender relations are highly linked to racial relations, gender and race shape one another. A Kaqchikel man finds it difficult to express himself freely in an urban space where he confronts the Spanish language and the liberal culture of the ladino. In the same context, the Kaqchikel women face a double challenge. They not only face bygone ideologies and beliefs that predominate in the same communities, but also racial obstacles in the urban area. At times, the Kaqchikel women avoid approaching a court to file a complaint against their abusive partners because they cannot speak the Spanish language.

On the topic of sexual division of labor, the Kaqchikel men may develop a sympathetic discourse in which they state that it is important not to overwhelm the women with the household tasks. This is because household tasks limit the participation of women in others spaces and their professional progress as well. Through the material changes, the Kaqchikel men have faced neutral labors and this somehow has benefited the women. The neutral labor has to do with the domestic appliances with which the Kaqchikel men feel at liberty to use and with which they suffer less stigma and shame.

In the course of the study, I found that, according to the men, the women look for strategies or hidden practices by which they try to change or at least influence the temperament of an authoritarian man. To do so, they resort to the practice of sorcery or to concoct a 'home-prepared medicine.' The Kaqchikel men fear enormously these practices because they could be victims of such practices at any time. Nevertheless, the majority assured to me that they have not been victims of sorcery or a 'medicine.' According to the informants, other men in the communities have suffered from such "evil" practices. Only two informants affirmed that they have been victims of witchcraft performed presumably by their wives or their mothers-in-law. Stories about all of the above have become part of everyday life conversations in these communities.

In the last chapter, I talked about 'other male practices'. This has to do with sexist practices, which sometimes are related to violence against women. Despite the fact of being common practices in the rural areas, the informants referred to them as practices of the past, with which they no longer engaged anymore. The Guatemalan literature, mainly that developed by indigenous intellectuals (see for example, KAQLA 2003; POP NOJ 2009) argues that the domestic violence is a colonial practice, which emerged precisely at the moment of the Spanish invasion. However, authors such as Roemary Joyce (2000) challenge this argument and demonstrate that gender oppression and the absence of affection are

ancient practices of Prehispanic Mesoamerican societies that did not emerge during the colonial times. These practices already existed since immemorial times, however the arrival of the Spaniards and the colonial times may have reinforced this and gave it a different form. Thus, domestic violence and gender inequality already existed. During the interviews, the informants never referred to *Cosmovisión Maya* or *Armonía Maya* to discuss gender equality or inequality as the Mayanist literature does.

The old ideologies and the beliefs are embedded in the culture that endorses violence in these communities. This is the case of the culture of alcoholism that the men usually referred to as "practice of the past." Thus, the combination of bygone beliefs and alcoholism led the men to the practice of an indiscriminate violence against women. However, at the moment of the interviews they assured to me that they have changed. Indeed, at the moment of the interviews they were critical and more consistent about the women's rights and gender equality, which are necessary for an overall progress.

In this analytical chapter, I have stated that domestic violence is still a common practice in these communities. Indeed, during the course of my fieldwork I realized that Ibán still beat his wife, and apparently she could not do anything because she was threatened and because she could not speak the Spanish language to register a complain in the courts. The local authorities such as the COREDs intervened but they could not do much to deal with the problem. The lack of a strong authority in the communities has led men such as Ibán to have absolute authority in their homes and beat their wives whenever these women trespass the established gender boundaries.

And finally, I found that at times the Kaqchikel men engaged in extramarital relationships. When a man has an extramarital affair, he may neglect his wife because of his relationship with another woman. This can result in strategies to force the wife out of the house, such as through beatings, so the other woman can move in. Recently, the intervention

of Christian religious discourses and the message of the mass media about gender equality have pushed men to reflect about the consequences of extramarital relationships. I personally hope that these changes are for the benefit for all the people in the communities.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings in this research could not be generalized to other men such as to those who live in the same place. In this regard, the following reflections are relevant. First, this study explores the lives of men who were born during the 1960s or 1970s. Hence, many of these men have a concept of masculinity very particular of the time, which has changed gradually. Many of these men were born in a time when the concept of masculinity and work had a great relevance. Their stories contrast those people who were born in the late 1970s. To a great extent, this new generation had access to formal education; therefore their concept of culture and common practices was different.

Secondly, further studies should be conducted to explore the lives of more than ten men and for more extended periods of time. There are cultural patterns that can be identified to explore, compare, and examine the lives of many men and not only ten as it was the case of this study. I also realized that two months is not enough for these kinds of studies, especially when the researcher is tracking down specific cases. Hence, the number of participants and the time to conduct the research should be a salient aspect to consider in future research. It is my hope, however, that these men's stories would expose the complexities of their lives in a territory that was invaded and colonized many years ago and continues to decipher the challenges of the so called "modernity" and "globalization."

Thirdly, this study lacks to an extent a more complex analysis such as that of an intersectionality approach. This approach holds that the classical models of oppression within society, such as those based on race, gender, class, and sexuality do not act independent of

one another (Collins 2000). Instead, these forms of oppression interrelate. Accordingly, it is important to take into consideration other markers of oppression that the men and the women face alike. This study focuses on a population of peasant working class families that share similar life stories. However, they are surrounded by other cultures and I suggest that further research needs to take into account the interaction of the Kaqchikel men with the ladino populations, and analyze the ways in which the sense of masculinity and authority may lose strength in an urban context where the latter has influence. In addition, it is important to analyze the ways in which masculinity between social class and across generations is changing. Another important topic to explore is the way in which homosexuality is represented in these communities and how the population, accept, tolerate, or reject these sexual identities. Despite these limitations, this study aims to become a contribution to the understanding of an aspect of the social complexity of the Kaqchikel people in Sololá.

After the interviews I was inspired to learn more and conduct similar research in the future. As a member of the Kaqchikel community, I would like to share my findings with women and men through workshops. In this way, I will show them the necessity of supporting the equation of women and men alike. I also would like to teach younger generations of women and men about the current situation of gender relations. I know that younger generations are influenced by other cultures and realities but it is important that they know the cultural practices of the past generations, and how these practices are changing over time and influencing the way we are living today. To pursue such dreams I need to polish my theoretical and analytical tools. That is why I dream to pursue a doctorate degree to learn more about gender and power in indigenous communities, write books on the topic, give workshops to people or organizations, and probably have influence at the policy level to support people's rights regardless of their gender.

Appendix A –Study Participants

Name	Age	Education	Number of children		Marital Status	Extramarital relationships (self-reported)	Alcoholic before marriage
			F	M			
Armando	33	Advance degree in Business	1		Separated	No	No
Mateo	60	-	6	4	Married	No	Yes
Fausto	44	2nd grade in Primary school	3	8	Cohabited	No	Yes
Julio	38	1 year to complet Bachillerato (the equivalent to the US-High school)		3	Married	No	No
Benito	60	-	5	3	Married	No	Yes
Cesar	44	6th grade in Primary School	2	1	Married	No	Yes
Arturo	36	5th grade in Primary	2	1	Separated	No	Yes
Celso	42	3rd grade in Primary school	8	3	Married	No	Yes
Pedro	48	1rst grade in Primary school	2	3	Married	No	Yes
Iván	47	1rst grade in Primary school	2	5	Cohabited	Yes	Yes

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Vita

Rigoberto Ajcalón Choy was born in a hamlet called el Tablón in the township of Sololá. After the loss of his father during the internal war in the mid-1980s, his mother moved to the city of Sololá, where Rigoberto began his education and later an academic career. He attended different schools such as the religious school Santa Teresita and the Colegio Maya Tz-olojya'. Later in 2005, he pursued his Bachelor's degree in Anthropology at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala. He finished his BA thesis entitled "Municipalidad, participación indígena y democratización en Sololá a partir de la firma de los acuerdos de paz 1996-2010." While working as a translator (Kaqchikel-Spanish) at the Ministerio Público of Guatemala, he received the FORD Fellowship. The FORD fellowship as well as the priceless support of Charles Hale were instrumental in helping him join the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin to study and complete a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies.

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