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MUSIC AND THE MODERN MAYA: A RECEPTION STUDY OF
ROCK-MAYA MUSIC IN GUATEMALA

by

Malcolm Miguel Botto

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Communications

Brigham Young University

August 2008

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Malcolm Miguel Botto in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT

MUSIC AND THE MODERN MAYA: A RECEPTION STUDY OF ROCK-MAYA MUSIC IN GUATEMALA

Malcolm Miguel Botto

Department of Communications

Master of Arts

The current global flows of people, capital, technology, images and ideas--a phenomenon described as "mediascapes" by Arjun Appadurai (1996), traverse the most isolated Maya communities in Guatemala. These flows have recently influenced the creation of hybrid media products among the Maya. Among them we find an emerging indigenous musical genre called "Rock-Maya." I use reception analysis methods to document the encoding and decoding of this new indigenous medium of communication. Through qualitative interviews I attempt to show how K'iche'-Maya youth appropriate, what Motti Regev (1997) calls, the *rock aesthetic* to promote a sense of K'iche'-Maya youth identity in a modern local, national and global context. I conclude that Rock-Maya music serves as a form of cultural communication and a source for identity construction among young Maya adults. The production and consumption of this music also creates spaces for colonial relationships to be redefined and equalized in Guatemala. A short music video clip forms part of the study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I never thought Guatemala would become such an important part of my life when I took my first trip there with my family in 1990. Since then I have been tied to this wonderful place in one way or another. I want to thank the people of Guatemala for receiving me with open arms. Thank you for sharing with me your homes, your meals, your friendship, your words, your ideas, your struggles, and your joys. Thank you for helping me remember the important things about living.

My parents and family have been an inspiration through this educational adventure. Thank you all for always being there. To my parents, Alicia Ines Hortal, M. Daniel Wilson and Miguel A. Botto: Thank you for every sacrifice made to present opportunities along my path. To my siblings Jonathan, Noelia, Sebastian, and Anna: Thanks for sticking together through the hard times and helping me stay sane. To my grandmother, Alicia Esther Quetgles: Gracias for your unrelenting and inspiring interest in the defense of indigenous rights and identity (y por ese “otro mate” ofrecido). To my uncle, Fernando Hortal: Thank you for your gift with words and encouragement. To my uncle, Patricio Hortal: Thank you for your strength and conviction. To all of my family for the strength I receive from being connected to you.

My journey through BYU has been guided by motivating professors, mentors, colleagues, and friends. I thank them for instilling in me the desire to learn continually. I thank David Shuler for being a mentor who always had time for me. I thank John

Hawkins for showing me what a real anthropologist does. I am grateful for Janielle Christensen and BYU's Living Legends for being my support group through the years. Janielle: Thank you for trusting me with so many things. I appreciate the faculty and staff at the Communications Department for their assistance through this whole process. I am indebted to my colleagues and friends at the International Study Programs office. Thank you for supporting me in every way. I value my fellow classmates and friends, for the many conversations that inspired me (especially that one discussion on faith. Thank you Eduardo Aragon, Dina El Mahy, Eve Okura, and others). I thank Tami Matthews, for her continued visits and the long talks on "how things are going." I am especially grateful for Taylor Macdonald and Jenille Fairbanks for reading over my material and helping me edit. To all of you who kept asking, "How's that thesis going?" Thank you. Sometimes I wished you didn't ask but I'm glad you did.

I want to thank my thesis committee for their continued patience with me. To Allen Palmer for sticking with me till the end. To Carol Ward, for the stimulating discussions on ethnicity. To Chris Cutri and his wife Ramona for inviting me to eat, not only to talk about my thesis but also to talk about other important things in the world. This thesis would not have been completed without the encouragement from Kevin Stoker. Thank you for believing I had something to contribute. In the end, this written material exists because of my friends from Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala. I am indebted to the Kab'awil group, the Tepaz Lopez family, Marcos Ajpacaja, Isidro Chox and many others I've come to value and admire. Maltiyox chiwe iwonojel.....!!

Finalmente, agradezco eternamente a mi Padre Celestial por su poder en mi vida.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I – Introduction.....	1
CHAPTER II – Literature Review.....	6
Introduction.....	6
Identity Construction.....	7
Identity Construction in Guatemala.....	13
Mass Media and Adolescents.....	18
Music and Adolescents.....	21
Music and Identity.....	23
Globalization and the Rock Aesthetic.....	27
Globalization and Guatemala	30
Research Questions.....	35
CHAPTER III – Methods.....	36
Introduction.....	36
Trustworthiness and Credibility.....	37
Theoretical History to Mass Media Methodology.....	38
Reception Studies.....	40
Encoding.....	40
Participant Observation.....	41
Informal and Formal Interviews.....	42
Other Methods.....	43
Decoding.....	45
Interpretive Communities.....	45
Focus Group Interviews.....	48
Research Questions.....	52
CHAPTER IV – Results.....	53
Introduction.....	53
Encoding.....	53
History of Kab’awil.....	54
Social, Political and Economic Influences.....	54

Other Influences.....	56
Kab'awil Songs and their Intended Social Meaning.....	57
Decoding.....	67
Survey Data.....	67
Focus Group Interviews.....	72
CHAPTER V – Discussion.....	87
Introduction.....	87
Encoding: The Production of Rock-Maya Music.....	87
Decoding: Preferred Reading.....	91
Decoding: Enjoyment, Comprehension, Relevance.....	95
Enjoyment Level.....	96
Comprehension Level.....	99
Relevance Level.....	101
Rock-Maya Music's Social Role.....	103
CHAPTER VI – Conclusion.....	106
REFERENCES.....	113
APPENDIX A	120
APPENDIX B	136
APPENDIX C	138
APPENDIX D	139
APPENDIX E	146

CHAPTER I

Introduction

It seemed like a typical rock concert: electric guitars, a bass guitar, drums, big speakers, loud music, young adults forming groups here and there, strobe lights producing shadows of dancing fans, and a dominant group jumping up and down to the rhythm of the music. Everything was present that is typically found in an alternative rock band concert in the United States, Mexico, or Argentina, except the young women were wearing *huipiles* (traditional Maya woven blouses) and *cortes* (traditional Maya skirts), the band had a marimba on stage along with two turtle shells, a big traditional drum, some rattles, and a traditional reed instrument called the *chirimia*. This was a Rock-Maya concert taking place in the Guatemalan highland town of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. The songs were sung, not in Spanish or English, but in K'iche', an indigenous Mayan language. The concert represented the fusion of Maya elements and symbols with that seemingly most foreign of art forms—rock and roll music.

Today in Guatemala, the current global flows of people, capital, technology, images, and ideas traverse the most isolated Maya communities (Nelson, 1996). These flows have recently influenced the creation of hybrid media products among the Maya, including an emerging indigenous musical genre called “Rock-Maya.”

In “Music, space, identity: geographies of youth culture in Bangalore,” Arun Saldanha (2002) treated music as “a practice situated in, and producing, real and imagined space” (p. 337). For Saldanha, music forms part of the process of creating an

imagined space, or identity. Young people use music for reasons related to their social development and identity formation. Motti Regev (1997) argued that "...rock music is used to declare a 'new'—modern, contemporary, young, often critical-oppositional—sense of local identity, as opposed to older, traditional, conservative forms of that identity" (p. 131). James Lull (1985) identified particular personal and interpersonal goals young people have as part of their self-socialization and how music is used to achieve them. These goals include establishing their identities, developing peer relationships, learning about the world outside the home and community, and establishing their autonomy.

Maya youth today face what Regev (1997) called a "sort of tension between local and global cultural materials because they are thrown into contemporary global mediascapes" (p. 137). A fusion of local and global cultural material is a natural response to this tension. Regev (1997) argued that this fusion produces reflexive communities that consciously construct a new sense of identity. This new sense of identity highlights the cultural differences in the mix of cultural materials (138).

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) espoused a concept of culture that is semiotic. Geertz considered culture as a system of meanings where man is suspended in the "cultural webs of significance" (p. 4-5). Edward Fischer (2001) followed Geertz's conceptualization of culture, claiming that these "cultural webs of significance" form clusters of common concepts, emotions, and practices that arise when people interact regularly. This makes culture something fluid and dynamic yet remaining continuous. Fischer argued that "cultural logics," or internal cognitive models are what make culture continuous. He claims that "different cultures are marked by different logics of internal organization" (p. 15). For Fischer (2001), the "essence of culture remains its sharedness"

(p. 19). Fischer argued against an essentialist view of culture. It is not a list of essential attributes, behaviors and symbols that constitutes culture (such as the Maya eat maize as their staple, they are subsistence farmers, they speak a Mayan language, they live in adobe houses, etc.). Instead, culture is the sharedness of particular patterns, symbols, and ways of seeing and understanding the world.

Fischer (2001) believed the concept of cultural logics reaffirmed “the importance of cultural relativity and of anthropology’s contribution to the critique of Western reason . . . [to] elucidate cognitive mechanisms of improvisation and proactive cultural construction. . . ” (p. 15). This follows the constructionist approach discussed by Cornell and Hartmann (1998). Yet, Fischer (2001) argued against a strong “constructivist theory [that can be] morally ambiguous, and it has more recently been employed to undermine indigenous claims of authenticity” (p. 10). The Maya today are currently using “strategic essentialism” to authenticate and legitimize identity as well as cultural and socio-political rights (Warren & Jackson, 2002, p. 206). The strategic essentialism used by the Maya involves making explicit those patterns, symbols and worldview shared among Maya peoples. This allows the Maya to differentiate themselves from other ethnic groups and call for particular attention to the needs of the Maya in Guatemala. The difference between essentialism and strategic essentialism is who makes the defining decisions. Globalization has restructured power relationships for the Maya at a national and global level. This restructuring plays an important role in the construction of identity for young Maya adults.

Young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala are particularly active in the construction of their identities. Many scholars have studied

Maya culture from a Faustian perspective. The Faustian ideas, espoused by the Frankfurt School, regarded traditional cultures to be constantly and irreversibly polluted by contact with the high technology and media produced by dominant cultures. Under this perspective it was natural for outsiders to essentialize and assign labels and identities to other cultural groups. This study rejects the “Faustian contract” and argues for the “global village model” to better understand current Maya culture in Guatemala (Ginsburg et. al., 2002, p. 212-13). The global village model argues for the exchange of technology and ideas in today’s world and seeks to understand how local cultures can “recreate a local sense of community associated with the village life through the progressive use of communication technology” (Ginsburg et. al., 2002, p. 213).

This study uses reception analysis methods to document the encoding and decoding of a new indigenous medium of communication, that is Maya-Rock. Through surveys, qualitative interviews and participant observation, this study demonstrates how K’iche’-Maya youth appropriate what Regev (1997) called the rock aesthetic to promote a sense of contemporary K’iche’-Maya youth identity in a modern local, national, and global context. Regev’s rock aesthetic model is a progressive use of communication technology and aesthetic among the Maya in Guatemala. The conclusion will indicate that Rock-Maya music is a product of globalization and serves as a form of cultural communication for K’iche’-Maya youth. This study will also show how young Maya adults construct and communicate their identity through the Rock-Maya music of the Kab’awil band. Through this cultural medium, Maya culture is defolklorized and normalized in Guatemala’s contemporary multiethnic society.

Indigenous communities throughout Latin America have been forced into the minority category for ages. Because of the minority status of indigenous communities, any medium produced by or about indigenous communities will likely be political in some form. This research adds to the field of “indigenous media” studies and helps “develop a body of knowledge and critical perspective to do with aesthetics and politics, whether written by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people, on representation of Aboriginal people and concerns in art, film, television, or other media” (Ginsburg et. al., 2002, p. 212).

The theoretical framework for understanding the role of Rock-Maya music in Guatemala is presented in Chapter II. Chapter III discusses the methodology used to collect the necessary data for a reception analysis of this music. Chapter IV presents the data collected under a reception study structure. Chapter V discusses the data in relation to the encoding and decoding of this music and to the social role of this music in Guatemala. Following a discussion of the data, the researcher formulates conclusions and presents them in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

If an “understanding of the self is a necessary precondition for all subsequent knowledge,” it is then essential to consider the significance of “personal” and “social” identity (Radwan 1998, p. 1). This argument suggests that,

regardless of how objectively evident the world around us is, we can only come to know it by applying ourselves to that world....The sole instrument of observation available to any person ...is his or her own individual sense of significance and relationships, a conceptual screen that filters ...the confusion of life in all its detail into a manageable stream of sensation (Radwan 1998, p. 1).

Understanding of the self, or a sense of identity, is an essential part of making sense of one’s existence. In a world full of symbols, images, and messages it is important to understand how these elements interact with and shape identity. These symbols, images and messages come from varied sources including family, peers, institutions, and the mass media. This chapter will present the theories that can help uncover the relationship between mass media, specifically music, and ethnic identity formation in Guatemala. The chapter will begin by defining identity and discussing the construction of identity in Guatemala. It will then discuss the medium of music and how it is used by young adults. A discussion on globalization and the rock-aesthetic will prelude a description of these issues in Guatemala.

Identity Construction

It is necessary to first discuss how to best conceptualize identity. Identity is popularly regarded as a fixed idea of the self residing in the individual. When this popular idea, the fixed sense of personhood, is deconstructed, a more complex and organic phenomenon emerges. Huntemann and Morgan (2001) argued that identity is subjective and an organic socio-cultural process. They found identity to be a “fluid, partly situational, and thus constantly under construction, negotiation, and modification ... actively constructed as it is expressed and vice versa” (p. 311). According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), this fluid process is based on the interaction between the individual and his or her social world. This process develops personal identity and social identity. Personal identity refers to self-knowledge that derives from the individual’s unique traits and attributes. Social identity is an understanding of the self that derives from perceived membership in particular social groups. An individual can thus have multiple social identities depending on the social context. Identity can be “powerfully associated with membership or lack of membership in a group, religion or nationality” (Huntemann & Morgan, 2001, p. 310).

Mass media provide shared understandings about one’s surroundings and its people. Huntemann and Morgan (2001) suggested that “components of identity reflect and result from social interactions with family, friends, peers, authorities, and others, as well as from mass media images and values” (p. 311).

In a modern global society, race and ethnicity have important roles to help make sense of an individual’s or a group’s place in society and their relationship to others. The way one conceptualizes and experiences race and ethnicity are influenced by

epistemological heritage. Epistemological heritage, the way one knows things, is rooted in history and a product of interaction. Social scientists have worked to identify how people use history and social interaction to distinguish themselves from others. They have made efforts to identify the elements that shape identity and relations among different identities. Some scholars have found these elements to be fixed while others argue they are constantly changing

The sociological debate over how to interpret ethnicity and race is continuously shifting on a continuum that deals with the following question: “Is ethnicity fixed and unchanging, or is it fluid and contingent” (Cornell & Hartmann 1998, p. 41)? In the early twentieth century, Franz Boas (1911) moved western thought away from biological explanations to ethnicity and used science to challenge social Darwinism. Max Weber (1968) began thinking about ethnicity when he tried to explain the subjective and objective elements that are connected to building ethnic affiliations. His work guided other scholars to consider ethnicity as a phenomenon rooted in culture, economics, and politics. This informed sociologist Robert Park’s (1930) work as he developed an “assimilation” model. Park’s “assimilation” model proposed that ethnic and racial distinctions and creations were a matter of culture and behavior. He projected that through the linear process of assimilation all “ethnic” identities would eventually disappear. When Park’s assimilation theory failed, scholars re-evaluated their assumptions.

In response to the failed “assimilation” model, scholars began to use “primordial” explanations for ethnic and racial distinctions in society. Clifford Geertz, and other scholars argued that ethnicity was a fixed, unchangeable, primordial “given,” rooted in

what Grosby calls “nativity” (1996, p. 52). For the primordialist, the circumstances surrounding birth are essential to the construction of self and the identification with a particular group. Horowitz claimed “the language of ethnicity is the language of kinship” (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998, p. 54). Grosby argued that, before birth and socialization, an infant is biologically linked with parents, grandparents, clan, tribe, and larger collectivities such as city-states and nation. According to Grosby (1996), kinship is a significant primordial referent for classifying oneself and forming groups. Geertz identified other primordial referents. They include kinship, “ethnobiological” physical features, language, place, religion, and custom (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996, p. 43-44). The primordialist argument claims a powerful attachment is formed with those who share these same referents and with the referent itself. Thus, racial and ethnic boundaries are formed and distinctions established between groups in society through primordial attachments. These primordial attachments were treated as deeply rooted and fixed attachments unaffected by circumstance. It was the fact that these attachments were fixed and enduring that explained the failure of Park’s assimilation model. Primordialist explanations dealt with the capacity for ethnicity to endure. They did not deal with the intensity of attachments nor the changing structure or variation of these attachments.

Another group of social scientists, Cohen (1974), Roosens (1989), Glazer and Moynihan (1970), and others from the Chicago School of sociology directed their arguments towards the opposite end of the continuum. These scholars argued that ethnicity survived because of its fluidity. Situational or circumstantial explanations for ethnicity focused completely on outside forces. For the circumstantialist, ethnicity was a product of history (not rooted in history), economics, politics, and interaction among

these elements and other social groups. Bean and Tienda (1999) argued that Geertz's primordial ties cannot completely explain ethnic group solidarity. Their examples, based on Hispanic immigrant experiences, point towards the notion that ethnic boundaries are "defined not only by socially produced rules of descent, but can be changed by group members themselves" (Bean & Tienda, 1999, p.203). Frederik Barth (1969) discussed the creation of boundaries by those inside and outside ethnic groups. He argued that ethnic groups do not form in isolation but through contact and interaction with other groups. He stated, "The persistence of ethnic groups in contact implies not only criteria and signals of identification, but also a structuring of interaction which allows the persistence of cultural differences" (p. 80). Michael Hechter (1996) used Rational Choice Theory to explicate ethnic relations. This theory assumes human behavior is driven by personal utility. For Hechter, people are goal-oriented, and they evaluate circumstances to make the choice that produces the greatest benefits. Michael Banton (1996) also argued that choices are dependent on economy, social status, and obligations to friends and neighbors, and not to ethnic orientations. In his article, "The Actor's Model of Ethnic Relations," he posited the idea that ethnicity was a notion forced by the outsider and was not previously considered among the in-group (Banton, 1996, p. 98-103). These and other situational explanations deal with ethnic change and variation but do not consider ethnicity's durability.

At this juncture of academic conflict over how to conceptualize ethnicity and race, the work of Cornell and Hartmann (1998) deserves attention. They propose a synthesis of primordial and circumstantial explanations to create a "constructionist" framework that better helps us understand the durability of ethnicity and its adaptability

to circumstance. By considering identity formation, the constructionist view attempts to explain how ethnicity is informed by particular social conditions and experienced as a primordial phenomenon. The interaction between circumstances and human action is what creates ethnic groups. Human actions are informed by identity and social interaction. Thus, “ethnic groups are actively involved in the construction and reconstruction of identities, negotiating boundaries, asserting meanings, interpreting their own pasts, resisting the impositions of the present and claiming the future” (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998, p. 101). Cornell and Hartman (1998) identified external contextual and internal symbolic factors that interact to create identities. The constructionist view focuses on the active participation of a person in the interaction between these factors. Cornell and Hartmann (1998) identified six external contextual factors involved in identity construction. These factors include politics, labor markets, residential space, social institutions, culture, and daily experience. They recognize that these factors or sites for identity construction are intricately linked.

This is evident in the Puerto Rican immigrant experience discussed in Bean and Tienda’s (1999) chapter, “The Structuring of Hispanic Ethnicity” (pp. 210-213). Politics involves the “formal distribution of power” (Cornell & Hartmann 1998, p. 155). When Puerto Rico became a United States territory, Puerto Ricans became part of that complicated web of United States politics. Puerto Rico governs all its domestic matters directly, but the “governance structure is bounded by the provisions of the federal constitution” (Bean & Tienda, 1999, p. 211). While Puerto Ricans share a common citizenship, defense, currency, and loyalty to the value of democracy with other United States citizens, they are restricted from voting in the presidential elections and are not

represented in the national Senate. They can enter the United States mainland freely and are obligated to serve in the military. These policies build boundaries between United States citizens from Puerto Rico and those from the mainland. Such boundaries force Puerto Ricans to consider themselves as second-class citizens. The labor market is also involved in building ethnic boundaries for Puerto Ricans. As the local economy has shifted from an agricultural to an industrial economy, many Puerto Ricans entered the United States looking for work. As they entered the United States, they were relegated to the lower-wage labor jobs. This affected the residential space and resources Puerto Ricans had access to. The circular migration discussed by Bean and Tienda (1999) influenced the cultural and daily experiences of Puerto Ricans in the United States. These external factors are not alone in the construction of identities and formation of ethnic groups.

Individuals and groups contribute to the construction encounter. Their contributions are considered by Cornell and Hartman (1998) to be internal factors. They include preexisting identities, population size, internal differentiation, social capital, human capital, and symbolic repertoires. The Puerto Rican experience can also serve here as an example. Puerto Ricans arrive in the United States with existing identities. A Puerto Rican can say she is a woman, a daughter, a wife, a Puerto Rican, a nurse, a New Yorker, a dancer, and a Nuyorican. Cornell and Hartmann (1998) described construction of identity as a “process through which that identity joins other consciously held identities, or replaces, overshadows, disrupts, or otherwise alters them” (p. 197). The new United States context places Puerto Ricans in a position to re-evaluate their identities, contrasting those of others. All who leave their native home carry with them a

“powerful conception of who they are, rooted in their experience . . .” in their native home. Puerto Ricans who participate in the circular migration mentioned earlier keep a vivid conception of that identity. Those born in the United States use their parents’ and grandparents’ conceptions to inform their Puerto Rican American or “Nuyorican” experience. Puerto Ricans use social and human capital to solidify group identity. They build relationships with each other and rely on the knowledge and abilities of others in the group to confirm their place and to make meaning of their identity in the new context. Puerto Ricans, as well as other ethnic groups, conceptualize and experience identity through the primordial attachments to land and kinship. Cornell and Hartmann (1998) suggested that, “identities are human creations, existing only in ways that we come to think about ourselves and others” (p. 231). Thus, these creations are influenced by epistemology. Essentially, although identities may be a product of circumstance, they are informed and experienced through primordial elements. Edward F. Fischer (2001) took the constructionist model presented by Cornell and Hartmann (1998) and applied it to the construction of identity among the Maya of Guatemala.

Identity Construction in Guatemala

In a time when globalization and transnationalism have blurred, expanded and questioned traditional ethnic, economic and social boundaries, Edward F. Fischer (2001) provided a holistic and enlightening view of identity politics and construction. In *Cultural Logics and Global Economies*, Fischer (2001) strived to understand how and why the indigenous Maya peoples of Guatemala have asserted and defended their cultural identity and distinctiveness against hundreds of years of Hispanic dominance and Western thought. He focused on individual Maya activists in the pan-Maya movement

and on the local cultures of two Kaqchikel-Maya towns, as well as the changing national and international power relations to better understand ethnic identity construction in Guatemala and in the modern world. His analysis is informed by theories from cognitive studies, interpretive ethnography, and political economy.

Fischer's (2001) thesis considered the active role of the individual in the construction of identity guided by "cultural logics," or internal cognitive models, and national and global relations. He stated, "Maya identities as lived experiences and self-interested presentation share certain discernable patterns linked both to an underlying cultural substrate (internalized through cognitive models) and to a dynamic articulation with increasingly global relations of political economy" (p.6). Fischer showed how Maya identity is "shaped by both the larger context in which they exist and the lived experiences of individuals" (p.7). Fischer (2001) discussed how individuals have different conceptions and expressions of Mayaness yet share fundamental similarities. He identified "cultural logics" to play a key role in establishing shared similarities in identity construction.

Fischer followed Clifford Geertz's perspective on culture. He quoted Geertz: "[M]an is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1973, Fischer 2001, p. 7). Fischer (2001) based his analysis of culture on this interpretive perspective and looks at how webs of meaning are woven between structural elements supplied by the material and social environment in Guatemala. He stressed on the power of the individual in negotiating meaning in life without consenting to methodological

individualism. Fischer considered methodological individualism to be limited, “for individuals exercise creativity, but only within certain cultural constraints that are intimately related to the larger processes of national political structure, the world system, and globalization.” For Fischer, the “essence of culture remains its sharedness” (p.19).

These cultural webs of significance form clusters of common concepts, emotions, and practices that arise when people interact regularly. This makes culture something fluid and dynamic yet remaining continuous. Fischer (2001) argued that what makes culture continuous are “cultural logics.” He claims that “different cultures are marked by different logics of internal organization” (Fischer, p.15). When considering race and ethnic issues, cultural logics can imply several disturbing realities, making imperative the following questions: Do cultural logics delimit options of choice? Does a particular cognitive model allow for only a limited set of options? Is a particular cultural logic placed at a disadvantage when it does not match the dominant cultural logic?

A common methodological concern arises when considering cultural logics. If the concept of cultural logics is used to analyze ethnic and racial experiences, the question then arises as to whether someone from a particular culture is capable of adopting or applying the reasoning/logic used in another culture. Margaret L. Andersen (1993), in *Studying Across Difference*, discussed this issue. Can white scholars truly contribute to understanding the experiences of racial and ethnic groups? Both Fischer (2001) and Andersen (1993) argued this is possible if the research is carried out responsibly and is sensitive to the intersubjectivities of those studied as well as the researcher herself.

The cultural logics concept seeks to “elucidate cognitive mechanisms of improvisation and proactive cultural construction” This perspective sounds very much like the constructionist approach discussed in Cornell and Hartmann’s *Ethnicity and Race*. Yet Fischer argued against a strong “constructivist theory [that can be] morally ambiguous, and it has more recently been employed to undermine indigenous claims of authenticity.” Allan Hanson’s (1989) “The making of the Maori: Culture Invention and Its Logic” provides an example of a study that undermined Maori autonomy and their claim to authenticity. Fischer (2001) found that his “cultural logics” concept better explains and deals with ethnicity’s capacity to change yet endure and exhibit intense “primordial” attachments. Cultural Logics may not predict particular actions but allows for a sense of regularity and continuity in behavior. Fischer argues that it is the “idiosyncratic internalization of received cultural schemas that composes the cognitive bases of cultural logics and thus of agency” (2001, p. 19). Internal cultural logic is a function of life histories intersecting with social relations.

Early 20th Century anthropologists assumed that acculturation and assimilation to western modernity was inevitable. From this perspective ethnography followed a Boasian perspective that called for the documentation of lost or soon-to-be lost traditional cultures. Anthropologists formulated trait lists and ethnography espoused an essentialist mind set that would reduce ethnic populations to a list. This can turn into a form of racism. Researchers can easily ignore the complexities of ethnicity by referring to established research that assumes all Blacks believe that... or the Maya believe that... In Guatemala these trait lists are essentialist and racist in nature and were used in social engineering programs to modernize Guatemala (Fischer, 2001).

Anti-essentialist scholars who opposed and critiqued the essentialist stance focused solely on individual experience to explain identity construction. These scholars critiqued the essentialist perspective that “assumed a clear linkage between contemporary Maya culture and ancient Maya forms, showing this as a form of archaeo-romanticism that in many ways supports neocolonial relations of dominance” (Fischer, 2001, p.10). After listening and analyzing Maya voices on the topic, Fischer (2001) argued for an “anti-anti-essentialism” that can better account for individual variation and change without having to reject the commonality and continuity “indexed by the culture concept” (p.14).

Fischer (2001) called for a holistic perspective in the analysis of ethnic identity variation and change among the Maya of Guatemala. This holistic perspective must consider the national and global factors at work. For Fischer (2001), world-system models can help elucidate how individuals conceive of and live in their worlds. He considers capitalism, transnationalism and globalization (Cornell and Hartmann’s external contextual factors) key in the structural shifts that have opened up new venues for ethnic expression in Guatemala. By examining the relationships between the global and local factors involved in the identity construction in two Kaqchikel Maya towns, Fischer (2001) identified meaningful cultural boundaries in Guatemala. He documented a decentralization that has “benefited many marginalized ethnic groups who see their interests are represented not by a state, but by a nation or ethnic group” (p. 66). Fischer documents how neoliberal approaches to development have opened new spaces for the marginalized Maya of Guatemala. Indigenous issues and concerns have thus been given more attention and value in modern Guatemala.

Fischer (2001) identified a shift in the source of Maya identity. The traditional source of Mayaness has been the local municipal center and family. Pan-Mayanists trace the “foundation of their identity back to an ethnohistorical construction of pre-Hispanic societies, while the vast majority of Maya peoples root their identity in geographical place and in known genealogical continuities” (p. 84). Maya leaders hope this “primordial” attachment to historicity will help unite the country’s diverse Indian groups (currently divided by language, terrain, and local custom) to better “work for the conservation and resurrection of certain elements of Maya culture while promoting broad-based reform in Guatemala state structure and policy” (Fischer, 2001, p. 98).

Fischer (2001) found that the constructivism used by pan-Mayanist and rural Maya hold an essentialist cultural paradigm. This constructivism “differs significantly from that of academic theory in its integral engagement with practical issues . . . yet it transcends the minutia of opportunistic construction” (p. 243). Maya constructivism is based on a primordial tie to history and the values of authenticity. Fischer found that authenticity is asserted through claims of ethnic continuity and interpretations and acceptance of innovations that are informed by Maya cultural logic.

Mass Media and Adolescents

Maya youth, although very different from the dominant Spanish speaking Ladino in their social and cultural position, interact with media in similar ways. Media form part of an adolescent’s socialization. Socialization is key to identity development and is considered to be the “developmental process through which children learn and internalize the normative beliefs, values, knowledge, skills, and behaviors important to members of their social groups” (Kelly & Donohew 1999, p. 1035). Kelly and Donohew (1999)

applied schema theory by claiming that “when we are exposed to media, we interpret its meaning in terms of our own interests, values and knowledge” (p. 1036). They support Radwan’s (1998) assumption that understanding of the self is fluid and dependent on interaction with the world. Kelly and Donohew (1999) asserted that “our attention and cognitive systems involve continuous, reciprocal interactions between the processes of interpretation and integration and knowledge stored in memory” (p. 1038). Our interactions with the world form schemas that create the cognitive screen that filters our understanding of life. Media form part of these schemas which inform our identity.

Huntemann and Morgan (2001) claimed that the “massive flow of popular images, representations, and symbolic models disseminated by the media profoundly shapes what young people think about the world and how they perceive themselves in relation to it” (p. 309). Mass media play an important role in the socialization process of adolescents, but, as Kelly and Donohew (1999) argued, in most cases, it is a secondary factor in socialization. They argued for a primary socialization theory. Primary socialization theory argues that adolescents learn about social behavior within the context of their family, school, and or peer groups (Kelly & Donohew 1999). These primary socialization sources influence how youth interpret, interact with, and adopt the messages and values that come from secondary socialization sources. Secondary socialization sources, like the media, are thus mediated by the direct influence of family, school, and peers. Kelly and Donohew (1999) suggested that

the primary socialization process influences the effect of media through selection (primary socialization produces attitudes that lead to particular choices), selective perception (attitudes and values developed through primary socialization

determine how media messages are interpreted), and exposure norming (interactions with primary socialization sources after exposure alter interpretations of media messages). (p. 1034)

The family is the first and most important source of socialization for a child. As children reach adolescence the influence of family is diminished as they “seek independence and other sources of socialization outside of the family” (Kelly & Donohew, 1999, p. 1033). This is evident in the increased use of particular media by youth. Among teenagers, the average television viewing decreases to approximately two hours a day and listening to popular music increases to approximately four hours a day (Huntemann & Morgan, 2001). Youth between the ages of 12 and 20 buy the majority of music recordings “Add to this CDs, books, billboards, newspapers, flyers, and less traditional media, and it is evident that media infiltrate and influence the adolescent’s life” (Kelly & Donohew, 1999, p. 1034).

In “Adolescents’ Uses of Media for Self-Socialization,” Arnett (1995) embraced the uses and gratifications approach to understand how adolescents “use media in a kind of self-socialization” (p. 521). He specified five uses adolescents give media: entertainment, identity formation, high sensation, coping and youth culture identification. Youth use media to construct identities. They use music, movies, magazines, and television to inform themselves about gender behavior, sexuality, relationships, occupational aspirations, political values, and national and ethnic identities. Music plays an important role in helping youth cope with the difficulties of adolescence. Larson (1995) has found that adolescents ponder the themes of the songs in relation to their own lives while listening to music. There is a proportional increase in the amount of time

youth spend listening to music and the increase in problems, conflicts and stress they experience. Consuming particular kinds of media may give youth a “sense of being connected to a larger peer network, which is united by certain youth-specific values and interests” (Arnett, 1995, p. 524). Music is key to the development of identity among adolescents.

Music and Adolescents

Lull (1985) argued that “music helps create a culturally binding consciousness among young people who in the process develop an awareness of things they are motivated to learn about” (p. 365). This is why rock music, the new popular genre, plays an important role in adolescent socialization and identity formation. Popular music, throughout history, has created topics for conversation, set new values, developed new vocabularies, identities and symbols. Lull (1985) claimed that youth, as part of their socialization, tend to appreciate “esoteric music types and artists” because this distances them from other social groups, i.e. parents, siblings, etc. (p. 366). Thus, music is used by young people as a “basis for forming impressions of each other and for constructing their social webs and daily activities” (Lull, 1985, p. 367). Sharing musical taste serves as a unifying factor among adolescents.

Lull (1985) also claimed that “active use of a medium increases its effect as an agent of socialization” (p. 368). The effect of music takes place at a physical level in the form of dancing, imitating performers, moving to the beat; at an emotional level by romanticizing, feeling the music and relating themes to personal experience; and a cognitive level by processing information (Lull, 1985, p. 368). Adolescents find great content variety in music that facilitates their identity formation. Because music is

flexible it can provide a feeling of autonomy and achievement as youth choose what they listen to, where, how many times, and how loud. Music can also provide feelings of belonging and intimacy as youth associate with others with similar tastes.

Lull's (1985) article is based solely on interpretive research. He has reviewed and studied what others have written and applied it to the phenomenon of music as a form of social communication. He focused on how people, specifically youth, use this medium. He did not argue for direct effects of music but considered music as a part of the social realm of humanity. In western cultures popular music plays an important role in the social life of youth. His theoretical perspective follows Blumler and Katz's (1973) uses and gratifications theory. He considered the receiver of this medium to be an active consumer that uses music to satisfy his social needs, that is, identity formation.

North and Hargreaves (2001) argued that, among youth, an "expressed preference for a particular style may carry an implicit message to other adolescents regarding a range of attitudes and values" (p. 76). Their research supports the view that music "may function as a 'badge' which conveys information about the person who expresses a particular preference" (North & Hargreaves, 2001, p. 77). Youth use music to understand their social world and its players. Social identity is thus formed from the perceived characteristics and values of fans of different musical styles. Thus, "people who like musical styles which are viewed as prestigious by adolescents are also viewed as possessing more socially desirable traits" (North & Hargreaves, 2001, p. 90). They also found that musical preferences reflected an "attempt to match their self-concept" (p. 90). Self-esteem was found to mediate this effect, with higher self-esteem associated with stronger identification with particular musical sub-cultures. North and Hargreaves

(2001) found support for Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory as "adolescents responded more favorably to people who liked the same musical style as themselves" (p. 90), thus forming associations of membership in particular imagined groups. These associations fluctuate depending on the changing contexts of location, time, and culture. North and Hargreaves (1999) caution that "music will have different specific 'badge' functions for different sub-groups of young people at different times . . ." (p.90). Research of this kind can only provide snapshots of how youth use music and how music forms their identities at specific times and contexts.

Music and Identity

In "Music, space, identity: geographies of youth culture in Bangalore," Saldanha (2002) treated music as "a practice situated in, and producing, real and imagined space" (p. 337). For Saldanha, music forms part of the process of creating an imagined space or identity. Wade (2002) described the relationship between music and the formation of Black identity in Colombia. He explained:

[M]usic is not just an expression of identity; rather it helps to form and constitute that identity. Instead of a group of people having a ready-formed identity which they then signify, to themselves and others, with a given form of music, identities are in a constant process of formation and change and generally do not easily correspond to clearly defined categories or groups of people. Music – listened to, danced to, performed, talked and written about – is part of the process of formation and change. As such, particular styles are not tied in a simple fashion to specific groups: Instead, music is integral to the complex relationships between changing and overlapping sets of people (p. 22).

Music as a cultural symbol has taken center stage in ethnic movements in Latin America. In Colombia, Wade (2002) has found that “for some, the music is part of a project of anti-racism, community development and the affirmation of Black identity” (p. 26). Blacks in Colombia have appropriated *salsa* and *vallenato* as ethnically Black music, although their historical origins are not particularly African in origin. He has also found that Black musical forms, like the *cumbia* with African origins, are now heard in non-African areas of Colombia and the world.

At the turn of the 21st Century, the situation of Blacks has changed in Colombia compared to two decades earlier. Blackness, in Colombia, has achieved a “greater public and political profile than before and is increasingly recognized by Black and non-Black people alike – and especially by governments – as a legitimate part of the nation” (Wade, 2002, p. 25). In Colombia, as in several other Latin American countries, “there has been an official recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity in the nation, ever since the revised 1991 constitution” (Wade, 2002, p. 25). This phenomenon has been repeated throughout Latin America. Recently the state, in many countries, has officially recognized ethnic minority groups such as the Quechua of Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile and Argentina; the Maya and Garifuna of Guatemala and Honduras; the Mapuche of Chile and Argentina; the Kuna of Panama; and the many indigenous groups of Mexico. This official recognition has spurred the growth of indigenous, Black, and other minority social movements. This has led to the proliferation of ethnic organizations, and the public has paid more attention to these cultures.

This phenomenon is influenced by globalization and transnational influences that have always intersected with “a sense of regional rootedness” (Wade, 2002, p. 26). Wade

(2002) reported, “I found as many folkloric dance groups in the barrios as I did rap crews, and the same kinds of people were rapping as were dancing and playing the traditional marimba music of the Pacific region” (p. 26). Music is an important part of Black identity formation in Colombia. This new Black identity is shaped by regional music “for which public space has been given by the local state” as well as by music that is transnational (Wade, 2002, p. 26). According to Wade (2002), new tastes in music may enter the

mainstream and in so doing thrust Black identity onto the national scene, creating new opportunities for broadening and perhaps politicizing notions of Blackness and, at the same time, threatening to confine Blackness to an enjoyable spectacle, divorced from the contexts of racism and poverty in which these musical styles found their resonance. Colombia’s recent redefinition as a multicultural society has ... given a new twist to this dynamic, rather than radically changing it. (p. 27)

Radwan (1998) argued that the effects of music can be better understood if considered as a rhetorical mode, “a coordination of . . . thought and action achieved through evocation and maintenance of shared self-concept” (p. iii). Music serves as a “symbolic act that enables this process of identification by articulating active forms – ways to move and be together” (Radwan, 1998, p. iii). He argued that music can be considered a rhetorical mode because it requires conscious participation in a communal activity. He considers music a dynamic art that requires a special relation with the self, society and the music, and this develops in the person a particular consciousness. According to Radwan (1998), music should be seen as a “co-creative event rather than a text or object” (p. 14).

Music enables these rhetorical exchanges that influence the continuous formation of the self. Radwan (1998) described how Aristotle (n.d.) contrasts music with colors and flavors, pointing to the active and moving elements of music that offer a “stylized presentation of activity that ‘possesses and instills’ character because it both objectively ‘has’ characteristic qualities and also, if fully attended to, requires participation and active thought from the listener” (p. 11). Aristotle identified the active qualities of music in relation to becoming. Radwan (1998) contrasted music with sculpture and argued that the focus of sculpture is essence. Sculpture suggests how something looks and feels. Music, conversely, focuses on *becoming* in “an active and conscious development of time” (Radwan 1998, p. 13).

When studying music as a social phenomenon and rhetorical event, Mary Louise Serafine (1998) argued,

The object, if there can be said to be one, is a fluid, changing thing, or else there are multiple objects, each constituted from some human-subjective point of view. At best, the central artwork/object is an idealized, hypothetical piece – the area of overlap among all the individual performances and conceptions of the work. This artwork is not a fixed eternal object, but an abstract and fluid one that rests on human cognitive construction in all phases of its existence – composing, performing, listening. (p. 67)

The fluid and changeable qualities that music brings to human experience produce varied conceptualizations of the self. Thus, the effects of music on adolescent identity formation are far from direct. The effects are mediated by countless variables that make

the formulation of identity a continuous organic process. Music participates in this process.

Globalization and the Rock Aesthetic

The continued efforts to conceptualize contemporary social change have generated numerous debates over the topic of modernity and consequently globalization. Featherstone, et al. (1995) dedicated an entire volume to the leading discussions on this influential paradigm in social and cultural thought. A consideration of the globalization discussion can help explain mass media and the processes of sociocultural change in present in Guatemala.

The globalization paradigm is based on a shift of perspective. Historically, social theory has been based on the tradition that considers social change “as the internal development of societies” (Featherstone, et al., 1995, p. 2). Globalization theories call for a consideration of inter and “trans-societal flows which are pushing towards a borderless global economy” (Featherstone, et al., 1995, p. 2). Appadurai (1996) suggested a new framework from which to look at the irregular, fluid and multidirectional flow of people, capital, technology, images, and ideas. He argued that the “new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 158). Appadurai (1996) coined the term “-scapes” to better express the fluid irregularities of our current global situation. He identified five dimensions. These include *ethnoscapes*, *mediascapes*, *technoscapes*, *financescapes*, and *ideoscapes*. Appadurai’s (1996) notion of “scapes” offers a fresh framework to examine globalization. Featherstone et. al. (1995) suggested that these “-scapes” are “coming to

assume as much, or greater, centrality than national institutions. International social, political, and cultural organizations are standing alongside and beginning to replace their national counterparts” (p. 2). These international influences are of particular significance in Guatemala’s nation building processes.

The Maya of Mesoamerica have experienced a degree of globalization since before the arrival of the Spanish Conquistador Alvarado. The flow of commodities and ideas is a centuries-old phenomenon. The pre-Hispanic Aztecs and Maya participated in this flow just as the Persians, Indians and Chinese of the first century. In the last century, this flow has intensified at an unprecedented rate. Due to the increased economic, political, technological and social power of the West, the flow has been perceived to be unidirectional, flowing from the West to the rest of the world. This has lead scholars to focus on the homogenizing effects of globalization, thus, identifying “Americanization” or “McDonaldization” as part of the process of globalization and making the elements of homogenization to be largely western. This vision of globalization supports and sustains colonial relationships and perspectives and is indicative of the preponderant western ego. Appadurai’s framework for conceptualizing globalization is a better framework for looking at the fusion of global and local forms and practices in indigenous Guatemala because it questions colonial relationships and assumes global and local forms to be interacting equally and thus validating all forms.

The fusion of global and local forms and practices has been identified as “glocalization.” Robertson (1995) talked about glocalization as a global creation of locality. It is not the presence of global artifacts in the local but “similar processes of localization taking place universally,” as is the establishment of nationalism with similar

characteristics, i.e. emerging democracies that recognize the multicultural plurilingual realities of their imagined nation-states (South Africa, Guatemala, Peru) (Featherstone et al., 1995, p. 4-5). Featherstone et al. (1995) observed this to include the creation of locality guided by formal international institutions. Examples include the pan-African movement or the pan-Maya movement as well as “the Global Forum meeting in Brazil in 1992 to organize globally the promotion of values and identities of native peoples” (Featherstone et al., 1995, p. 5). It is also observed by Motti Regev (1997) through the hybridization of music.

Popular rock music is both a product of and a vehicle for hybrid expressions of identities and has entered the “landscape” of globalization throughout the world. Today “ethnic” or “national” rock and its pop variations exist everywhere from Hong Kong to Zimbabwe. Motti Regev (2003) has documented the production of hybrid popular music. He has identified the rock aesthetic to be the “core practice of popular music in the world” (p. 222). Regev (2003) identified the rock aesthetic as a “set of constantly changing practices and stylistic imperatives for making popular music, based on the use of electric and electronic sound textures, amplification, sophisticated studio craftsmanship, and ‘untrained’ and spontaneous techniques of vocal delivery” (p. 224). A logic of eclecticism, Regev (2003) argued, is at the core of the rock aesthetic. This logic of eclecticism is a product of globalization. The multidirectional flows of ideas have caused people to consider other forms and styles to be as important as their own, or as is the case with marginal communities, it has caused them to consider their own forms as important as those of the dominant group. This is evident in the emerging World Music genre that is generated by this multidirectional flow of musical styles. The

wonderful thing about these cultural constructions is that through “symbolic transposition and internal logical transformation, continuity is maintained by giving old forms new meaning and giving new forms old meaning” (Fischer 2001, p. 13). Nederveen Pieterse (1995) argued for a continuum of hybridities. On one end, an assimilationist hybridity and at the other end “a destabilizing hybridity that blurs the canon, reverses the current, and subverts the center” (Featherstone et al., 1995 p. 56). Hybridities thus allow for and validate the restructuring of older patterns and models in society. Minority ethnic groups have found their musical styles validated because they see musical forms from other minority ethnic groups as valid in the global arena. This concept plays an important part in the formation of new social relationships, patterns, models, etc. in Guatemala.

Globalization and Guatemala

A description of the situation of the Maya in Guatemala can help elucidate how the medium of music, globalization and identity construction interact in the current sociopolitical context of Guatemala. Guatemala has a substantial indigenous population. Some figures claim 60% of the population as Maya (Fischer, 2001). Historically, the colonial structures have subjugated, exploited, and ignored the indigenous Maya of Guatemala. The Maya have learned how to survive within a system dominated and governed by the Ladino, or the non-indigenous western-oriented ethnic group (Siebers, 1999).

The Maya are the largest indigenous group of people to Mesoamerica. They are the descendants of the pre-Columbian people that lived in the lands that are now southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and El Salvador. The Maya of Guatemala belong to one of twenty different linguistic and ethnic groups in the country. The 1994

Guatemala national census reports “3.6 million Mayas out of a national population of 8.3 million inhabitants” (Warren, 1998, p. 12). This conservative census reports 43 percent of the population to be Maya. Other census report up to a 60 percent Maya population in Guatemala (Warren, 1998). The K’iche’, Mam, Kaqchikel and Q’eqchi’ make up the four largest Maya ethnic/linguistic groups in Guatemala and 80 percent of the total Maya population (Warren, 1998). Guatemala is unique in having such a large indigenous population and joins Bolivia and Peru in the same development, political and economic struggles as a nation. These struggles have been associated to ethnic and cultural issues.

Guatemala’s 30-year civil war continues to haunt many today. In the 1960s the primary participants in the insurgency were “middle peasants [who] lost their capital, sank deep into debt and . . . experienced sudden unexpected misery” (Wilson, 1995). It was not until the late 1970s that the indigenous population began to be associated with the armed conflict (Fischer, 2001). Many Maya followed the Liberation theology rhetoric used by Catholic catechists and guerrilla leaders. Some became involved in the insurgency, and many were labeled as insurgents (Wilson, 1995). The Maya were also recruited by the military. The civil war, or *la violencia*, as it is referred to by Guatemalans, affected everyone in Guatemala. The armed conflict between the guerrilla and the military resulted in horrific genocide, ethnocide, and isolation. The violence left a legacy of fear and silence in Guatemala (Warren, 1993). This silence was felt in mass communication when a leading Maya radio announcer was killed by the military. A Mam-Maya scholar Victor Montejo (2002) recalled, “The death of a voice with which people identified symbolized the death of their own voices” (p. 137).

The armed conflict ended in 1996 with the signing of the Peace Accords by the Guatemala government and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). This historic event was a result of global influences, including “realignments in the global political economy” (Fischer, 2001, p. 79). The United Nations was involved in the process and was instrumental in the creation of the 1995 “Accord on the Identity and Rights of the Maya People” (Warren & Jackson, 2002). This accord became part of the 1996 peace agreements. Victor Montejo (2002) found that Maya activists were involved in the peace negotiations through participation in organizations like the Maya Council of Guatemala (COMG) and the Coordinator of Organizations of the Maya People of Guatemala (COPMAGUA). The peace negotiations took seven years and were a product of local and global entities (Warren & Jackson, 2002).

International and supranational organizations were of particular significance in these processes. Alcida Rita Ramos (2002) and June C. Nash (2001) have observed that the Maya and other indigenous people often “despaired of gaining help from national governments that rejected populist claims in the name of neoliberal policies of development. Instead they turned to international non-governmental organizations and the United Nations, where they found allies among other indigenous groups facing similar problems” (Nash, 2001). These supranational powers brought in particular influences. Appadurai (1996) labeled these ideological, political, and social influences as “ideoscapes.” He claimed that the ideoscapes flowing through today’s world are “composed of elements of the Enlightenment worldview, which consists of a chain of ideas, terms and images, including *freedom, welfare, rights, sovereignty, representation* and the master term *democracy*” (p. 160). Warren and Jackson (2002) identified the

notions of “compliance with the law, social justice, minority rights and human rights” as “western notions” (Warren & Jackson, 2002). These concepts have produced international agreements and declarations, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Pact for Civil and Political Rights, the Declaration of Indigenous Rights, Guatemala’s Peace Accords and others. The 1999 Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi A. Annan (1999), declared that these “documents are not products of one civilization imposed on others by superior might. On the contrary, “. . . they provide a shared yardstick for the civilization of which we are all a part. They form the essential framework of our peaceful dialogue and interaction with each other” (p. 78). These arguments point to the prevalent processes of globalization and localization in the world.

The 1996 Peace Accords, and specifically the Accord in the Identity and Rights of the Maya People, have been influential in the creation and re-creation of new identities and cultures in Guatemala. Maya activism is growing and a pan-Maya movement has developed. Fischer (2001) argued that,

[The] pan-Maya movement has emerged from the unique temporal conjunctures of Maya and Western, local and global, modern and traditional, and symbolic and material systems of structuration, which themselves are historically informed and conditioned by the ongoing praxis of lived experiences. (p. 84)

In Guatemala, globalization and transnational flows influencing the construction of new identities as Maya activism are “taking advantage of decreased tensions in current world politics to revive and strengthen a cultural heritage that has been submerged by centuries of external and internal, overt and covert, colonialisms” (Fischer, 2001, p. 86).

These cultural constructions are often reflected in hybrid media products. Rock-Maya is an example of this.

In other parts of the world indigenous media products are very politicized. For example, Catalan, Basque and Welsh media products are often protest expressions (Llewellyn, 2000). In addition, Llewellyn (2000) found that the rapid cultural interflows lead to “deeper exploration of national music and that peculiarities of place and repressed elements of history become all the more vibrant and evocative in a situation of global reception” (p. 326). Fischer (2001) claimed that “individuals exercise creativity, but only within certain cultural constraints that are intimately related to the larger processes (often conceived of as “structures,” yet themselves inherently dynamic) of national political structure, the world system, and globalization” (p. 8).

The theories and conversations related to identity construction and the use of music as a source for communicating and constructing identity apply to the subject of study. As noted above, music is one of the external factors involved in the socialization and identity construction of adolescents. This medium is best understood and interpreted through primary socialization sources and internal cultural factors. The multidirectional notion of globalization can help explain the role Rock-Maya music plays in the communication and construction of contemporary Maya identities in Guatemala. The rock aesthetic is a specific framework that sheds light as to how glocalization is at work in the popular music scene of indigenous Guatemala. The above research and theories provide the information needed to more transparently understand the following research questions and appropriately find answers. A reception analysis of Kab’awil’s music provides the needed data to understand the role of Rock-Maya music plays in the lives of

young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala. The following research questions directed this reception study.

Research Questions

1. What is the social and political context that has produced Rock-Maya music and its content? (Encoding)
2. How do young K'iche'-Maya adults of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala interpret Rock-Maya music? (Decoding)
3. How does Rock-Maya music serve as a form of cultural communication and a source for identity construction?
4. What can the decoding of Rock-Maya music tell us about how young Maya adults interact with indigenous media?
5. What is the role of Rock-Maya music in the local, national and global context?

CHAPTER III

Methods

Introduction

This chapter examines the methods used for this research. It outlines the process of obtaining reliable and valid data through qualitative methods. Through participant observation, informal and formal interviews, and the creation of a web site and music video clip, the researcher was able to collect data needed for the encoding of Kab'awil's music. A survey was administered and general information collected. This information was later used for the formal and informal interviews as well as the focus group interviews that provided data related to the decoding of Kab'awil's music.

The research does not focus on the formal qualities of Rock-Maya music. Instead, it focuses on the cultural mediations that occur through the music. This is done in an effort to open new discursive space for indigenous media that respects and understands them on their own terms. Ginsburg et al. (2002) asserted, "it is important to attend to the processes of production and reception" (p. 212). A reception study uses qualitative methods to collect data on the encoding (production) and the decoding (reception) of a particular media product. Thus, a reception study focusing on the encoding and decoding of this music is most appropriate.

The questions and topics at hand are best understood within a naturalist paradigm. The naturalist paradigm makes specific assumptions about reality: the relationship between the observer and the subject of research; the interrelatedness of elements that produce causality; and the type of methods required to produce reliable information. This research is informed by cultural studies and assumes that identity is contextually driven

and constantly changing. It considers media as part of the social capital people use to inform themselves when participating in collective interactions. These collective interactions reflect patterns of identity construction. This research considers media audiences to be active producers of meaning, and not mere consumers of media meanings. It follows recent communication audience studies that, according to Morley (1996), share two assumptions: “(a) that the audience is always active and (b) that media content is always ‘polysemic’ or open to interpretation” (p. 11). Qualitative methods were used to collect, elucidate and analyze data to answer the research questions. The data is subject to the interaction between multiple factors which are interpretive and cannot be controlled in every case. As with all empirical studies, reliability and validity must be considered in qualitative research. These criteria are translated to “trustworthiness” and “credibility” in naturalist studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Trustworthiness and Credibility

In relation to naturalistic research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified specific methods to produce credible and trustworthy findings and interpretations. Among them are: 1) prolonged engagement; 2) building trust; 3) persistent observation; and 4) triangulation.

The researcher has been engaged with the K’iche’-Maya community of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá for eight years. He has built close relationships with particular families and individuals in this community. In 2003 the researcher began a translation project with the local educational institution, *Instituto Paraiso Maya*. During his stays in Ixtahuacán he became very involved with this institution and provided linguistic and anthropology workshops and taught South American music and dance to

future bilingual (K'iche'-Spanish) school teachers. His involvement has been by invitation. The prolonged and collaborative relationship with the institute made it the ideal site for conducting the reception study of Kab'awil's music. The researcher's prolonged engagement with this K'iche' community increases the trustworthiness and credibility of the data that were collected. Through the past ten years, the researcher has been able to build trust with members of the community, demonstrating his genuine interest in them and reassuring them that their confidences will be protected. The researcher's presence in the community reduced the "foreigner effect." The community became accustomed to the researcher's presence. Community members are prone to act more naturally and respond more candidly with someone they are familiar with.

A two-month stay in the community provided opportunities for persistent observation on the specific research topic. The researcher attended community events, worked at the schools, hung-out with young Maya adults, attended Kab'awil rehearsals and concerts. The researcher observed and listened to community members' talk about music, about being Maya, and specifically about Rock-Maya music.

"Triangulation" was taken care of by the following qualitative research methods: in-depth interviews, focus group research, participant observation, surveys, the creation of a web page and video filming. These methods provided ways for the researcher to consider the negotiations Ixtahuacán youth make about the meanings of Rock-Maya music as it relates to their identity.

Theoretical History to Mass Media Methodology

Early mass media research was conducted under a paradigm that considered the audience as a large mass of people ready to receive the mass communication message.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) explained how every message was a powerful, direct stimulus to action that would elicit a particular response (p. 16). It was assumed that messages had singular meanings and through analysis of the texts one could understand the effects they would have on the viewer. Lasswell (1948) proposed an “effects theory” that claimed mass media had a direct effect on in people. He assumed that audiences were passive and absorbed media messages uncritically. Effects theory was questioned when scholars saw that audiences were much more critical about the messages than Lasswell predicted. This ultimately led to “uses and gratification” studies. These studies focused on finding reasons why people use the media. As scholars began to consider the audience members as “active” participants in search of gratifications and uses people get from media, they began to shift their focus from the direct effects model to a more functional perspective. The methods used for this research shifted from textual analysis to audience responses. Reception studies combine the efforts from the effects approach to media research with the uses and gratification approach. Reception research considers the communication from the perspective of the message sender as well as from the message receiver. In order to identify the communicative features of Rock-Maya music the perspective of the message sender and the message receiver must be considered. The researcher works under the assumption that the communicative and social meaning of Kab’awil’s music can be reached by analyzing and understanding the interaction between the message senders and receivers in a particular social context. A reception study in the context of indigenous Guatemala can best provide the information needed to analyze and understand this interaction.

Reception Studies

The semiotic tradition focuses on signs, symbols and their meanings. It also considers meaning to be a social construct. Using the semiotic tradition, Hall (1980) looked at how meaning is constructed out of media texts. He argued that media audiences can decode or interpret media texts from one of three positions; 1) preferred position, 2) negotiated reading, or 3) oppositional reading. The negotiated readings are the most common. These negotiated readings are informed by the audience's social position. They may be full of contradictions because other discourses are "always at play besides those of the particular text in focus" (Scott, 2003, p. 319). The preferred position or the dominant reading is when the receiver of the message shares the sender's code and intended meaning. The oppositional reading refers to an interpretation of the media message that is contrary to the dominant code. The message receiver may understand the dominant or preferred reading but decides to reject the preferred reading. This could be due to the social position of the receiver and an alternative frame of reference (Hall, 1980).

Through this reception analysis of Rock-Maya music, we can better understand the interaction between the music, the message sender, receiver and the social context. We are then able to see how this media form is used as social capital in the collective construction of new Maya identities.

Encoding

To understand the encoding of Rock-Maya, that is the social and political context in which it was produced, the researcher was a participant observer in Ixtahuacán, he

conducted in-depth interviews with the band members, assisted in the creation of a web site and offered to film footage for potential music video clips.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is an important data collecting tool in qualitative research. This method allows the researcher to understand the social context and get an emic, or inside, perspective about the topic of study. The researcher became acquainted with the members of Kab'awil even before the band was officially organized. He has seen live and video-taped performances and rehearsals of this band. The researcher's familiarity with this new musical genre and his knowledge of Mayan languages has facilitated his journey through the interactions young Maya adults make in relation to this music and their identity. Speaking K'iche' allowed the researcher to be part of the informal conversations among young Maya adults at Instituto Paraiso Maya. It also allowed young Maya adults that would normally not speak Spanish to interact with the researcher and get their perspective on this music and its meanings. Familiarity with the Kab'awil band and the friendship that had developed did present some challenges, one of them being that some may have seen the researcher as a supporter of the band. The researcher had to make it clear to the band members that although he considered them his friends he was there to study their music. He also had to explain his role as a researcher to the community.

The initial stages of the research focused on understanding the presence and relevance of this music in the specific community of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. As Hall (1980) discussed, in "Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse," it is important to analyze the social and political context of a particular media product to be

able to understand the encoding of that media form. This was partly accomplished by reviewing the pertinent literature to Guatemala and the subject matter. It was also accomplished by the researcher's previous ethnographic experience in this particular community (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán). The initial weeks in the community served to collect data on the social and political context that has produced this music form. The researcher's previous trips to Ixtahuacán allowed him to observe and participate in some of the youth events and activities.

Informal and Formal Interviews

The researcher held informal or unstructured interviews with various people in Ixtahuacán to understand the place this music had in the community. He made sure to talk to people from different positions in the community. The researcher talked with young parents and their children, older parents, young students, school teachers, government workers, merchants, etc. These interviews helped the researcher understand what kind of questions to ask in the formal interviews with the band members. It also helped him select appropriate questions for the survey and the focus group interviews with the young Maya adult of Instituto Paraiso Maya.

Every current member of the Kab'awil band was formally interviewed following a semi-structured model. Each interview was recorded and then transcribed. Half of the interviews were in K'iche' and the other half in Spanish. The interviews took place in the subjects' homes. The interviewer made sure to allow the interviewee to direct the interview. This allowed for particular themes, topics, categorizations, etc to naturally reveal themselves. This method of interviewing tries to eliminate the tendency to ask leading questions. The interviews began with some general questions about the

individual. The researcher presented general topics to the interviewee. These included the formation of the band, the personal association with the band members, what things influenced the band members, the purpose of the group, the message they wanted to communicate, why they sing in K'iche', their target audience, etc.

Other Methods

Traditionally audio-visual data have been of interest to social scientist in two ways: that which is produced by the researcher, and that which is produced by those under study. Marcus Banks (1995) identified a convergence of these two forms of data collection in recent years. He calls this "collaborative representation." Banks (1995) cautioned the investigator to avoid having the content take priority over the context. This is common when a particular visual representation is produced by the investigator. In an effort to consider the context in which Rock-Maya music is produced and consumed the researcher participated in a collaborative effort to represent Kab'awil via the internet and through a music video clip. This collaboration allowed the band members to benefit from the use of technology and allowed the researcher to collect data regarding the content and context of the Rock-Maya music. The researcher mainly provided the technology and the technological know how. The band members discussed and decided on the content, what languages to use, what photos to include on the web site, what locations to shoot video at, what particular shots to take, who to film and when, etc.

The researcher made a strong effort to connect with the band members and gain an emic perspective on the production of their music. Some band members had experience with the Internet and upon seeing that the researcher had a computer they

asked if he would help them set up a web site for their band. The researcher agreed, and this served as a beneficial way of collecting information about the encoding of this music.

Federico, the band's bass guitar player, had the most experience with computers at the time, so he was assigned by the other band members to work on this project. The researcher and Federico met to discuss the content of the web page. The researcher showed Federico some sample web sites, and Federico selected what he deemed best for Kab'awil's site. After seeing sample sites Federico and Francisco, the band's lead singer, selected the particular categories for the web site. The content was solely their material with some help from the researcher on Spanish language writing. The categories on the web site include: Beginnings, Purpose, Songs, Instruments, Members, contact information. See Appendix A.

Another innovative method was the filming of footage for a potential music video of one of their songs. The researcher had access to a video recorder and offered to film footage to make a music video. The band members were pleased about this development. The researcher had limited video tapes and time so he asked Kab'awil to select two of their songs for a music video. He then asked the band members to think of scenes, people, places and things that would best describe the music in visual form. This procedure allowed the researcher to learn the themes and topics the band members thought to be important. The researcher kept a field notebook with observations on the process of creating the web site and filming the footage. These field notes were then expanded and analyzed in a field journal. The collaborative nature of creating a web site and filming created a relationship of trust between the researcher and the band members. These collaborative efforts produced data for the researcher as well as material for the

band to use as they seemed fit. This created an ethical relationship of mutual benefit for the researcher and the band.

Decoding

To understand the decoding of Rock-Maya music, that is the interpretations given by the listeners of this music, the researcher conducted informal interviews, surveys, focus group interviews, and analyzed the interpretive community of the interviewees. These methods provide the necessary data to understand the interpretations of Rock-Maya music by young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán and their interactions with this music in relation to the construction of their identity.

Interpretive Communities

Stanley Fish (1980) argued that meaning couldn't be found in the text itself. He proposed that meaning was not an individual matter, but a social one. Fish used a social constructionist approach to inform his studies on how readers assign meaning to a text. This social constructionist approach claims that "reality is socially constructed and a product of group and cultural life" (Littlejohn, 2002, p. 27). As with Fish's (1980) readers, Rock-Maya listeners form part of an interpretive community that came into being around this specific medium and content. A relatively large interpretive community was found at the Instituto Paraiso Maya. The institute served as the site for most of the research. This produced a homogenous interpretive community.

Instituto Paraiso Maya began in the 1990's when community leaders gathered to discuss the current education their children were receiving. They were not satisfied with the national educational system that attempted to castilianize the indigenous population and disregard their cultures and languages.

These parents wanted their children to value their K'iche' language. They wanted their children to better understand and value their Maya ideology and *cosmovision*. They feared homogenization. They wanted to reassert the viability of earlier cultural forms. To achieve this they chose to use formal education, a new model or instrument that was not traditionally part of the Maya world. Education among the K'iche' Maya is today a symbol of modernity. In Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, it became a product of cultural resynthesis. This resynthesis is a product of the multidirectional flows of people, ideas, capital, etc.

As formal education formed part of being Maya in Ixtahuacán, parents began to send their children to the big cities to continue their education. Ixtahuacán only offered instruction to the Junior High level. It was very expensive for families to send their children to study in the cities. Yet, formal education had become so important that many would sacrifice to send their children to study and return bilingual, bicultural and “modern.”

Community leaders were concerned with having so many of their youth leave. Melchor, a primary teacher and instructor at Paraiso Maya, expressed his concern with this new phenomenon. He mentioned that in the big cities a student would adopt a different ideology. He observed, “They return to Ixtahuacán ashamed of their K'iche' culture and language. Many go to become teachers and return with the national model to castilianize” (personal communication, 2006). Although formal education was valued, it was expensive economically and culturally. Community leaders wanted to have more control of the education and decided to form an institute that would tend to their community needs.

In 1993 Instituto Paraiso Maya began offering courses and a degree in bilingual K'iche'-Spanish primary education with an emphasis in community development. The global flows and relationships (including the Peace Accords) have influenced Guatemala as a whole. Today Instituto Paraiso Maya follows a formal curricular plan. In Ixtahuacán, education has passed through a process of indigenous revitalization and the politics of institutionalization have standardized the outcome producing the Instituto Paraiso Maya.

The director of Instituto Paraiso Maya explained that the purpose and goal of the school is “to form bilingual teachers, technicians and promoters with an orientation in community development so they can develop their scientific, technical and occupational skills that will permit them to face and resolve the collective and individual socioeconomic problems in a critical, analytical, reflexive, responsible and viable manner” (personal communication, 2006).

Before traveling to Guatemala the researcher presented his research proposal to the director of this institute. Instituto Paraiso Maya agreed to cooperate on the research. Most students at Instituto Paraiso Maya are between the ages of 17 and 26. This makes the institute an ideal place to find young Maya adults who are actively involved in identity construction and who listen to Rock-Maya.

The researcher conducted informal interviews with young Maya adults to understand how they conceptualized musical genres and to identify what genres are listened to by these young adults. Informed by these interviews and observations the researcher developed a general survey that was administered to young adult students at Instituto Paraiso Maya. The survey focused on their music preferences and music

listening behavior. The general music preference survey was administered to young adults between 17 and 26 at Instituto Paraiso Maya. Anonymity was maintained with every participant involved in the research. A total of 83 young Maya adults were surveyed. Four complete classes were surveyed. The students in these classes were in the last two years of their degree. The survey was available and administered in K'iche' or in Spanish. Students selected the language they preferred. (The survey questions can be found in Appendix B.) The questions collected both demographic data as well as information about the attitudes and behaviors of participants in relationship to their use of Kab'awil music.

Focus Group Interviews

The main form of collecting data was through group interviews. Focus group interviews allowed the researcher to collect and interpret the insights of Rock-Maya music audiences. It also allowed for the interview participants to react to each other's comments and ideas about Rock-Maya music. The researcher used Griswolds' (2004) cultural diamond model as an accounting device to help understand Kab'awil music as a cultural object and its relationship to the social world (p. 17). This model focuses on the relationships that exist between the cultural object, the social world, the creator, and the receiver. Thus, questions were divided into three different categories. Rock-Maya music by Kab'awil is the cultural object. The Kab'awil music band members are the creators. The receivers were young Maya adult students, between the ages of 17 and 26, from the Paraiso Maya educational institute in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala. The researcher then conducted a textual analysis of the responses, comments and conversations of the focus group interviews.

It is important to consider that the identification of Kab'awil music as a cultural object is an analytic decision made by the researcher. The researcher has considered Rock-Maya music a cultural object because it has become public and has “entered the circuit of human discourse” (Griswold, 2004, p. 13). Griswold’s approach considers “cultural objects as a socially meaningful expression that is audible, visible, tangible or can be articulated . . . it tells a story” (Griswold, 2004, p. 13).

A moderator was selected among the Paraiso Maya students. The researcher consulted with the professors at the institute to identify a student that had a good rapport with his fellow classmates and would be able to lead the discussion during the focus group interview. This moderator was given the specific instructions that would facilitate an open discussion among the students. (The instructions are detailed in Appendix C.) Unfortunately the researcher found that the moderator dominated the conversation. This limited the interaction and discussion among the students. The first focus group interview was conducted by the student moderator. The researcher took the role of moderator during the subsequent focus group interviews.

Each focus group was allowed to listen to three Kab'awil songs. The selected songs were: 1. *Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat* (Thank you grandfather, thank you father), 2. *Uq'ojom nutinamit* (The music of my town/people), and 3. *Ixoq Ajchak* (Working woman). (See Appendix D for the lyrics of these songs.) After each song the moderator/researcher presented some questions related to this music as a cultural object. These questions were for the group to respond to freely. The questions dealt with how the listener felt and thought about the song and why. They were also asked to relate the meaning of the song to them and its purpose. (See appendix E for the exact questions).

After the three songs were presented then the moderators pursued other questions concerning the “creators,” the “receivers,” and the “social world.” (The questions for the discussion about these other parts of the “cultural diamond” are detailed in Appendix E.)

These focus groups and semi-structured interviews were the primary methods used for data collection. Although focus groups were meant to allow for interaction to take place between the participants, the interactions were mainly between the students and the interviewer/moderator. This allowed the researcher to pick out themes and categorizations young Maya adults used to construct their interpretation and relationship to this music.

Wimmer and Dominick (2003) explained that focus group interviews are particularly beneficial when trying to identify and understand audience attitudes, views and behavior on a specific topic. It is also useful when trying to understand shared understandings of everyday life. From the analysis of the group conversation and some of the interaction the researcher is able to examine what social and cultural logic is used in the decoding of the media text among young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán.

Focus groups consisted of about eight to ten participants. Too many participants would not allow for a free flow of conversation and response to the interview questions. It would also limit the participation of the students. The focus group interview participants were young Maya adults selected from the list of survey participants. The researcher consulted with the institute director and a couple of professors to determine the students that would potentially be more willing to participate and share information in a focus group interview. Fortunately, all participants knew each other and felt relatively

comfortable with each other due to the previous two or more years of study together. There were a total of four focus groups. A moderator was used for the first interview. Unfortunately, the moderator tended to dominate the conversation and responses. The researcher served as a moderator for the other interviews. Because of this he was not able to completely eliminate the ‘interviewer effect’ of agenda setting interrogation.

Each interview session began with a brief explanation of the research and general instructions of what it involved. (see moderator instructions for focus group interviews). The participants were told their responses and conversations would be recorded and that the researcher would not reveal their names in the research, keeping confidentiality. Before each set of questions a particular song was played from Kab’awil’s CD. The songs chosen were those that students identified on the survey. The researcher made observations of the non-verbal reactions to the songs. The responses to the interview questions were recorded. Each focus group session lasted between 60 to 90 minutes.

Each focus group recording was then transcribed. The researcher’s previous K’iche’ and Spanish language knowledge helped in the analysis of the responses and conversations. Nevertheless, because the researcher is not a native K’iche’ speaker it was useful to have the assistance of a K’iche’ translator when needed. After the recordings were transcribed and translated, they underwent a textual analysis. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with four participants from each focus group. This served to provide clarity and understanding of the meanings, negotiations and interpretations young Maya adults make in relation to Rock-Maya music and their identity.

Research Questions

1. What is the social and political context that has produced Rock-Maya music and its content? (Encoding)
2. How do young K'iche'-Maya adults of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala interpret Rock-Maya music? (Decoding)
3. How does Rock-Maya music serve as a form of cultural communication and a source for identity construction?
4. What can the decoding of Rock-Maya music tell us about how young Maya adults interact with indigenous media?
5. What is the role of Rock-Maya music in the local, national and global context?

CHAPTER IV

Results

Introduction

This chapter will deal with the data collected from informal interviews, participant observation, formal interviews, web page creation, and video filming as well as survey and focus group interviews. The encoding section discusses the history of the group within Guatemalan local, national and global context. The social, cultural, and economic context under which Rock-Maya music was produced is also presented. This information explores this music as a product of globalization, and also reflects how the Kab'awil band uses rock aesthetic to communicate particular messages.

The decoding section of this chapter considers the interpretations of Rock-Maya music by young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. The data confirms a preferred reading of the music by the audience, an agreement with the intended message sent. It also shows how young Maya adults understand and interpret this music at an entertainment level, a cultural level, and a reflexive level.

Encoding

Kab'awil band members choose to encode particular messages through their music. These messages are ideological in nature and a result of the sociopolitical and historical context in which the band members experience life. The data collected helps the researcher better understand the social, cultural, political and historical context in which Rock-Maya music is produced by the Kab'awil band members. The data collected from interviews, participant observation and collaborative productions (web site and video filming) are divided into four categories that help explicate the encoding of Rock-

Maya music of Kab'awil. These include History of Kab'awil; Social, Political and Economic Influences; Other Influences; Kab'awil Songs and their Intended Social Meanings.

History of Kab'awil

Francisco Feliciano Tepaz, the lead singer of the Rock-Maya band Kab'awil, explained to me that the “idea to create a Maya artistic musical group began in 1997 after the signing of the Peace Accords in Guatemala” (personal communication, July 16, 2006). The musical group was formalized in 2001 when Francisco gathered some talented friends—all school teachers in the municipality of Ixtahuacán—to create the group. At this meeting it was decided that the objectives of this group would center on Maya culture and worldview. To date, they have composed over twelve original songs, have recorded one CD, and have performed throughout Guatemala.

Social, Political and Economic Influences

The conditions leading to creating this band pre-date the 1996 Peace Accords in Guatemala. Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán is an indigenous K'iche' municipality that for centuries remained geographically, historically, economically, and culturally separate from the rest of the nation. However, things began to change rapidly thirty years ago with the entrance into the community of technology, mass media, religious organizations, international humanitarian organizations, and other groups. Also, the ability to leave the community for education or work brought change to this community (Hawkins, 2006).

The band members all left the community at some time in their adolescence to study at a school in a larger city of Guatemala. There they learned something about music. They gathered with friends and played the guitar and sang to the popular Spanish

language songs. The music they played was usually from other groups and artists, such as Mana, Ricardo Arjona, and Jose Luis Perales. Kab'awil member Genaro mentioned “we are not musicians really . . . we’ve just made music through experience” (personal communication, July 14, 2006). Because the rock aesthetic does not require the musicians to be professionals, Rock-Maya is a genre accessible to all. Kab'awil band members learned to play and sing music from other friends, from copying other groups, and from much practice. Few of them read music or received formal music instruction when they formed the group. The accessibility of the rock aesthetic has been key to the formation and development of this group.

All band members attended Catholic mass growing up, and as youth they learned religious music in Spanish and in K'iche'. The Catholic priest and Genaro's father, Don Florentino Ajpacaja Tum, would write the songs for mass in K'iche'. Francisco remembers that as youth they had formed a group to play and sing music in mass but that he always had in mind “to form a group and sing at cultural events” (personal communication, July 16, 2006). They began to consider the idea of writing and singing their own music. Genaro relates, “Why not sing to our people so that they can listen to us and understand us?” (personal communication, July 14, 2006). The Catholic church had much to do with using K'iche' for the songs of Kab'awil and other bands. Traditionally, speaking K'iche' had been frowned upon in formal national and institutional environments. It was to be reserved for the home and the community, for intimate environments, not for public use. When the church began to value the K'iche' language by instituting mass and singing religious hymns in K'iche', the K'iche' community of Ixtahuacán began to rethink the place of K'iche' in different environments. Observing

this religious use, the youth began to think of using of their indigenous language in other settings as well. One of these settings would be in popular music, more formal and public and part of the national and global scene.

Another force that came into play was the community leaders of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán becoming involved in the Pan-Maya and Maya revitalization movement of the early 1990s. The young men in the band were somehow connected to this movement. Genaro is son of the late Florentino Ajpacaja Tum, a renowned K'iche' linguist and elder in the community. Linguists were commonly connected to the Pan-Maya movement (Warren, 1998). Leading up to the Peace Accords, a number of national and international organizations began to support bilingual Mayan language/Spanish education. All band members studied to become bilingual elementary school teachers.

The economic situation for the band was difficult when they began. They did not have the resources to facilitate the formation of a band, and sometimes they borrowed instruments. Things improved when the flow of commodities into the community increased, and the band members were able to access technology and call upon friends with needed ideas and information. Their goal was to put together a rock/pop music group in the K'iche' language, "so that there would be an alternative at a global level," related Zacarias (personal communication, July 6, 2006).

Other Influences

Sobrevivencia, a band that sings in the Mayan languages of Mam and Kaqchikel, as well as Spanish, was particularly influential on the Kab'awil band members and the creation of this Rock-Maya band. Sobrevivencia recorded its first album (*Twi' Witz*) in 1999. Kab'awil member Francisco Tepaz was a classmate of some of the Sobrevivencia

band members and had seen them perform. When he took their album to Ixtahuacán to share with friends, Genaro was impressed. Genaro and his fellow musicians had always played music in Spanish copying songs from Arjona, Perales, and other artists. When they heard *Sobrevivencia* sing in Mam, Genaro considered forming a band that would sing in K'iche', his native language. It also impressed him that they combined indigenous instruments and rhythms with rock-'n'-roll and other genres.

Some people, like Rene Villanueva of Mexico, argued, “plugging in a guitar is like plugging into imperialism” (Regev, 1997, p. 125). Kab'awil band members disagree. The members of Kab'awil see their Rock-Maya music as a way to strengthen their sense of being Maya as well as being part of a larger national and global community. They feel they are participants in a new and contemporary global and local expression of their identities. This is similar to what Regev (1997) found among many musicians in non-western countries. He finds that the “presence of rock music in their own local cultures and its influence on local music is hardly seen as a form of cultural imperialism. On the contrary, they perceive rock as an important tool for strengthening their contemporary sense of local identity and autonomy” (p. 125).

Kab'awil Songs and their Intended Social Meaning

The intended purpose of Kab'awil became clear in the interviews, the construction of the web site and the music video tape clip. The band members shared their desire to use music to revitalize, rescue, guard and give value to their K'iche' culture and language. They often shared a concern for a loss of culture because of outside influences. Genaro shared, “We used to have a rich culture, but slowly it began to be influenced by other cultures. Things began to disappear slowly, our language, our

traditional dress, everything. When the young generation listens to the marimba or chirimia today they just laugh. They say, ‘What is that?’ and they don’t appreciate their own culture” (personal communication, July 14, 2006).

The band members said that they can reach the youth by fusing the modern genres and rhythms with the old ones. Genaro explained,

By using and playing our traditional instruments together with the modern we are indirectly making or revitalizing our culture. Many, when we play the marimba or chirimia, begin to dance and sing. We are now talking about our culture together with other cultures, multiculturalism. Many may say ‘I don’t want to dance to Marimba’ . . . but they hear our music or another Maya group and they begin to sing and dance. Indirectly they say this is Rock-Maya, but it also is part of our ancestors’ music. (personal communication, July 14, 2006)

The group worked on a draft of the web site that identified the principal objectives of the group.

Our principal objective is to keep our culture strong and alive. This includes giving value to our 1) language, 2) traditional dress, 3) music (including our traditional instruments and rhythms), 4) customs, 5) traditions, and 6) our Maya worldview. We want to do this through music. The majority of the songs we sing are in our K’iche’ language. We want to communicate the message that in our culture you will find a rich reservoir of knowledge that will help us live better with our Mother Earth and our fellow man. We want each youth to appreciate their native language. We want to demonstrate that we can use our K’iche’

language in any context, just like Spanish, English, Kaqchikel or any other language. (Kab'awil web site, see appendix A)

Gerardo, a younger member of the band, mentioned that the purpose of the band was to “establish our Maya culture . . . so that people in Guatemala accept our culture. This is why we sing in two languages. Also, to save our culture we mix our traditional instruments [tambor, tzu, and tortuga] with the modern [electric guitar, drums, and keyboard]” (personal communication, June 30, 2006).

Kab'awil band members believe they are cultural brokers between their community, Guatemala, and the world. They sing in K'iche' for two reasons. One, to give value to their native language and help maintain it and two, because “K'iche' has the most coverage. Many of our elders and many in our communities don't understand Spanish and even less English. We play music with guitars and drums, but in K'iche' so they can understand our message” (Genaro, personal communication, June 30, 2006).

Zacarias had a more global purpose for Kab'awil. He demonstrates how he feels about their music with the following words:

We want people to hear us . . . not only in Guatemala, not only in Ixtahuacán. We want to present ourselves at a global level. We want to make ourselves known for our music in K'iche' . . . and for our dark skin color (*morenos*) and do a concert at a global level, in Europe or the United States. This is our dream . . . we want to reach. (personal communication, July 6, 2006)

Zacarias wants their music to be appreciated more at a global level than a national level.

The band as a whole aims to send a particular message through its music. All band members shared a desire to communicate and maintain Maya cultural values,

promote social change and reflection, and to reaffirm Maya cultural identity in the local, national and global level. They also desired their music to be enjoyable and wanted many to hear it. They see how the music of Kab'awil is intended to be a form of cultural communication for young K'iche'-Maya. They intend the audience to interpret their music at three levels: enjoyment, comprehension, and relevance (Morley, 1992).

Kab'awil band members expect their music to be enjoyed by the audience, to make sense to them and for it to be meaningful in relation to their contemporary cultural context.

Through rehearsals, Kab'awil wanted to prepare for every planned performance. They expected to entertain their audiences as well as to communicate a particular message. Genaro mentioned, "I want to tell people: there is no other way but through music. Music is something real special...we need to try to do things well." The band members find the fusion of instruments and rhythms an important tool to making the music entertaining to a wider audience. Genaro elaborates on this issue:

We try to use the chirimia, the tambor, the turtle, and all that and combine it with the electric guitar, the drums and mix it. Many don't agree with this. Why? "I'd like just the chirimia or the tambor. But in other parts, Chichi, Quiche, Xela and other cities...there they support us a lot. They know us well, they even dance to the son mixed with the drums. We had a concert in Xela, in December when there were a lot of North Americans, they didn't understand the K'iche, of course, but the rock music, they listened to it mixed with our traditional rhythms and sounds, our music from Guatemala...they began to dance to it. That's what we want to communicate. (personal communication, July 14, 2006)

Kab'awil wants to entertain a larger audience than their local community. They are able to do this because of the rock aesthetic. Regev (2003) identified this aesthetic as something common for a global audience. He claims that the pervasiveness of the rock aesthetic “has greatly reduced the sense of total strangeness, or ‘otherworldliness,’ that radiated in the past from music from unfamiliar cultures” (p. 228). The rock aesthetic made it enjoyable for the North Americans as well as the Guatemalans.

Zacarias identified how youth in Ixtahuacán and other Maya communities are finding their music entertaining, “...there are many youth that take their guitars and participate in schools with our music . . . We even have grandparents and parents that want to listen to our music. They want to see Kab'awil. ‘Who are they?’ they ask” (personal communication, July 6, 2006).

Gerardo has thought about their audiences and understands how diverse they are. He mentioned that there are audiences looking for entertaining and meaningful music. Gerardo realized that they “saw a space that needed to be filled...regarding ethnicities we (Maya) are very excluded at times and this is why they use two languages K'iche and Spanish...this is a space that needs to be filled in Guatemala.” The music that was previously used for entertainment by the Maya audiences was predominantly in Spanish or English. Maya audiences now find they have a new option.

Genaro seemed to be the philosopher of the band. He identified Kab'awil's specific ideology: “Kab'awil's ideology is to transmit the message left by our grandparents. I can communicate to the new generation, to the children today that they have this worldview given to them, this ideology and they can transmit it to their children and all the generations to come” (personal communication, July 14, 2006). Federico Tuy

Ecoquij confirmed that their “songs revolve around Maya culture, respect for Mother Earth, our multi-cultural reality as Guatemalans and the importance of unity in diversity” (personal communication, June 29, 2006).

Maya communities throughout Guatemala are experiencing change. In the midst of this change, Kab’awil wants to reassure themselves, their community and the world that they are making choices to retain the important elements of being Maya. The band member, Genaro shares that,

For most people, the music of Kab’awil, for those that understand K’iche’ it is very clear . . . we want to communicate that we can still relive/hold on to those days when our grandparents were with us. Unfortunately we are here today and we cannot live what our grandparents lived, but it is time to relive those ideas, values . . . all of the culture . . . so the message is: ‘why not value what our ancestors have done? The traditional dress, the culture, the language . . . those things they left us? We can leave this earth and the point is that we leave footprints in this world. What I’m saying is that what I do, my song can follow...the footprints. He will say: I’m going to sing in K’iche’ because my father did. My grandfather was one of the great men of Santa Catarina’s history. He wrote the Tz’onojb’al Tz’ij, the monolingual K’iche’ dictionary . . . this encouraged me to start writing songs in K’iche’. We even had plans of having him review our songs . . . but unfortunately he passed away. (personal communication, June 30, 2006)

Popular music is a space for social commentary. Regev (2003) stated that “rock music came to be closely associated with the ‘empowerment’ of every day lives of youth,

with implied ‘resistance to the dominant culture, and the active subcultural rebellion against hegemony’ (p. 225). Zacarias confirmed Regev’s (2003) observation. He said, “We want to inspire, and say things through music, songs” (personal communication, July 6, 2006). The band members feel they have particular messages to send out.

Zacarias continued,

We have a message we send like Genaro’s song *Tyox Numam*, there is a message that is sent: don’t hit your father, don’t scold your mother. This is a message that reaches your heart and your feelings. Through this music... the people that listen...even those on the buses....they are listening and reflecting and thinking on this message... through music. Like the songs *Le qach’ab’al nim ucholaj* [“Our great language”] and *Xa oj junam* [“We are all equal”] . . . there is no one larger one smaller...we are all the same here on the earth. They listen to this, they listen to us through this music. (personal communication, July 6, 2006)

Zacarias as well as Genaro want to make their music relevant in today’s diverse Guatemala and in the world. Genaro finds that it is in a multicultural state that his K’iche’ ethnicity can be acknowledged and valued. He shares his ideas about multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism is important. We shouldn’t close ourselves in one culture. I want to share what I know. Many sing in English. I like to listen to English even if I don’t understand it. In the same way many people appreciate what I do, what I sing...this is why I want to transmit our message and that others learn how we live and the reality that surrounds us and find ourselves in. I want to share this with other people and see how they can help us. I would like many to listen to

our music and that they ask themselves why I write music and why I sing.

(Genaro, personal communication, July 14, 2006)

For Kab'awil the rock aesthetic serves as a vehicle for connecting them with a global community while expressing their uniqueness as K'iche'-Maya. Genaro reminds us, "We want to communicate message for all humanity, for the world. Just because we sing in K'iche', this does not mean that we sing only for our people. No, it is not like that. I want to tell all people...all those that want to understand our language...that someday we can share our experiences person to person" (personal communication, July 14, 2006).

The footage taken for a music video clip presented the researcher with data on the group's intended message to their audience. The planning took place in Francisco's home. The researcher explained some of the limitations to the equipment and time. With a total of six video tapes it would be feasible to take footage for only two or three songs. The task was to decide on which songs to shoot footage for. The group discussed the issue and two criteria arose. One, the songs needed to be entertaining and aesthetically pleasing. They had to be the best in their album. The second criterion was about the message they wanted to communicate. They wanted to communicate the importance of valorizing and maintaining their culture and language. As they discussed the options a third criterion arose. They spoke about making this music available to a broader audience. They were concerned with communicating the relevance of this music to a local, national and global audience. The language of the song became a concern, and some thought it would be best to choose a song in Spanish. One of the band members said a song in Spanish would be understood by more people and "we wouldn't enclose ourselves in just our culture." Another band member expressed his concern about

English speaking listeners that wouldn't understand the K'iche' or the Spanish. The researcher suggested the use of subtitles. The band really liked this idea because they could still express themselves in K'iche' and have a larger audience understand them. They chose the song *Tyox Numam Tyox Tat* and *Jelalaj Tzijob'al*. They chose them because of the quality of the music and recording and because of the message. Selecting these songs revealed that the band wanted to communicate at the three levels: enjoyment, comprehension and relevance.

The next step to filming was identifying how the band wanted to visually represent these two songs. The types of scenes, activities and people they suggested for filming reveal the band's desire to express a contemporary Maya identity. The following lists identify the suggestions given by Kab'awil for filming.

Tyox Numam Tyox Tat (Thank You Grandfather, Thank You Father)

- Grandparents
- Youth receiving counsel from grandparent
- Grandparents working, walking, playing an instrument
- Grandparents with children
- A young man writing a song
- The band playing music
- All the instruments, modern and traditional
- Youth dancing, playing

Jelalaj Tzijob'al (Beautiful Language)

- Traditional dress
- A girl and boy in traditional dress
- Grandparents talking
- Children talking and playing
- Humberto Akabal (K'iche' Poet)
- K'iche' Dictionary
- Other K'iche' books
- School teacher teaching in K'iche'

The researcher explained the possibility of taking b-roll shots that could later be helpful in the creation and editing of the music video clip. The band members suggested the following b-roll shots to be taken:

- Nature
- Lake Atitlan
- Town center, market
- People traveling

During the filming the researcher would take directions from the band members. He would collaborate with them on ideas and share suggestions but would always defer to the instruction of the band. Through this filming Maya cultural logic was expressed.

The songs in Kab'awil's first album also reflect their purpose and desired message to communicate through their music. The nine songs in their latest album deal with the following themes: Deity, Ancestors and Family, Natural world, Women, Respect, History, Romance, Language, Traditions and Culture, Community, Modernity, Multicultural Diversity, and Human Rights. The following is a list of the original song titles of Kab'awil's first album, with their Spanish and English translations where needed.

Song titles:

1. Ajaw (K'iche') – Creador (Spanish) – Creator (English)
2. Nan Ulew (K'iche') – Madre Tierra (Spanish) – Mother Earth (English)
3. Aquel Rio (Spanish) – That River (English)
4. Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat (K'iche') – Gracias Abuelo, Gracias Padre (Spanish) – Thank you Grandfather, Thank you Father (English)
5. Nostalgia (Spanish) (English)
6. Ixoq Ajchak (K'iche') – Mujer Trabajadora (Spanish) – Working Woman (English)
7. Je'lalaj Tzjob'al (K'iche') – Hermoso Idioma (Spanish) – Beautiful Language (English)
8. Guatemala
9. Sachnaq Echab'al(K'iche') – Herencia Olvidada (Spanish) – Forgotten Heritage (English)
10. Uq'ojom Nutinamit – (K'iche') El Son de mi Pueblo (Spanish) – The Music Of My People (English)

Decoding

The data collected from surveys and focus group interviews are presented to help elucidate the decoding of this music by young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. The survey data document the reasons why young Maya adults listen to this music and why they do not. The data from the focus group interviews help to see the relationship between the cultural object (Rock-Maya music), the social world (the local, national and global community), the creators (Kab'awil band members), and the receivers (young Maya adults).

The decoding data demonstrate a preferred/dominant reading by the audience. According to Stuart Hall's (1980) model of interpretive positions/codes, Rock-Maya music was naturally accepted and considered transparent by a Maya audience because both the message sender (Kab'awil) and the receiver (young Maya adults) share common codes and social positions. In addition to demonstrating a preferred reading, the data show how Rock-Maya music is decoded at an enjoyment, comprehension and relevance level.

Survey Data

A survey was administered to 83 young Maya adults. These young adults were students at the Instituto Paraiso Maya in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán between the ages of 17 and 24 (there were only two above 30 years of age). Of the 83 young Maya adults, 36 were female and 47 male. This is a relatively even group of male and female respondents. Of the 83 respondents 62 identified themselves as Catholic, eleven evangelical, and ten identified themselves as having no religion. The predominant religion of these young Maya adults is Catholic (75%).

These young Maya adults were asked if they regularly listened to the music by Kab'awil. Out of the 83 respondents, 59 answered affirmatively, 23 negatively and one did not answer. The majority of the participants (71%) identified themselves as Rock-Maya music listeners. They were then asked why they listened to this music. Their answers varied, falling into eight categories. The "Cultural Identity" category deals with responses related to local tradition and community, the Maya identity, and connection to ancestors. They included responses such as, "I love it because it is music from Ixtahuacán." "Because it is from our Maya culture, so we can show our culture." "Simply because it is for our culture, for us Maya people." "The music is pure Maya," "It is our grandmothers' and grandfathers' music." "I listen because they sing of our culture/traditions."

The "Language" category includes responses related to the use and the valorization of the K'iche' language. The responses under this category include, "Because they use our language in their songs." "I listen to it because it is expressed in our K'iche' language." "Because they are giving value to our K'iche' language." "It is beautiful to hear the words they say." The "Message" category deals with responses related to the received message of each song, such as, "Because it awakens our thinking and imparts beautiful wisdom to us." "Because the songs present great lessons." "It imparts a message of good values from our elders/grandparents."

The "Aesthetic" category is related to responses about the instruments and style of music as well as likeability and general enjoyment when listening. These responses included comments such as: "It is fun to listen to." "I listen to it because I like their style." "I like the instruments they use and their style of music." "It is very beautiful,"

“Because I like it.” The “Reflection” category includes metacognitive responses. They included the following comments: “Some of the songs have a good message and give us something to think and reflect on.” “Because it awakens our thinking.” “I just simply like some of the songs because they speak of reality.” The “Rock Music” category includes the responses related to listening to this music because it is rock music.

Some of the respondents included several reasons for listening to Rock-Maya music. Each reason was placed in the appropriate category. For example, “It imparts a message of good values from our elders/grandparents” was recorded under the “Message” category and the “Cultural Identity” category. See Figure 1 for a visual representation of the participants’ responses to why they listen to Rock-Maya music.

Why Young Adults Listen to Rock-Maya

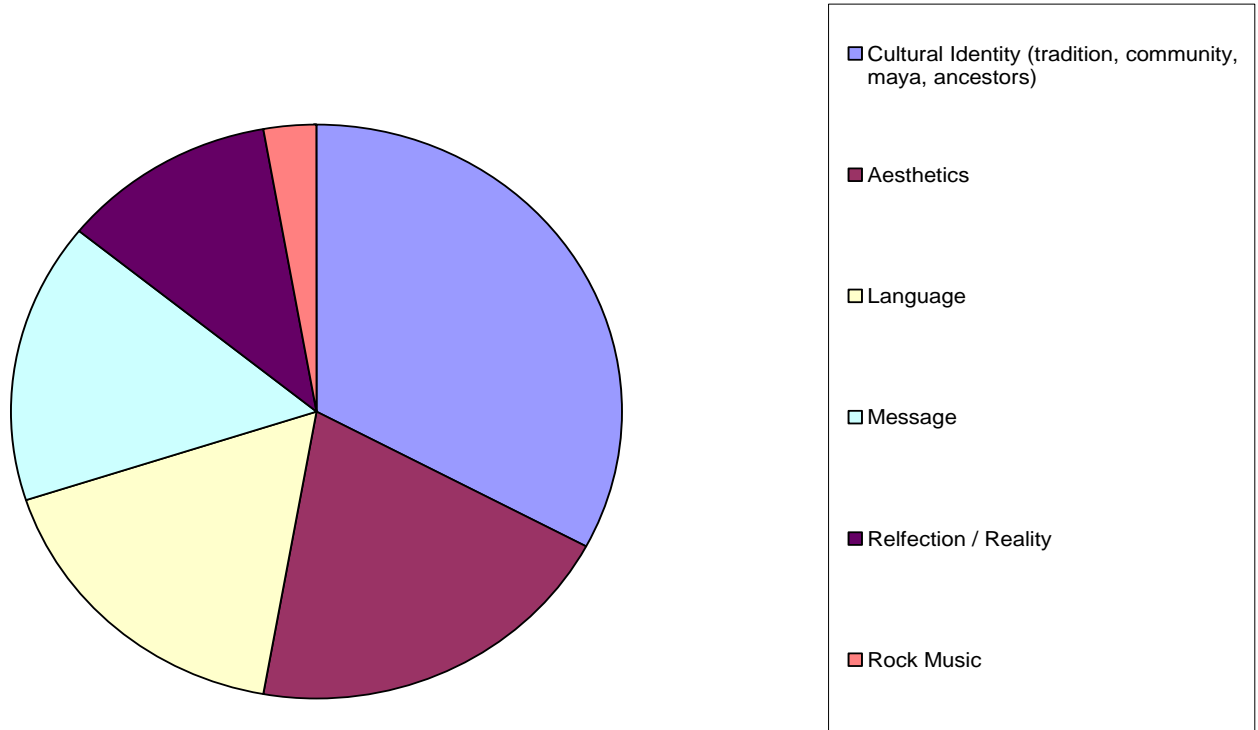


Figure 1. Reasons to why young Maya adults listen to Rock-Maya music. The Cultural Identity category received 23 responses; Aesthetics received 14 responses; Language received 12 responses; Message received 11 responses; Reflection received 8 responses; Rock Music received 2 responses.

If they listened to Rock-Maya music they were asked to list the songs they liked best. A tally of all their responses shows that many of the young adults did not know the exact name of the songs. Some responded with a line from the lyrics of one of the songs. This response was placed with the related song. The songs they listed were either from the Kab’awil group or from the Sobrevivencia group. See Figure 2 for the Top 10 chart for Rock-Maya music among the young Maya adults of Ixtahuacán.

Top 10 chart of Rock-Maya songs

1. Uq'ojom Nutinamit (Kab'awil)
2. Ixoq Ajchak (Kab'awil)
3. Nostalgia (Kab'awil)
4. Aquel Rio (Kab'awil)
5. Guatemala (Kab'awil)
6. Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat (Kab'awil)
7. Uno'j Numam (Sobrevivencia)
8. Ixtahuacán (Sobrevivencia)
9. El Grito (Sobrevivencia)
10. Nan Ulew (Kab'awil)

Figure 2. Top 10 chart of Rock-Maya songs among young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán.

Some of the survey participants do not listen to Rock-Maya music. Their reasons are varied and include: “I have not seen/heard them.” “I don’t have their CD.” “I don’t have a radio/electricity.” “I don’t like it.” “I don’t want to listen to it.” “I prefer to listen to Christian music.” Of those who do not listen to Rock-Maya music, the data show it is because they are unaware or unable to listen to it. The survey data shows that 70% of the responses referred to being unaware or unable to listen to Rock-Maya music. About 30% of the responses referred to reasons for disliking the music or choosing not to listen. See Figure 3 for a visual representation of the participants’ responses about why they do not listen to Rock-Maya music.

Why Young Adults Do Not Listen to Rock-Maya

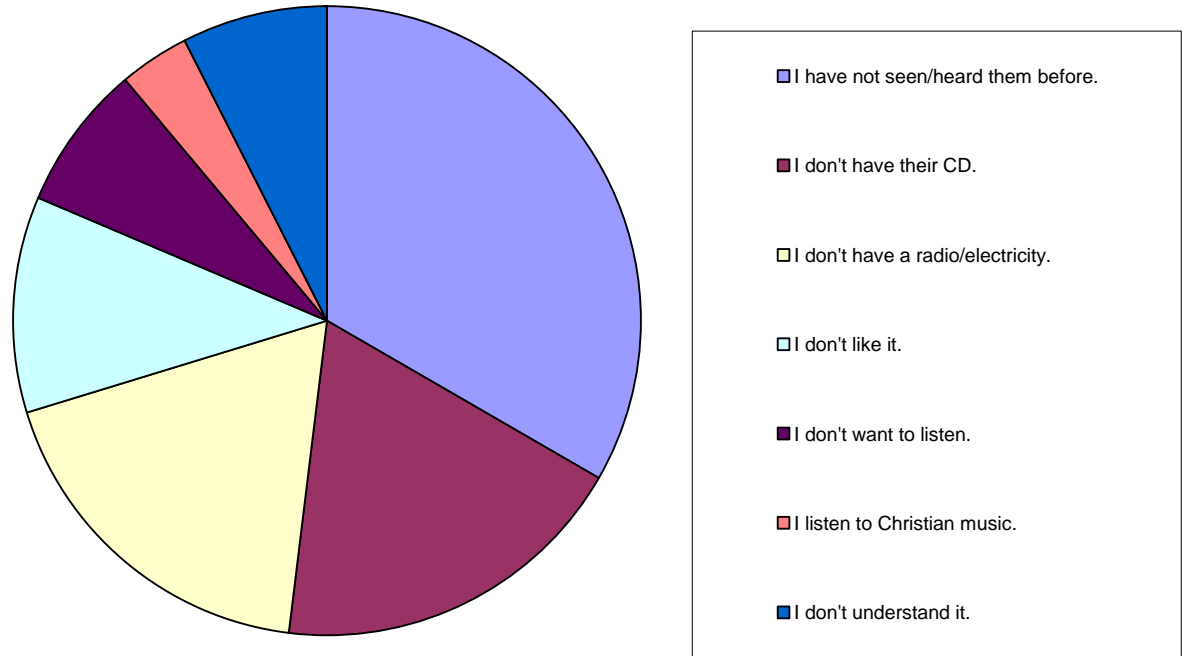


Figure 3. Reasons to why young Maya adults do not listen to Rock-Maya music. The ‘I have not seen/heard them before’ category received 9 responses; ‘I don’t have their CD’ received 5 responses; ‘I don’t have a radio/electricity’ received 5 responses; ‘I don’t like it’ received 3 responses; ‘I don’t want to listen’ received 2 responses; ‘I listen to Christian music’ received 1 response; ‘I don’t understand it’ received 2 responses.

Focus Group Interviews

The focus group interview questions followed the Cultural Diamond model created by Griswold (2004). This model is meant to identify topics for data collection and help the researcher obtain a fuller “understanding of any cultural object’s relationship to the social world” (Griswold, 2004, p. 17). The Cultural Diamond model assumes a

relationship exists between the cultural object, the creator, the receiver, and the social world. It suggests areas to investigate to better understand these relationships. Griswold (2004) claimed that a “complete understanding of a given cultural object requires understanding all four points and six links” (p. 18). These four points include the cultural object, the creator, the receiver and the social world. The six links refers to how these points are connected. The focus group interview questions and discussions were framed with this model in mind.

The Cultural Diamond model defines the cultural object to be a “socially meaningful expression that is audible, visible, tangible, or can be articulated” (Griswold, 2004, p. 13). When an object, like Rock-Maya music, enters the public sphere, it becomes part of the culture. The researcher has observed Rock-Maya music enter the “circuit of human discourse” and has made an analytic decision by identifying this music as a cultural object in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán (Griswold, 2004, p. 17). Three songs were selected for participants to listen to. The songs were selected from the list of songs identified by the young Maya adults on the survey administered to them. They are: Tyox Numam Tyox Tat, Uq’ojom Nutinamit and Ixoq Ajchak.

The first song was Tyox Numam Tyox Tat. The participants were very attentive and pensive while listening to this song. The discussion that followed revealed some themes deemed important to the informants. One of the themes that surfaced after listening to the Tyox Numam Tyox Tat song dealt with the importance of respect in Maya culture and way of life. The way they spoke about this theme seemed normative in nature. The participants talked about how this value (respect) is connected to being Maya. One young woman mentioned, “I like it because of the message they give that

pertains to our values. Like respect. We need to value what our ancestors have planted (sembrar) for us in our culture.” One of the other participants stated, “The music is meaningful. It’s not just about singing. The topic revolved around respecting your grandparents, the importance of respecting ancestors, parents, Ajaw (God), and nature.” Another had never heard this song and commented, “I have never heard this song but upon hearing it now I feel it is somewhat sentimental . . . the lyrics are the most important part. It tells us about respect . . . we must show respect within our families as well as out in the community.” One young man stated,

This is a very traditional song . . . we could say it forms part of the nationality (identity) of the town/community. It talks about the importance of respecting our elders and following their counsel. Many have stopped following their counsel or respecting them. When I listen to this music I remember the good counsel of my parents and grandparents. Kab’awil tries to awaken that value to respect our elders . . . and as youth we need to be grateful for the counsel of our elders.

One participant expressed fear that traditional Maya values are disappearing. She stated, “This song is historically true . . . and what it says is to act and apply what our elders tell us They give us good counsel. . . . Before, people would respect each other, but today that respect is disappearing among the youth.” That fear resides in many Maya because of the constant influences from the outside. This is reflected in the following comment related to the use of K’iche’ language in the song: “What they (Kab’awil) want to do is elevate our culture. Because many youth listen to music from other cultures . . . and in our culture we don’t use it (K’iche’ in the songs). . . It’s

important to listen to it because they have many things to say . . . like this song about respect.” One clearly stated, “If we use our language it will not disappear.”

Another participant commented on the practicality of using K’iche’ in the songs. He said, “When you listen to music in English that you can’t even understand, it is not the same as listening to music in K’iche that we can even analyze.” One young man made a poignant statement,

It is a sad reality we face in Guatemala We tend to uphold things from other cultures before our own We don’t give priority to our own culture . . . like Kab’awil is making music in our own language What I get from this song is that we all are capable We as indigenous people, I have value, I know my language but I don’t know where to use it. As I listen to this song I feel a lot of things. With this song I can begin to react, to interpret things that are ours and begin to express things in another way.

These young adults understood the common perception that rock music can be of a rebellious or subversive nature and that it can be seen as something bad. “One must choose music that has a positive message,” one young woman said. “Rock music is not bad in and of itself. It depends how one uses it. Rock with negative messages can affect us. If they transmit a positive message slowly it will lead us towards our nature and not towards our instinct.” One participant contrasted Rock-Maya with music from the non-Maya communities and said, “I like the lyrics, in K’iche’. This is a new positive music especially when you compare it to reggaeton and other *ladino* music.”

The main topic of conversation that emerged after listening to *Uq’ojom Nutinamit* (“The Music of Our Town”) involved their value for multiculturalism and respecting

different ethnicities. They discussed the use of the marimba, the tambor and the chirimia as important Maya ethnic elements. “They use our instruments. . . . They form part of our music,” one participant stated. One young man talked about the fusion of the different instruments. He said, “Not only do they use instruments from another culture but they also use . . . our instruments.” Another young man talked about Guatemala’s cultural diversity: “This is an important song because it is about our people . . . not only Maya but also Xinca, Garifunas, Ladinos.” The K’iche’ word *tinamit* means town in English but also refers to people, as is the case with the Spanish *pueblo*. One student talked about the purpose of this particular song: “To instill the importance of accepting and valuing the different ethnicities in the country; Maya, Xinca, Garifuna, Ladina. To eliminate discrimination.”

The song *Nan Ajchak* (“Working Mother”) stimulated a discussion on the rights of women, especially indigenous women, in Guatemala. Again there was a prescriptive tone to the conversation, that is, they discussed what should be done. The participants began by reaffirming what the song described as the life of a K’iche’ woman. “This song talks about the indigenous woman. This is how life is for our indigenous mothers. They work, get up early, clean.” One young man analyzed the lives of women in his community, “If we think about the women . . . they do more than the man. They work, wash, prepare the meals, and some even go get firewood . . . the women are more important in our community It is also important to recognize that women have rights also in today’s Guatemala.” One participant found this song to be useful in “making us reflect To feel what a woman feels and how she must suffer.” The discussion then turned to how women should be treated. “We must respect our women, mothers, sisters

more. We should value our mothers and what they do.” This young man expressed how his mother was a driving force in his family. He continued, “I feel compassion. I don’t want to be the author of any injustice.” There was an evaluation of the condition of women in Ixtahuacán today compared to before. One young woman commented that “in today’s world the women are allowed more opportunities for participation.” A young man noticed the change in opportunity for women. He stated, “Women do everything... they prepare everything . . .take care of everything Some men don’t give importance to the women. Some say they are only there to sustain her husband. In the past they were not given much importance . . . they may have not had the possibility to do other things outside of the house. Today there is more gender equality.”

After listening to the three Kab’awil songs an interesting conversation began about the differences between Rock-Maya music and other types of music, specifically rock music. The conversations included a discussion about using and mixing different instruments, and the use of the K’iche’ language, and the message of the songs.

Young Maya adults considered the main differences between Rock-Maya music and other types of rock music to be related to the instrumentation, the language and especially the message. Some participants identified the Rock-Maya as “their” music because of the use of traditional instruments. A young man commented that “the marimba and the chirimia bring in our (Maya) rhythms.” When asked what they thought about mixing the traditional instrumentation and rhythms with the other “western” styles and instruments, their responses confirmed that these songs were considered very authentic to being Maya in today’s world. One listener commented that by mixing instruments and styles Kab’awil is

giving importance to and valuing our instruments. Why not use other instruments together with our traditional instruments that complement each other.....that is their mission.... To complement with what our community doesn't count with ...like more of electric instruments...other cultures generate other instruments but they are implementing them to produce more songs.... If they couldn't count with the resources of these other instruments it would be difficult to transmit their music and messages.

Listeners find that this music is important because it helps others learn about who the Maya are. The mixing of styles and instruments helps communicate who the Maya are. This was evident when a young man stated, "By using other instruments it allows other people from other cultures to learn about our culture. By using other instruments one gives strength to the creation of a new form of music."

It is evident that music with western instrumentation and styles form part of Maya youth identity. Some listeners found the Rock-Maya music to be more aesthetically pleasing because of its use of western instruments. "It is important to mix instruments.... If we just use our instruments the music doesn't sound very well, but if we use other instruments, guitar, it gives the music 'fame', better sound . . . people like these other instruments."

One listener found the fusion of sounds to be a positive democratizing element to today's Guatemala.

I agree with the fusion, the mixture . . . if we were to say "let's just do things that are only 'ours' (*propio*) then we enter into discrimination" We are saying we don't like the other cultures . . . and we discriminate. For me the mixture/fusion

means we are democratizing things. . . . We are taking in the good things and not the bad things. For me it is interesting to be able to democratize these instruments, this music.”

The use of K’iche’ language is also a differentiating factor. One listener demonstrates his connection to this music because of the use of K’iche’ and the message he embraces. “The music from Kab’awil forms part of an essential part of me; with other music, if I don’t listen to the lyrics it’s not a big deal, but if it is in our language we understand it because it is ours.” The young listeners discussed the use of K’iche’ language in Kab’awil’s songs as having two purposes. One was to facilitate the transmission of the message. The other was to validate the K’iche’ language, and by connection, the K’iche’ Maya culture, in today’s globalized context. When asked why Kab’awil sings in K’iche’, a young woman answered, “They sing in K’iche’ so everyone in the community can listen to it. Some cannot listen to things from other countries. . . they decided to sing in K’iche’ so that all can understand their music.” The fact that Kab’awil uses K’iche’ in their lyrics led the listeners to interpret Kab’awil’s desire to reach their own K’iche’ community. A listener concluded that the use of K’iche’ in Kab’awil’s lyrics “is important because it can reach out to all the towns, hamlets and communities around. Everyone has the right to listen and understand what they are listening to. If it is in Spanish some may not understand it . . . so that every K’iche’ community can understand the message their songs have.” Another listener considered Kab’awil to show how important their audience is by singing in K’iche’: “The purpose is to help the people apply the message and feelings they are singing about and that they all

understand it. The group is showing how important their audience is by making sure they all understand the music.”

The participants also discussed the social effects of Kab’awil’s music and the fact that K’iche’ is used in their songs. One participant compared Kab’awil’s music with music from other bands. He stated,

the tendency is to highlight the other cultures over ours. This is because for years we have been trained in Spanish as an official language. . . . It is true, Spanish is an important language but it doesn’t mean our language is worthless. . . . We’ve just been discriminated against for ages now and the ideas, the grandness, the quality or efficiency of certain languages (as well).”

The fact that Spanish is the official language of Guatemala places all the other Mayan languages in an inferior position. This idea has been transmitted from generation to generation. Currently, many Maya no longer use their ancestral Mayan language. There is concern that these languages will disappear. This is present in the minds of these listeners, and they find that Kab’awil is trying to counteract this loss. One listener said, “They sing in K’iche’ so we don’t lose our language . . . , and those things that are ours.” Another mentioned, “From what I’ve heard they have written songs that would help our culture and language survive and not disappear. . . . Like the Xinca culture and language has disappeared.”

Kab’awil listeners are reconsidering the place of K’iche’ language use because Kab’awil has decided to use this language in a realm and context not previously used. This gives the K’iche’ language and culture value in the eyes of its listeners.

Kab'awil is doing something comparable to what other cultures do They are showing that there is an audience Our people understand the songs perfectly because it is in our language, about our lives. Kab'awil makes us reflect that all of us descendants of the Maya can do what other people in other cultures do.

Every culture has their value and ours has that same value. They can create music and songs and so can we . . . we are both competent.

The colonial relationships are reconsidered, even equalized, and increased value is given to languages and cultures previously thought of as inferior. This is because the K'iche' language is now used in a context previously allotted to western languages. The new space in which K'iche' is being used, that is, in rock music, forces its listeners to reconsider the role and importance of this language and culture.

Young Maya listeners identify with this music because it carries particular Maya cultural traits, symbols, and identities. The instrumentation, rhythm and style together with the use of K'iche' in their lyrics are strong cultural indicators of Mayaness. Yet, the predominant feature that differentiates this music from other rock music, the listeners found, is the message. One listener said,

The difference is . . . when you listen to music, like from Kab'awil, you are left with a particular message. When I listen to other rock music from other cultures and it is not the same I admire their music because I like it and I like their message.

One young listener argued that the instruments don't matter. It is the message that makes it different.

I don't think it is the instruments that make it different; it is the message that they impart. It could be that Kab'awil doesn't use the chirimia or the tambor but they could still continue imparting the same feeling and message. The lyrics are important.

Another listener talked about the general attributes of music and how it transmits feelings in addition to the verbal message. He stated, "There is no deception in the music . . . It is the feeling that they transmit through the music . . . whatever inspires them, and they can transmit the feeling. That's what is important." Another listener reaffirmed his view that Rock-Maya was art, because it motivates people.

Kab'awil puts into use what is ours . . . the marimba for example . . . Other cultures do the same thing with the things from their culture. It is the music that convinces us through the feeling it transmits . . . because it is an art. So someone listens to music because of this feeling . . . just like Kab'awil . . . if they were to send their music someplace else they would be accepted. It all depends on the feeling of the music. This is what motivates.

See figure 4 for a summary of the comments from the focus group interview participants that relate to how they categorize this new musical form in contrast to rock music from other places (English/Spanish).

Rock-Maya

- Transmits messages that make one reflect on life
- Speaks about the reality of our lives
- Is based on our culture and our identity ,we are youth and we have our thoughts, we live, the music makes us cry because of the feeling they transmit, because that is how we feel inside.
- Good method to communicate a message
- Helps people reflect on life
- Produces good people
- Sends a good message and makes people reflect.
- Rock-Maya music has our rhythm . . . the marimba and chirimia bring in our rhythms.
- They use traditional instruments

Rock Music in Spanish / English

- Heavy rock transmits negative messages that can be harmful to people.
- Does not speak about the reality of our lives.
- We like to listen to English rock music but it is in English. We listen because we just like how it sounds.
- Other artists like Arjona and Andrade also have songs that make us reflect, even though they may sometimes talk about other things like drugs and other things. Other bands may play heavy rock and this may not transmit much of a message.
- Don't use traditional instrument

Figure 4. Differences between Rock-Maya and other Rock music

The researcher was also concerned with how the listeners viewed the other points of the cultural diamond. What did listeners think of the creators of this music? When asked about why they (the listeners) thought the Kab'awil group began, one listener shared, "I have no idea how they started but . . . as we listen to the music . . . some of us dream of being musicians" We see here that the Kab'awil group has inspired some young Maya adults to also become musicians. Another listener listed three reasons why she thought the group began. She commented on how the band members liked music, they wanted to express their feelings, and they wanted to talk about the reality of our lives.

The participants were asked who they thought listened to this music. This was to collect data on the relationship between Rock-Maya music (cultural object) and the

audiences of this music (receivers). Most participants responded that the primary audiences were young Maya adults. This is because they know about this music. “Mainly those that are Maya. Others don’t know about it,” one listener said. Some identified lack of technology as a reason for not knowing about this music: “Some may not listen to it because they don’t have a CD player or the CD.” Another mentioned that many do not know about it because of discrimination that still exists in the country’s mass media.

The youth listen to this music. . . . Older people don’t listen to it because they don’t know about it. It is not transmitted very often in the radio . . . maybe only in Nahual Estereo, or in the program Mayab’ Winaq from the capital. It is not played partly because of discrimination . . . because it is in our language.

The young listeners mentioned how important it is that many others listen to this music so as to support an indigenous group as well as to share their Maya culture and worldview with others.

If there were people that don’t like this music it would be a loss. We should all support the group so they demonstrate the importance of ‘our’ things, our culture. . . . Some of us just criticize the bad things from the groups but we should constructively support the group. We as indigenous people, with a native language, need to listen to it.”

Other listeners found it necessary to translate the lyrics to Spanish “for those that don’t understand our language so they can learn about our culture, our reality, our lives.”

Young Maya adults that listen to Rock-Maya found that not everyone knew about this music or even agreed with this music. One listener mentioned, “Those that are from

Ixtahuacán know it and they like it . . . because they are their neighbors.” A listener from a neighboring town explained, “I didn’t know that this group existed When I found out about it I commented it to my brother . . . [and] he told me that they would arrive to Nahualá to give a concertLots of people don’t know about them because they are not heard on the radio very often.” Although Rock-Maya listeners are predominantly young adults and teenagers, there is some approval by the older generations. A young woman shared, “My cousin has a CD [player] and she was listening to the Kab’awil CD and my grandfather was there. He asked, ‘the singers of this music, where are they from?’ I told him that they are from Ixtahuacán. He was really happy, he really liked it.” Other young listeners found that many do not agree with this type of music.

There are some people that criticize these groups There was a concert one time where a number of Rock-Maya groups performed The next day there was a teacher that said that it was not good to follow these groups or support them because they are copying from other countries She was saying that we are copying things from another culture.”

Another listener responded with this comment,

I don’t think it is the case . . . they don’t use all the same instruments, the same sounds. They use the marimba, the chirimia . . . it is not the same. It is different and the message is very different, it is about our pueblo our culture. You can’t compare the two.

In this reception study the data present the necessary information about the encoding and decoding of the Rock-Maya music of Kab’awil. The data collected on the encoding of this music indicates to the social, political and economic context in which the

music was produced. The data collected from the band members also reflect the messages they intend to communicate to their audiences. The data collected on the decoding of Rock-Maya music go beyond identifying the type of reading audiences give this music and delves into elucidating the relationship this cultural object has with its social world. The data present information on how audiences interpret and find meaning in this music.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the data collected in relation to the proposed research questions for this reception study. It examines how Rock-Maya music from Kab'awil is a product of globalization and transnational influences. These influences have always intersected with what Wade (2002) called a “sense of regional rootedness” (p. 26). In the case of popular music in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, these global influences have intersected with local identity through Regev’s notion of rock aesthetic. The product of this intersection is the music created by Kab'awil and identified as Rock-Maya music.

This chapter also explores how young Maya adult listeners interpret and interact with Rock-Maya music. The decoding of this music reveals that young Maya adults give a dominant/preferred reading to this music and interpret it at three important communicative levels: enjoyment, comprehension and relevance. The preferred reading by listeners and their interaction with this music at these three levels show how young Maya adults use this music as a resource for the construction of their modern Maya identities.

Encoding: The Production of Rock-Maya music.

The social and political context in which Rock-Maya music has been produced is influenced by Guatemala’s rich heritage and complex history. It has been plagued with political, racial, ethnic, and economic conflict for centuries. The conflicts grew into violence between the 1960s and 1990s. The historic Peace Accords signed in 1996 between the Guatemalan government and the URNG (National Guatemalan

Revolutionary Union) became the catalyst for social and economic change in Guatemala. These changes, at times very slow, have begun to produce new understandings of the self and the other. The emergence of new media forms serves as a vehicle to understanding these changes, as is the case of Rock-Maya.

Kab'awil identifies the 1996 Peace Accords as a turning point for Maya empowerment and opportunity. "The idea to create a Maya artistic musical group began in 1997 after the signing of the Peace Accords in Guatemala," Francisco explained (personal communication, July 16, 2006). The events and ideas that lead to the Peace Accords in Guatemala were highly influenced by the multidirectional flow of expectations, laws, ideas, philosophies, people, commodities, etc. The 1996 Peace Accords created a point of reference on how to evaluate life and the expectations for the future in Guatemala. Featherstone et al. (1995) found this to be a common product of globalization as "minorities who appeal to transnational human rights standards beyond state authorities, or indigenous peoples who find support for local demands from transnational networks" (p. 49). This connection to global networks empowered the Kab'awil band members to carry out their plans to form a Rock-Maya band that would fuse and mix local elements of Maya music and identity with the rock aesthetic.

Globalization affected the personal lives of the Kab'awil band members. Outside influences played a part in the lives of Kab'awil band members. During their formative years, the community of Ixtahuacán was beginning to more readily welcome outside influences. The community was also beginning to send their youth to other towns and cities to continue their education beyond elementary school. Most of the Kab'awil band members had left Ixtahuacán to study at a bigger city. This flow of people and ideas

shifted the perspective and worldview of these young Maya adults. This shift included the reconsideration of their Maya identity in a national and global context. Traditionally Maya communities identified themselves primarily with their own community. As the young Maya adults of Ixtahuacán, like Kab'awil band members, left their community they began to identify with other circles and reconsider their identities. Kab'awil band members returned to Ixtahuacán with a sense of being part of a larger national and global community.

The accessibility of the rock aesthetic was key to the formation of the Kab'awil group. Kab'awil band members appropriated the rock aesthetic because it had formed part of their socialization. They grew up listening to artists such as Mana, Ricardo Arjona, Ricardo Andrade, etc. This music entered their social realm at home through the radio. Learning to play rock music came through friends. The rock aesthetic became more accessible when they left the community. Their friends with a bit more experience in the rock aesthetic would teach them. They would copy songs from other groups. The rock aesthetic does not require the musicians to be professional. Genaro related, “We are not musicians really . . . we’ve just made music through experience” (personal communication, July 14, 2006).

The demands of globalization brought Kab'awil band members to new communities and in contact with others outside of their community. They found that identifying oneself as Maya required being explicit about the symbols that marked them as Maya. Language is the strongest of these cultural symbols. Historically Mayan languages have been considered to be of a lower status than the official Spanish language. In fact, many use the term “dialect” to refer to indigenous Mayan languages as

a derogatory term that refers to an incomplete language, a mix of sorts without a defined grammar. Kab'awil band members grew up with the understanding that the world regarded their language as inferior. In the 1980s the American Catholic priest and Florentino Ajpacaja began to write religious music and text in K'iche'. This validation of the native K'iche' language by an outsider caused young community members to question the place of their native language as given by the Guatemalan society. Francisco began to think about using the medium of popular music to help question the place given their native K'iche' language by others (the nation). Genaro argued, "why not sing to our people so that they can listen to us and understand us" (personal communication, July 14, 2006). Francisco and Genaro also found some of their friends from other Maya indigenous communities were already singing in Mam and other Mayan languages. This encouraged Kab'awil to continue working toward forming a band that would sing in K'iche'.

The fact that band members are currently bilingual K'iche'/Spanish school teachers also reflects the shift in how the band members see their culture and language in relation to the nation-state. Bilingual (Mayan language/Spanish) education was supported by and pushed for after the Peace Accords and under a new vision of a diverse, multicultural and plurilingual nation state. These young Maya band members were supportive of the new position of indigenous people in the national realm. They expressed their support by being bilingual teachers and by creating this new popular musical form in K'iche'.

Decoding: Preferred Reading

Research question 2 (How do young K'iche'-Maya adults of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, Guatemala interpret Rock-Maya music?) is discussed in this section. The data show that young Maya adults tend to give the Rock-Maya music from Kab'awil a dominant or preferred reading. This means the intended messages sent by the band are the same messages the audience members interpret. They understand the intended meanings in the songs. This is because the audience members share the same social position and cultural codes as the message sender, the Kab'awil band. They share the same identity. This supports Stuart Hall's (1980) claim that audiences interpret media messages according to their social position. The identity the Kab'awil band and the audience members share is experienced through the primordial referents identified by Hutchinson and Smith (1996) and present in Kab'awil's music. They include kinship, "ethnobiological physical features, language, place, religion, and custom" (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996, p. 43-44).

These referents to ethnic identity were expressed in the encoding and decoding of the Kab'awil music. Band member Zacarias identified the ethnobiological physical feature of having darker skin and the use of K'iche' language as two distinct ethnic referents. He presents these in opposition to other cultural identities by desiring to do a concert where these ethnic referents are made even more distinct. He said, "We want to make ourselves known for our music in K'iche' . . . and for our dark skin color (morenos) and do a concert at a global level, in Europe or United States. This is our dream . . . we want to reach" (personal communication, July 6, 2006).

The themes and lyrics of the songs also helped audiences identify with Kab'awil's music because they dealt with tradition and custom as well as the Maya cultural logic. The themes presented in the songs include deity, ancestors and family, the natural world, the role of women, the cultural value of respect, K'iche' language, community and physical space/place.

The songs dealt with other themes that linked well with young Maya adults who today live in a new social context –one much different from that of their parents and grandparents. These themes include the rights of women, multicultural diversity, modernity and human rights. Young Maya adults were able to identify with this because they are youth in a globalized context.

In one concert the researcher observed all referents were present in different forms. Attendees arrived with their siblings, cousins and friends. They physically looked like the band members and each other. The attire the band used while performing was a mixture of western clothing with Maya symbols. These included the traditional sandals, a pair of pants made with Maya cloth and an embroidered representation of Xb'alamke (Popol Wuh hero), a bright Maya style shirt, a hat made of Guatemalan cloth, etc. The band members matched what the audience was wearing. The band and the audiences were communicating to each other their contemporary Maya identity. Although the concert took place in Ixtahuacán (a K'iche' Maya community), both K'iche' and Spanish were used by the band and by the youth. This reflects the acceptance of bilingualism as part of their Maya identity.

Cornell and Hartmann (1998) presented a constructionist paradigm for understanding identity construction. This model is also useful in understanding how

Rock-Maya music serves as a resource for constructing identities. The preferred reading by the audience in Ixtahuacán confirms the common modern Maya identity that the band members and their audience share. This is because these identities have been constructed under the same or similar circumstances and involve the internal factors such as pre-existing identities, population size, internal differentiation, social capital, human capital, and symbolic repertoire. These internal factors are combined with external contextual factors (politics, labor markets, residential space, social institutions, culture, daily experience) to help construct new identities. Fischer (2001) argued that the link between these internal and external factors is the shared cultural logic. He asserted that “Maya identities as lived experiences and self-interested presentation share certain discernible patterns linked both to an underlying cultural substrate (internalized through cognitive models) and to a dynamic articulation with increasingly global relations of political economy” (p.6).

Kelly and Donohew (1999) argued for a “primary socialization theory” that considers “normative and deviant behaviors as social behaviors learned predominantly in the context of interactions with primary socialization sources of the family, the school and peer clusters” (p. 1034). These primary socialization sources influence how youth interpret, interact with, and adopt the messages and values that come from secondary socialization sources. Secondary socialization sources, like the media, are thus mediated by the direct influence of family, school and peers. Kelly and Donohew suggested that the primary socialization process influences the effect of media through selection (primary socialization produces attitudes that lead to particular choices), selective perception (attitudes and values developed through primary socialization

determine how media messages are interpreted), and exposure norming (interactions with primary socialization sources after exposure alter interpretations of media messages). (p. 1034)

Although youth become more independent from the influences of the family, the family can indirectly mediate the influence of mass media messages on youth. Arnett (1995) confirmed that “adolescents do not come to media as blank slates, but as members of family, community, and culture who have socialized them from birth and from whom they have learned ideals and principles that are likely to influence their media choices and how they interpret the media they consume” (p. 528). Family influences mediate the choice of peers and media. As youth become more independent of their families the influence of peers and the media become stronger. Youth may find reflections of their developing self-identities in the media and among peers. In the case of young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán, K’iche’ Maya cultural logic acquired through the family has influenced how they decode Rock-Maya music. Institutions can also be a source of primary socialization. Kelly and Donohew (1999) found that institutions, like schools, can also mediate the effects of media in adolescents. They claim that schools “expose youth to culturally acceptable, prosocial norms . . . Media, particularly music, provide ways of defining and uniting the members of a peer subculture as well as expressing their shared view of the world” (Kelly & Donohew, p. 1036). Instituto Paraiso Maya is an institution that promotes the education and preservation of Maya cultural values and language. The institute also promotes a pan-Maya identity that connects the K’iche’ youth of Ixtahuacán to other Maya youth of Guatemala. Formal education and the use of technology are valued at the institute. The institute has also had connections with global

entities (such as the German enterprise for sustainable development cooperation *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*). The young Maya adults that attend Instituto Paraiso Maya are thus socialized to value and maintain their K'iche' culture while they adopt modernity.

Young Maya adults throughout Guatemala are thrown into the complex negotiations of making sense of local and global cultural material. Kab'awil band members reflect this situation for young Maya adults through their music. Thus, listeners in Ixtahuacán feel unity with and understand the intended messages from the band members. In addition, Arnett (1995) stated that consuming particular kinds of media may give youth a “sense of being connected to a larger peer network, which is united by certain youth-specific values and interests” (p. 524). Young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán find themselves connected to other young Maya adults that are placed in this same situation by consuming Rock-Maya music.

Decoding: Enjoyment, Comprehension, Relevance

Research questions 3 and 4 are discussed by considering the three dimensions of decoding Morley (1992) recommended. He argued that there are other dimensions to decoding besides the acceptance / rejection model proposed by Hall (1973). Beyond the preferred, negotiated, and oppositional readings an audience member may give a particular media product, Morley called for a consideration of the enjoyment, comprehension and relevance dimensions of decoding (Morley, 1992). The data show how audiences decode Rock-Maya music at these three levels. These are related to Lull's (1985) observations on media effects in audiences. Lull (1985) discussed media effects and found that the effect of music takes place at a “physical level” in the form of dancing,

imitating performers, moving to the beat; at an “emotional level” by romanticizing, feeling the music and relating themes to personal experience; and a “cognitive level” by processing information (p. 368). These dimensions of decoding Rock-Maya music of Kab’awil are considered to better understand how this music serves as a form of cultural communication and a source of identity construction. It also sheds light on how young Maya adults interact with indigenous media. The relationship between Rock-Maya music (the cultural object), the creators, the receivers, and the social world are highlighted in the discussion. The young K’iche’-Maya adults of Ixtahuacán also find this music to have a relevant and important role in their local, national and global social worlds.

Enjoyment Level

Young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán listen to Rock-Maya music because they find enjoyment in this music. About 71% of the survey respondents declared they listened to Rock-Maya music by Kab’awil. Of the 23 participants that do not listen to Rock-Maya music the majority do not listen to it because they do not have access to the music or technology. Only 7 of the 23 (30%) do not listen because they dislike like it. The survey data show that 20% of the responses to the question, “Why do you listen to Rock-Maya music?” dealt with aesthetics and 3% with the fact that it was rock music. Twenty three percent of the survey participants responded saying that they listened to Kab’awil music for some sort of aesthetic reason. Young Maya adults like to listen to the music because they consider it beautiful. They like the instrumentation, and the musical style. “It is fun to listen to,” wrote one survey participant. This is an important level of interpreting and understanding the music.

The enjoyment level of communication shows that this medium is innovative and attractive to those most involved in identity construction in young Maya adults of Guatemala. It also provides a popular forum for new identities to be reaffirmed. The use of rock music also questions the traditional view of what Maya identity should be. The fact that Maya identity can be communicated through the contemporary medium of rock music questions the preconceived ideas the nation may have of what it means to be Maya. For centuries the indigenous populations of Guatemala have been folklorized and commodified to promote tourism or a national historical link to some great past. Through the years, this folklorized view of the Maya has been promoted by INGUAT (Guatemala's Institute for Tourism), the Guatemalan government, the media, anthropologists, and other researchers. The fact that a contemporary medium is produced and consumed by indigenous young adults forces Guatemala as a nation to redefine previous notions of their indigenous population. It also empowers the Maya to define their desired place in the national context.

Mass media have been used by indigenous populations for many years in Guatemala, radio being the primary medium. Much of the indigenous media has been used for practical, educational, health or marketing purposes. Rock-Maya music may not seem threatening or political in nature since it is a leisure activity and has no apparent purpose to communicate any political/social views. Yet, it is the fact that Rock-Maya music is used for enjoyment that makes it a vehicle for communicating new ideas about the place of the Maya in the national imagination. Rock-Maya music can defolklorize the indigenous populations of Guatemala. It also encourages young Maya adults to consider their place as Maya to be equal in a multicultural nation state. Antoni Castells i Talens

(2003) argued this case in his article on indigenous language use in cinema. Castells i Talens found that the most “subversive aspect of an indigenous film is the apolitical appearance” (p.55). He argued that “a culture that only identifies itself as activist can never reach normality” in the nation-state (Castells i Talens, 2003, p. 55).

Regev (1997) finds that “. . . rock music is used to declare a ‘new’ – modern, contemporary, young, often critical–oppositional–sense of local identity, as opposed to older, traditional conservative forms of that identity” (p. 131). The older, traditional conservative forms of Maya identity are influenced by the centuries of folklorizing Mayaness into a static historic form of identity. Rock music allows for a new identity to be communicated—one that is changing, present, contemporary, fluid, and organic. One listener from a focus group reaffirmed his view that Rock-Maya was art, because it motivates people.

Kab’awil puts into use what is ours . . . the marimba for example. . . . Other cultures do the same thing with things from their culture. It is the music that convinces us through the feeling it transmits . . . because it is an art. So someone listens to music because of this feeling . . . just like Kab’awil. If they were to send their music someplace else they would be accepted. It all depends on the feeling of the music. This is what motivates.

Although audience members listened to Kab’awil music for enjoyment it was not the only reason.

Comprehension level

James Lull (1985) argued that music not only serves as a source of entertainment but that it also has particular socializing properties. He uses cultural examples of how music plays an important role in the social life of particular peoples in the world. In Africa, the Venda utilize music and dance to “reinforce social relationships” (Lull, 1985, p. 363). In Nordic countries, “farming chores are demarcated musically,” while community and political activity is always accompanied by music in Latin America and the Caribbean. Buddhist, Moslems, Christians and other religious groups use music as part of their social existence. Lull claims, “musical expressions are meaningful symbolic messages” (Lull, 1985, p. 364). The survey data show that about 50% of the responses on why young Maya adults listen to Kab’awil’s music were related to emotional or comprehension reasons. These reasons for listening to Rock-Maya music included cultural identity with 33% of the responses and K’iche’ language use with 17% of the responses.

Most of the data from the focus group interviews also suggest that this music was primarily interpreted at the comprehension level, that is, the audience understands the messages of the Kab’awil songs. The messages were interpreted to reflect their current cultural identity. Kab’awil band members explained that their main objective as a group was to “keep our culture strong and alive. This includes giving value to our 1) culture, 2) traditional dress, 3) music (including our traditional instruments and rhythms), 4) customs, 5) traditions, and 6) our Maya worldview” (personal communication, 2006, see appendix A).

The use of K'iche' language in the songs served two purposes. One was to assure the messages are understood by the K'iche' Maya. One student commented, “when you listen to music in English that you can't even understand, it is not the same as listening to music in K'iche' that we can even analyze.” Another focus group participant shared, “The music from Kab'awil forms an essential part of me, together with other music. If I don't listen to the lyrics it's not a big deal, but if it is in our language we understand it because it is ours.”

The second purpose is to communicate the importance of the K'iche' language (which is intricately connected to K'iche' Maya identity) and to validate its use and, by extension, the people that speak it. One student commented on the use of K'iche' in the songs. He said,

It is a sad reality we face in Guatemala . . . [that] we tend to uphold things from other cultures before our own. . . . We don't give priority to our own culture . . . like Kab'awil is making music in our own language. . . . What I get from this song is that we all are capable . . . we as indigenous people have value. I know my language but I don't know where to use it.

Young Maya adults found Kab'awil songs reaffirm other Maya cultural symbols and identity. Throughout the focus group interviews the comments from the participants revolved around Maya symbols and values. The listeners noticed that the song Tyox Numam Tyox Tat emphasized respecting the elders as evidenced by the following comment: “The music is meaningful. It's not just about singing. The topic revolved around respecting your grandparents, the importance of respecting ancestors, parents,

Ajaw (God), and nature.” Music is not just an expression of identity. It helps construct and it constitutes that identity. Music communicates and forms cultural identity.

Rene Villanueva of Mexico argued that “plugging in a guitar is like plugging into imperialism” (Regev, 1997, p. 125). But Regev noted that many musicians and fans in non-western countries find the “presence of rock music in their own local cultures and its influence on local music is hardly seen as a form of cultural imperialism. Contrary to Villanueva, they perceive rock as an important tool for strengthening [italics added] their contemporary sense of local identity and autonomy” (Regev, 1997, p. 125). The members of Kab’awil see their Rock-Maya music as a way to enhance their sense of being Maya as well as being part of a larger national and global community. These producers of Rock-Maya music, together with their listeners, feel they are participants in a new and contemporary global and local expression of their identities. Young Maya adults find it easy to resonate with the music and the band members because they share those same codes and experiences.

Relevance Level

For minority adolescents in a multicultural country such as Guatemala, identity formation requires contemplation of one’s ethnic or racial group membership. Rock-Maya music calls for youth to consider ethnic identity formulations. The assimilationist history of Guatemala has ignored ethnic diversity. In recent years, after the signing of the Peace Accords (1996) and the Accords on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1995), the government recognized the multi-ethnic nature of Guatemala. This has forced the state to give public space to the Maya and has thrust Maya identity onto the national scene, creating, as Wade documented in Colombia, “new opportunities for broadening

and perhaps politicizing notions of [Mayaness]" (Wade, p. 27). Kab'awil band members together with their listeners find Rock-Maya music as a way to politicize their identity.

In Ixtahuacán identity politics become more complex as young adults reflect on their local loyalties and their desire to acquire global values and lifestyles. Rock-Maya music serves as a forum for reflection on differences and similarities and creating boundaries and identities. Rock-Maya music fits within the continuous quality of Maya tradition and differentiates the youth by its modern style and global considerations. Symbolic interactionist theory argues that "individuals develop their self-concept through interaction with significant others" (Lloyd, 2000, p. 32) As the Maya interact more with non-Maya, Maya from other linguistic regions, and media, like Kab'awil's music, a new sense of identity forms that demands the differences to be accepted and valued.

Young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán are very reflective about interpreting Kab'awil's music. This observation fits under the relevance level of interpretation. When young Maya adults listened to Rock-Maya music they reflected on the text, the instrumentation, the band itself, and what all this meant to them. As they reflected they became more conscious of their identity as Maya. Listeners found that Kab'awil songs helped them reflect on the issues relevant to today's reality. Survey data show that 27% of the responses regarding why young Maya adults listen to Kab'awil dealt with the relevance dimension of decoding music. The relevance of the message in the lives of young Maya adults was an important reason for listening (16% of the responses). The other 11% of the responses dealt with how the music makes the listener reflect and think about reality. Participants would remark ". . . the songs have a good message and give us

something to think and reflect on.” Another participant explained that she listened to Kab’awil “because it awakens our thinking.”

Most young Maya adults are thinking about their place in a new diverse nation. The young Maya adults interviewed talked about Guatemala’s cultural diversity and the importance of eliminating discrimination by valuing the diversity in the country. Young Maya adults consider this music important because it encourages listeners to reflect and evaluate their place and condition, and its relevance to the local, national and global context. Wade (2002) found in Colombia, that music can be “part of a project of anti-racism, community development and the affirmation of [ethnic] identity” (p. 26). Similar to the case of music in Colombia, Rock-Maya music can create a space for expanding the notion of Mayaness at the local, national and global level.

Rock-Maya Music’s Social Role

Rock-Maya music has an important social role at the local, national and global level. At the local level, this music allows young Maya adults to identify themselves with a contemporary sense of Maya identity. This contemporary sense of Maya identity combines the distinctive aspects of traditional Maya culture with the modern national and global context young Maya adults live in. At a national level this music confirms the strength of the Maya populations and demands certain relationships to be reconsidered. At a global level, this music attests to the ramifications of globalization and the need for cultural groups to distinguish themselves more explicitly.

Rock music in general is considered to be subversive. It is usually seen as a form of music that is in opposition to the norms of society. If Rock-Maya music is seen within the context of Maya cultural revitalization then this music agrees with the norms and

goals of the community. Yet, when this music is analyzed within the national and global context, it is subversive and makes a strong statement to the non-Maya. The creators and the listeners of Rock-Maya music make particular distinctions explicit. These distinctions create boundaries and help construct identity. This is necessary to be able to maintain distinctiveness in a world where the boundaries become more and more complex.

Some may find that by mixing the rock aesthetic with traditional aesthetics, Rock-Maya performers and listeners are no longer traditionally Maya. But, by making the fusion explicit they are highlighting the differences. This contrast is needed to show the difference in a nation where traditional Maya music has been appropriated by the state. This empowers young Maya adults because it allows them to preserve the differences they find valuable in their culture while they participate in the similarities that come from living in a multicultural nation and a diverse world. Marking the differences and similarities is a way of validating the relevance of local forms in a global context. The multidirectional flows of ideas and cultural material are influencing the construction of new identities as Maya activism “is taking advantage of decreased tensions in current world politics to revive and strengthen a cultural heritage that has been submerged by centuries of external and internal, overt and covert, colonialism” (Fischer, 2001, 86).

Rock-Maya music responds to globalization. Young Maya adults from Ixtahuacán may feel lost in the push and pull of symbols and identities because of globalization. They want to conserve their Maya identity and not get pulled into a *mestizo / ladino* (non-Maya) identity the state would prefer for them. Rock-Maya allows them to be Maya and also global / modern. It defies the notion that the Maya are

backwards, disconnected, rural and stuck in the past. Rock-Maya music humanizes these young adults and allows for their Maya identity to be valid and important in the global context. It deals with the constant struggle to unify the diverse ethnic groups in Guatemala and the world. Through Rock-Maya young Maya adults feel connected to their local reality in a global and modern context.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

Maya youth in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán face what Motti Regev (1997) called a “sort of tension between local and global cultural materials because they are thrown into contemporary global mediascapes” (p. 137). He claimed one strategy for coping with this tension has been “the conscious construction of a new sense of contemporary local or national identity that mixes both types of materials. Hence, the transformation of sectors within national and local cultures into reflexive communities, focusing their sense of identity and difference around particular mixes of cultural materials” (Regev, 1997, p.138). This study shows how Rock-Maya music forms part of this mixture of cultural material and creates a reflexive community among the young adults in Ixtahuacán.

This reception study on Rock-Maya music facilitated the collection of data that revealed the role and meaning of this music among young K’iche’-Maya adults in Ixtahuacán. The data on the encoding and decoding of this music shed light on how Rock-Maya music by Kab’awil is a product of globalization and serves as a form of cultural communication for young K’iche’-Maya.

The data collected on how Rock-Maya music is encoded reveals that Rock-Maya music by Kab’awil is a result of the effects of globalization. The social context in which this music was produced was one of cultural friction and fusion. Guatemala is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse nations in Latin America. Access to transportation, information and technology has demanded interaction between the different cultural, linguistic and social groups in Guatemala. This access has placed the

Maya in a position to interact with national and global institutions, people and ideas. These interactions led to political changes in Guatemala that affected the expected relationships between the Maya and ladino (non-Maya) population. These political changes (such as the Peace Accords), led to other social, political, economic, educational, artistic, and communicative changes for the Maya population. The multidirectional flow of people, capital, technology, images and ideas (including the rock aesthetic) have restructured the way native populations see themselves and how they are seen by others. All these changes set the stage for the creation of a K'iche'-Maya rock band in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán that created music with specific messages that reflect the social, cultural and economic condition of young Maya adults.

The data collected on how young Maya adults decode Rock-Maya music reveals that Rock-Maya music audiences identify themselves with the Kab'awil band members and interpret their music the way the band members intend (i.e., a preferred reading). This is because Kab'awil band members and their listeners share the same “cultural logic” identified by Fischer (2001). This cultural logic creates a common basis for the creators and receivers of this music to understand the local and global symbols in the music. The symbols in the music match Maya cultural referents that are combined with foreign referents currently experienced by Kab'awil band members and young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán. Thus, young Maya adults make a preferred reading of Rock-Maya music.

The decoding data also show that audiences decide to listen to and interpret Rock-Maya music at three levels: enjoyment, comprehension, and relevance. The analysis of Rock-Maya music at these three levels of decoding allows for a better understanding of

how young Maya adults interact with this music and the social world around them. Rock-Maya music listeners are reconsidering old colonial relationships because of the use of K'iche' language in a context previously allotted to western languages. Rock music in K'iche' provides a space for leisure that was traditionally reserved for dominant non-Mayan languages and cultures. Because Rock-Maya music is consumed for enjoyment and leisure, it demystifies commercial media and strengthens local power. Young Maya adults listen to Rock-Maya music because they comprehend the message and the role this music plays in their local, national and global context. Rock-Maya music is created in languages understood by young Maya adults. The messages, symbols and aesthetic value are also understood and appreciated by young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán. This music is relevant to young Maya adults because it calls on them to reformulate notions of Maya identity. The fusion of traditional Maya cultural material with non-Maya material allows for a new space to be created— a space young Maya adults can relate to because it is contemporary to their reality. This space affords young Maya adults the opportunity to escape the romantic and exotic identification typically assigned to them by westerners. Rock-Maya music can provide an opportunity to change stereotypes and reaffirm social, cultural and political power in Guatemala. Young Maya adults find this relevant to their reality.

To a global audience, Rock-Maya music may appear to be apolitical in nature. This music does not call for youth to rebel or become activists. It does not call for the Maya to become involved in separatist movements. On the contrary, this music strives to reach normality and to become part of a pluralist society in Guatemala. Yet, in the context of Guatemala, Rock-Maya music carries political undertones because it calls for a

reconsideration of the place and role of the Maya in a multicultural society. Instituto Paraiso Maya student expressed it best with these words:

Kab'awil is doing something comparable to what other cultures do. . . They are showing that there is an audience. . . Kab'awil makes us reflect that all of us descendants of the Maya can do what other people in other cultures do. Every culture has their value and ours has that same value. They can create music and songs and so can we. . . . We are both competent.

This student is reconsidering his role as a Maya in Guatemala. He feels connected to a significant group of people similar to himself who form an audience to this music. This young Maya adult also finds his ethnic group to be competent in relation to other dominant groups. This is significant because of the ethnic inequalities and racist history of Guatemala. Although the themes of this music may appear apolitical (ancestors and family, the natural world, women, respect, history, romance, language, traditions / culture, community, modernity, etc.) this music can be very political in relation to providing spaces for colonial relationships to be redefined and equalized.

Young Maya adults in Ixtahuacán are “actively involved in the construction and reconstruction of identities, negotiating boundaries, asserting meanings, interpreting their own pasts, resisting the impositions of the present and claiming the future” (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998, p. 101). This study shows that Rock-Maya music plays an important role in the efforts to construct contemporary Maya identity. Rock-Maya music is a cultural object that interacts with the social world in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, in Guatemala and in the world. Rock-Maya music facilitates identity constructions because it helps re-establish boundaries. Through Rock-Maya music cultural distinctions and

similarities are established. The universality of the rock aesthetic in Rock-Maya music highlights the common global context in which all young adults live. The Maya cultural symbols highlight the distinctiveness of young Maya adults. Musical fusion has been a natural phenomenon throughout history. The fact that the Kab'awil band members are making the fusion explicit empowers them and their listeners to make decisions on how to construct their identity. Rock-Maya band members are thus utilizing “strategic essentialism” to determine how to identify themselves and how they want others to identify them (Fischer, 2001). Thus, Rock-Maya music is not only a reflection of new identities among young Maya adults, but also a part of the resources used to construct contemporary Maya identity.

Rock-Maya music has the potential for positive effects on adolescent identity formation. Marcia (1980) argued that the better developed the structure of identity, “the more aware individuals appear to be of their own uniqueness and similarity to others and their own strengths and weaknesses in making their way in the world. The less developed this structure is, the more confused individuals seem about their own distinctiveness from others . . .” (p. 159). Rock-Maya music celebrates the distinctiveness of Maya culture and heritage. It also connects youth to other non-Maya youth of the country and the world that also follow the rock music culture. Rock-Maya music can help an adolescent in Guatemala experience what Erikson (1968) described as “wholeness” as he feels a “progressive continuity between that which he has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future; between that which he conceives himself to be and that which he perceives others to see in him and to expect of him” (p. 87).

This qualitative study has explored the meaning of Rock-Maya music in the contemporary lives of these young adults. The data and discussion corroborate that Rock-Maya music is a product of globalization and serves as a form of cultural communication for young Maya adults in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. Through the production and consumption of Rock-Maya music, the K'iche' of Ixtahuacán are demonstrating they are part of the current global, national, and local context they live in. This study has added to the field of "indigenous media" studies and helps "develop a body of knowledge and critical perspective to do with aesthetics and politics, whether written by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people, on representation of Aboriginal people and concerns in art, film, television, or other media" (Ginsburg et al., 2002, p. 212).

This reception study forms a basis for future research on indigenous media in Guatemala. This study was limited to the proposed research questions. It was also limited to a specific audience. There are theories the researcher did not take into account in this study that could potentially shed light on the phenomenon of Rock-Maya music in Guatemala. There are many questions that must be considered in future research efforts to better understand indigenous media and its relevance in North, Central and South America. The following are some questions to consider in future research:

1. Who are other audience members of Rock-Maya music? Who are the non-K'iche' speaking audiences listening to this music? Are they other Maya, Ladino, Garifuna, International?
2. How is Rock-Maya music decoded by other ethnic groups in Guatemala?
3. How is Rock-Maya music decoded by other generational groups in Guatemala?

4. What are the views of parents, grandparents, community leaders, religious leaders, and educators about Rock-Maya music?
5. What are the theories on Youth Culture and how do they relate to Rock-Maya music?
6. In what spaces is Rock-Maya music being performed? How is this related to the role this music plays in local, national and global contexts?
7. How does the case of Rock-Maya music in Guatemala compare to other artistic expressions of indigenous peoples in Latin America, the United States, and Canada?

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APPENDIX A
Grupo Kab'awil Webpage



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Ub'ix Qatinamit

“el canto de nuestro pueblo”

Grupo

KAB'AWIL

Utz Iwulik Bienvenidos Welcome

7/12/2008 1



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Principios



La idea de fundar un grupo artistico musical Maya, surge en el año 1997, después de la firma de los Acuerdos de Paz. Lamentablemente la carencia de recursos económicos en nuestro pueblo, Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, como en otras partes del país, impide a que muchos sueños se realicen.

El grupo se fundó formalmente en el mes de enero del año 2001. Francisco Feliciano Tepaz, el de la iniciativa, nos convocó a una primera reunión. Fue una experiencia inolvidable ya que todos estábamos dispuestos a desarrollar nuestros talentos musicales y culturales al formar un grupo de música. En esa reunión hablamos de los objetivos, centrados a la cosmovisión maya. Discutimos específicamente los tipos de instrumentos, ritmos, traje, idiomas, temas y la imagen del grupo. Todos estábamos emocionados por compartir la misma idea y empezar en esta trayectoria.

Empezamos a comprar los primero instrumentos y a tocar algunas canciones de otros grupos. Después empezamos a escribir canciones originales. La primera siendo "Sachnaq Echab'al" que traducido al español significa "Herencia Olvidada". A través de esta canción queremos rescatar el idioma y los valores de la unidad y el respeto mutuo.

Actualmente contamos con 12 canciones originales. Estas canciones hablan sobre la cultura Maya, el respeto hacia la Madre Naturaleza, nuestra realidad pluricultural como guatemaltecos y la importancia de la unidad en la diversidad. La mayoría de las canciones las cantamos en nuestro idioma K'iche', pero también cantamos en otros idiomas representando la diversidad de nuestro país.

Al Ajaw, Nuestro Creador, le damos nuestro agradecimiento por superar los obstáculos que encontramos en el camino, por darnos la fuerza y la voluntad para hacer algo por nuestra cultura maya.

Last Updated: July 12, 2008



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

KAB'AWIL

Nuestro Nombre Kab'awil significa en español "dos visiones". Nosotros crecimos viendo los tejidos tradicionales de nuestras abuelas con el ave bicéfalo llamado "Kot". Aprendemos que para ver correctamente nuestra realidad debemos tener "dos visiones" o sea, debemos ver el pasado para poder corregir el futuro.

Nuestro Proposito Nuestro objetivo principal es mantener nuestra cultura fuerte y viva. Esto incluye valorar nuestro 1) idioma, 2) traje, 3) música (incluyendo nuestros instrumentos y ritmos autóctonos), 4) costumbres 5) tradiciones y 6) nuestra cosmovisión maya. Queremos hacer esto a través de la música. La mayoría de las canciones las cantamos en nuestro idioma K'iche'. Queremos transmitir el mensaje que en nuestra cultura se encuentra un rico conocimiento que nos ayudara a vivir mejor con nuestra Madre Naturaleza y nuestros hermanos. Queremos que cada joven aprecie su idioma materno. También queremos demostrar que se puede usar nuestro idioma K'iche' en todo ámbito, al igual que el castellano, ingles, kaqchikel o cualquier otro idioma.

Ayuda En este momento carecemos de fondos para poder seguir desarrollando nuestros propositos. Si usted desea apoyarnos de alguna manera por favor [contactenos](#).



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

KAB'AWIL

Canciones [Sachnaq Echab'al](#) / Herencia Olvidada / Forgotten Heritage
[Xa Oj Junam](#) / Igualdad
[Nan Ajchak](#) / Mujer Trabajadora
[Aquel Rio](#) / That River
Nostalgia
Ajaw / Creador
Guatemala
Nan Ulew / Madre Nateraleza
Hombre de Cambio

NOTA: Las canciones fueron grabadas en un ensayo impromptu con solo una guitarra. Esperamos grabar nuestro primer álbum profesional utilizando mas instrumentos.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Clip #1

Clip #2

SACHNAQ ECHAB'AL

SACHNAQ ECHAB'AL

Iwir xinq'ax loq
jawi kajach'an wi le ajchak
xojtjionik, kub'ij
"che pa le uwachulew
k'i qach'omanik,
che ma le rajawaxik are' le
riqoj ib'."

We at katzukuj le utzilal
Katetzelaxik
Choq we xaq jun katk'o'ji'wi
Pa le meb'ail
Je' choq katyoq'ik
Je' choq katyoq'ik

Jas k'u kaqaj oj winaq
Jasche xqasach le no'jib'al
Kech eqati't choq eqamam
Le are' xkiriq le utzilal
Xa chrumal le riqoj ib'

HERENCIA OLVIDADA

Ayer pase
Por donde tapiscaba
el sabio campesino.
Platicamos pues y dijo
"En este mundo,
hay muchas formas de pensar,
Mas lo que importa es la unidad"

Si tu intentas triunfar
En esta vida, no hara falta el odio
Y sin no háces nada por
sobresalirte . . .
También seras envidiado
También seras criticado.

Entonces que queremos los
humanos?
Por que nos olvidamos de los
consejos
De nuestras abuelas y abuelos?

Si en paz vivieron por que unidos
fueron.

FORGOTTEN HERITAGE

Yesterday I passed by a man
gathering his corn
And I stopped to listen,
He said:
"In this world there many
paths, but unity is what is
important."

If you try to triumph in this
life, many will hate you.
And if you keep your humble
way . . .
You will be criticized,
You will be condemned.

So what is it that man wants?
Why do we forget the counsel
of our Ancestors, our
Grandmothers and
Grandfathers?

They lived in peace because
of their unity.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos



Clip #1



Clip #2

XA OJ JUNAM

XA OJ JUNAM

Ixoq, achi
ali, ala
ak'alab
chitampe wa'
we qab'antajik
oj winaq

We katk'ixik
kaq'alajsaj
at jachin je'
xa' atelnaq kanoq

Ixoq, achi
ali, ala
ak'alab
chitampe wa'
we qab'antajik
oj winaq

Choq we katk'ixik
kachokonsab'ej
le uch'ab'al le atinamit
nim atelnaq kanoq

Ixoq, achi
ali, ala
ak'alab
chitampe wa'
we qab'antajik
oj winaq

Xak'u chrumal wa'
ruk' ronojel qanima
kaqab'ij chawech
cher qonojel
xa oj junam

Xa oj junam
Xa oj junam
Xa oj junam oj winaq
Xa oj junam
Xa oj junam



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos



Clip #1



Clip #2

IXOQ AJCHAK

IXOQ AJCHAK

Sibalaj aq'ab'il kwa'lijik
chukajmaxik le uparo'ch
maj jub'eq uxlanem kub'anö
le ixoq ajchak.

Aretaq kutzir ronojel
le uchapanik pa le ro'ch
kuyak k'u b'i rib'
kab'e chuchi' le ja'
chuch'ajik taq le ujastaq
je choq ku b'anö
are chi' kab'e chumolik
keb' oxib' uxk'a'y

K'ax k'ax kuriqo
k'ok'o ku b'anawi kusok rib'
k'ax k'ax kuriqo
k'ok'o ku b'anawi kuriq numik
k'ax k'ax kuriqo
le ixoq ajchak

Nim k'ut le uchak pa le upajä
nim k'ut le upatan pa le wokaj
choq nim k'ut le upatan pa le amaq'



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos



Clip #1



Clip #2

AQUEL RIO

AQUEL RIO

Parecía que nadie pudiera acabar
el mundo entonces le dijo aquí no mas
a todos nos dejó

Recuerdo muy bien de un río
que pasaba por allí cerca del
pueblo donde nací

Cuando seguíamos a mama
a lavar la ropa
eran tan divertidos esos momentos
ya que llegaban muchos
niños de mi pueblo

Pasaron pues los anyos volando
el río se ha quedado sin la sombra de los
árboles
por eso decidió alejarse de los humanos

Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha ido tristemente de los
humanos
Dime quien podrá crear otro
igualito

Para que los pobres niños
tendrán donde divertirse

Se ha vuelto entonces un basurero
aquel lugar donde cantaba un
hermoso río

Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha ido tristemente de los
humanos
Dime quien podrá crear otro
igualito

Para que los pobres niños
tendrán donde divertirse



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

KAB'AWIL

Instrumentos y Ritmos

Los instrumentos y ritmos que tocamos son una mezcla de lo moderno con lo tradicional. Nuestra idea es que no se pierdan los sonidos y ritmos tradicionales. Mezclamos sonidos y ritmos modernos con los tradicionales para crear un genero nuevo Rock-Maya. De este modo atraemos a la juventud de hoy.



Instrumentos modernos: Guitarra electrica, Guitarra electroacústica, Bateria, Bajo, Teclado.

Instrumentos tradicionales: Chirimía, tambor, tortuga, palo de lluvia, flauta, maracas, pito, zampoña, marimba, quena, otros.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

KAB'AWIL



Guitarra
/ Voz

[Francisco Feliciano
Tepaz Ixmatá](#)

Bajo / Voz

[Federico Manuel Tuy
Ecoquij](#)

Bateria

[Francisco Chox Tepaz](#)

Guitarra
Electrica / Voz

[FranciscoGenaroCan
Ajpacaja](#)

Teclado

[Antonio Zacarias Tepaz
Ixmatá](#)



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Francisco Feliciano Tepaz Ixmata



Nombre: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz Ixmata

Fecha de nacimiento: 1 junio 1973

Lugar de nacimiento: Sija' (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan), Sololá, Guatemala

Instrumento: Guitarra electroacústica / voz

Profesión: Maestro de educación primaria urbana

Pasatiempo: Ver televisión y practicar guitarra.

Música Favorita: El Son (Danza del Venado)

Deporte Favorito: Fútbol

Comida Favorita: B'ichaq'or (comida típica Maya-K'iche')

Bebida Favorita: Penul (bebida típica Maya-K'iche')

Color Favorito: Azul Marino

Sueño: Propagar la música maya a nivel internacional.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

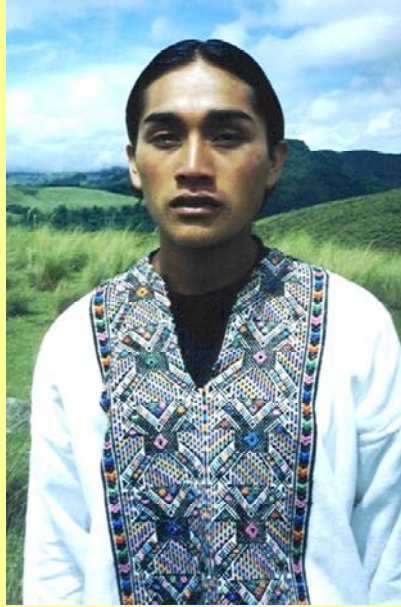
Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Francisco Chox Tepaz



Nombre: Francisco Chox Tepaz
Fecha de nacimiento: 15 abril 1982
Lugar de nacimiento: Sija' (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan), Sololá, Guatemala
Instrumento: Batería, percusión tradicional
Profesión: Maestro de educación primaria bilingüe K'iche' - Español
Pasatiempo: Ver televisión y escuchar música.
Música Favorita: Rock y Romántica
Deporte Favorito: Fútbol
Comida Favorita: Ensaladas
Bebida Favorita: Café con Leche
Color Favorito: Blanco y azul marino
Sueño: Ser un gran músico



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Antonio Zacarias Tepaz Ixmata

Nombre: Antonio Zacarias Tepaz Ixmata

Fecha de nacimiento: 21 julio 1977

Lugar de nacimiento: Sija' (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan),
Sololá, Guatemala

Instrumento: Teclado, palo de lluvia

Profesión: Maestro de educación primaria bilingüe
K'iche' - Español

Pasatiempo: Escuchar música

Música Favorita: Sones tradicionales de Guatemala

Deporte Favorito: Fútbol

Comida Favorita: Jok'o'm (comida típica Maya-
K'iche')

Bebida Favorita: Jok'om k'aj ruk ak' (bebida típica
Maya-K'iche')

Color Favorito: Blanco



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Federico Manuel Tuy Ecoquij



Nombre: Federico Manuel Tuy Ecoquij

Fecha de nacimiento: 10 junio 1980

Lugar de nacimiento: Sija' (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan), Sololá, Guatemala

Instrumento: bajo / tortuga / voz

Profesión: Maestro de educación primaria bilingüe K'iche' - Español

Pasatiempo: Leer, practicar guitarra y teclado, pintar

Música Favorita: El Son (especialmente el baile de Los Gracejos)

Deporte Favorito: Básquetbol

Comida Favorita: Rax Jok' (comida típica Maya-K'iche')

Bebida Favorita: Ubaq' Q'or (bebida típica Maya-K'iche')

Color Favorito: Azul Marino y Rojo

Sueño: Ser pintor y músico.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

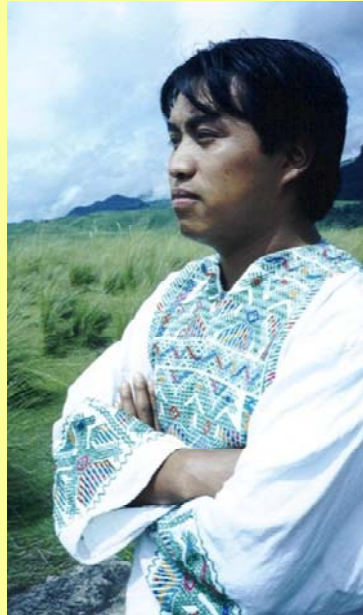
Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos

Francisco Genaro Can Ajpacaja



Nombre: Francisco Genaro Can Ajpacaja
 Fecha de nacimiento: 15 septiembre 1979
 Lugar de nacimiento: Sija' (Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan), Sololá, Guatemala
 Instrumento: guitarra eléctrica / voz
 Profesión: Maestro de educación primaria bilingüe K'iche'- Español
 Pasatiempo: Escuchar música.
 Música Favorita: Romántica
 Deporte Favorito: Básquetbol
 Comida Favorita: Jok'o'm (comida típica Maya-K'iche')
 Bebida Favorita: Uwa'l ja' (bebida típica Maya-K'iche')
 Color Favorito: Blanco
 Sueño: Ser un gran compositor.



Kab'awil Home

Principios

Propositos

Canciones

Instrumentos

Integrantes

Contactos



Contactos

Direccion Kab'awil
Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan
Solola, Guatemala

Telefono (502) 762-8365 - Guatemala

Correo Electronico bixmayakabawil@hotmail.com



APPENDIX B
Survey in Spanish

Encuesta	Música: Rock-Maya	Grupo: Kab'awil
1. FECHA		
2. NOMBRE		
3. EDAD		
4. PUEBLO		
5. RELIGION		
6. ESTADO CIVIL		
7. ¿ESCUCHA LA MUSICA DE KAB'AWIL REGULARMENTE?		
8. ¿POR QUÉ ESCUCHA ESTA MUSICA?		
9. ¿POR QUÉ NO ESCUCHA ESTA MUSICA?		
10. SI USTED ESCUCHA LA MUSICA DE KAB'AWIL, ¿QUÉ CANCIONES LE GUSTA MAS? ESCRIBALAS EN ORDEN DE PREFERENCIA.	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
11. ¿QUÉ LE GUSTA DE ESTA MUSICA?		

APPENDIX B
Survey in K'iche'

K'otb'al Chi'aj**B'ix: Rock-Maya AjB'ix: Kab'awil**

1. Jachke q'ij kamik?	
2. Jas ab'i?	
3. Jampa ajunab'?	
4. Jawi katel wi? Jas ub'i atinamit?	
5. Jachke a religión? Jawi at kojonaq wi?	
6. La at k'ulanik?	
7. La katö' le taq b'ix re Kab'awil?	
8. Jasche katö' wa' we taq b'ix?	
9. Jasche na kata' taj wa' we taq b'ix?	
10. We katö' le taq b'ix re Kab'awil, Jachke b'ix mas utz katö'? Chatz'ib'aj jachke le nab'e, ukab', urox mas utz katö'.	1. 2. 3.
11. Jachke mas kaqaj chawach che wa we' taq b'ix?	

APPENDIX C
Moderator Instructions (English)

Focus Group Interviews

Moderator

- Allow participants to speak freely with each other, ask each other questions and express opinions and doubts.
- Try not to control the conversation; as long as it stays within the topic of discussion.
- The moderator must show interest in the topic and the responses.
- It is not necessary to keep a particular order of themes or questions...if an interesting theme arises it is important to accept these comments.
- If there is a participant that is not participating, it is suggested that one of the questions be directed to him or her. Example: “Brenda, What do you think about this?”
- If a participant tends to dominate the discussion and does not allow others to comment, the moderator should say something like: “Juan, before you answer, let’s hear what Pedro thinks about this.”

Information for the Group

- There are no wrong answers. Feel comfortable to respond, comment, questions, give your opinion as you please.
- This group interview will be filmed. No comment or part of the video will be used without the permission of the participant.
- This is an informal discussion. There is no need to raise your hand to speak. If you have a comment or question feel free to express it openly. We hope you will discuss the topics naturally.

APPENDIX D
Kab'awil Song Lyrics

Musical Group: Kab'awil
Álbum: "El canto de las aves"

Ajaw (Creador)

Letra y música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Kaqamaltyoxij chech la Ajaw
Chech wa' we jun q'ij
Xsipaj la chiqe
Maj k'u kaqaya oj
Maj k'u kaqasipaj
K'ama b'a la wa' we sin qab'ix

Lal yo'wnaq la chiqe le je'lalaj k'aslemal
Lal choq yo'wnaq la chiqe le je'lalaj q'ij
Lal xsipan la chiqe le saqlo'loja joron
Lal choq xsipan la chiqe le uchuplinem ta le ch'umil

Ri eloq'olaj taq e qati't xemaltyoxin
Ruk' keb' oxib' kotz'i'j
Xemeji' chwach la uk'u'x kaj

Je k'u ri e loq'olaj taq e qamam
Na xekanaj ta kanoq
Xkisipaj k'u ri je'la taq pom
Ruk' ronojel kanima

Nan Ulew (Madre Tierra)

Letra y Música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Wa' we b'ix
Ruk' ronojel qanima
Kqasipaj chech le Qanan Ulew
Xa chrumal chwach kujwa' wi.

Qonojel oj sik'italik
Kak'oji' qak'ixib'al chwach
Ya'tal che la Nan Ulew

Kaqasipaj keb' oxib' kotz'i'j la.

Are k'u wa' le malyoxinik
Kaqaya chech le Qanan Ulew
Xa chrumal are' sipanaq le qixim
Ma are la' tzuqb'al qib' ronojel q'ij

Ruk' qaki'kotemal
Kujb'ixan pa qach'ab'al
Choq kaqaxojowsaj we je'la q'ojom
Kech ri e qati't choq kech ri e qamam.

Aquel Río

Letra y música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Parecía que nadie pudiera acabar
El mundo entonces le dijo
Aquí no mas
Y a todos nos dejo.

Recuerdo muy bien
De un río que pasaba
Por allí cerca del pueblo donde nací
Cuando seguíamos a mama
A lavar la ropa
Eran tan divertidos esos momentos
Ya que llegaban muchos niños de mi pueblo.

Pasaron pues los años volando
El río se ha quedado sin la sombra de los árboles
Por eso decidió alejarse de los humanos.

Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha desaparecido aquel río
Se ha ido tristemente de los humanos.

Dime quien podrá crear otro igualito
Para que los pobres niños tendrán donde divertirse.

Se ha vuelto entonces un basurero
Aquel lugar donde cantaba un hermoso río.

Se ha desaparecido aquel río.....

Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat (Gracias Abuelo, Gracias Padre)**Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat**

Letra y música: Francisco Genaro Can
Ajpacajá
Grupo: Kab'awil

In b'enaq pa le b'e jawi xb'in wi le
numam.

In b'enaq pa le b'e jawi xb'in wi le
nutat.

Xane xna'taj k'u chwe ri kina'oj
xkich'ob' kanoq:

“Mawetzela'j ri awajil atz'aqat,
mak'ulila'j ri awachalal,
mayaj ri anan,
mach'ay ri atat,
chak'utunisaj ri ab'antajik.
Chak'ama kib'e konojel ri awinaq
ruk' le utza chomanik
xuqe' pa le suk'alaj b'e.”

Tyox numam, tyox tat.
Na kasachan ta k'u chwe we je'la taq
tzij.
Na kasachan ta k'u chwe wa' we na'oj.

Xib'ij k'u chwech chi kaqamaltyoxij che
ri Ajaw
xuqe' ri Qanan Ulew
Ronojel ri jastaq usipam chqech.
Rumal k'u wa'
Xa ne xuriqa k'u ri q'ij
Xa ne xuriqa ri ucholaj
chech uk'utunsaxik we qab'antajik.

Tyox Numam, Tyox Tat

Letra y música: Francisco Genaro Can
Ajpacajá
Grupo: Kab'awil
Translation: Malcolm Miguel Botto

I have traveled the path where my
grandfather walked.

I have traveled the path where my father
walked.

Thus, I certainly remembered the
counsel they left behind:

“Don't neglect your loved ones,
Don't despise your brother,
Don't scold your mother,
Don't hit your father,
Show your culture.
Lead all your people
With wisdom
And on the straight path.”

I thank you Grandfather, I thank you
Father.
I certainly will not forget these beautiful
words.
I certainly will not forget this wisdom.

You counseled that we should thank the
Creator
and our Mother Earth
for all things granted us.
For this reason
The day has arrived
And it's purpose found
To present our identity.

Nostalgia

Letra y musica: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Era una noche que te vi por primera vez
 Mis ojos se fijaron solamente en ti
 Y el silencio me hizo sufrir tanto
 Porque tenia mucho miedo
 De que me rechazaras.

Creo que ni te diste cuenta de lo que me paso
 Estaba sentado tristemente por ti mujer
 Mientras bailabas el son con tus amigos
 Por eso me decidí hablarte.

Baile contigo hermosa mujer
 Conversamos un momento y nos conocimos
 Pues me gustaste tanto
 Aunque te fuiste de mi
 Ni siquiera me dijiste adiós
 Pero te recordare siempre, siempre, siempre

Creo que ni te diste cuenta.....

Ixoq Ajchak (Mujer trabajadora)

Letra y musica: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Sib'alaj aq'ab'il kawalij chukajmaxik le uparo'ch
 Maj k'u jub'iq uxlanem kub'ano
 Le ixoq ajchak
 Aretaq kutzir ronojel le uchapanik pa le ro'ch

Kuyak k'u b'i rib'
 Kab'e chuchi' le ja'
 Chuch'ajik le ujastaq
 Je' choq kub'ano
 Arechi' kab'e chumolik keb' oxib' uxk'a'y

K'ax, k'ax kuriqo
 K'o k'u b'anawi kuriq numik
 K'ax, k'ax kuriqo
 Lee ixoq ajchak
 Nim k'u le uchak pa le upaja
 Nim k'u le upatan pa le wokaj
 Choq nim k'u le upatan pa le amaq'

Je'lalaj Tzijob'al

Letra y música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Chitampe wa' we qachomanik
Oj mayab' winaq
Oj k'o pa Iximulew.

We kak'ixik kaq'alajisaj le ab'antajik
Le achomanik xa elnaq kanoq.

Choq we kak'ixik
Kachokonsab'ej le uch'ab'al le atinamit
Je' choq le achomanik
Xa elnaq kanoq.

Le qach'ab'al nim ucholaj
Are' uk'ux le qab'antajik
Are' xq'alajisan chiqawach
Ronojel le xajtajnaq.

Guatemala

Letra y música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Dicen que somos seres humanos
Pero humano no lo veo tanto
Tal vez por eso me decidí
Cantar esta canción.

Mis ojos no soportan mas lagrimas
Por tanta injusticia que es insoportable cada día.
Guatemala, Guatemala
Tu realidad causa nostalgia
Pues la paz se ha cambiado por sangre
Y la democracia por exclusión
Guatemala, Guatemala.
Los años se van volando
Y nuestra madre tierra sin árboles,
Ni sus criaturas cada vez
Guatemala, Guatemala.

Guatemala eres tu, mujer tejedora de la paz.
Aquel hombre que lucha por resistir
Aquellos niñillos esperanza del futuro.....

Sachnaq Echab'al (Herencia Olvidada)

Letra y música: Francisco Feliciano Tepaz

Iwir xinq'ax loq jawi' kachakun wi le numam.
 Xojtzijonik, xuch'ob' chwe
 che pa le uwachulew k'i qachomanik.
 We at katzukuj le je'lalaj k'aslemal
 Katetzexaxik, choq we na kariq taj jas kab'ano
 Je' choq katyoq'ik. Je' choq katyoq'ik.

Jas k'u kaqaj oj winaq
 Jasche' xqsach le no'jib'al
 Kech ee qati't choq ee qamam.

Le are' xkik'utunisaj nimaq taq chak
 Xa chrumal le riqoj ib'.

Uq'ojom Nutinamit (El son de mi pueblo)

At sik'ital jewa' pa we je'lalaj xajoj
 Je' wa' pa we kikutemal
 At kosnaq k'u la' pa taq le arajawaxik
 Chatuxlana b'a
 La' at q'itajnaq qeta'm k'ut oj k'o k'u awuk'
 Awech k'u wa' we jun q'ij ruk' ronojel kanima.

Kaqab'ij chawech achi', xaq xew k'u xk'isik
 Ma kujtzalij k'u wa' xaq xew k'u xk'isik
 Ma kujtzalij k'u wa'
 Chatkikotoq, chatxojowoq
 Kujsik'in ruk' ronojel qanima
 Chi xpe ta b'a iwonojel ruk' kikutemal.

Ee sik'ital konojel, Ee mayab',
 Ee sik'ital konojel Ee Garifuna,
 ee sik'ital konojel, Ee Xinka.
 Je' choq konojel, ee kaxlan taq winaq
 Chixxojowa' b'a ruk' we je'lala q'ojom.
 Rech ri loq'olaj qatinamit.
 Katkikotoq, chatxojowoq.

Integrantes durante el primer album:

Francisco Genaro Can Ajpacaja, Guitarra eletrica y voces

Antonio Zacarias Tepaz, teclado y marimba

Pascual Moisés Tepaz, Bajo, pitos y voces

Guillermo Alfredo Garcia, Bateria

Francisco Feliciano Tepaz Ixmata, director, guitarra y voces.

APPENDIX E
Cultural Diamond Model Questions for Focus Group Interviews

Cultural Diamond (Griswold. 2004)

Cultural Object: “Rock-Maya” music by Kab’awil

Social World: Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. Young adults studying at the Magisterio bilingue K’iche’-Espanyol

Creator: Kab’awil group

Receiver: Students from the “Paraiso Maya” institute; young adults between 17 and 24.

Cultural Object

Allow participants to listen to the following song: **Tyox Numam** (track 4)

After listening to the song, ask the following questions:

1. What did you feel as you listened to this song? why?
2. What images did you entertain as you listened?
3. What did it make you think about?
4. What is this song about?
5. What is the message the song imparts?
6. What is the purpose of this song?
7. What did you like best about this song?

Allow participants to listen to the following song: **Uq’ojom nutinmait** (track 10)

After listening to the song, ask the questions.

Allow participants to listen to the following song: **Ixoq Ajchak** (track 6)

After listening to the song, ask the questions.

Creators

1. How do you think this group started?
2. Why do you think this group started?
3. Why do you think they play this music?
4. Who do they sing for?

Receivers

1. Who listens to this music? Why?
2. Who does not listen to this music? Why?
3. Who should listen to this music? Why?

Social World

1. What do your parents think of this music?
2. What do your friends think of this music?
3. What do the people of Ixtahuacán think of this music?