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**This pageant which is not won: The Rabín Ahau, Maya women,
and the Guatemalan nation**

McAllister, Carlota Pierce, M.A.

The University of Arizona, 1994

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THIS PAGEANT WHICH IS NOT WON:
THE RABÍN AHAU, MAYA WOMEN, AND THE GUATEMALAN NATION

by

Carlota Pierce McAllister

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
In the Graduate College
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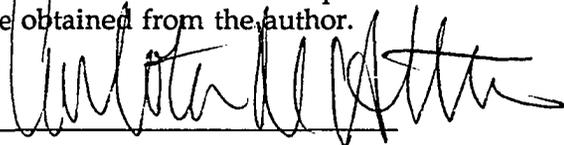
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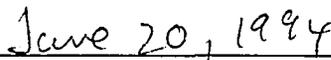


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my uncle Mario, for putting up with me during the trials and excitements of fieldwork and helping me think through the Rabín Ahau.

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ABSTRACT

The "Rabín Ahau," Daughter of the King in Q'eqchí, is elected annually in a pageant in Cobán, Guatemala to represent indigenous women before the Guatemalan nation. Although the contest takes the form of a beauty pageant, the criterion on which the candidates are judged is their authenticity as Maya women; their authenticity, in turn, guarantees Guatemala's distinctiveness in the international community of nations.

This thesis explores what signifying authenticity requires of would-be Rabín Ahaus, when being Maya at all in Guatemala has historically been life-threatening. It links the aestheticization of Indianness to the ethnocidal racism which literally erases Maya bodies from the national territory, and examines how Guatemalan nationalist discourse uses mimesis and commodification of "the Indian" to create and control an Indian essence; it indicates, also, how the participants in the contest work mimetic excess to triangulate official authenticity and assert different meanings of the Maya.

Introduction: The Three Faces of the Rabín Ahau

The Rabín Ahau, Daughter (or Granddaughter) of the King in Q'eqchi', is elected annually in a pageant held in Cobán, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. To be Rabín Ahau is to be *Reina Indígena Nacional*, Queen among Guatemalan Maya women, the representative of her race before the nation. Communities from around Guatemala send representatives to this contest. In 1993, the twenty-second year of the pageant and the silver anniversary of the folkloric festival of which it is the crowning event, fifty-four candidates were presented. They were judged, according to the program for the event, on the following bases: 1) authenticity of race; 2) authenticity of *traje típico* (typical costume); 3) expression in their own language; 4) expression in Spanish; and 5) authenticity in dancing the *son*. I asked one of the judges of the contest to define this "authenticity:" How would she know it when she saw it? The authentic, she told me, was that "which represented something *really real* of a people or of a person."

Ethnicity and nationality are peculiarly bipolar. The nation is imagined as simultaneously exclusive and inclusive: it is at once universal, a member of the community of nations but also particular, a people with a shared past, unlike any other. "It is," in Anderson's (1991:12) words, "the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny." Ethnicity, on the one hand, is

conceived as primordial essence but, on the other, it can only be known as it is manifested to the senses. It is supposed at once to be embodied, in nature, and yet subject to the vagaries of history, liable to be lost or betrayed.

Authenticity pins the poles of the body and history together, and thereby joins ethnicities and nations. In an authentic representation the union of signifier and signified is no longer arbitrary: it is "really real." This is the magic of authenticity, the source of its power and its centrality to myths of nation and race.

Historically, these myths have been rendered with peculiar frequency in the shape of Woman. The different vectors along which gendered subjects are produced -- mythico-symbolic, doctrinal, institutional, and subjective (Scott 1986) -- intersect with the processes of nation-state formation, such that

central dimensions of the roles of women are constituted around the relationships of collectivities to the state... [and] central dimensions of the relationships between collectivities and the state are constituted around the roles of women (Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1989:1)

Women both mark the boundaries of the collectivities in which they participate and incarnate the totality of the collectivity. In everyday practice and in nationalist discourse, women serve a metonymic function: they stand in as signifiers of the whole.

Beauty pageants are among the most obvious instances of this use of women for nationalist purposes (Stoeltje n.d.). The Rabín Ahau is also,

however, queen of her race, and as such the Rabín Ahau is not a beauty pageant. The Indian queen is cut off from the possibility of beauty in a racist Guatemala. She cannot signify Guatemala's participation as an equal in the community of nations – that job is left to Miss Guatemala, invariably among the whitest of the nation's girlhood – but only its distinctiveness, its tradition, its Indian past. Authenticity in the Rabín Ahau is an aesthetic property, but one subordinate to the truly Beautiful. The candidates' bodies cannot help them: their womanhood is insufficient. Only in their fixity, their timelessness, their non-presence in the shifting here and now that bodiliness implies, can they become really real.

The first time I attended the Rabín Ahau was in 1988, in the time of Vinicio Cerezo, Guatemala's first civilian president in fifteen years. We arrived late and were hustled into our seats in a large arena with a fashion-show runway down the middle of it. Already, Indian women in ceremonial dress were dancing the *son* one by one up the runway to the stage, and their incense burners slowly filled the room with *copal* smoke.

The evening reached a high point of hilarity when a guacamaya, chained to its perch on the backdrop, fell in the middle of Vinicio's speech and was unable to right itself. While stage hands scrambled up the papier mache volcanoes of the scenery, it hung, squawking guAAAk, guaaak, in counterpoint to Vinicio's thumps on the podium and cries of "Guatemalans!

"We are a people of two bloods!" The Indian queens' speeches were another matter. Repeatedly, and in no uncertain terms, they shouted that the blood of the Maya coursed through their veins and that *ladinos* could oppress them no longer. Never had I heard anyone in Guatemala make such a radical statement; my companions, however, the sort of people to whom the queens were surely referring, were untroubled by the challenge. The spectacle was gorgeous, confusing, and interminable: when we left at two thirty in the morning the three finalists had yet to be chosen.

When I returned to Guatemala in the summer of 1993 to investigate the *Rabín Ahau*, I had, clearly, an event begging for anthropological analysis. Nation and blood, costume and ritual, women speaking out about their oppression, and the participation of the powerful: in short, the pageant touched on virtually every theoretical issue of interest to me. It offered an opportunity, as well, to deconstruct the ineffable pleasure that the sights and smells of Guatemala, my mother's country, have always held for me. I assumed that my ethnographic enthusiasm would be universal, but soon found that it was shared only by a very few.

I stayed with my uncle for the summer, and his friends, members of Guatemala's civilian elite, were suspicious as to my intentions. Some were interested in my project, and wanted to read what I would write, while others warned me off the event, telling me it was not a true expression of indigenous

culture, or that the queens' speeches were too political. Anthropologists at the San Carlos, the public university, were put off by my interest in the Rabín Ahau. They disapproved of it: it was run by the army; the candidates were mistreated, not given food or shelter during their stay and put on display for tourists; it was not an indigenous expression of self but an appropriation of the indigenous by the powerful. Once I was in Cobán, conducting my investigation, the companion of one of the queens asked me if I had read Ricardo Falla's *Masacres de la Selva* (this book documents army atrocities in the Ixcán, and its author was forced into exile upon its publication), and told me that was the sort of thing anthropologists should really be doing. I am untroubled by the first set of objections, but the others strike me as more serious: where is the place for a discussion of something as frivolous and possibly corrupt as this pageant in the context of Guatemalan history?

To lightly dismiss this concern on theoretical grounds is only to reproduce a structure of domination which subordinates Third World intellectuals to First World ones, and anthropologists' subjects to anthropologists themselves. They deal with the banalities of practice and political economy, while We trade in theory, discourse, the microphysics of power. Thus, while I maintain that understanding the Rabín Ahau is relevant for understanding Guatemala's situation, I take its relevance to be proven in my analysis.

Cornel West's (1988) outline of a neo-Gramscian approach to the oppression of Afro-American peoples guides this endeavor. He distinguishes three moments in this approach, which he calls *modes of domination, forms of subjugation, and types of exploitation and oppression* (22). The first moment is genealogical, the moment of discourse analysis; the second is microinstitutional and deals with styles and identities; while the third is macrostructural, political economic in the most inclusive sense (21-22). These moments are not levels of determination; all three structure both oppression and the possibilities for resisting oppression. The separation between them is analytic; in operation they are radically inseparable. Nor can the analysis of one variety of racial oppression be transferred to another: race and racism are always specific (as are, I would add, the ways in which they interact with gender). This framework permits an understanding of processes of subjection which is at once historical and multidimensional.

I have reordered and reconceived West's moments as follows. Section one is an overview of the process of Guatemalan state formation since its colonial beginnings. Using Corrigan and Sayer's work on state formation, I treat the state not as a thing, but as a process through which subjects' understanding of their world is ordered. The historical emergence of different Guatemalan categories of personhood and the social geography which maps these categories in the national territory and keeps them in a state of terror

represent West's types of exploitation and oppression. Section two treats modes of domination, deconstructing the discourses of race, gender, and sexuality in whose terms the communities of "the Indian" and "the Guatemalan" are imagined. In section three I examine the Rabín Ahau itself: the categories and discourses of the previous moments are engaged and "biology and structure are put in right relation" (Turner 1967:93) through the ritual process of the pageant. The Rabín Ahau is one of the institutional sites where forms of subjugation are acted out and upon.

The Rabín Ahau is one element in the larger oppression of Guatemala's indigenous people. Its frivolity is an important tool with which the relations of power that produce this oppression are able to operate in the commonsense, everyday world. Moreover, its frivolity makes available strategies of resistance to subjugation. Conceived as stasis, as the place of the really real where nothing really happens, any movement in the space of the Rabín Ahau loosens, however minimally, the pins which hold Maya women's bodies on the display board of official history.¹ The question, Who is the Maya daughter of the Guatemalan king? should provoke suspicion in anyone familiar with Guatemalan history; suspicion animates this examination of how the question is asked and answered.

¹I am grateful to Daniel Nugent for suggesting this metaphor.

State Formation and Indigenous Communities

Introduction

In the introduction to *Guatemalan Indians and the State: 1540 to 1988*, Smith deciphers "the main political dialectic in Guatemala in the relations of power and culture embedded in the two institutions of community and state" (1990a:11-12). Indeed, the Indian community is the first in the series of collectivities represented by the Rabín Ahau. The most common reason given for candidates' participation in the event was that they wanted to "*representar a su pueblo*," to represent their village. When I pressed them as to what it might mean to "represent" their community, they treated the question as stupid and unnecessary. What does the transparency of the meaning of community in fact conceal?

Community and State Formation

The "closed corporate peasant community" (Wolf 1957) is a standard actor in the anthropological literature on Guatemala and southeastern Mexico. As Stavenhagen (1970:236) defines it, it is "distinguished from others through its clothing, dialect, membership, and participation in a religious and political structure of its own." Over these traits much debate has swirled. Are they a pre-Hispanic survival, a product of the colonial administration, or an

accommodation to a plantation economy in the capitalist world system? Is the community endangered, dying, or already dead?

Other writers have dismissed the static definition of community on which this debate rests. Rather than conceiving of community as an institutional structure, Watanabe calls it "a problematic social nexus that must also be explained in its own terms" (1990:184). Conjoined in this nexus, he argues, are "place, as an ongoing here and now, with individuals committed to the emergent possibilities and conditions of that place" (1992:12). Out of this conjunction, "premises about how to get along in that place with those people" (1992:12) are formulated in conventional strategies, both technical and cultural. Community is produced in the interaction of people, place, and premises. Smith has argued that the Indian community is the result of an ongoing negotiation between Guatemala's indigenous people and state attempts to subordinate them. Community is thus the point at which local and global forces intersect and domination is negotiated (1984:109). Incursions by the state, in her view, are rejected or transformed by the community to its own ends, and "the cultural distinctiveness of Indian communities itself remains a visible repudiation of state attempts to create a national hegemonic culture" (1990:17).

In approaching the problem of Indian community through the lens of state formation, I concur in this understanding of community as emergent and

resistant, and Indians as creatively engaging relations of power as members of communities. I take issue, however, with Watanabe's definition of culture as a set of conventions, and Smith's notion of the state, and thus of community, as coherent institutions. The literature on state formation departs from Abrams's (1988:82) insight that "the state is not the reality which stands behind the mask of political practice. It is itself the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is." Instead of the state, he proposes to study the "politically organized subjection" (1988:63), the state system, which gives rise to the idea of the state. Corrigan and Sayer expand this argument (1985), holding that "the repertoire of activities and institutions conventionally identified as 'the State' are cultural forms" (3), the cultural forms of life under capitalism. State formation is a project of moral regulation which both totalizes as members of a collectivity and individualizes as distinct categories of person the subjects within what are simultaneously constructed as the collectivity's bounds. It revolutionizes in its production of social identities and geographies "the way in which the world is made sense of" (1-2), through "state activities, forms, routines and rituals" (2). The dialectic of community and state to which Smith refers is, in fact, the precipitate of a peculiarly Guatemalan process of state formation.

In subsequent work, Sayer and others writing on state formation have emphasized its irreducible historical specificity, which, in Sayer's words,

"establishes severe limitations on the degree to which concepts and metaphors that we found helpful may be applied elsewhere" (1994:2). In a world capitalist system, Guatemala occupies a very different position than the England of *The Great Arch*. Guatemalan state formation, likewise, has taken a very different turn: while Corrigan and Sayer are treating the formation of a "bourgeois social order" (1985:187), the "permanent counterinsurgency" which regulates everyday life in Guatemala is difficult to characterize simply as "bourgeois." As Nugent and Joseph (1994:18) note in the case of Mexico, unravelling the contradictions presented by specific processes of state formation -- dissipating the "mask" which is a particular state -- is no easy task. I introduce, therefore, Taussig's (1992) idea of the Nervous System. The Nervous System is the "chronic state of emergency" (13); it is the confusion of order and disorder which makes and unmakes the Indian community and the Guatemalan state. The Nervous System does not only perform the violence of abstraction on bodies, but also the violence of genocide and torture; it is the mask of "terror as usual" (Taussig 1987) which allows the first kind of violence to go unnoticed and the second to appear extraordinary, when in fact they construct the forms of everyday life.

While the relations which produce community and state are the focus of this section, I note as a methodological point that gender is a primary mode by which processes of state formation classifies its subjects. Invoking gender as a

category of analysis further problematizes any stable or *a priori* understanding of what constitutes a community or a state, for they are always already internally riven by gender. This invocation implies not simply an occasional mention of what women and men were doing differently, but an understanding of how the power relations inscribed in community and state are also processes which differentiate male subjects from female (cf. Scott 1986; di Leonardo 1992). Unfortunately, the literature on Guatemala addresses gender's role in the historical formation of Indian communities little if at all. At moments gender's traces, if not its empirical content, can nonetheless be distinguished. I will signal these as they arrive, but a more complete discussion of contemporary constructions of gender as they intersect with notions of "the Indian" will be reserved for the next chapter.

Guatemalan State Formation

The conquistadors of what is now Guatemala encountered on their arrival in 1524 densely populated and complex societies. Out of the havoc and depredations wrought by representatives of the Spanish Crown on its new subjects, a coherent system of secular and ecclesiastic colonial rule emerged. Its smallest units were the *pueblos de indios*. These settlements of indigenous people, with limited communal lands, and tribute and forced labor obligations, were concentrated in the populous Western highlands. This left the Eastern lowlands to be progressively populated by *castas*. *Castas* were the Spanish

Crown's attempt to regulate the liaisons which took place between conquerors and conquered (often under conditions of coercion of indigenous women by Spanish men) from the earliest days of the colony. The Crown created legal categories for each variety of miscegenous offspring. The *castas'* "impure blood" denied them the corporate rights of either indigenous, *naturales*, or the Spaniards and their legitimate heirs. The *pueblo* was thus a racial as well as geographical construct.

The province of Guatemala, capital of the Audiencia General de Guatemala, was an important administrative center with little in the way of easily extractable natural resources: power lay in access to the labor and tribute of the *pueblos de indios* rather than to the land. The Guatemalan *pueblos* developed, therefore, as political institutions (Smith 1984:88) with, furthermore, an autonomy of sorts:

On the one hand, no one but the church or Crown had easy access to Indian labor or products in Guatemala. But on the other hand, the church and Crown directly exploited Indians in Guatemala rather than acting as mediators between them and Spanish settlers. This kept most Guatemalan Indians more isolated from non-Indian settlers than Indians in other parts of the New World. It also prevented the rise of a powerful landed oligarchy in the province, holding power independent of the state (Smith 1990b:74).

The terms in which Smith's dialectic takes place have their roots in the colonial period.

Following Independence, a Liberal attempt at legislating away "corporate privileges," such as those of the *pueblos*, now called *municipios*, met quickly with failure. A peasant rebellion, with the collusion of Conservatives, brought Rafael Carrera, himself a *casta*, to the presidency. Under Carrera the "protection" which colonial policies had offered indigenous people was restored. Cochineal replaced indigo as Guatemala's export crop; unlike indigo, which was grown on large plantations, cochineal could be produced by peasants with small holdings. The cochineal trade, in bringing new prosperity to peasant communities, stratified them (Barillas et al. 1989:108), and may have made easier the reconstruction of Guatemala into a coffee economy after Justo Rufino Barrios, the "Reformer," took power in 1871 (Smith 1984:92).

The new regime required registration and titles for all municipal and communal lands. While indigenous communities managed to retain 55 percent of the lands they had formerly held, the other 45 percent, largely located in the fertile Verapaces and Pacific piedmont, were sold to non-indigenous Guatemalans or European immigrants (Davis 1988a:81), who, by dint of intermarriage and shared economic interest, came to form "one of the smallest but most powerful coffee oligarchies in Central America (Smith 1990b:84). In twelve years, from 1871 to 1893, close to 100,000 acres changed hands, leaving many indigenous without a means of survival other than working on the new coffee *fincas* (Davis 1988a:83)

Deeming economic pressures insufficient for producing the laborers needed to grow coffee, the Reformer reintroduced the *mandamiento*, the forced labor laws of the colony, and passed legislation requiring workers to carry documentation of their work at all times. *Finqueros* hired labor contractors to bring recalcitrant indigenous down to the coast, entrapping them in debt or with brute force. These laws and practices were regulated by an expanding bureaucracy and enforced by a growing military apparatus: the government's budget for "Governance" increased almost 300% from 1870 to 1890, while that for "War" grew almost 500% in the same time (McCreery 1990:105).

Handy (1991:47) and McCreery (1990:106) note that this did not destroy Indian communities, for the seasonal nature of coffee-growing and the fact that indigenous grew most of the country's subsistence crops made the preservation of some peasant production possible. It did, however, produce a new category of person, the *ladino*. Conceived as people with some Spanish blood, *ladinos* came to occupy the intermediary positions between Indians and oligarchs -- small merchants, small-scale cultivators of cash crops, plantation or state agents, soldiers. Less fortunate *ladinos* were landless workers, living permanently on *fincas* or in urban centers.

According to Smith (1990b), this racial distinction preexisted the coffee era and was seized upon by the European-descended elite as a useful tool for stratifying and dividing a subaltern population. The proliferation and blurring

of *castas* had proved impossible to control and all "mixes" had indeed been subsumed under the term "*ladino*" by Barrios's time. The translation is not automatic, however. These new designations, Indian and *ladino*, describe positions won and lost in the fight to retain municipal autonomy. Indians, I hold, were not those remained racially pure, but rather those who literally stood their ground through the furies of plantation building. *Ladinos* were those who lost it, joined to those who had lost theirs centuries before. Their loss, however, was a gain in the racial hierarchy.

"Indian" and "*municipio*" took on their meanings as relational terms.

Beleaguered communities countered the pressures against them

by strengthening a subculture of resistance that interacted infrequently with formal local government and by elaborating a village market system that was, in the main part, controlled by Indians. Both of these actions were clearly attempts at "disengagement" from the state (Handy 1991:48).

Early ethnographers of Guatemala encountered this "subculture of resistance" in the 1920s and 30s, and misrecognized its defining attributes -- endogamy, internal regulation of land distribution, distinct dress, dialect, and religious customs, notably the *cofradía* or civil-religious hierarchy -- as the eternal nature of the Maya community. But although they erred in locating the origins of these practices in the mythic pre-Hispanic past, it would equally be an error to assert their essential inauthenticity. Rather, a community's invention of tradition (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983), its *costumbres*, became a powerful moral

regulator of passage in and out of the community, and thus of the community's distinctiveness from other communities and from *ladinos* both inside and outside its bounds (Smith 1990c; Watanabe 1990, 1992).

More data on the status and activities of women in Indian communities in this period is critical. Was it at this point that conditions arose which make possible the Rabín Ahau's representation of the boundaries of the community by the boundaries of its women? Required is a detailed examination of how the exchange of women implied by community endogamy affected women; how the wives of members of the *cofradías* participated in civil-religious ceremony; how kinship engendered access to resources within systems of land distribution; and how the division of labor within the community, and particularly between footlooming and backstrap looming, which are characteristically male and female tasks respectively, came about and was fixed in that form as "tradition." Moreover, one would like to know how the state's labor laws applied to women. Now, entire families migrate to coffee *fincas* for the picking season, and in photographs contemporary with the early coffee period, women are certainly in evidence laboring alongside men; but it seems likely that the passbook law referred only to men. These matters have been little studied, and they are not the crux of this work: for the moment, they must remain questions.

The "coffee caudillo" system of rule pioneered by Barrios reached its apogee under Jorge Ubico (1931-1944). Aging Guatemalan oligarchs still sigh for *los tiempos de Don Jorge* as an era of peace, order, and prosperity. This golden age was underwritten by a vagrancy law requiring laborers with over ten *cuerdas* of land to work 100 days a year, and those with fewer than ten to work 150 days a year on public works or *fincas* (Warren 1989:150), by a ban on all political meetings, and by a strong and active military to enforce this legislation. Indian villagers from San Andrés Semetabaj, notes Warren (1989:151) valued Ubico's emphasis on mandatory primary schooling, introduced but not insisted on from the time of Barrios. Intellectuals and junior officers in the military, however, took umbrage at Ubico's dictates. In 1944, when this discontent had become more general and popular uprisings were taking place in both the city and the countryside, a revolutionary *junta* seized control of the government and held elections.

The revolutionary governments of Juan José Arévalo and Colonel Jacob Arbenz attempted, in Handy's (1991:49) words "to enlarge dramatically the 'positive' functions of state institutions and curtail the power and scope of the 'negative and repressive' instruments." These positive functions included rural education initiatives, fomenting labor unions and passing labor and social security legislation which favored workers (Handy 1991:50). Moreover, they sought to strengthen the powers of municipal governments and advocated

open elections to positions of municipal authority (Handy 1991:53). The Agrarian Reform Law, passed in 1952, was the culmination of this pro-worker, pro-peasant policy and attested to the growing importance of the Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajadores (Guatemalan Worker's Party), in the coalition which made up Arbenz's power base. This law was ultimately to prove Arbenz's undoing; expropriations and redistributions were contested, accusations of Communism began to fly, the Guatemalan elite feared for its property, and American corporate interests in Guatemala appeared threatened. In 1954 a CIA-backed coup by exiled army officers "liberated" the nation, meeting little resistance from the internal Armed Forces, who had become disillusioned with Arbenz's failure to support them in the face of growing rural unrest (Handy 1991:52).

While Indian rebellions (notably, the massacre at Patzicía where fifteen *ladinos* -- and an "uncountable number" of Indians -- were killed (Adams 1990:146)) had, in 1944, contributed to the instability which enabled a coup, the new regime maintained an ambivalent relationship to the majority indigenous population. Adams (1990) cites contemporary editorials characterizing Indians as lazy and vicious, and calling for their forcible incorporation into the "nation;" the Arévalo and Arbenz administrations were of much the same opinion (1990:155). The creation of the Instituto Indigenista Nacional was one means by which they addressed the "Indian problem." Handy (1991) argues

that rural politicization campaigns by "revolutionary parties" as created conflict in rural *municipios*, bringing violence rather than the "progress" intended. Warren notes that villagers who lived through the revolutionary period perceived it as "promot[ing] antagonism between Indians and *ladinos*" (1989:154) and having little impact on material conditions. Davis holds, however, that the politicization of rural areas made possible the organization of cooperatives in the next two decades (1988:16).

The coup marked a return to and renewal of what Handy calls the state's "negative functions." In the thirty years after 1954, there would be only one civilian head of state. At first erratically and then with increasing cogency and brutality, "permanent counterinsurgency" solidified as the system of rule. In the sixties, Marxist guerrilla groups began to operate in mostly *ladino* eastern Guatemala and in urban areas; paramilitary groups and death squads, some with official party connections, sprang up apace. Under Carlos Arana Osorio, "the Butcher of Zacapa," "the process of terror" (Aguilera Peralta 1980) took shape. Thousands were massacred, and mass arrests and assassinations of prominent left-wing and centrist public figures were common between 1966 and 1974. The campaign exhausted the guerrilla movement for the moment. Funding and support for counterinsurgency was provided less by the *cafetalero* oligarchy than by the industrial and financial bourgeoisie emerging out of the Central American Common Market, and by the United States government, free

with its Cold War and post-Cuban-revolution aid to any regime that promised anti-Communism.

Post-coup governments invited the Acción Católica (Catholic Action) to install missions in Indian communities. This was intended as a counterinsurgent measure: AC priests were to bring Indians under the national auspices, keeping them from the subversions their seemingly new politicization and historic distinctiveness might induce. Indeed, the mission had its desired effect: by converting a younger generation to more "orthodox" Catholicism, AC broke up the authority of the *principales*, the leaders of the older *cofradía* hierarchy, and in so doing, provoked a questioning of the *costumbre* which marked the boundaries of the *principales'* closed *municipios*. A split between *costumbristas* and Catholics grew along generational and ideological lines (Arias 1986, 1990; Warren 1989). Catholics abandoned participation in the *cofradías*, and began to cultivate crops other than corn. The relationship to *traje* changed, too: footlooming was engulfed by industrial looms, and young men, going out more often into the *ladino* world and often passing for *ladinos* while they were there, wore *traje* less and less frequently. Women continued to wear and weave *traje*, but also began to sell the products of their backstrap looms, creating fewer variations on the *municipio's* specific design, and thus standardizing the *huipil* for the growing market in textiles (Warren 1989:155-60). Throughout this period, too, landholdings decreased in

size or were lost to smallholders altogether, increasing landlessness and accelerating migration to the coast (Davis 1988b:15).

Vatican II and the new Liberation Theology radicalized these capitalo-catholic developments. Lay catechist groups, formed to supplement evangelical efforts, started literacy campaigns using Paolo Freire's radical "pedagogy of the oppressed," and organized study groups raising awareness of citizens' and peasants' rights under the Guatemalan constitution (Arias 1990:240-41). Schools were built in rural areas. Agricultural and weaving cooperatives were also formed within communities, with the aid of the AC clergy, both to market production more efficiently and to lobby politically for land and community rights (Warren 1989:157). The importance of these efforts was accentuated when the 1973 oil crisis provoked a recession in the Guatemalan economy as a whole and intensified rural poverty, driving people off their land (Arias 1990:240), and still more by the devastating earthquake of 1976, which killed 20,000 and left one million homeless (Arias 1990:243).

The Indian bourgeoisie, who lived in departmental capitals rather than outlying *municipios*, began to press for indigenous representation at the national level, standing candidates to the 1974 elections and forming an indigenist political party, Patinamit. Arias argues that the indigenism of this movement derived from a new valuation of "Indian culture":

this meaning was born of the need to reelaborate the symbolic codes of the older traditions in order to form a new worldview that would make entrance into modernity possible without adding to the contradictions and internal disintegration threatening the Indian community. (Arias 1990:245)

The conservative impulse behind this and its lack of real results failed to engage poorer indigenous, and they turned to increasingly radical alternatives, marching on the capital several times in 1977. In 1978 the Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC) was formed, taking as its mandate the struggle of all rural poor, but also the struggle of indigenous people against racism. Menchú describes the movement:

The CUC started growing; it spread like fire among the peasants in Guatemala. We began to understand that the root of all our problems was exploitation. That there were rich and poor and that the rich exploited the poor -- our sweat, our labor. That's how they got richer and richer. The fact that we were always waiting in offices, always bowing to the authorities, was part of the discrimination Indians suffered. So was the cultural oppression which tries to divide us by taking away our traditions and prevents unity among our people (1983:118).

Competing attempts, *costumbrista*, bourgeois, and radical, to construct a specifically Indian basis for political action divided indigenous communities, to the extent that for the first time *ladino* intervention seemed desirable to certain sectors within the community. The *principales* of Nebaj in the Ixil triangle called in the army in 1973 and 1975 to rid the area of guerrillas, including fellow villagers (Arias 1990:247); the party Patinamit supported General Romeo

Lucas García in the 1978 presidential elections (Arias 1990:246). These would prove to be truly Faustian bargains.

The guerrilla movement was renewed in the late 1970s and certain groups, particularly the Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres (EGP), which operated in the Ixil triangle and the north of El Quiché, for the first time recruited indigenous people, men and women, to the armed struggle. It seems indigenous were not responding as much to the righteousness of the guerrillas' cause as they were to multiplying attacks by the army on individuals and communities (Davis 1988:23). Nonetheless, their participation gave Lucas García and his brother Benedicto (after 1981 head of the counterinsurgency campaign) a pretext for declaring all Indians insurgent, along with a substantial percentage of non-Indians. Manz describes their strategy: "No distinction was made between combatants and civilians, no rules of war were followed, and there were no prisoners of war" (1988:17). During their regime, some 400 villages were wiped out, 50,000 people killed, and one million more displaced from their homes, forced to hide and run for years in the jungle, or to seek asylum in Mexico or points North (Manz 1988). This gleeful and indiscriminate killing spree horrified even the U.S. government, which, under Jimmy Carter, cut off aid in 1977. No counting or recounting of incidents can convey the extent of the violence. Only the military high command came out well: they seized massive landholdings in the agriculturally rich Zona Reina

and made themselves millionaires for the price of the worst human rights record in the Western hemisphere.

The violence in a few short years completely altered Guatemala's landscape, literal and imagined. McCormack's *Harvest of Violence* (1988) collects anthropologists' analyses of the changes wrought in the communities in which they had worked. He notes that the army distinguished four levels of "subversion" in Indian communities -- from 'free of subversion but under watch' to 'in enemy hands,' with intermediate stages -- and laid out a different strategy of military response for each level (McCormack 1988:xv). No village, thus, was unaffected. Communities were torn apart: people were picked off and killed, their bodies dumped in other villages; in some villages, local death squads formed and informers turned neighbors against one another. No one was free of suspicion, either of being a subversive or of being an *oreja*, an informer. Communities were also torn from their spiritual and physical roots in the land: Wilson (1991) notes that Q'eqchí, forced to flee their villages and hide in the jungle, were unable to practice their worship of local guardian mountain spirits because they did not know the spirits in the areas to which they were relocated. The army's scorched earth policy destroyed much of the rural area's means of agricultural subsistence, and fear made those in outlying communities abandon their distant fields and their settlements for more central ones. Many villages simply did not survive. The legacy of this period,

memories of violence, suspicion and terror, is such, Davis argues, that "it is legitimate to refer to [it] as part of a more encompassing 'culture of fear'" (1988:27). A critical component of the culture of fear is silence about the reasons for fear: as Warren (1993) shows for San Andrés Semetabaj, people are reluctant to refer to the period except obliquely as "*la violencia*" and yet terror and suspicion structure everyday experience.

Under Lucas García, the military established a decisive break with the oligarchy, and in the process, its own ascendancy. While the oligarchy had stood silently by through the violence, happy to let the military rid Guatemala of those troublesome subversives, the Lucas García brothers' excesses cost money. Moreover, the High Command, thanks to its plundering of Indian land and government coffers, was in a newly strong economic position. Anderson and Simon (1987) argue that the break was over taxation: the oligarchy resented the military's usurping their position and wanted either to return to an Ubican symbiosis or to "modernize" the civil sector (Smith 1987), while the military wanted the oligarchy to pay not only for services rendered, but also to fund a whole new national project: for the military "to consolidate itself as the central institution within the state, in a society whose central institution is to be, in turn, the state and not the private business community" (Anderson & Simon 1987:12).

The army proposed to accomplish this through a combination of repression and development. When I met officers from the military Zone of Cobán, their conversation, for my anthropological edification, was largely about the problem of Guatemala's backwardness and her development through national integration. Two institutions are key to this plan insofar as Indians are concerned: civil defense patrols and model villages or development poles. The former aims to make the Indian community self-policing and, indeed, self-terrorizing; the latter is a community built to facilitate surveillance (Anderson & Simon 1987; Smith 1990d; Manz 1988). The army has begun to build roads through the countryside it so recently cleansed: the North, historically isolated by its mountainous geography, is now served by some of the best roads in the nation, giving *militares* easy access to their new *fincas*. The masses displaced by the violence and the erosion of traditional economies supply cheap labor to a newly industrial Guatemala, and foreign aid has returned since the mid-eighties with the "transition to democracy," targeting, according to Smith (1990d:23), those villages where women wear *traje*. Protestant evangelicals, also with international connections, have made many converts among indigenous. Although they slowed somewhat after 1983, human rights abuses have never ceased, and in 1993-94 were once again becoming more frequent. The picture of an "ideologically new" Guatemala, suited up for twenty-first century capitalism, and complete with a docile Indian population, emerges.

This is, of course, not the only picture. Guatemala could not continue to be the international pariah it was in 1982 and become the legitimate nation of which the military dreamed. Under Ríos Montt (1982-83), counterinsurgency went private:² the practice of terror was delegated to paramilitary groups with no official connection to the army or the regime, while officially-perpetrated violence took place under the rubric of the elimination of corruption. Under Mejía Victores (1983-85), the "transition to democracy" was prepared (Anderson & Simon 1987). Observers have rightly minimized the ability of the democratic governments which took power after 1985 to act with any autonomy from the military: to this day, no investigation of military war crimes has been conducted because the military will not agree to it. Under Ramiro de León Carpio, the current civilian Head of State and a former United Nations human rights ombudsperson, human rights abuses have increased; his own cousin's assassination, which his widow and other commentators accuse the army of perpetrating, remains uninvestigated. Still, it has not been possible to entirely silence dissidents in Guatemala or elsewhere.

Rigoberta Menchú's 1992 Nobel Prize is the most visible marker of this dissidence (and, as such, a profound embarrassment to the powerful), but organizations like the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (GAM) or the Comité Nacional

² Daniel Nugent notes the similarity of this phenomenon to the simultaneous privatization of prisons in the United States, suggesting that this practice is world-historical and not simply Guatemalan.

de Viudas Guatemaltecas (CONAVIGUA), groups of relatives and widows of the disappeared, as well as the CUC, maintain an active political presence in Guatemala despite death threats against their leaders. Refugees are trickling back from Mexico, although with little official support and much army harassment, and the much reduced guerrilla coalition, the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG), has entered discussions with business and church leaders and, since late 1993, negotiations with the army. Furthermore, it seems that the military was unable to impose its will in the constitutional scuffle created by President Serrano's failed "self-coup" last summer. De León Carpio, perceived as a progressive, came to power after mass protest in Guatemala and international disapproval of the army's candidate for president forced the army to rescind its support and acclaim de León Carpio instead.

The Nervous System

This, then, is the shape of Guatemala's Nervous System. The "process of terror" first developed under Arana Osorio is the perverse and logical conclusion of the totalizing and individualizing techniques of state formation. Indiscriminate mass slaughter and the ever-present threat of being labelled "subversive" erase local and particular histories in the most literal sense, and constitute the population as an eternally suspicious and insurgent totality. Hence the frequent shameless admissions on the part of army officials that

they will kill half the population if necessary to rid the country of subversion. In fact, they would kill the whole population: subversion is not a tumor, it is a terminal cancer, spread throughout the body politic, invisible and incurable, but always needing treatment. A colonel I met in 1993 told me that his job was to protect national sovereignty by eradicating *desafectos*, those not in agreement, and that these were around every corner, despite estimates that the entire armed insurgency now consists at most of 300 people.

Death threats, disappearances and torture, on the other hand, individualize. The arbitrariness of state classificatory practices is literally embodied by these techniques in disfigurements or violations of the body: intellectuals, for example, often have their tongues cut out; women are routinely raped. Signs of Indianness, like wearing *traje*, marked one for death in the early eighties. While categories are always unstable, the state of terror reveals how they are critically, urgently so: their boundaries are clearly marked by pain and death and are yet always shifting. The culture of fear regulates this contradiction, and it is this, rather than a simple act of ordering, which is the heart of state formation in Guatemala.

The transparency of community and the act of representing community as a participant in the Rabin Ahau is an assertion of order within the Nervous System. It derives its strength from a 500 year process of state formation and is to be understood in relation to Guatemalan state forms; it is a complex

assertion not easily understood in terms like "power" and "resistance" or "hegemonic" and "counterhegemonic." That is, this claim to order does not disrupt relations of power, for it is always already internally disrupted by relations of power. It is not the claim itself, therefore, but how the claim is made and received in different contexts including the Rabín Ahau that makes it significant. Community in the shaky and problematic sense of a claim to "a particular Mayan place" is the foundation upon which the mythical edifice of the Rabín Ahau rests; to what extent it can be made by Maya people in a particular Mayan way is at stake.

Nation and Subnation: Indian Women and Authenticity

Introduction

For Anderson (1991) the "central problem of nationalism" is its power to compel people "not so much to kill, as willingly to die" in its name (7). The "imagined political community" of the nation is understood as a "deep, horizontal comradeship" between its members. By this definition, Guatemala's nationhood is highly problematic. Comradeship in the Nervous System is too fraught with betrayal, suspicion, and violence to be deep; remembering fratricide is no nationalist "reassurance" (199) when it is too much a part of the everyday to be forgotten. Indeed, the "national question" has preoccupied Guatemalan pundits and students of Guatemala since a sovereign Guatemala was first imagined.

The "national question" is constantly metamorphosing into the "Indian question." The problem of Guatemalan nationalism is formulated as the problem of incorporating Guatemala's majority Indian population into the nation. This commonsensical opposition sums up the paradox of nation-building in postcolonial societies and demonstrates the centrality of race-making to the process. A Guatemalan people committed heart, body, and soul to the Guatemalan land: to imagine this community, caught in the interstices between the universal claims of Enlightenment reason and the particularities of

Guatemala's location in time and space, has required a differentiation between "supnationals," "nationals," and "subnationals" within the national territory.

These different groups are given concreteness, as Alonso notes, "by articulating spatial, bodily, and temporal matrices through the everyday routines, rituals, and policies of the state system" (1994:4). As these matrices come together in a bodily *hexis*, "a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of *feeling* and *thinking*" (Bourdieu 1977:93-94, ital. orig.), they are naturalized and can command the "deep attachments" that characterize nationalism. When bodies and desire are thus conjoined, gender and sexuality become critical mediators of the process of identity formation (Parker et al. 1992). For nation-building purposes in Guatemala, the different groups invoked in the "national question" are engendered and eroticized in hierarchical relations.

In the previous chapter, I outlined macrostructural aspects of the state system; this chapter will examine how the logic of those types of exploitation is mediated by "various hegemonic... philosophies of identity that suppress difference, heterogeneity, and multiplicity" (West 1988:23). Accepting Anderson's assertion that "nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" (1991:3), I take nationalism as such a philosophy of identity, one with which other ways of identifying must necessarily contend. Accordingly, I will deconstruct discourses of Guatemalan

nationalism to understand the terms in which the Rabín Ahau is able to transcend reality and become "really real."

Nation, Ethnicity, Race

The nation, for Anderson, arose in the Enlightenment's "'relativization' and 'territorialization'" (1991:17) of the great religious and dynastic realms which preceded it. It was made possible by "the *interplay* between fatality, technology, and capitalism" (1991:43, ital. orig.). Fatality is the fact of human linguistic diversity; technology is the printing press; capitalism makes possible the commodification and dissemination of national print languages in mass-produced books and newspapers. This interplay made possible a revolution in the apprehension of time and space; communing with one another in consuming these commodities, subjects synchronized themselves with a community of fellow citizens, in a bounded social entity moving forward in "'homogeneous, empty time'" (1991:24), the time of clock and calendar.

Founded on a consciousness of shared difference, the nation is always "limited and sovereign" (1991:7); it presupposes a world of nation-states, with no space left unbounded. And although this world is of recent vintage, it is believed to transcend history: "If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into a limitless future" (1991:11-12). From its appearance in the New World at the

end of the eighteenth century to its "last wave" in twentieth-century anti-colonial struggles, nationalism developed as a "modular" cultural artefact, "capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains" (1991:4), working along the way its magic of converting chance into destiny and the recent into the primordial.

Chatterjee criticizes the determinist "sociologism" of Anderson's argument, his failure to notice "the twists and turns, the suppressed possibilities, the contradictions still unresolved" (1986:22) in twentieth-century nationalism. He calls anti-colonial nationalism "a different discourse, yet one that is dominated by another" (1986:42). That is, nationalist thought, whatever its content of rejection of colonialism and appeal to tradition or to the pre-colonial past, is always constrained to reason within the forms of Enlightenment thought which colonialism brought (1986:38). Nationalism, then, cannot ultimately challenge "the legitimacy of the marriage between Reason and capital" (1986:168); it must always "find for 'the nation' a place in the global order of capital, while striving to keep the contradictions between capital and the people in perpetual suspension" (1986:168). Postcolonial nationalism can never transcend the tension between the posited universality of the nation-state and the particularity of the nation to which it is attempting to give shape.

In "A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation Across Ethnic Terrain," Williams distinguishes between two categories of citizen in the nation-state: "(a) those who claim ideologically patterns institutionalized in the nation's civic arenas as their 'tribal' past and (b) those identified with patterns not consistent with the institutionalized ones" (1989:412). She argues that much of the literature on ethnicity labels the first category "non-ethnic" and reserves the tag of ethnicity for the second category. The possibility of defining them thus

is a consequence of the ideological linkages between the forms of deference and demeanor (the cultural enactments) and the phenotypical characteristics (cultural embodiments) that the most powerful members of that society institutionalize in civil society and employ in social circles to determine who, among persons of different 'tribal pasts,' is trustworthy and loyal to the political unit (1989:419).

The trope of "blood" is enlisted in the service of this distinction, such that "blood, not language or the other cultural products of 'racial genius,' remains synechdochic for identity and purity" (1989:431). Chatterjee's "contradictions between capital and the people" which are suspended and mediated in the postcolonial nation are, in fact, worked out as a conflict between different "bloods," between "non-ethnic" and "ethnic," or "national" and "subnational" groups within the nation-state.

As Alonso notes, following Szwed, "somatic and style of life indexes" are systematically conflated in both social scientific and practical life, rendering a

distinction between the categories of "ethnicity" and "race" one of nuance rather than kind (1994:15). She (1994) and Williams (1989) hold that the categories of ethnicity, race, and nation are produced by the same processes, of which they "competitively label different aspects" (Williams 1989:426). Alonso calls these processes spatialization, temporalization, and substantialization (1994). The geographies, histories, and bodies created by state formation are summoned up and forced to dance with one another in different and hierarchically ordered figures of identity. To treat these figures as the given of an analysis rather than its problem is to concede them the primordial nature to which they lay claim and grant them "misplaced concreteness" (Alonso 1994:1).

Soldiers and Indians in Guatemala

Much of the literature on the "national/Indian question" in Guatemala falls into the trap of misplaced concreteness. Thus, Adams (1989) sees continuity in five hundred years of race relations in Guatemala, a "Conquest Tradition" of hatred and fear between Indians and *ladinos*, which is "played out through a dialectic of performances that reproduce all of this, generation after generation" (1989:124). Similarly, Smith, even as she deconstructs the "linear history" which would trace current race relations to the colonial period, explains them "by the way in which certain political contests between Guatemala's Indians and its other groups were temporarily won or lost" (1990b:73). These accounts of Guatemala's history cannot escape reproducing

the very Guatemalan ideologies of nation and race that they seek to understand, whereby Indians are constituted as a group successfully resisting the advances of the nation, and, moreover, a group whose blood is the guarantor of its purity.

To extricate this analysis from that trap, I turn to Williams's notion of "the classificatory moment of purification" (1989:429) against which races and nations are measured. This moment is the foundation "for the construction of myths of homogeneity out of the realities of heterogeneity that characterize all nation building" (1989:429). State formation makes the conditions of possibility of this moment but there is no necessary fit between state formation and nation-building or race-making. Thus, at different points in the history of a state, even in the course of nation-building, the community of the nation will be imagined differently to legitimate different and contending systems of rule.

In contemporary Guatemala, the military controls the system of rule, and it is actively engaged in its own nationalist project. The classificatory moment of purification which serves as this project's origin myth is the Conquest. In the Conquest, according to this myth, Europeans and Indians met and clashed, and Europeans proved superior. The destiny of the next five hundred years is to replay this meeting of cultures and bloods, with everything that they index, at both the individual and the societal level. Adams's notion of the "Conquest Tradition" accurately captures this ideology; he fails only to see that it, like all

traditions, is invented by specific social interests (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Other imaginings of Guatemala have derived their purity from other moments: for example, the "shared fatality of trans-Atlantic birth" (Anderson 1991:57) which motivated a *criollo* identity, whose birthright was to rule the Americas, to distinguish itself from a *peninsular* or Spanish identity. Traces of *criollo* nationalism linger on, and some elites in Guatemala continue to define themselves as *criollos* (Casaus Arzú 1992). This self-definition lays claim to Guatemala's constitutional history, the history of Conservatives and Liberals, of Barrios's Reform. Guatemala, for *criollos*, is "an entailed patrimony" (Newman 1987:53); *criollo* nationalism is a kind of *noblesse oblige*. This history, which is not the bloody one of the Conquest Tradition, also renders *criollos* susceptible to being defined out of the Guatemalan nation which the Conquest Tradition constitutes. Since Ubico's overthrow, the military has been solidifying dominance over the *cafetalero* elite; to legitimate the military's ascendance, autochthonous Guatemalanness has become a fact of blood rather than birth or ownership of land. The Indian becomes the absolute point of reference of the autochthonous, but because Indianness is absolute, it cannot operate as a bounded, calendrical entity: as a nation. The criterion of the national is *control* over the Indian, the ability to make relative the Indian absolute and enter into the absolute world of nations. Those best poised to realize the nation's destiny in this myth are *militares*.

Guatemala is delineated and carved up by the Conquest Tradition. In the national territory, subnationals, nationals, and supernationals uneasily cohabitate. The first are, of course, Indians: those who have not yet been conquered, those who are eternally subject to conquest, Guatemala's soil, its past, its heritage. The last are its civilian elite: variously self-identified as white, *criollo*, or sometimes *mestizo* or *ladino* (Casaus Arzú 1992:208), and defined by others as Europeans or whites, the elite are those whose essence comes from outside Guatemala and who are thus "not really" Guatemalan. The nationals are *ladinos*, most perfectly represented by the *militares*. As mixed people, they can lay claim to Guatemala's indigenous heritage, but also, and most importantly, to rise above it; they have subsumed the Conquest into themselves, and transcended it as the only full Guatemalans. This mythological structure is enacted in recurring tropes and practices, which subordinate Indians to *ladinos* and suppress the third term of the elite, erasing elite complicity in reproducing the structure and the real "transnational" profits derived from the strategies of reproduction. It fails entirely to include Guatemala's Caribbean *garifuna* population, which has only recently begun to be revindicated in national rhetoric, and continues to be included only as an afterthought. Mytho-logic simplifies Guatemala's complexities into a binary opposition (Williams 1989), performing in its operation discursive erasures which obtain material effect.

Alonso disagrees with Anderson that "homogeneous, empty time" is the only time of the nation; she notes, following Bakhtin, that the epic is also a nationalist genre (1994:10-12). In epic imaginings, "[t]emporal categories are valorized creating a hierarchy among past, present and future" (1994:11); these moments, invested with the moral weight of the nation, are rhetorically distributed among the nation's different groups (1994:23). Guatemala's epic relegates Indians to the past and the past to Indians, and makes the military, as the organ of development, the agent of the future. The passivity of the one and the agency of the other are regulated in the present, which is the Conquest Tradition. Bakhtin argues that the "distance between past and present is mediated by 'national tradition'" (Alonso 1994:12); tradition is a "kind of past whose essential purpose is to *debate* other pasts" (Appadurai 19??): it gives a temporal structure to the present.

The history of Indians is imagined to end with the Conquest. Carmen Pettersen's book, *Maya of Guatemala: Life and Dress*, is a *finquera's* celebration in watercolors of Guatemala's indigenous beauty; its images are ubiquitous in Guatemala's presentation of itself to tourists, and its text notes that "their natural evolution was interrupted 400 years ago" (1976:36). Modern Maya communities, then, offer direct access to the mythic past. A brochure produced by "a private funded, non-profit, non-partisan institution" for development calls the *Mundo Maya*, a multinational touristic project, "a link

between the ancient and modern worlds, a bridge the time traveller can cross." Tourism in Guatemala is "Travelling in Time." Investing in Guatemala, however, is "A Business Alternative for the Future," and the army is currently engaging in a massive propaganda campaign to identify itself with Guatemala's economic development. This includes placing signs all over Guatemala City and the countryside with messages like "*Ejército de Guatemala: Pioneros de la Paz*" [Army of Guatemala: Pioneers of Peace], or "*Mano en mano: el futuro lo construimos juntos*" [Hand in hand, we build the future together]. Indians can only enter the present by undergoing the alchemy of the Conquest Tradition. Hendrickson describes the national celebration of the day of Tecún Umán, the Quiché prince who was defeated by the conquistador of Guatemala, as a passage through epic time:

Tecún Umán, as a primordial Guatemalan being, may have been "just" an Indian, but through death, the conquest of his people, and resurrection as national hero, he is transformed (1991:291).

For everyday Indians, this alchemy is accomplished by proletarianization, dispossession, and ladinization. The Indian's choice is to remain "ancient," passive and mythical, or to enter the present as a subordinate, a supplicant of the future. Both of these options are problematic, but any attempt to articulate another challenges the chronology of the nation, and all such attempts have met with swift reprisal by the guardians of the future. The future can only be fulfilled if the past and present are kept in proper relation.

The spatialization of these temporal categories produces the national territory. Nationalism must perform an "enclosure, measurement, and commodification of space" (Alonso 1994:5), to construct an identity of person and place. In Guatemala, Indianness is always specific, not only to an ethnic and linguistic group, but to a *municipio*. A specific form of agriculture, the corn *milpa*, defines Indians' relationship to the earth; the *milpa* gives the community, and thus Indianness, its spatial structure (Annis 1989). The *municipio's* geographical limits restrict its possibilities as a basis for solidarity: shared experiences of oppression, as Menchú notes (1984:40), cannot be easily expressed except within its unit. Passages to and from the *municipio* challenge the bases of Indian personhood. On the other hand, the military's self-appointed trusteeship of the "national sovereignty," clearly indexes their conception of their own relationship to space. In the 1980s, the National Geographic Institute became the *Military* Geographic Institute, and since then it has become very difficult to obtain a topographical map of Guatemala without the military's approval. Richards (1985) argues that Guatemalan counterinsurgency is organized around a folk dichotomy, dating from the Conquest, between the urban and the rural in which "geographical isolation and an historical legacy of regional autonomy were factors accounting for the backwardness" of counterinsurgency's Indian victims (101), and in which the urban is seen as "the moral basis for society" (91). Counterinsurgency's

policies of destroying outlying hamlets and *municipios*, and reorganizing villagers into the nucleated settlements of the model villages is the logical response to this spatializing of social relations. A colonel told me that, although Indians may seem happy on their little *milpas*, they must be *forced* off them and given the opportunities to develop offered other Guatemalans. Indians are scaled to the local and situated in the rural: they are "backward" in time and space. They must find their place within the map of the *militares*, who have the free range of the nation and the moral authority of the city as tools with which to forge ever forward.

Substance presents a problem, for in the Conquest Tradition, everyone has at least *some* Indian blood. How is the race to be made, then, if not on the basis of an absolute difference? Purity of blood makes the Indian, and that purity is indexed in "*la forma de vestir y la forma de hablar*," the way of dressing and the way of talking which Indians alone have. This common guideline for "knowing the Indian" is a shorthand for saying that Indians have culture and do not have language. Indian culture, like sweat, simply comes out of their pores. Indian weavings, especially the women's *traje*, are, in the words of an Inguat (Instituto Nacional Guatemalteco de Turismo) pamphlet entitled "*Guatemala: Nuestra Identidad*" [Guatemala: Our Identity], "a door of access to Maya culture," standing in for all the rest of Indianness. The confusion of Indian substance with Indian production is so great that there is a constant

need to remind the would-be appreciator of Indian culture that there is an person inside those clothes (Pettersen 1976:11); Menchú notes in a discussion of the Rabín Ahau that "This is what hurts Indians most... they think our costumes are beautiful because it brings in money, but it's as if the person wearing it didn't exist" (1984:209). Indians, moreover, cannot speak: they can only express themselves in the woven patterns of the "traditional symbolism of their history and ancient gods" (Pettersen 1976:11). When they try to speak Spanish, they supposedly distort it, replacing all final consonants with "e" and use archaic words. An age-old Guatemalan joke genre relies on "Indian" mispronunciations of Spanish words to make puns. Rigoberta Menchú jokes, which are currently ubiquitous, update this genre (cf. Nelson 1993 for an in-depth analysis of the semiotics of these and other Rigoberta jokes). Indians cannot make speeches, either: an articulate Indian speaker is a contradiction in terms, and if one presents herself, she can only be parroting someone else's words. Hence, members of the elite were continually discussing last summer whether Rigoberta was really *inteligente* [intelligent] or merely *lista* [clever]; and the clear and reasoned protest Rosalina Tuyuc, an indigenous activist, made on the national news when a civil defense patrol killed three peaceful protestors, was a source of great astonishment. Indians are natural (indeed, one term for Indians is *naturales*); their earth, their corn, their past are their substance. They are doomed always to reproduce themselves; their substance

cannot generate anything new. Thus, the punchline of the joke, "How did Rigoberta applaud when she heard about the Nobel Prize?" has the joketeller mimic Rigoberta *tortillando*, slapping her hands together as if making corn *tortillas*, Indians' staple food.

The substance of *ladinos*, on the other hand, allows them to accede to transformative creativity and its marker, full access to speech. *Ladino* culture is not culture at all but politics, the life of the city, the motor of the future. This culture is manifested in institutions, not objects, with the possibility of using and transforming Indian objects inscribed in those institutions.

Communication and relations -- structure itself --(and the withholding of communication and regulating of relations which are critical to the state of terror) are constitutive of the *ladino* space in Guatemala. Since the "transition to democracy," public relations has become very important to the army; last summer they hired a woman as their spokesperson, which was meant to signify a "gentler, kinder" military approach to politics. The army has taken up the burden of giving voice to national concerns both inside and outside Guatemala. The products of the Guatemalan process of "*mejorando la raza*" [improving the race], whereby the Spanish blood of the Conquest releases them from the imprisonment of their Indian blood, *ladinos* can take the best of both worlds: pride in the Indian which they have conquered in themselves (cf.

Hendrickson's (1991) discussion of the use of *traje* in *ladino* ceremony), and simultaneous pride in their transcendence.

Racism, Gender, and Sexuality

This variety of anti-colonial nationalism differs in certain respects from those Chatterjee discusses. His foundational opposition between West and East is overly homogenizing and obscures the radical historical differences between the colonization of Latin America and that of Africa and Asia. Colonialism *per se* ended in Latin America in the 1820s; Enlightenment structures of thought were well established and accepted as the norm of rule by the end of the nineteenth century. Twentieth-century Guatemalan nationalism defies, therefore, not so much the rationalist inheritance of the Enlightenment as the United States imperialism which is the twentieth century's colonialism, even as the possibility of its vocalization is shored upon all sides by the fruits of U.S. imperialism – military and economic aid, foreign investment. Guatemalan nationalism positions itself as anti-colonial by following the imperative of rejecting international accountability for human rights. What "we" do with "our" Indians is nobody's business but "our" own in Guatemala. This statement makes no argument that human rights are inappropriate in the Guatemalan case; rather, it denies that any violation of human rights is taking place. Rather, human rights discourse is enlisted to protect Guatemala's "national sovereignty" from *gringo* criticism (Schirmer

1993a): "we" are all Indians when it comes to the outside world, and that is why "they" think they can order us around -- the purest evidence of "their" hypocrisy. Capital and the people, the outside and inside of Guatemala, must be kept rigorously separate and yet conjoined. This imperative enjoins violence, and the culture of terror which keeps violence always present and yet suspended.

The site of these contradictions is the Indian body. To keep anti-colonialism pure, Guatemalan nationalism must continually reinvent this object and engage it in a struggle whereby national "humanity" must be extricated from Indian "animality," albeit in the most "animal" of fashions (Balibar 1990:291). "Indian" is an evolutionary location: nationalism's aspiration to "uniformity and rationality" (Balibar 1990:283) is also a racism which transforms the subnational into the subhuman. Although overt expressions of biological racism, in Guatemala as elsewhere (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Gilroy 1990), are not fashionable, a set of discourses which reduce culture to biology and define the terms in which Indians can be talked about nonetheless reproduce their eternal objecthood. Racist discourse has a charitable and a vicious aspect: in the first, the Indian is polite, soft-spoken, loyal, traditional, and makes such beautiful and delicious things; in the second, the Indian is lazy, dirty, smelly, suspicious, subversive, ungrateful, primitive. Both aspects of the discourse are present in any discussion of "race;" their contradictions are

never exposed, for each aspect is drawn on selectively to prove whatever point is at hand or justify whatever action is called into question (Wetherell & Potter 1992). It simultaneously includes and excludes the Indian. The Indian is part of Guatemala, that which is most characteristic about it -- "our" culture, "our" tradition, "our" character, the basis for other's judgements about "us." But the Indian can never characterize others: she can never accede to the fully human, to voicing rather than being interpellated by the "we," for this is the prerogative of the nation as a whole. Guatemalan nationalism trembles with the "will to know" (Foucault 1971) the Indian; this will, enacted in everyday racism (Essed 1990), legitimates and naturalizes the space-time-substance conjunctions described above.

The sentiment of nationalism "spills into and out of libidinal economies in ways that are at once consistent and unpredictable" (Parker et al. 1992:5), argue the editors of *Nationalisms and Sexualities*. Gender and sexuality, as systems of difference, are fundamentally implicated in the nation's claim to distinctiveness; consequently, they are continually invoked by

on the one hand, the nation's insatiable need to administer difference through violent acts... And, hence, on the other, the nation's insatiable need for representational labor to supplement its founding ambivalence (ibid).

Anthias and Yuval-Davis specify five ways in which women have historically been constituted and have constituted themselves in relation to nationalist process and state practice.

- (a) as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities;
- (b) as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups;
- (c) as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture;
- (d) as signifiers of ethnic/national differences -- as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories;
- (e) as participants in national, economic, political and military struggles (1989:7).

What they do not address is the way in which the construction of an appropriate sexuality determines who will best fulfill these functions (Parker et al. 1992:6). As feminist critiques of the study of kinship have made clear (cf. Yanagisako & Collier 1987), an unproblematized understanding of "reproduction" as rooted in biological "fact" explains little about systems of kinship cross-culturally. Schneider noted in 1969 the correspondence of U.S. ideologies of kinship to U.S. ideologies of nationalism, and argued that this may indicate a more general isomorphism between the two. Studies of nationalism, like studies of kinship, must critically examine the premises which regulate "reproduction," the libidinal economies which traverse it.

Smith (1992) argues that Indian women's role in Guatemala is defined by an "anti-modern" ideology of the links between race, class, and gender. Accepting an "essentialist construct of the bases of ethnic identity" whereby

they "obtain both their identities and social positions in their communities through descent and/or biology" (1992:7), Maya women agree to maintain their own parochialism within the community, marked by dress (*traje*) and language (unilingualism in the local language), and embodied in their "modest demeanor" and shyness towards strangers. In return, they are offered autonomy within the community and "a certain personal security" (1992:8) -- respect and protection -- which *ladina* women can never have in the national, "modern" ideology of gender relations. Her thesis is supported by the rate of Maya endogamy, which, at "90-95 percent in communities now averaging about 10,000 individuals, [is] one of the highest rates of community in-marriage in the world" (1992:14). Menchú, in her description of the practices of her community, Chimele, makes assertions similar to Smith's. Her parents taught her from an early age

not to abuse my own dignity -- both as a woman and a member of our race. They always give the *ladinos* as an example. Most of them paint their faces and kiss in the street. To our parents, this was scandalous (1983:59).

Indian women have the community's support "as long as they don't break our laws" (1983:77). These laws are precisely respect for the boundaries of the community, for "when our women migrate (leave the village and come back), they bring with them all the nastiness of the world outside... which we know is disgusting" (1983:61). Menchú herself, because of her political commitments,

has been forced to break those laws and has come under community censure: "The community is very suspicious of a woman like me who is twenty-three but they don't know where I've been or where I've lived" (1983:61).

Ethnographic accounts of gendering practice in Guatemala are rare, and these are valuable. In constructing separate and opposing systems of gendering, however, they do not recognize the coexistence of these two systems in nationalism and the national territory, and the ways in which each is thereby implicated in the other. That reproduction is considered different in kind in Indian communities is interesting in itself: the distinctiveness of Indian women regulates the reproduction of Indians, while the reproduction of the nation is secured by the congress of unmarked men and women. The homologies of this account with the nationalist account of primordial Indian difference -- both anchored in the markers of dress and language -- exposes the will to know the Indian as a force of desire.

"True discourse, liberated by the nature of its form from desire and power, is incapable of recognizing the will to truth which pervades it; and the will to truth... is such that the truth it seeks to reveal cannot fail to mask it" (Foucault 1971:219). Guatemalan racist discourse seizes upon and reproduces the historically constituted specificities of Indian womanhood as the truth of the Indian. The Indian woman's body is the object of intense speculation, a

speculation which recoils in horror the moment it uncovers what it seeks. She is the object, thus, of an intensive negative eroticism.

Indian women in Guatemala are not simply desexualized: the possibility of their sexuality is continually raised only to be cast away and denigrated. While I was waiting for another anthropologist one afternoon in the town of Tactic, a young *ladino* man who had spent three years in the U.S. saw me and came over to chat me up. As he had experienced U.S. racism against Latinos, he recognized discrimination when he saw it, but said that he could still not bring himself to "*enamorar*" [flirt with, pick up; lit. "to inspire love in"] a woman in a *corte* [indigenous woman's skirt]. He feared, he said, that people would talk, and so he dismissed the possibility the moment it arose. The horror of Indian women's sexuality is made more explicit by Menchú. When she worked as a maid in Guatemala City for a *ladino* family, her fellow maid, also indigenous, but ladinized ("She wore *ladino* clothes and already spoke Spanish" (1983:91)) was fired because she refused to sexually initiate the sons of the house. Menchú, however, is not asked to serve in this capacity. The recurrent theme in her interactions with the household is how "dirty" she is, because she does not know *ladino* customs, and she says, when her companion is fired: "Perhaps [the mistress] nursed the hope that one day I'd be clean... so that one day I'd be all right to teach her sons" (1983:96). Menchú is simply too Indian for the mistress to risk her sons with.

Traje is the preeminent marker of Indianness, but, in Nelson's words, "[w]hile *traje* is supposed to do the work of administering and representing difference unproblematically, its role... is ambivalent because it both displays and covers up, and this covering up incites a desire..." (1993:5). Indian women's bodies are the objects of this desire, but this desire is scandalous. Their bodies can never be naked, that is, stand alone in their full humanity, for their nakedness would be an abomination. The Indian woman must be fused with her culture, securely wrapped in her *traje*, or else negated utterly.

Indian women can appear in the Guatemalan world, then, as one of two things: authentic or ugly, not-beautiful. The first appearance is the appropriate one. An authentic Indian woman lines up all the locations of Indianness and embodies them: she incarnates a series of metonomies whereby she stands for her *traje*, which stands for her *municipio*, which stands for her blood, which stands for her culture, which stands for the distinctiveness of Guatemala in the community of nations. The space between her history and her presence is closed: she is "really real." Thus, both tourists and elite Guatemalans can comment on the beauty of an Indian woman, or, more often a scene -- as they travel through the countryside, or contemplate photographs of "Guatemala" -- containing Indian women, but what they mean is that the spectacle as a whole is beautiful. Only rarely would they refer thus to the physical person of the woman, and if they do, it is insofar as she "looks

Maya;" that is, provides a suitable physical presence for the clothes or the scene she is occupying. Spectators at the Rabín Ahau, for instance, were able to distinguish particularly "perfect" specimens of Indian womanhood, whom they considered beautiful, but their characterization as "perfect" indicates that they are beautiful because they provide a perfect match for their *trajes*, for the spectacle. The authentic Indian woman is a rich source of aesthetic pleasure; the pleasure is offered, however, by her *difference* from the classically beautiful, rather than her beauty.

The ugly Indian woman is one who, in a manner of speaking, lets her slip show. She doesn't wear her *traje*, or doesn't wear the right one; she leaves her *municipio* or returns to it; her blood doesn't keep her from speaking; she wants to be included in Guatemala's universality, its humanity, and not just its particularity. She throws off the pleasing correspondence of the metonomies, "to restore to discourse its character as an event" (Foucault 1971:229), and sickens racism's eroticism by exposing it. Indian women who have moved to the city, who interact with *ladinos* on a daily basis, tend to fall under this rubric. Maids are thus universally ugly. Many people spoke of all the candidates to the Rabín Ahau as automatically ugly by virtue of their race, and considered the event's beauty-pageant structure a travesty, an "aping" of the truly beautiful which could only meet with ridicule. In a discussion with my uncle about the Guatemalan terms for beauty -- "*bella*" being reserved for a

woman with "classical features," while "*atractiva*" means a woman with imperfect features who is nonetheless considered pretty – I asked where Indians fit into the schema. "They don't," he said. An Indian woman's physical presence is only referred to when it is out of context; that is, the context of the idealized Guatemalan landscape depicted in touristic literature. And out of context, that presence is hateful, tolerated because it is necessary (maids must, after all, care for the bodies of others even if their own body is unworthy), ugly. The discourse of racism must reinscribe the inappropriate Indian woman in its vicious aspect, and accuse her of an excess of bodiliness, of blemishing the human ideal with her subhuman properties: in short, of being ugly. Only thus can it restore the luminous simplicity of its truth.

Resistance

Many anthropological discussions (cf. Adams 1989; Handy 1991; Hendricks 1989; Smith 1984, 1990a, 1990c; Watanabe 1990, 1992) of Guatemala privilege indigenous resistance. As noted at various points in this section, this privileging finishes by reproducing the terms of the very hegemonic discourse they challenge. Thus, indigenous people really are located in autonomous, self-reproducing, subnational communities; Indian women really are authentic. This is, in Alonso's words, engaging in anthropological "wishful thinking" (1994:24), which helps no one, least of all indigenous people. Menchú

describes the real divisions and limits the autonomy of the *municipio* imposes on counterhegemonic action:

That's what is really distressing for us Indians, because when we're together, well, we're a community, we're all from the same place, but down in the *finca* we're together with other Indians we don't know... They're all Indians but from different ethnic groups who speak different languages... It was as if we'd been talking to foreigners (1984:40).

Nonetheless, it would be an error to attribute overly great coherence and totality to hegemonic constructions of the nation. Hegemony, as Roseberry reminds us, is "a problematic, contested, political process of domination and struggle" (1992:11). Its problematic nature is difficult to ignore in Guatemala, where the Nervous System makes a mockery of any simplistic understanding of "hegemony" as an unruffled consensus backed by the threat of coercion. The mythological structure of Guatemalan nationalism I have outlined is, precisely, mythological: there are anti-racist *ladinos*, Indian soldiers (indeed, the infantry is largely composed of young Indian men who have been *forcibly* recruited themselves), and other messy identities which its categorical neatness struggles to suppress. That it often succeeds testifies more to the strength of the sociohistorical forces -- the state system -- which implement it in everyday practice rather than to its pure discursive magic.

If power cannot exist without resistance, then, nor resistance without power, how is one to escape reproducing power in identifying resistance? Alonso suggests that "the anthropology of transnational subaltern groups,

diasporas and border peoples might offer more cause for optimism" than "privileging place-identities" (1994:25). I signalled in the first chapter the significant interventions of such groups in the Guatemalan context, as well as those of groups, such as CONAVIGUA, which construe other kinds of border-crossing identities, in this case gendered (cf. Schirmer 1993b for a discussion of these groups). In restricting "resistance" to such coherent political movements however, one risks relegating the majority of Guatemala's population to irremediable abjection.

To avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of wishful thinking and dire structuralism, for the next chapter's discussion of candidates' resistances to the overdetermined framework of the Rabín Ahau, I keep two maxims in mind. The first is Sayer's, following Koreck: counterhegemonic projects are not coherent and solid; in fact, they cannot be said to be *projects*, precisely because they are counterhegemonic (1994:7). The other is from Radhakrishnan, who argues that "the strategy of locating any one politics within another is as inappropriate as it is coercive" and that feminism secedes from nationalism "*not to set up a different and oppositional form of totality, but to establish a different relationship to totality*" (1992:81, ital. orig.). From these maxims I conclude that to speak meaningfully of resistance, one must speak specifically, hence ethnographically, for the violence of abstraction is the state's violence. I reflect, too, that resistance may not challenge what one expects it to. Taussig notes

that resistance is precisely about the reversal of expectations, the unforeseen, and often casual or off-hand, juxtaposition of different orders of meaning. Resistance is "never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault 1978:95). It must draw on one dominant discourse to contradict another. In the contingency of this resistant practice, the contingency of power is revealed.

Conclusion

The Indian woman as representation anchors Guatemalan nationalism in nature, and creates the effect of the really real. The bodily *hexes* of Guatemalan subjects gyrate around this axis, either as an embodiment or as a negation of that embodiment. The Rabín Ahau, as national ceremony, renders this axis in ritual. The candidates' success depends upon their ability to articulate the axis appropriately: they must line up the metonomies, perform their own authenticity, and simultaneously conceal the "twists and turns" of their performance in order to become really real. In this sense, they become the agents of their own domination, embodying the racist discourse which would make them less than human. In practice, however, the incoherences of racist discourse and the dualities of nationalism permit the candidates in the very liminality of the moment to occasionally surprise discursive expectations and reposition themselves in relation to the national totality.

The Rabín Ahau: Ritual, Mimesis, and Mimetic Excess

Introduction

The ritual process, for Turner (1969), mediates culture's paradoxes to produce society. It does so through "the activation of an ordered succession of symbols" (1969:93) which passes participants in the ritual from their previous state through a liminal moment of transition to a new state of order. States are "any type of stable or recurrent condition that is culturally recognized" (1969:94). What is the connection between these states and the State? "State formations," notes Corrigan, "are intensively and materially cultural... cultural as to ways of living, and cultural as to symbolic resources" (1994:5) Theorists of state formation (Corrigan & Sayer 1985, Joseph & Nugent 1994, Alonso 1994) hold that ritual is a primary tool for the reproduction of the Idea of the State. Subjects' daily "exact performances" of state totalizing and individualizing forms make the illusory coherence of the State concrete, that is, make it a stable and recurrent condition. The Rabín Ahau is, I argue, a rite of State which mediates the paradox of the Guatemalan nation as Indian and yet not-Indian.

However, Turner argues that the period of transition, "betwixt and between" (1964) states, is in fact a non-state: liminality. Liminality is "ambiguous and indeterminate" (1969:95), "a stage of reflection... where there is

a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence" (1964:15); this freedom is precisely what allows the state which follows its renewed strength. How can rites of state partake of this symbolic richness of ritual liminality, yet still secure exact performances?

In the Rabín Ahau, this difficulty is negotiated by the peculiar capitalist processes of commodification and what Taussig calls "the organized control of mimesis" (1993:68). Mimesis is "the nature culture uses to create... a second nature" (1993:xv), a sympathetic magic of contact and copy of Otherness, in which the contact is swallowed up in the copy. This, of course, as Taussig notes (1993:22), is precisely what Marx called "commodity fetishism." Commodities, for Marx, are "sensuous things which are at the same time supra-sensible or social" (1976:165); their form "is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things" (ibid). To create a copy of something is to have power over it, for "mimesis sutures the real to the really made up" (Taussig 1993:86). To control mimesis, then, is power itself: the power to create the really real.

The Rabín Ahau is structured like a beauty pageant, which pits contestants competitively against each other for an honor only one can win. The beauty pageant is a veritable allegory of capitalism, both in its form and in its world-wide popularity: first introduced in the United States by P.T.

Barnum in 1854, it has since become an international commonplace, a virtual *sine qua non* of nation-statehood (Wilk 1993:1). Indian culture, commodified as "folklore," and set up against "politics," forms the Rabín Ahau's symbolic matrix. Race, *traje*, indigenous language, and dance are folklore's sacred symbols (Turner 1964). For these symbols to be effectively communicated, however, their potential multivocality must be channeled into the univocality of nation-state binary oppositions. They must be joined together and attached to a *municipio*, embodied in its representative. The contestants must therefore engage in mimesis, attempt to copy and in copying become the Indians who are the spirits of folklore: the one who does so most successfully is the most authentic. This paradox, the mimicking of an Other who is supposed to already be one's Self, can only be achieved by the contestants' mimicking the Indian's Other, the *ladino*, by giving a speech in Spanish, the anomaly among the bases of "authenticity" laid out in the Rabín Ahau's program. Finally, to insure that these mimetic complexities are kept in control, the candidates' mimicry is submitted to the judgement of an "expert" jury. Constituted outside the frame of the ritual process by its obligation to judge, the jury's job is to keep a clear head, to resist the seductions of mimetic sensuousness. Whatever happens during the pageant, a State of Order is restored in the end by the jury's authoritative elevation of one candidate to the Daughter of the King.

The ritual process, however, is not confined to the pageant. The candidates arrived four days before the night of the election. Although the period of their candidacy was institutionalized rather than truly betwixt and between states, at moments during those four days, "spontaneous communitas" was generated, a "generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties" (Turner 1969:96). This social bond gave rise to mimetic excess, political activity, and other forms of "inappropriate" behavior. The very sensuousness of mimesis subverts attempts at regimentation and abstraction.

The Rabín Ahau: Location and History

The election of the Rabín Ahau is the crowning event of Cobán's National Folkloric Festival, first held in 1969. The festival, which takes place at the end of July and the beginning of August, was scheduled to coincide with the city's titular feast, the day of Santo Domingo de Guzmán, founder of the Dominican order. Cobán is the capital of the department of Alta Verapaz, and the largest city in the region of the Verapaces. The Spaniards had difficulty conquering this remote and mountainous area, which was known as Tezulutlán, Land of War, but Bartolomé de las Casas and the Dominicans succeeded with "peaceful evangelization" where war and the *encomienda* failed. The area was renamed Verapaz, True Peace, and in 1536, by royal decree of Charles V, Cobán was founded. To this day, it proclaims itself "Imperial City."

Divided into Alta and Baja Verapaz in 1877, the region, at a lower altitude than the highlands, has a mild climate and fertile soil. However, its isolation from the administrative center of the Audiencia General during the colonial period meant that it remained also on its economic and cultural periphery until the introduction of coffee in the late 19th century. A motley crew of *capitalinos*, Germans and other European immigrants bought appropriated Q'eqchí and Poqomchí land and set up huge coffee, tea and cardamom plantations. Although the large majority of the population is still indigenous, the immigrants left a demographic trace. Rojas Lima cites as significant populations in the region today "Q'eqchís, Poqomchís, Spaniards, Blacks, English, Belgians, Germans, garifunas, coolies [South Asians], and U.S. Americans" (1990:46), and Cobán is famous for its "blue-eyed Indians," the mythological product of the encounter between Indians and Germans (cf. Pettersen 1976:257). The Verapaces' heterogeneity and historic isolation have given the region a distinct character, observers hold (Rojas Lima 1990:52): Verapacenses are quick to affirm their cultural identity.

While Alta Verapaz is now an important part of the national economy, it remains peripheral in many respects. The majority of the population is extremely economically marginalized. The *Prensa Libre*, in July 1993, published the results of a National Statistics Institute study which showed the Verapaces to have the highest level of poverty in the country: 90% of Verapacenses live

below the poverty line.³ The historic landlessness of the indigenous peasantry worsened in the 1970s with the discovery of oil in the region. "Large landowners, mineral and petroleum companies, and government hydroelectric schemes dispossessed thousands of Kekchí-speaking Indians of their lands" (Davis 1988b:96). The massacre which in May 1978 publicly inaugurated the Lucas García counterinsurgent regime took place in Panzós, Alta Verapaz, against Q'eqchí protestors, and the army's presence is still significant in the region. The region, moreover, is infrastructurally isolated from Central Guatemala. In the 1950s, it took a whole day to travel from Cobán to Guatemala City. A highway was built connecting the two in the 1960s, and now the trip only takes four hours by bus or car, but Cobán is still "off the beaten track." *Capitalinos* consider it provincial, and those who choose to live there as suffering a self-imposed exile; tourist guides to Guatemala dismiss it as without significant interest except for the Festival.

The Festival has been from its inception a profoundly Cobanero inspiration. Its organizers have changed over its twenty-five year history: a few landowners, some local *ladino* and indigenous professionals and businesspeople, some municipal and departmental politicians, but are Cobaneros, who see themselves as responsible for their city's and their

³ The poverty line was measured by a combination of in-home investigations and the criterion of satisfaction of basic needs (Prensa Libre, July 28, 1993).

department's welfare. The Festival has provided them with a means of recentering Cobán in the cultural life of the nation; it has also served as a weapon in struggles over local cultural and political influence. What gives it the power to do so is the magic of "folklore."

A history of the Rabín Ahau is difficult to piece together.⁴ There are, it seems, no organizational archives except for the last three years. People disagree about why this is so: some say there was an archive which burned when the *municipalidad* caught fire a few years ago; others say there was an archive which was plundered by unscrupulous organizers in search of photos of the pageant; still others say one never existed, and that only the organizers themselves have any record of their activity (if they did, they were not forthcoming with it, however). There are different assessments of the event's history, for there have been several dynasties of organizers since it was founded. Members of the different dynasties hate one another, and each changing of the guard has taken place under a cloud of accusations. The only recurring participant who seems to have escaped these conflicts is the Doctor Herbert Quirín (may he rest in peace), perhaps because he is dead, or perhaps because he belonged to one of the old German Cobanero coffee families (the

⁴I gathered the information here presented from interviews with organizers, old copies of the local journal *Verapaz*, and newspaper clippings and letters I found amongst the papers of Padre Esteban Haeserijn, an Acción Católica priest who spent years missionizing to the Q'eqchí and compiling dictionaries of the language, and who was involved in the event's beginnings.

Diesseldorfs) and, as a "super-national," was thus immune to the pettinesses which beset lesser mortals. All concur that he was a "*gran folklorista*," a great folklorist, and a teacher to them.

Accusations of wrongdoing center on the abuse of "folklore" for personal gain. The most frequent is "*mal manejo de fondos*" [bad handling of money], or more frankly, stealing and corruption by bribes. It is also standard, however, for each dynasty to accuse the others of not being truly committed to folklore, of not really knowing anything about folklore, and of participating only out of their desire for self-aggrandizement, endangering folklore's purity. The most serious accusation of all is having perpetrated mixed folklore and politics.

What exactly is folklore? A 1972 article, called "Meeting of the Race in Cobán," offers this insight:

There is folklore and folklore. That which serves to amuse tourists and the real thing. The first is nothing more than a feast of colors and dances with no ancestry whatsoever, with no genuine art, and without any devotion to traditions or historic realities (*Verapaz*, August 1972).

Ancestry, genuineness, tradition, history: these are the properties of true folklore, but as such they are ineffable, unrecognizable. They must be made manifest as cultural objects, "beliefs, rites, ceremonies, customs, legends, autochthonous artisanry and music." These objects, in Guatemalan nationalist ideology, are the property of Guatemala's indigenous people; their history is "the glorious past of Maya heritage." But as indigenous people are lamentably

susceptible to outside influence, to dreaded "transculturation," certain brave and shining knights, folklorists, must pass through the trials of intensive study and lecture-giving to seek and bring back folklore, and preserve Indian cultural purity. Insofar as they can do so, demonstrating their knowledge of and disinterested appreciation for folklore's objects, those objects become public property; their history becomes the history of all Guatemalans and their salvaged purity the purity of the nation itself. Folklore is, thus, Guatemala's "purest and most autochthonous values;" without it, she is "inverted (*trastrocada*), mutilated, falsified, becoming weaker in her spirit and in what ought to be the strength of her life as a people." Folklore is the fetish of Guatemalanness, a coveted and esoteric object which confers power on he or she who can possess it.

It is, moreover, a commodity fetish. People involved with the Folkloric Festival were unanimous in their insistence that folklore is "culture," not "politics." At first, this statement is straightforward, because as we have seen, Indians make culture, while *ladinos* make politics, and folklore is about Indians. It is more complex than that, however, for the president's participation and speech in the event are not considered "political." What is politics? As Marco Alonzo said to me, "*vamos a hablar de la palabrita 'política'*" [let's talk about the little word "politics"] When pressed, people would say that by politics they meant "party politics [*la política partidista*]." Party politics,

in turn, meant partisan politics [*la política partidaria*]: as the head of the 1993 organizing committee told the queens, "Here we are all political, but none of us are partisan." What is partisan? The president's participation is non-political because he represents the nation, the abstract entity composed of "all Guatemalans." Partisan is anything that violates this abstract entity, like any reference to the real divisions within it, or worse still, staking out a position within those division. The Culture of Terror is unmentionable. Politics can thus consist of a too-eager currying of favor with the military, but is more likely to consist of anything which hints at the specificity of Indians, and their oppression, within the nation, for Indians are inherently subversive, even as they are paradoxically unable to produce politics. Folklore objectifies the complex social relations, the "politics," between indigenous and *ladinos*, between provincials and *capitalinos*, between Guatemalans and tourists, which produce it.

The different factions warring over the control of folklore have two archetypal representatives. Marco Alonzo, a *ladino* from rural Tamahú, who now owns a stationary store and runs a night school, founded the festival in 1969 and was president of the organizing committee until 1971. He intended the Festival, among other objectives, to "Salvage the indigenous cultural patrimony, constantly affected by external influence, and protect its authenticity," and to "foment consciousness among the Guatemalan people, so

that they will identify fully with their cultural traditions, showing them their positive values" (*Verapaz*, August 1992). This was to be accomplished, he explained to me, by providing a marketplace in Cobán for indigenous artisans from around the country to sell their wares directly to the public. Artisanal demonstrations would show traditional manufacturing techniques in action, dances whose authenticity had been established would be performed, and concerts of the marimba and the chirimía, Guatemala's indigenous musical instruments, would be held. Unfortunately, however, the festival was only attended by locals at the beginning, and so in 1971 a *gancho*, a hook for tourists and *capitalinos* was instituted: the competitions for Rabín Ahau, and for a departmental indigenous representative, Princesa Tezulutlán. Alonzo considers the queens a necessary distraction from the true business of the Festival. He represents folklore's desire to give indigenous people a space of their own, albeit a space defined by indigenism rather than by indigenous themselves. This faction lost ground through much of the 1970s and 1980s, and only resurfaced in 1993, when Alonzo was awarded a medal for founding the event.

The other faction's figurehead is Doña Nana Winter. She is an extraordinary character, a figurative, if not literal, "blue-eyed Indian." She owns a bakery, and is well-off; both of her *apellidos* are German. She is nonetheless not only a wearer of *traje*, to the triumphant exclusion of all other

modes of dress, but insists that her employees and any other woman with whom she comes in contact, no matter from what culture or ethnicity, instantly put on *traje* themselves. (She gave me a *huipil* and insisted I wear it around her.) She frequently gives tremendous *paa bancs*, traditional Q'eqch'í feasts, at her home, Villa Elena, just outside of Cobán. Local and visiting dignitaries attend these events, as do jeeploads of *militares* from the local military zone. When she invited me to lunch, I met the governor of Alta Verapaz as well as most of the zone's commanding officers. She is also not very secretly the lover of Benedicto Lucas García, who, she told me, has done a lot for the poor people of Guatemala. Folklore has become her whole philosophy of existence: she told me, "this election is once a year, but the folklore, the folklore of Guatemala is every day... So, I think that folklore, we make it every day and at every moment, when we have the opportunity." For her, the folkloric festival is the Rabín Ahau, and the Rabín Ahau is the consummate indigenous woman. Her faction takes folklore to its logical conclusion: indigenism to the total exclusion of indigenous people. This faction held sway during most of the Rabín Ahau's history.

Elections for indigenous queens had been held for decades in Guatemala at town fairs and the like -- the first *India Bonita Cobanera* [Pretty Cobanera Indian], for example, was elected in 1931 -- but a national queen was an innovation. It quickly succeeded in attracting contestants as well as an

audience of *capitalinos* and tourists. By 1972, according to the program for that year, queens from twenty *municipios* in different parts of Guatemala were competing for the title of Rabín Ahau. A 1973 newspaper article entitled "A Pleasant Visit to Cobán," notes:

Personally, what impressed us most about that magnificent event was the confidence, grace and eloquence, with which, before the jury and before an audience estimated at more than three thousand spectators, the young and beautiful indigenous women who were competing for the coveted prize handled themselves.

Response to the innovation was not all positive, however. Another article, from 1972, "Intentions are not enough: Folkloric Festival in Cobán?" huffs:

It's high time that we stopped calling indigenous "my child" and thinking of them only as "poor little Indians [inditos]"... The speeches given by the participating Indians on the night of the election and which were probably written by the parish or by the town schoolteacher, were nothing more than a sorry brainwashing... it was truly painful to see how the election went on for four long hours that night... now I do say poor Indians and poor audience, the first for participating in a Miss World-type contest without knowing why or for what, and the others for applauding and thus "participating" in a fake event without knowing why either.

This debate over the Rabín Ahau -- glorious nationalist celebration or exploitative paternalistic brainwashing? showcase of Indian talent or rehearsal of Indian abjection? good folklore or bad (but always folklore)? -- sums up the positions of the two factions. The event is folklorically ambivalent for it is a profoundly "modern" means of trotting out "traditional" values. Notably, the debate is centered around the most ambivalent part of the pageant, the

speeches. The Rabín Ahau's very ambiguity, however, made it of enduring interest, and in the 1970s its importance only grew.

It was during this period that presidential, and consequently, military, participation in the event was stepped up. Although Arana Osorio (1970-74) had attended the event, the wife of General Kjell Laugerud (president from 1974-78), Helen Rossi de Laugerud, was a Cobanera, very involved in the promotion of Cobán culture, and in the 1970s a presidential speech was incorporated into the pageant. According to witnesses, the speech was a low point, as Laugerud was always staggeringly drunk. His participation was nonetheless ardently solicited, and in one particularly scandalous incident, the *cofradía* of the Order of Santo Domingo presented him with the Order's monstrance during the pageant, with the conniving of the organizing committee. Laugerud was not allowed to keep it, but this incident nearly destroyed the indigenist credibility of the event; Quetzaltenango, an important Quiché cultural center and thus Cobán's rival in things folkloric, almost carried it off.

Growing military interest in the Rabín Ahau was undeterred by this evidence of folklore's alienation from its constituency. When General Romeo Lucas García, who is a major Cobanero landowner, came to power in 1978 he began to pay for the entire event, which had subsisted on charity and ticket revenues until then, out of his own pocket. According to Nana Winter, this

was a sum of some 25,000 quetzals (then, \$25,000 USD) a year. He, too, gave speeches; and the event became truly "national," well-attended by *capitalinos*, and broadcast on national television on Canal Once. Lucas García's funding dried up some time after the return to a civilian presidency, but the structure set in place with his money survived on extensive corporate sponsorship (mostly from Guatemalan companies, but also Pepsi Cola and Crush), and TV and entrance revenues. The pageant became institutionalized, such that the head of the Inguat's Events Section could describe it to me as "one among the many indigenous ceremonies of Guatemala" (cf. Menchú's 1983:209-10 description of the event).

By Nana's, and, to be fair, more impartial observers' accounts, 1991, the year she organized the pageant, was its apogee. Almost 100 candidates came, and the then-president, Jorge Serrano, flew the winners to Tikal in private jets and had lunch with them. But she was impeached as committee head for *mal manejo de fondos*, and in 1992, the municipality was forced to take over the event because nobody else would do it. A cholera epidemic meant that the event was almost canceled, and poor organization made it entirely unsatisfactory: few candidates attended, and the jury was rumored to have been bribed by the winning delegation from Quetzaltenango.

1993 was intended to turn over a new leaf for the pageant, turning it against all that Nana Winter had stood for. The committee head, Dr. Javier

Tujab, is a medical doctor. He has his own radio show on Radio Tezulutlán where he gives inspirational Catholic readings, and he is Poqomchí, from Tactic, although people there reportedly consider him very *caxlanizado*, ladinized (Carter, pers. comm.). He is also a great friend of Marco Alonzo, and they were intent on making up for the 1980s excesses of the event. However, the change in folkloric emphasis seems also to have lessened the event's prestige. The president did not attend in 1993: he had a Central American summit to go to that day, but people thought that he would not have come in any case, to mark his distance from the Rabín Ahau's military associations. Unfortunately, the event was also rather badly organized (not entirely through Dr. Tujab's fault): the usual media and high-prestige guests were absent, and only fifty-four candidates were presented. The renewed recognition of the presence of indigenous people in folklore has diminished to commodity's fetishistic powers.

It is appropriate that the fabric of folklore should fray in 1992, the Quincentenary of the arrival of Spaniards in the New World, and the year in which Rigoberta Menchú was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. A Guatemalan anthropologist dismissed my interest in the Rabín Ahau by telling me that after 1992, much more "legitimate" expressions of indigenous culture were finding their way into the public arena, by which he meant pan-Mayanism, protests against the Quincentenary, the return of Guatemalan refugees, and of

course, the Nobel (Lara, pers. comm.). These events are preeminently "political" in the Guatemalan, and Folkloric definition of the term, and as such undermine the very negation from which folklore as commodity takes its value. Indians are not just for folklore anymore, and folklore has had to take this into account.

The Queens and the Pageant which is not Won

The 1993 candidates and their delegations arrived in Cobán on a Wednesday afternoon. To register, they filled out forms which asked first for the *municipio* and department they represented, then their name, age, place and date of birth, schooling, profession or job, and language. Their parents' names and places of birth were also solicited, as were detailed descriptions of the ceremonial *trajes*, both women's and men's, of their town. Finally, someone from the delegation's *municipio* had to be named as "responsible for" it, that is, the delegation's presence had to be sponsored by someone of relative authority.

These forms project a vision of Guatemalan indigenous womanhood appears here which, while not unrepresentative, is nonetheless socially and geographically specific.⁵ As a population, they fit well into the model of

⁵ Apparently, in Carol Hendrickson's thesis, which I have not had the opportunity to consult, she states that the town in which she works, Tecpán, refuses to send candidates to the event, seeing it as a *ladino* appropriation of indigenoussness. Representation in the Rabín Ahau, thus, is self-selecting.

docility the army's counterinsurgent efforts have been designing. The fifty-four queens, who had to be single and between the ages of 15 and 22 to compete, tended towards the younger end of this range: only eleven were 20 or older. They had a higher level of education than a random sample of Guatemalan indigenous, with, generally, between six and eight years of schooling; there were even some university students among them -- extraordinary, given that the illiteracy rate among indigenous women is over 90% in Guatemala -- and several teachers or bilingual secretaries. Nonetheless, a significant minority had only one or two years of school, and the most common profession given was "domestic services," i.e., maid. Their class position within their towns was difficult to determine except by inference from their level of education, but the families of queens I spoke to did everything from sell *atol* in the market (Patzicía's mother) to own a sandal factory (Quetzaltenango's uncle), with many *agricultores*, farmers, in between. They were without exception Catholic: this is not a requirement for participation, but Protestants, of whom there are large and growing numbers in indigenous Guatemala, simply seem not to participate in these events. Given Catholics' and Protestants' respective positionings vis a vis "tradition," with Protestantism constituting a rupture (cf. Annis 1988 for a somewhat inadequate discussion), this makes sense; it also identifies the queens, perhaps, with the more *costumbrista* sectors of their *municipios*, and certainly some were the daughters

of *cofrades*. Still, a few others no longer even lived in the *municipios* they were representing, but had moved to poorer neighborhoods of Guatemala City: a significant disruption of "traditional" community life. Finally, certain departments -- Quetzaltenango, Suchitepéquez, Sololá, Alta Verapaz, and Guatemala -- were much better represented than others, among them the highland departments of the Quiché and Huehuetenango that were particularly badly hit by the violence.

From the moment of the candidates' arrival in Cobán on a Wednesday afternoon, the strains which beset folklore reverberated in the way in which they were treated. The Rabín Ahau is plagued, as I noted in the introduction, with rumors of mistreatment of the participants. Menchú describes the experience of queens forced to come to Cobán by their own means, and then to wave and throw kisses at tourists, after which they are abandoned in hostels without food. Still worse, I was told that in some years, the queens and delegations had to camp in the central plaza, where tourists could go by and watch them prepare their food. The 1993 organizing committee was committed to treating the candidates with respect, to remembering, as it were, the person within the *traje*. This commitment, however, was incompatible with the very structure of the pageant. Queens and organizers were caught in a bind between the desire to treat the participants well, and the real limitations - - of finances, of organization, and of will -- for doing so.

Thus, the participating *municipios* had been promised that their representatives' passage to Cobán would be paid or that they would be transported by army vehicles. The promised transportation had failed to materialize; delegations of up to five people had had to go all the way to Guatemala City to find army buses, or worse, pay 17 quetzals per person to take a commercial bus.⁶ The organizational committee had to make amends by offering to reimburse anyone who had kept their receipts, but was unable to do so at that moment. As the days wore on without repayment forthcoming, the delegations became more and more disgruntled.

These upsets were regularly repeated. The delegations were rustically but acceptably housed at the dorms of the EFA (*Escuela de Formación Agrícola*) and given three meals a day, but the EFA was five miles from Cobán and no means of transportation was provided except for official purposes, leaving the delegations stranded or forced to hike. Even on their afternoons off, the queens were expected to stay at the EFA; wandering was frowned upon and even explicitly forbidden by the organizers. Moreover, the EFA had no telephone or medical facilities, and when people asked for medicines or services from Cobán, the women in charge of housing complained about the

⁶There were, in the Summer of 1993, 5.7 quetzals to the U.S. dollar. Cost-of-living in Guatemala is measured by the price of tortillas, as most Guatemalans' staple food. Tortillas are currently 0.5 Q each. 17 Q thus represents a significant outlay for most people.

ingratitude of "these people." The queens were taken to lectures and given tours of the countryside, but seating in the two old schoolbuses provided for their transportation often proved insufficient, and somebody was always left standing. On the evening of the queens' rehearsal dinner, where they gave their speeches for the first time and various dances and presentations were performed, their mothers were not allowed into the EFA cafeteria and had to stand outside in the rain, watching them through the windows. While they were welcomed by the mayor of Cobán, the governor, who was supposed to address them according to their itinerary, simply forgot to show up. The waning of folklore's power, which had recognized the space of participants in the Rabín Ahau, had not changed the structure of that space: queens and delegates were left to fit themselves in, sometimes uncomfortably.

The pageant started and finished in this conflict. It began two hours late, because of the committee's disorganization and the delegations' discontents. Several factors contributed to the delay. One, the organizing committee had failed to tell the administration of the gymnasium where the event was held that they needed chairs for the gymnasium floor, and, consequently, none had been provided. Tickets to sit on the ground level cost fifteen quetzals each, while seats up in the bleachers were only ten, so it was the fancier members of the audience who were left to stand and mill about. Armchairs were found for the dignitaries in attendance -- the Minister of Defense, the departmental

governor, the zone commander and the mayor and his family -- but two hours of searching failed to provide hundreds of others with any seating. In addition to this small fiasco, the queens had gone on strike, in part because they had not yet been reimbursed for their bus fare to Cobán, and in part because the organizing committee, in its frenzy to cut the epic length of the pageant down to a more standard two hour size, had threatened to make the speeches given the night before at the rehearsal dinner count as the speeches upon which the queens would be judged. I myself was out of sorts, because my wallet was stolen right as I entered the gymnasium. Cobaneros joke that the only reason anyone goes to see the Rabín Ahau is so they can pickpocket all the rich tourists and *capitalinos* who come in from out of town; after my experience I felt that this was an accurate estimation of the audience's composition. At long last, however, these personal and collective difficulties were smoothed over, the lights went out, and the pageant began.

In the total darkness (if not total silence -- the Inguat's school of tourism was in attendance and the students felt obliged to whistle and make catcalls during any lull in the evening) of the gymnasium, a voice began to intone the opening passage of the Fondo de Cultura Económica edition of the *Popol Vuh*, the chronicle of Quiché cosmology and history. The passage describes the creation of the world: "*Ésta es la relación de como todo estaba en suspenso, todo en calma, todo en silencio...*" [This is the story of how everything was suspended,

everything calm, everything silent...]. When it got to the moment where the creators say "*Tierra*" [Earth], and the earth comes into existence, the lights went on to expose the stage. The set was not volcanoes this year, but a pre-Columbian pyramid-like structure with a huge Maya head (copied, we heard later, from a small statue in the designer's personal collection) made of styrofoam.

The announcer left myth-time to greet us, the audience:

Welcome, everyone, to Tezulutlán, on this night when the different cultures of the land of eternal spring come together. Languages, dances, *trajes*, customs, and traditions are united in this twenty-fifth National Folkloric Festival to say to the world: This is Guatemala!

Speeches were then given by the mayor, by Dr. Tujab (very apologetic about the chairs), and by the reigning India Bonita Cobanera and Princesa Tezulutlán, as hostesses of the event. The latter two, when they were done, went and sat on the pyramid.

It was some time before the other queens came out on stage. First, the Inguat Folkloric Dance Troupe performed some "traditional" dances. I found this section excruciating: the troupe was composed entirely of *ladinos*, engaged in their own, highly caricatured mimesis of Indianness. All the dances seemed to require them either to smile idiotically, or bump mysteriously and menacingly into one another. Another anthropologist, who had been studying indigenous dance for several years, was outraged at this display. An

indigenous man from Mazatenango, however, told me he thought it was good that *ladinos* were keeping these things alive: the loyalties folklore attracts are complex. In any case, it was a relief when the queens began to file out, one by one.

There was no runway for them to dance down this year, as part of the committee's time-saving plan. The program sternly warns: "The participating candidates will dance the SON when the jury indicates, NOT as they enter the stage." They entered on stage right, with their attendants if any, and could squeeze in only a few little steps before arriving at the microphone, which was also on stage right. Speeches were then strictly limited to one-and-a-half minutes in each language (also a significant reduction from years past), first in Mayan and then in Spanish. The speeches in Spanish, the *mensajes*, which I discuss in greater detail below, were the crowning moment of a candidate's appearance on stage: candidates were photographed as they spoke, they were attentively listened to, and good *mensajes* received tremendous applause. Once a candidate gave her speech, she went over and sat with the others on the pyramid.

When the speeches were done, the candidates were asked to dance a *son* en masse. This was a free-for-all: fifty-four candidates jostling each other to get to get upstage made a mockery of subtle regional distinctions, although Sololá, whose regional *son* is particularly *brincadito* (jumpy), did try to attract

attention by flinging herself to her knees and bowing to the four cardinal points. The jury retired to deliberate.

The committee took the opportunity to thank the different media in attendance, and the various corporate sponsors. Televisiete (a Guatemala City television station), Pollo Campero (a Guatemalan fast food chain), and Pepsi Cola got the biggest applause of the evening, far bigger than any of the queens. The minister of defense, the governor, and the zone commander were also thanked, but they, however, were booed. In a surprisingly short time, the jury returned with a list of ten finalists.

Questions were distributed to the finalists, asking things like: "What is the role of the Maya woman/Maya youth in Guatemala today?" "What does your traje mean?" or "What can you do for you *pueblo*?" One by one, they answered, and the jury retired again. The audience, which had been waiting for some five hours, was getting bored and tired, and when the announcer came up to the microphone, desire for a decision was palpable. But no! The contestants had to dance the *son* once more, and only then could San Pedro Soloma be declared the winner, and the jury's identity finally revealed. Soloma was crowned by the outgoing Rabín Ahau, who came in, to the disapproval of many, made-up and teetering on four-inch heels and gave a tearful speech about the beauty of being an indigenous woman. The new Rabín Ahau's prize, a Spanish dictionary, was presented to her, thanks were

given to the audience and media, the audience and jury hurried out to home or to parties, and most of the queens were taken back to the EFA. In a final irony, however, the new Rabín Ahau and a few other candidates got locked into the gymnasium and had to make the five-mile trip back on foot at four in the morning.

The Rabín Ahau: Ritual Process

Even despite these delays and slip ups, the pageant managed to maintain something of the quality it had when I first experienced it. It was still a spectacle: the *trajes* were still gorgeous, the speeches still powerful, and the experience even heightened by the exhaustion we, audience and performers collectively, passed through before we reached a resolution. When it was over, we were left with a sense that *something* had happened. What exactly does the election of the Rabín Ahau resolve? Turner counsels beginning a study of the ritual process with the molecules of ritual, its symbols. Ritual symbols "exhibit the properties of *condensation, unification of disparate referents, and polarization of meaning*" (Turner 1969:52; ital. orig.). A symbol is polysemous, for "[i]ts referents are not all of the same logical order;" they tend, however, "to cluster around opposite semantic poles. At one pole, the referents are to social and moral facts, at the other, to physiological facts" (ibid). Ritual symbols bring together society and the body. The bases of authenticity given in the program are, to reprise: a) authenticity of race; b) authenticity of *traje típico*; c)

expression in Mayan language; d) expression in Spanish language; and e) authenticity in the dancing the *son* of the region. Leaving (d), expression in Spanish language, aside for the moment, let us examine the symbolic properties of the other bases.

Authenticity of race means no mix of Spanish blood; an aquiline nose, slanted eyes, and dark skin are its manifestations. On the other hand, it is well known that everyone has some admixture, that "there are very few authentic Maya people," as Nana Winter told me, and that the real difference between a Maya and a non-Maya, thus, lies in the *traje*. For the *traje* to be authentic, however, it must be the ceremonial *traje*, for the daily *traje* has been corrupted by the introduction of foreign materials and techniques, and by the propensity of young indigenous women to paint their faces and perm their hair. *Traje*, then, is supposed to be more than just clothing: it is a habitus (Bourdieu 1977). Body and *traje*, ideally, are fused into a seamless whole. Race and *traje*, blood and clothing, substance and form, constitute a single symbol rich with meanings.

Good expression in Mayan language, I was told, was speaking in Mayan for a certain length of time without mixing in too many words in Spanish. Although all the jurors spoke at least one indigenous language, no one spoke more than two or three; few members of the audience spoke even one. Speeches in Mayan could not therefore be received and responded to as

speeches *per se*, but rather as a sort of "speaking in tongues," issuing forth from the pre-Columbian past and finding their medium in these Indian women.

The faculty of Mayan speech as a property of the candidate's racial constitution was at stake.

Dancing the *son* takes the measure of the queens' ability to move like Indians. The *son* is a marimba rhythm; the marimba is Guatemala's "native" instrument. *Sones* are the most mournful of marimba songs, and they tend to have names like "Ishtia Quetzalteca," or "La San Juanerita," i.e., the names of Indian women. A woman is supposed to dance the *son* by lowering her head, putting her hands behind her back, and hopping back and forth from one foot to the other to the rhythm. Regional styles vary largely on the dimension of how *brincadito* [jumpy], or, contrarily, *callado*, [calm and modest], the dancing is. The *son* is the artful performance of what is considered Indian demeanor in Guatemala.

The multivocality of these symbols, which bring together blood and culture together in complex ways, is short-circuited, however, by the requirement of authenticity. Authenticity implies the possibility of inauthenticity, and the need to distinguish between them. The same juror who told me the authentic was the "really real," also said that authenticity was identity, that it had to do with intrinsic qualities. Only the expert jury, composed of the curator of the Inguat's collection of *trajes*, the famous

indigenist politician, an anthropologist from the Universidad del Valle in Guatemala City, and two bilingual professors from the Academy of Mayan Languages, had the knowledge and perspicacity to recognize these intrinsic qualities in the shifting and deceptive play of the ritual. To take *traje* as an example, the so-called ceremonial *traje*, even if it ever were standard, is currently most certainly not: much research is required to recognize it. Nana Winter told me that the Doctor Quirín used to be ruthless in disqualifying incorrectly dressed princesses; now that these contests are institutionalized, new queens learn about authentic ceremonial dress from outgoing queens. Moreover, as it is more elaborate than daily *traje*, ceremonial *traje* is considerably more costly. Significant resources or community support are usually necessary to pull it together. Knowledge and money make the *traje*, which, however, is supposed to be an intrinsic property of the candidate's Indianness. The politics of knowledge and money must be rigorously hidden for the *traje* to appear natural: *traje*, like all the other bases, is constituted in folklorization. The jury is composed of certified *folkloristas*: their possession of that most precious commodity allows them to make judgements about folklore's symbols.

Expression in Spanish, the *mensaje*, is the anomaly among the bases, for Indians are neither supposed to make speeches nor speak Spanish. For the queens to speak the national language is for them to enter the nation, which

for a truly authentic Maya would be impossible. It is, however, the only moment in which a candidate can really prove her intrinsic qualities in performance, and in the capitalist world of the pageant achievement, not ascription, is what counts. The queens must navigate these tricky waters, passing through the national and the capitalist and beyond to authenticity and tradition, without the jurors noticing that they have made the journey. They do so by mimicking Indians with specific linguistic means, using Maya poetic style and incorporating emblems of Indianness into their speech through manipulations of intertextuality. She who does this most effectively, whose process of contact with the Indian within is most effectively swallowed up in her copy, is the most authentic. She "sutures the real to the really made up" (Taussig 1993:86), becomes "really real," and is crowned Rabín Ahau.

The Mensaje

The *mensaje* must maintain folklore's shaky coherence; its ever-present threat of disrupting this coherence makes it dangerous, for a disruption would reveal the politics behind culture, the woman behind the *traje*, and the state behind the nation and the race. Its significance does not go unrecognized. *Mensajes* are a perennial site of conflict in the Rabín Ahau, famous for being "political" ("too political" in the opinion of many members of the conservative Guatemalan elite), even during the most repressive military regimes. One informant told me about a Rabín Ahau who, during the regime of Lucas

García, said that Guatemala was *last* among the countries of Latin America because it did not respect the rights of its indigenous people. He thought she was brave to the point of foolhardiness for making this statement (as indeed she was, for at that time one could have been killed for far less), though he was vague about what the consequences of her speech, if any, turned out to be. He was torn between approval that she had told the truth and disapproval that she had placed herself in danger and contaminated all her witnesses with the wildfire contagion of subversion.

In 1993, the organizational committee tried to make the *mensajes* more "cultural." The program advises:

It is the responsibility of the authorities of each *municipio* who sends a candidate to the Rabín Ahau to take care that the message of their candidate remain within the sociocultural ends that the event pursues.

On the night of the candidates' arrival Dr. Tujab made this caution more explicit. He told them at some length that the event was of national and international significance and that complaining about the last 500 years offended their audience. Their fight should be intellectual, not "*a cañonazos*" [with gunshots]; they were all political but no one should be partisan; and it behooved them to confine their remarks to projections towards the future rather than mouthing a party line. Some of the candidates nodded at this, while others made no response.

Unvoiced in Dr. Tujab's remarks is tension over the authorship of the *mensajes*. There is some expectation that the candidates will speak impromptu, and the finalist speech is specifically intended to measure their ability to do so. Candidates indeed pretended that they were simply seized by inspiration on stage. The *mensajes*, however, were clearly scripted: the versions candidates gave at the rehearsal dinner were identical to the versions they gave at the event itself, and since the finalist questions were fairly standard for this sort of event, I suspect that they, too, had been prepared in advance. Although this is standard beauty pageant practice, all sorts of fears are attached to the scripting of speeches in the Rabín Ahau. If they are written in advance, reasoning goes, they must have been written by someone other than the queen herself. Other voices raise the frightening possibility of partisan voices, for Otherness, in Guatemala, is as we have seen, always suspicious. The *mensaje* must be regimented to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable others.

Although the quality of the *mensajes* varied, the point they had to make did not: we are Maya, we represent what is best about Guatemalan, and so we have rights within Guatemala. There were several clever little phrases which made this point succinctly: Patzún said "We should say *Guatemaya*, not Guatemala;" Totonicapán asked that Guatemalans "put theory to practice" with regards to indigenous people. Quetzaltenango made a whole argument for indigenous rights to land, citing legal justifications, and said it was not enough

to go on about the *son* and the *traje*; the majority of candidates, however, made their point doing just this. Even the strongest formulations of this point were not political unspeakables *per se*, although they might have been at recent points in Guatemalan history. Their political danger lies less in their threat to surprise dignitaries by listing unspeakable horrors than in their threat to expose the construction of authenticity.

The regimentation of the *mensaje* is accomplished not by restricting what candidates can say, but by determining how they can say it. Command over the *mensaje* as a speech genre elevates the common queen to Rabín Ahau, authenticity's representative. Genre, according to Bakhtin (1986), is essential to speech; through genre, speakers orient themselves and their listeners within the stream of discourse. They position themselves generically by manipulating textual form and intertextual references to make connections between their speech and the social and linguistic context. Genre is a powerful tool: "Invoking a genre... creates indexical connections that extend far beyond the present setting of production or reception, thereby linking a particular act to other times, places, and persons (Bauman & Briggs 1992:147-8). Coherent meanings are produced by genre's integration of texts and contexts. Genre's fundamental intertextuality, however, means that the fit between past and present is never complete; manipulating this "intertextual gap" is what allows for creativity within the genre, for "exploring and reshaping the formal,

interpretive, and ideological power of the constituent genres and their relationship (Bauman & Briggs 1992:154).

I have examined in detail elsewhere (McAllister n.d.) the candidate and finalist speeches of three of the candidates, Soloma, Tactic, and Sololá (see Appendix I), to discover the generic resources of the *mensajes*. Following a structure laid out by the exigencies of the pageant, the candidates greeted their audience, introduced themselves, identified themselves as members of a collectivity, and made projections and calls for action in the future. Stylistically, they used all the most characteristic features of what Hanks (1989) calls "Maya style:" parallelism, couplets and triplets in which one term varies, and cyclicity. Intonational contours, sentence structure, and word choice all contributed to create these stylistic effects, and produce the *mensaje's* distinctiveness. As Urban says: "One cannot miss [style's] presence; it is there to be noticed" (1991:80). And it is to be noticed as Maya; these uses of Maya style allow us to hear this unorthodox genre, spoken in Spanish, in tune with other, time-honored forms of Mayan speech.

Style was not the candidates' only mimetic resource, however. The *mensaje* is a complex genre, incorporating other texts into its whole, most frequently the *Popol Vuh*. Sometimes the chronicle was referenced simply by appealing to the "*Corazón del Cielo, Corazón de la Tierra*" [Heart of the Sky, Heart of the Earth], the name the Quiché gave to the creator of the earth, to

God (*Popol Vuh* 1947:92). Both Tactic and Sololá made this appeal. Candidates also tended to use Maya place names instead of Spanish, which, in context, took on the aura of the *Popol Vuh* even if they were not direct quotes: Tactic, for example, exhorted indigenous women to open their spirits to the thresholds of Xibalbá, the name of the Underworld, but also of the Alta Verapaz region, in the chronicle. Sololá made the most extensive use of the *Popol Vuh* in her *mensaje*: lines 1-30 of her first speech were taken word for word from the Fondo de Cultura Económica edition of the book. Perhaps the best-known of indigenous chronicles and widely available to Guatemalan readers, the *Popol Vuh* becomes in its incorporation in the *mensaje* an effective index of the authentically Maya. In referring to it the candidates are attempting to reproduce the essence of these mythical ancestors in their own person.

Since it is such an effective index of Mayanness, however, the *Popol Vuh* has been invoked in other contests, and these references threaten to disturb the *mensaje's* mimetic organization. Another direct quotation common in the speeches is "*Qué todos se levanten, que nadie/ni uno ni dos se queden atrás*" [Let everyone rise up, let no one/not one nor two stay behind], which is the priests' exhortation to the assembled tribes as they lead them into battle against the Quiché (*Popol Vuh* 1947:221). This quote also ended "the Declaration of Iximché" produced by the CUC in response to Spanish Embassy

massacre. The Declaration was "virtually a declaration of war against the regime" (Arias 1990:254) and this quotation was taken up as the movement's slogan.

Often brought into the *mensaje* is another political slogan: "*el pueblo unido jamás será vencido*" [the people united will never be defeated]. Tactic, who uses it at the end of her finalist speech, is not alone. Along with "*qué todos se levanten*" it refers, as do mentions of Rigoberta Menchú, the international year of indigenous people, and 500 years, to current international political debates and interpellates unacceptable Other voices. Rather than mythical ancestors, the participants in these debates are living, politically active, authentic Maya.

The spirits of Indians are everywhere in the *mensajes*, but some of these spirits refuse to remain within folklore's realm. If these spirits were allowed to enter the Rabín Ahau, mimesis would spin out of control; the genre within which the queens' mimicry takes place is not flexible enough to permit mimetic excess. The intertextual gaps which with a candidate gives herself space to speak can also widen far enough for her to get lost in them.

To demonstrate this, I turn to the moment in Tactic's *mensaje* when she tries to bring out the slogan "*el pueblo unido jamás será vencido*." Although Tactic did not win, she was, in my estimation, the most moving of the speakers and had the best audience response of any of the candidates. Even *gringo* members of the audience, who spoke neither Spanish nor any

indigenous language, told me they could see she "really had something to say." The juror I interviewed, however, and many Guatemalan members of the audience, concurred that she was too political. Soloma, who did win, was in all respects authentic. Her *mensajes* were considered exemplary of what was expected from a Rabín Ahau; in mimicking the authentic, she became it.

Distinctions between the too political and the authentic are not made only at the referential level, but through the seamless quality of a candidate's mimetic performance. During the following passage, which stretches from line 46 to line 60 in Tactic's finalist speech, she becomes dysfluent in her attempts to manipulate the *mensaje's* intertextual gaps, and exposes her engagement in the "hidden internal polemic" (Bakhtin 1984) of the *mensaje*, its conflicting voices. This seriously undermines the believability of her copy.

46	...pero_	but
47	..nosotros_	we
48	!juntos !'odos_	all together
49	lo podemos logr^ar	we can do it
50	...<LO porque dice el dicho LO>\	because the saying says
51	una leña no puede hacer s'ólo_	a woodpile cannot make it alone
52	que vale todo un gr^upo de --\	what is a whole group worth--
53	..(H)<LO d'el otro lado está trabajando y	on the other side it is working and we are
54	nosotros aq'ui LO>\	here
55	..en'onces--\	so
56	...%!unidos--	united
57	ja_	nev-
58	un pue-/	a peo-
59	como dice el dicho\	as the saying goes
60	...un pueblo unido jam'a=s será venc^i=do\	the people united will never be defeated

(see appendix for transcription codes)

Hill, in "The Voices of Don Gabriel" (n.d.) argues that dysfluencies in speech arise from within "a responsible self, which attends to precise representation" (64). In her analysis of Don Gabriel's narrative of his son's murder, she notes that he is eloquent when speaking about the murder, but dysfluent when he tries to use the capitalist language of business and profit; she attributes this to peasant ideological resistance to capitalist penetration.

I see Tactic's dysfluency in the passage above arising also out of a responsible self, but a self whose orientation to the discourse she is producing is constrained by the genre in which she is speaking. From lines 46 to 52, Tactic is trying to address a new voice, the voice of Guatemalan refugees on the other side, in Mexico. She fights to bring them into her speech, breaking her normal intonational rhythm and hesitating more than usual. Once she brings them in, however, at line 53, she can go no further for these voices are outside of the bounds of the Rabín Ahau. In forcing them in, she forces herself out, "falls out," in Hill's words, of her *mensaje*. She attempts to recover her place with a standard generic intertextual reference, "*el pueblo unido jamás será vencido*," but must struggle with it too in a series of false starts in lines 55 through 58. Only after she distances herself from the saying, maximizing the intertextual gap between it and her speech by reframing it as a saying rather than her own "authentic" words (line 59: "*como dice el dicho*" [as the saying goes]) can she bring her speaking self back into her *mensaje*. The indexical

associations of this particular saying are, as discussed, "political;" after the reference to the refugees they are "too political" and break generic bounds.

The pageant restored symbolic order to Guatemala's fraught nationalism. The nation's Indian past was reenacted in the present, but in authenticity's terms, terms which do not challenge the Conquest Tradition. Presidential and military support for the event, and *ladino folklorista* infighting and struggle over Indian culture make eminent sense in this context. Repression and domination of indigenous people, and even the erasure of their substance, do not automatically mean erasure of their "spirit." Rather, events like the Rabín Ahau commodify that spirit in a form which the powerful can then exchange with one another, nationally and internationally. This process is never totally achieved: a *mensaje* like Tactic's and the response she found in the audience recall the partiality of all attempts at closure. Tactic restored in her mimetically excessive performance the sensuousness of the commodity as fetish. That the ears of those who have authority to judge are nonetheless deaf to Tactic's claim is not her failure, but the failure of a resistant politics which must confine itself to the terms authenticity prescribes when it is the powerful who prescribe authenticity.

Liminality and Sensuousness

One is left to wonder, given the limits of authenticity, why would candidates, the delegations which accompany them, and the communities

which send them, want to participate? One answer is "*para representar a su pueblo*" [to represent their town]. As discussed in the first chapter, this claim of representation is complex. The point it has to make, "We are Maya, we are here, and we have rights," is not one to be taken lightly, even if the Rabín Ahau does its best to reinscribe that point into nationalist logic. At a corporate level, the Rabín Ahau offers indigenous people a space in the public, and such spaces are rare in Guatemala. At a more intimate level, however, the level of subjectivity and embodiment, what does this event offer those who choose to participate? The candidates, often, said they had wanted to come "*para conocer*" [to learn, to know]. This knowledge, whose object is left open, is the kind of speculative freedom which Turner argues is characteristic of liminality; desire for this objectless knowledge played in and out of the queens' four-day stay in Cobán and pushed the queens at times out of their institutionalized candidatehood and into the betwixt and between.

Over the course of these four days the candidates had many of the aspects of liminal personae. They were kept apart from wider society -- the EFA's isolation saw to that --- and sexually segregated immediately upon their arrival. In liminality, the low become high, "the underling comes uppermost" (Turner 1969:102), and, certainly, during their four days these Indian women, ordinarily the most oppressed category of person in Guatemalan society, were continually lauded and feted. This lowness in the realms of the high, however,

is a form of ritual pollution, and constant complaints by organizers and Cobaneros that the queens messed up the places they stayed (completely unsupported by any evidence), marked the candidates' perceived excess of bodiliness in liminality. In the series of lectures, tours, and performances to which they were witness, the *sacra* of folklore were transmitted to them, bit by bit, to make them "vividly and rapidly aware of what may be called the 'factors' of their culture" (Turner 1964:14) They listened and absorbed, submitting, as it were, "to an authority that is nothing less than that of the total community" (Turner 1969:103).

In true liminality, however, "all attributes that distinguish categories and groups in the structured social order are here in abeyance; the neophytes are merely entities in transition, as yet without place or position" (Turner 1969:103). This was most manifestly not the case among the candidates. Almost without exception, they called each other not by their proper names, but by the names of the towns they represented. The queen from Sololá was simply Sololá, the queen from Zacualpa, Zacualpa. Sitting with them in a lecture as they tried to get each others' attention was like a lesson in Guatemalan geography: "*Tssst, Patzicía, tssst Patzún.*" Moreover, deviations from authentic behavior were frowned upon by other candidates: one queen, who ate lunch one day in a sweat suit rather than her *traje*, was asked incredulously if this was how she dressed at home. Another, who kept

making out with her boyfriend, was asked the same question, and worse still, comments were made about the fact that her neck was a different color than her face, that is, that she was wearing makeup to look white. The queens were not stripped of their structural properties; rather, they were stripped down to their structural properties. Candidatehood is institutionalized as exchange value, as generic Indianness in a series of equivalent and interchangeable forms.

Consequently, candidatehood does not in itself constitute a liminal "stage of reflection" (Turner 1964:15). Indeed, many of the queens' experiences during their candidatehood made a mockery of reflection. For example, on their second day, they were given a lecture on "The Maya," by the indigenist politician whom they did not yet know was a juror. He spoke mostly about the color symbolism of the modern *traje* and the glories of the ancient Maya, as demonstrated by their astronomy, the invention of the zero, and the construction of Chichén Itzá. Many queens dutifully took notes and stood up at the end to ask questions like, "What exactly does the color black mean?" "What is the meaning of the *chachal* [indigenous women's necklace]?" or "What exactly are the equinox and the solstice?" questions which revealed in the very asking that the answers were already known. Rather than enfranchising speculation, the lectures the queens attended seemed designed to make them unthinkingly reproduce official culture. In addition, the fact that the jury's

identity was kept secret created a "panoptic" (Foucault 1977) effect. Never knowing when they might be watched, they watched themselves all the time, desperately guessing what might be required of them. At one point, a rumor went around that an organizer who had offered them chewing gum was actually testing them to see whether they would take it and, if so, how they would chew it. Queens who had partaken became anxious and ashamed. Their constant interactions with the organizing committee served to reinforce the structure of folklore rather than hold it up for examination.

It was in the interstices of their candidatehood, in the moments when they were going somewhere and not yet arrived, on their afternoons off, and in their performances for audiences outside of the official structure that the queens reentered the sensuousness of the Rabín Ahau's ritual symbols and rediscovered their hidden correspondences. The form of knowledge produced by mimesis, "this tactile knowing of embodied knowledge is also the dangerous knowledge compounded of horror and desire dammed by the taboo" (Taussig 1993:31). Folklore as commodity conceals the inappropriate conditions of its production; mimicry of the Indian woman conceals the scandalous Indian woman's body which performs the mimicry. Politics and beauty are the Rabín Ahau's taboos, but the queens did not always respect them.

I would like to focus on two instances of such "disrespect," both of which happened just before the pageant, during the queens' *tarde libre*, their free afternoon. The conditions for both, however, were prepared over the course of the four days. The first such instance was the strike which delayed the pageant. I was not privy to the organizing process, and so I can only comment on the sentiments which were circulating prior to the strike itself. The queens had brought with them up to four companions in their delegations. The delegations were generally composed of the queens' mothers, occasionally their fathers, and various young attendants, *caballeros* (knights) and *doncellas* (maidens), for parades and the like. The mothers served no structural purpose in the pageant, and consequently it was they who suffered most from the slights perpetrated by the committee's practice of folklore: they were stuck at the EFA, stuck in the rain, and, most irritatingly, stuck with the expenses for their daughters' transportation. The issue of the bus fares to Cobán gathered momentum as each day went by without the committee paying the delegations back. As the four days neared their end, more and more frequently I overheard conversations about receipts submitted, and promises made and broken.

The mothers from the beginning were a more subversive force than their daughters, for the scrutiny of the jury was not on them. I spent the first afternoon with the mothers instead of with the queens, because I got on the

wrong bus and ended up at the EFA rather than at a lecture on "The Marimba." A mysterious man, accompanying one of the queens, had taken note when I was first introduced to the delegations, and kept asking me whenever I saw him thereafter, "*¿Qué tal la antropóloga?*" [How's the anthropologist?] When we arrived at the EFA and the mothers had settled in, he came over to where I was sitting with some of them, interrupted the exchange of different customs and recipes, and told me I should be documenting the suffering of indigenous people. Some of the mothers left at this, but a bunch of others came up, and suddenly struck up a conversation about race and racism. They made fun of *ladinas* who tried to wear *traje*, mocking their inability to tie a *corte*, and went on to say that while *ladinas* would never sit as close to them as I was, and would call them "*¡India fea! ¡India fea!*" [ugly Indian woman] *ladinas* could not work as hard or carry as much as they could, and everything *ladinos* had depended on them. This taking charge of my presence with their own agenda continued, as they both encouraged me to do forbidden things, like stay over with them at the EFA or march in the folkloric parade, and insisted that I do things for them that the committee wouldn't, like bring them back sleeping pills or paper from Cobán. They, or at least some among them, were having none of the committee's rules; these were the mothers, I suspect, who encouraged their daughters to take action and get back from the committee the bus fare that was rightfully

theirs. Those daughters managed to get the support of all the participants, clearly, for no one went on stage until the committee had paid back some of the money and promised the rest for early the next morning.

The mothers represented the folklore's political underside. They had gotten their daughters' *trajes* together, taught them to speak their language and to behave properly: in brief, given them the tools they needed to act like Indians. They were well aware, thus, of the bodiliness which folklore tries to suppress, and made more so by the various shabby treatments they received. Their insistence on these politics pushed their daughters into a withholding of their own bodies from the ritual of folklore's reproduction, exposing the politics within. Their liminality, neither part of the pageant nor yet outside it, made their daughters' afternoon off not a respite from the pageant, but a moment of "spontaneous communitas" within it, a communitas which allowed the queens to enter the intersubjective and suspended space of the strike, and critically reflect on their own relationship to folklore.

The other incident that afternoon, in which I was directly involved, was seemingly trivial: a few of the queens asked me to take photographs of them, relaxing and wearing each other's *trajes*. However, their desire to be photographed then, and in that way, spiralled into "mimetic excess, demanding yet disrupting any possibility of mastering the circulation of mimesis in alterity" (Taussig 1993:246). The presence of my camera, a

"mimetically capacious machine" (ibid) made possible the queens' immersion in the sensuousness of their own bodies, as women, and in each other's *trajes*, as beautiful objects.

Beauty, as I have said, is strictly *not* part of the Rabín Ahau. For a jury to elect a candidate simply because they find her physically attractive would violate everything the Rabín Ahau stands for, not least because physical attractiveness is a taboo when it comes to Indian women. Physical appearance, people involved with the pageant said time and time again, was only noted insofar as it pertained to authenticity of race; many people not involved with the pageant simply dismissed all the women in it as ugly by virtue of their Indianness. Nor is the beauty of the *traje* supposed to take precedence over its authenticity: authenticity, in the Rabín Ahau, is itself an aesthetic attribute, and the only one which can count. The queens and their mothers were no exception to this rule: when I asked about beauty, they looked blank or even offended, with one exception. And whereas I could not contain my continual exclamations of "*¡Qué LINDAS se ven todas!*" [How pretty everyone looks!], nobody would join me.⁷ The exception was a discussion I had with one of the attendants. She told me that beauty lay in the capacities of a person, a fairly

⁷They knew I thought it was important, however. The mothers had encouraged me to get myself a *huipil* and wear it. When I actually did, they laughed at me a little bit, but kindly, and told me, "*Qué bonita se ve.*" [How pretty you look.]

standard response, but also said that the Rabín Ahau had to be beautiful because she would have to "*relacionarse con gente de otra clase*" [relate with people of another class]. Furthermore, she thought the queens appreciated and admired the beauty of one another's *trajes*.

The queens, in these photographs, are entering into the seductions of these latter two kinds of beauty. Let me begin the tale of this incident with my camera. I hate taking photographs, precisely because I find photography's mimetic capacity overwhelming. Consequently, I had no camera when I came to Cobán, but the incredulity of another anthropologist, Ed Carter, convinced me to buy the cheapest functioning one I could, at the local "Quick Foto." The camera was my most effective tool for establishing rapport with the candidates. Ed told me on the second day that the queens were being charged 10Q per photo of themselves by an official photographer. 10Q is an exorbitant sum, particularly since it costs only 2.50Q to process a photo. Ed and I offered to take photos of them instead; since I was with the queens much of the time, I ended up as their unofficial photographer, and demand for my services was constant.

Menchú argues that "for an Indian, taking a photo of him in the street is abusing his dignity, abusing him" (1983:208). Photographs are prototypes of the omniscient gaze, the encounter of the so-called West with the so-called Rest. What does it mean for Guatemalan Maya women, surely among the

most photographed of "natives," to solicit photography, their own mimetic reproduction? And then to keep the copy for themselves (although I did retain the privilege of the negative and its possibility -- with the queens' permission -- of infinite reproduction)? It is, precisely, mimetic excess.

Mimetic excess went further into mimicry of beauty queens and each other.

The weather was beautiful on that free afternoon, and everyone was glad to rest after three days of rushing from event to event. The candidates were taking their time to get ready: showering, combing out their hair, wandering around the EFA, and talking to one another. At one point, some of the queens from the coast, who were young and a bit flightier than the others, came over and asked me to photograph them. I, agent of authenticity, noticed that they were only wearing their *cortes* with T-shirts, and assumed they meant I should take the photo when they were ready for the pageant. "*Pónganse bonitas*" [get pretty], I said, "and I'll take your photo." I was trying to save my film for the pageant, and didn't want to take any "unnecessary" photos. But they insisted, and we went back behind the EFA to a little area with a fence. There they struck up various poses, looking over their shoulders at the camera and tossing their unbraided hair over their shoulders, very much as the candidates for *Señorita Monja Blanca*, a *ladino* beauty pageant, had appeared two weeks before in their official photos. The queens had indeed "gotten themselves pretty," but not at all gotten themselves *authentic*, which was what I had

meant. This simple act of girlishness recklessly flew in the face of everything the Rabín Ahau represents, without falling into the official alternative, ugliness.

Learning that I was taking photographs, a number of the other queens came out, these ones dressed in each others' *trajes*. *Traje* is relentlessly site-specific; the coherence of representations of Guatemala in the Rabín Ahau and elsewhere hinges on the possibility of reading place automatically from *traje*. Moreover, the entire structure of the Rabín Ahau departs from these building blocks, as the candidates' habit of identifying each other by *municipio* testifies. By changing clothes, the queens separated their selfhood from their obligation to represent. Chichicastenango pretended to be Zacualpa, and Zacualpa Chichicastenango, for the sheer pleasure of doing so, and for the pleasure of having it captured on film.

The spontaneous *communitas* induced by the camera differed from that which the mothers had provoked. The intersubjectivity it produced was not a collective subjectivity, like the subjectivity of the strike. Rather, it was a confusion of subjectivity, with all subjectivity's implication in subjecthood as a state form. Both intersubjectivities, however, shook the representational stability of a univocal Rabín Ahau: candidates joined Tactic in allowing "other" voices to erupt out of its hermetic authenticity, redefining their relationship to folklore's totality. These speculative moments, these breakings

of the cake of custom (Turner 1964:15) constituted, one explicitly and the other almost incidentally, acts of resistance.

Conclusion

In the Rabín Ahau, the discourse of Guatemalan nationalism is mapped onto the identities and geographies of Guatemalan state formation, to produce a particular "form of subordination:" the Indian queen. The Indian queen specifies "the power relations within the crevices and interstices" (West 1988:23) of the Guatemalan national/Indian question. In electing one of the queens as she who most perfectly performs this specification, the Rabín Ahau pageant attempts to "put biology and structure in right relation" (Turner 1969:93) by embodying the Indian womanhood which stands at the nexus of nation and race. The complex process by which her authenticity is generated is concealed in the moment in which it is secured, and she can then serve as an admirable guarantor of what the nation-state was always already supposed to be. The body, however, cannot be entirely contained; it glimmers forth, if only momentarily, unsettling the nation-state's guarantees in its passage.

Conclusion: Violence and Pageantry

Authenticity is easily dismissed, laughed off as the fixation of petty minds. But the really real resists such dismissals. As this discussion has shown, the really real can be so because in it disparate relations of power are woven together into a tight fabric. That fabric, here, is the folklore that clothes the Rabín Ahau; she must fuse it to her body by engaging its multiple and contradictory entailments. If she subsequently appears "in fantastic form," as the Daughter of the King, one must nonetheless enter that fantasy, climb on to the shimmering mirage of authenticity, if one hopes ultimately to dispel it.

I have tried to explore the mirage of the Rabín Ahau from several vantage points. Without this multiple perspective, one runs the danger of getting lost in one's object of analysis, of staying forever in the really real, the place where nothing happens. I hope that I have demonstrated how the apparent paradox of the Rabín Ahau -- an event celebrating indigenous people in a country renowned for its genocidal racism against indigenous people -- is in fact firmly inscribed within postcolonial rationality.

At the heart of this discussion is the problem of violence and its relationship to aesthetic pleasures. To valorize form over content, to abstract form from its content, is a kind of violence which unleashes multiple other violences in both the most expected and the most unexpected places. The

sublime is simultaneously the horrible. These reflections are somewhat weighty for the fragile pageantry of the Rabín Ahau, but this thesis has aimed to demonstrate that this event is, if not integral to, at least well integrated with the military's project of Guatemalan state formation and the production of a peculiar Guatemalan nationalism. The authentic, thus, is all the more important for its illusory nature: the really real transcends reality in order to define reality's terms.

APPENDIX A: SPEECHES

Transcription Codes

I am following a modified version of the transcription conventions of Du Bois et al. I do not mark primary accents, unless they are more marked than normal, which I indicate with a !, nor do I use their system of rendering intonation contour (see below). I have added one notation for voice quality: <SH ... SH>. It means that the stretch of discourse enclosed within the brackets is shouted.

Intonation Contours

I have rendered the system of intonational contours with the following symbols written before the tonic vowel:

' for a rise in pitch

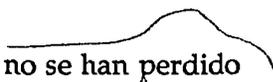
' for a fall

^ for a rise-fall across a single word.

To give the reader a rough idea of how these contours, in combination with terminal contours, might sound in speech, here are some characteristic intonations written with an intonation line:

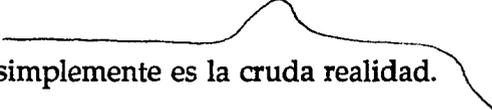
Soloma I

line 18 nuestras r[^]aíces_  nuestras raíces

line 19 no se han perd[^]ido\  no se han perdido

Tactic has a particularly wide-pitched version of these contours, which I render as '^\. It sounds like:

Tactic I

line 20 simplemente es la cr^u=da realidad\

simplemente es la cruda realidad.

San Pedro Soloma
First Speech

1	Respetables autorid^ades_	Respectable authorities
2	..resp ^e t ^a ble p ^u blico que nos acomp ^a ña_	respectable public which accompanies us
3	tengan muy buenas n ^o =ches\	good evening
4	..tr ^a igo para Ust ^a edes_	I bring to you
5	..el sentimiento de una mujer ind ['] ígena_	the sentiment of an indigenous woman,
6	maya <CRK q ['] anjob [^] al CRK>\	a q ['] anjobal maya
7	..de San P ['] edro Soloma_	from San Pedro Soloma
8	<CRK<LO Huehueten [^] a=ngo= LO>CRK>\	Huehuetenango
9	..Nos [^] otros\	We
10	..s ['] omos repons [^] ables_	are responsible for
11	de rescatar\	recovering
12	..<LO todo lo que hemos perdido LO>\	all that we have lost
13	..aqu ['] í estamos pres [^] entes_	we are present here
14	miremos hacia el fut [^] uro_	let us look to the future
15	..mir ['] emos hacia el fut [^] uro\	let us look to the future
16	porque t ['] odos_	because we all
17	aq ['] uí <CRK est [^] amos CRK>\	are here
18	..nuestras r [^] aíces_	our roots
19	no se han perd [^] ido\	have not been lost
20	..aquí está pres ['] ente nuestra cult [^] ura\	our culture is present here
21	..si c ['] ada uno de nosotros <CR luch [^] amos	if each of us struggles
22	CR>\	
23	..s ['] eremos\	we will be
24	fel [^] ices_	happy
25	..y mirar ['] emos_	and we will look
26	hacia 'un nuevo amanecer/	towards a new future
27	as ['] í como lo dese [^] aron_	just as was hoped for
28	<LO nuestros antepas [^] ados LO>\	by our ancestors
29	..Huehueten ['] ango les sal [^] uda\	Huehuetenango salutes you
30	..Huehueten ['] ango e=stá pres ['] ente_	Huehuetenango is present
31	..en su princ [^] esa_	in her princess
32	<LO xila bac ['] ún LO>\	xila bacún
33	..b ['] uenas n ['] oches\	Good evening.

Sololá
First Speech

1	O t'ú=/	o you
2	..Tzac'ó=l/	Tzacol
3	..Bit'ol\	Bitol
4	...m^íranos_	observe us
5	..esc^úchanos\	listen to us
6	...no nos d^ejes\	do not leave us
7	...no nos desamp^ares\	do not abandon us
8	...o Dios que estás en el c'ielo y en la t^ierra_	o God who is in the sky and on the earth
9	..<LO coraz^ón del cielo y coraz^ón de la	heart of the sky and heart of the earth
10	t^ierra LO>\	
11	..danos nuestra descend^encia_	give us our offspring
12	..nuestra sucesi^ón/	our successors
13	..mientras camine el s^ol_	as long as the sun is in the sky
14	y h^aya claridad\	and there is light
15	..que todos los pueblos tengan p^az_	let all people have peace
16	..m^ucha p^az y sean fel^ices\	much peace, and let them be happy
17	...o t^ú_	o you
18	<LO huracán LO>\	hurricane
19	..Chipi-Caculhá/	Chipi-Calculhá
20	Rax^a-Caculhá\	Raxa-Calculhá
21	..Chipi-Nana^uac/	Chipi-Nanauac
22	Raxa-Nana^uac_	Raxa-Nanauac
23	..Voc Hunahpú/	Voc, Hunahpú
24	Tep^eu Gucumatz\	Tepeu, Gucumatz
25	<LO Al^om Qahol^om LO>\	Alom, Qaholom
26	Ixpiyac^oc Ixmucané_	Ixpiyacoc, Ixmucané
27	..abuela del s^ol_	grandmother of the sun
28	..abuela de la l^uz\	grandmother of light
29	..que amanezc^a_	let it be light
30	y que <LO Il^egue el alb^ora LO>\	and let the dawn come
31	...Respetables autorid^ades_	respectable authorities
32	...compañeras aspir^antes al título Rabín	companions aspiring to the title of Rabín
33	Ah^au/	Ahau
34	Rabín Ahau sal^iente_	outgoing Rabín Ahau
35	..público pres^ente/	public in attendance
36	<LO muy buenas n^oches LO>\	a very good evening to you
37	...Mi n^ombre ^es_	My name is
38	Acalia Patricia Saquic Y^ac\	Acalia Patricia Saquic Yac
39	...Mi mens^aje lo dir^ijo=_	I send my message
40	con el corazón hum^ilde\	with a humble heart
41	y un espíritu gr^ande\	and a large spirit
42	..en primer lug^ar_	in the first place
43	..a t^odas las naciones m^ayas\	to all the mayan nations
44	t^ales_	such as
45	la n^ación de los kekch^ies/	the nation of the Kekchís
46	de los cakchiq^ueles_	of the Cakchiqueles
47		of the Quichés

48	de los quich'és/	and of the Mams
49	<LO y de los m^a=mes LO>\	as well as
50	...además/	of the culture of my <i>ladino</i> brothers
51	de la cult^ura de mis herm^anos lad^inos\	with whom, all together
52	..que en conj^unto_	we are
53	..conform^amos\	the citizens of Guatemala
54	<LO la ciudadanía guatemalt^eca LO>\	The purpose of my message is
55	...el propósito de mi mens^aje es_	for us to rid from our minds
56	que nos quit^emos de en m^ente_	the elimination of a culture
57	..esta eliminaci^ón de una cult^ura=\	which has survived
58	que ha sobreviv^ido_	already more than 500 years
59	..ya !m^ás de quin^ie=ntos ^a=ños\	that people, groups
60	...que pers^onas entid^ades_	and governments
61	<LO y gob^iernos LO>\	[inaudible]
62	..[XXXXXXXX]_	a great culture
63	una gr^an cultura_	but this has not been possible
64	pero ^esto no ha sido pos^ible\	nor will it be possible
65	<LO tamp^oco será posible LO>\	now
66	..ah^ora_	we need to raise up Guatemala
67	debemos levant^ar a Guatem^ala\	let everyone identify him/herself
68	...que cada persona se identif^ique_	from the nation s/he belongs to
69	...de que nac^ión pertene^ce\	with peace
70	con p^az_	liberty
71	libertad/	and justice
72	y just^icia\	so that everybody will identify him/herself
73	..a que c^ada persona se identif^ique\	let all the <u>trajes</u> [inaudible]
74	...que ^odos los trajes [XXX]^amos\	so that in this way
75	...para que así/	shoulder to shoulder
76	..hombro con h^ombro\	we will raise Guatemala up
77	levant^emos a Guatem^ala_	and one day
78	..y algún d^ía_	we will be among the developed countries
79	estar^emos en los países desarroll^ados_ <LO	of the earthly globe
80	del gl^obo terrestre LO>\	I exhort everyone
81	..Exh^orto a t^odos_	to have respect
82	..el resp^eto\	so that in this way
83	..para que así/	we can all live together
84	juntos convivir^emos\	together we can [inaudible]
85	juntos [XXX]^emos_	our peace and liberty
86	nuestra p^az y libert^ad\	for your message (?)
87	..para su mensaje(?)/	I want to [inaudible] you
88	...quiero [X^X]les_	my cordial greeting
89	mi saludo cord^ial_	full of love and fraternity
90	lleno de am^or y fraternid^ad\	as well as wishing my companions
91	detrás deseándolo a mis compañ^eras_	successes
92	..^éxitos\	and to the Rabín Ahau who is elected today
93	..y al Rab^ín Ahau que hoy salga el^ecta_	let her know how to represent
94	..s^epa represent^ar_	our mayan culture
95	nuestra cult^ura m^aya\	thank you
96	..muchas gr^acias_	and good evening
97	y <LO b^uenas noches LO>\	

Tactic (Princesa Tezulutlán)
First Speech (in opening ceremonies)

1	Señor gobernador depar'a=n-/ tament^a=1\	Governor of the deparan- tment
2	..<LO señor alc^alde municip^al LO>\	Municipal Mayor
3	..(H)señores m'ie mbros del jurado calificad^or\	members of the qualifying jury
4	<LO señores organizad^ores de 'este ev^e=nto\	organizers of this event
5	..(H)Rab'in Ahau sal^ie=nte\ compañ'eras p=articp^antes\ lc'ulto !público que nos honra con su pres^e=ncia\ ..(H)para t'odos y cada uno de Ust'^edes\ <LO tengan la mejor de la n'o=che LO>\	outgoing Rabín Ahau participating companions learned public who us with its presence
6	(H)les traigo un saludo [XXX] desde el [%XXXXXX^a=1]\	to each and every one of you the best of the evening I bring you [inaudible] greetings from the [inaudible]
7	...en el cua=l/ soy la portav'oz de un cordial sal'^u=do\ ...<A quis^iera que mi mensaje se entend^iera_ desde <LO el punto de vista de la realidad\ %actual nacional e LO> ident'^ial (?) de n'uestra Guatem'ala_ <A no es un resentimiento indígena asocial/ simplemente es la cr'^u=da realidad\ <LO en que vive mi g'e=nte indígena LO>A>\	in which I am the bearer of a cordial greeting I would like my message to be understood from the point of view of the current, national and (?) reality of our Guatemala It is not an antisocial indigenous resentment it is simply the harsh reality in which my indigenous people live
8	..(H)v'íctima de la explotac'ión A>_ <CR el tur^i=smo\ y el lav'ado de d^ólares CR>\	victims of exploitation tourism and money laundering
9	..<A<F<SH [XXXXXXXXXXXX] SH>\ quer'ido p^ú=blico_ quer'ido <SH asist^e=nte SH>_ en este m'agno ev^e=nto A>\	[inaudible] beloved public beloved witness to this great event
10	..(H)<SH pero se me forma un n'udo en la garg'^a=nta SH>F>\	but I get a knot in my throat
11	<LO al sab^er= LO>\	when I know
12	..<F<SH al !v'er SH> expresar F> <A lo que mi corazón s^ie=nte_ que en mis !v'enas late la fuerza de gritar A> al m^undo\ (H)!n^uestra realidad act'^u=al\ ..(H)la grand^e=za de los d^io=ses_ desde la <A majestuositad A>-/ ..y sus bell^ezas natur'^a=les\ 45	when I see expressed what my heart feels that in my veins pulses the strength to shout to the world our current reality the greatness of the gods from the majesticness-- and her natural beauties and the color of her many-colored <i>huipiles</i>

46	y el colorido de sus m ^u =lticolores	
47	huip'iles\	the sincere smile of her inhabitants
48	(H)la sonr=isa sin=cera de sus habit^a=ntes\	but I get a knot in my throat
49	(H)<F pero se me forma un n'udo en la	
50	garg'^a=nta F>_	when I know
51	<LO al saber LO>\	that that smile
52	que 'esa sonrisa_	is disguised
53	'es disfraz^ada\	forced
54	..(H)forz^ada_	and humiliated by the difficulties of life
55	y humill^ada por lo dif^icil de la v^ida\	for this reason, then
56	...<F<SH por 'eso pues SH>/	I ask the heart of the sky heart of the earth to
57	pido al <A<RH corazón del c'ielo corazón de	intercede [inaudible]
58	la t'ierra RH>A>F> qu'e intercede	
59	[X^XX]\	so that they may be treated
60	(H)<RH para que sean tom^ados_	like human beings
61	como seres hum^anos RH>\	or fe-
62	o po-_	like for a few people the example
63	..tal como algunos p'ocos el ej'e=mplaridad\	of their
64	%a sus probl^emas\	vital
65	vit^ales_	and essential problems
66	<LO y esenc^iales LO>\	that-
67	que_	and to us women
68	...(1)(H)y a nos^otros las muj^eres_	I exhort us tonight to awaken our spirits
69	nos exh^orto en esta n'oché que	
70	despert^emos nuestro esp^iritu\	th-
71	...qu-_	that we awaken our spirits to the
72	..<A despert^emos nuestro esp^iritu hasta los	foundations the thresholds of Xibalbá
73	cimientos A> umbr^ales de Xibalb^á_	to escape from the obsession
74	<A<RH para salir de la obsesión/	with incapacity
75	de la incapacidad RH>A>/	into which they have put us
76	que nos h=^an metodo\	Existing for touristic commodification (?)
77	(H)<A Estar por comodificación(?) túr^istica_	[inaudible] of wanting to accumulate
78	[XXX] de querer acumular(?)\	[inaudible] as to the weak
79	..[XX]^ando como a las d'ébiles\	I would like to sum up my message
80	..quis^iera resumir mi mens^aje_	but unfortunately time runs short
81	pero lament <F 'ablemente el !t^ie=mpo F>	
82	es c^or=to\	well for some people who tr-
83	..pues <F<SH para alg^unas pers^onas que	
84	inten-/	[inaudible] our messages [inaudible]
85	[XXXX] nuestros mens^ajes [XXX] SH>F>-/	to each [inaudible] none
86	...<LO que a cada [XX] ning^una_	look for the [inaudible] our message
87	..busca la [XXXXXXXX] n'uestro mens^aje	
88	LO>\	there are very few who agree with me
89	...<F<SH !'son !pocos los que están de	
90	ac^uerdo SH>F> conmigo\	and many who [inaudible] in the
91	y <A<F<SH muchos que [XX'X] en el año	international year of indigenous
92	internacional SH>A> de los	peoples
93	p=^ueblos indígenas F>\	

San Pedro Soloma
Finalist Speech

1	Q: ¿Cómo puede la mujer maya contribuir al	How can the mayan woman contribute to the
2	desarrollo del país?	country's development?
3	[Q'anjobal]	
4	Es m'uy importante en la sociedad/	She is very important in society
5	...como tamb'íe=n/	as well as
6	..<LO 'en el hogar LO>\	in the home
7	...en la sociedad/	in society
8	..qu'é mejor ej^emplo que <LO el de	what better example than that of Rigoberta
9	Rigoberta Menchú LO>\	Menchú
10	..t'odas somos intelig^entes_	we are all intelligent
11	ten^emos n^uestras m^ismas	we have our own responsibilities
12	resp^onsabilid^ades\	
13	como tamb'ién nuestras <LO capacid^ades	as well as our abilities
14	LO>\	
15	..nos^otras las muj^eres_	we women
16	s^omos resp^ons^ables\	are responsible
17	..porque sent^imos_	because we feel
18	'y_	and
19	o^ímos_	hear
20	..escuch^amos_	we listen
21	t^odos <LO los ojos los ten^emos LO>\	we all have eyes
22	y por qué n^o respet^ar <LO los derechos de	and why not respect the rights of women
23	l^a mujer LO>\	
24	..l^a muj^er/	women
25	..es resp^ons^able\	are responsible
26	...d^e/	for
27	..de cri^a=r_	for raising
28	n^iños\	children
29	form^arlos\	forming them
30	para el fut^uro de nuestro país/	for the future of our country
31	..para reportar_	to report
32	todo lo que nosotros_	all that we
33	..est^amos viv^iendo\	are living
34	sint^iendo\	feeling
35	<LO muj^eres LO>_	women
36	somos ..resp^ons^ables_	we are responsible
37	..s^omos import^antes\	we are important
38	<LO no nos sentamos menos que los	let us not feel that we are less than men
39	h^ombres LO>_	
40	..porque nosotros llevamos_	because we carry
41	..nuestra cult^ura_	our culture
42	nuestra s^angre_	our blood
43	<LO en nuestras v^enas LO>\	in our veins
44	gracias\	thank you

Sololá
Finalist Speech

1	Q: ¿Cómo deberán de prepararse los jóvenes	How should young mayans prepare
2	mayas para su mejor desarrollo?	themselves for their best development?
3	[Cakchiquel]	
4	Muy buenas noches a todos/	A good evening to all
5	...que=	um
6	agradezco sinceram'ente de que estoy	I am sincerely grateful to be once again with
7	nuevam'ente con Ustedes/	all of you
8	...unicam'ente exijo a los jóvenes m'ayas\	I only ask young mayans
9	..que %hoy mañana y s^iempre_	that today, tomorrow and always
10	..justifiamos nuestra cult^ura\	that we justify our culture
11	..olvidemos lo que pasó hace quin'ientos	let us forget what happened 500 years ago
12	'años\	
13	...<LO que c^ierto LO>\	which, certainly,
14	...que es un dolor tr^emendo\	is terribly painful
15	..pero como herm^anos que s^omos\	but like the brothers and sisters that we are
16	..luch^emos para una buena !p='atria	let us struggle for a better fatherland
17	mej^or\	
18	...<LO para una Guatem'ala l^inda LO>_	for a nice Guatemala
19	..para que dentro=	so that in
20	de=e_	in
21	poco t^iempo\	a short time
22	superar^emos_	we will overcome
23	...y juntos de la m^ano\	and hand in hand
24	lograr^emos un tr^iunfo en <LO nuestro	we will achieve a triumph in the territory of
25	territorio del p^aís LO>\	this country
26	..exhorto a todos ent^onces\	I exhort everyone, then
27	..para que h^oy=_	so that today
28	y s^iempre\	and always
29	..cultiv^emos nuestros cost^umbres_	we will cultivate our customs
30	..nuestros <LO tr^ajes tradicion^ales LO>\	our traditional costumes
31	..<LO muchas gracias LO>\	thank you very much

Tactic (Princesa Tezulutlán)
Finalist speech

1	Q: ¿De qué manera los mayas en la	In what way can the maya currently
2	actualidad pueden contribuir al proceso de	contribute to the peace process in
3	paz en Guatemala?	Guatemala?
4	[Poqomché]	
5	De qué manera_	In what way
6	(H)de qué manera nosotros los mayas_	in what way can we, the maya
7	podemos <LO participar en el proceso de	participate in the peace process
8	paz LO>\	
9	..(H)la manera de participar en el proceso de	The way to participate in the peace process
10	p^az\	
11	..(H)es saber nuestro derecho_	is to know our rights
12	y saber el derecho de nuestro hermano_	and to know the rights of our brother
13	(H)porque <F qué ¡lástima saber nuestro	for how sad to know our own rights
14	derecho_	
15	por ¡sí ¡mismo_ F>	for themselves
16	y <LO no saber el de otro LO>\	and not know those of the other person
17	<F qué lástima me da F>/	how sad it makes me
18	..porque <F<Rh tantas veces Rh>F> he	because so many times I have suffered these
19	sufrido <LO es'as consecuencias\	consequences
20	por eso me duele m^u=cho\ LO>	for that reason it hurts me a lot
21	..(H)por eso que nosotros_	for that reason that we--
22	...(H)cómo n'ó [XXX] participar en el proceso	how are we not to participate in the peace
23	de p^az\	process
24	...ahora\	now
25	<A<Rh tenemos la esperanza que es el año	we have the hope that it is the international
26	internacional Rh> de los A> <LO	year of indigenous people
27	p^ueblos indígenas LO>_	
28	..(H)y también tenemos el ejemplo de	and we also have the example of our sister
29	nuestra <A hermana <LO Rigoberta	Rigoberta Menchú
30	Menchú LO>A>_	
31	(H)de ¡muchas mujeres guatemaltecas_	of many Guatemalan women
32	(H)quien %'a nosotras las mujeres nos	who exhort us women to awaken our spirits
33	¡exhorta <LO que despertemos	
34	nuestro espíritu LO>\	
35	(H)ya llegó el momento que	the moment for us to awaken has come
36	despertemos\	
37	como 'Alta Verapaz la <F ![X^XX] F>--/	like Alta Verapaz the [inaudible]
38	...<LO ¡¡juntos podemos lograr LO>--_	together, we can do it
39	...podemos participar en el proceso de	we can participate in the peace process
40	p^az\	
41	...<LO que tanto anhelamos LO>\	which we so long for
42	..que sí se firmó el pacto [XX!X^X]/	if the [inaudible] pact was signed
43	..y s-	and i-
44	y no saber que nuestro derecho que	and not to know that our rights exist
45	existen\	

46	..pero_	but
47	..nosotros_	we
48	!j'untos !t'odos_	all together
49	lo podemos logr^ar\	we can do it
50	..porque dice el dicho\	because the saying says
51	una leña no puede hacer s'ólo__	a woodpile cannot make it alone
52	que vale todo un gr^upo de--\	what is a whole group worth--
53	..(H)<LO d'el otro lado está trabajando y	on the other side, it is working, and we are
54	nosotros aquí\ LO>	here
55	..ent'onces--\	so
56	..%!un'idos--__	united
57	ja--	nev-
58	un pue-/	a peo-
59	como dice el dicho\	as the saying goes
60	...un p'ueblo unido jam'=ás será venc^i=do\	the people united will never be defeated
61	v'iva Guatemala c'on la paz\	may Guatemala live in peace

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