

READING MAYAN WOMEN'S IN/SECURITY

Maria Stern-Pettersson

Introduction: Where are Mayan Women in Global Politics?

One time when I went to organize some communities where there was a lot of repression, the heads of the civil patrols' sat in the back of the {meeting}...and sharpened their machetes...I said, 'do not kill us because I feel that what I am doing is good, its not bad..'and when the meeting was over the combatant said that 'you say that we killed your children, fathers, husbands...but its because of you that your husbands were killed...they were looking for you because you have joined the guerrillas...{you} this se-ora who is organizing women, where did she get her ideas, clearly with the guerrillas she got her ideas, but I felt that no, it was not the guerrillas who came to give us these ideas, it was all the problems that occurred which gave me the idea, all the suffering, the pain, the hunger and my idea is that we have to seek a {way} to solve our problems...of how are we going to care for our children, because...{according to} our culture, as indigenous women, we have many children. {...} We want to be taken into account as women because there has been much time when we have not been respected{...} The men, are taken into account more...only the men participate {in the struggle}{...} The idea of the organization is so that women are not treated as less, so that women uncover our ideas, because we know a little bit about the situation, no? {...}

Me personally...when they murdered my husband in 1981...he was working on a fountain for potable water and when he came back, the army...captured him and tortured him for around two hours and...they killed him...They cut off his head and threw it in the river. My husband couldn't be found...Three days later we found him under the water. {...} I have five children...we were hiding from the army...and when they came they killed my hogs and ate them. {...} I decided not to be in my house...I was in the woods, under a tree and under the darkness...so we endured many days without eating{...}Then when the PACs found me they threatened me and I thought they were going to kill me...They pointed guns at me here {her chest}, and a knife here {her neck}, and others here {her face}{...} When the repression calmed I did not have anything...I suffered a lot because of my situation{...}I have this father-in law who has a lot of land and he doesn't want to share it with my children...a woman does not count, only a son, but when his son died, we women with our children are not taken into account. {...} Now in our organization, we are together and we have a few ideas...but still they treat us poorly...There are threats, but not the same as before, but there are threats...The PACs always threaten the women, always they try to find out who is organizing the women...{they ask} 'these women, why don't you have husbands, where do you get these bad ideas?' {Once} the chief of the patrols said: 'Now we are going to put all the patrollers together and all the widows

together...these women need husbands, because now they are not doing anything, that is why they are organizing...take two or three for each of you. {...} Several days ago even {some one told me} that they raped four women.

This is the situation now. But for me, I succeeded, but there are always threats, but they have not killed me yet...This is not only my situation...This is the situation of all the widowed women...that is why we struggle. We feel happy when we are together {...} The threats do not stop...but if we leave our struggle, more threats will come. If we are here in our place, in the organization, we have to seek our own solution...

—”Mercedes” (born 1955)

Many Mayas have stopped wearing their traditional dress so that the other society...the Ladinos will accept them...They lose much within the group. The group doesn't view them anymore as Mayas, because they do not speak the language, don't wear the clothes, as if they devalue themselves, devalue the culture. But they can't be Ladinos: they are forming another group without identity, without culture, when really {a Mayan woman} could....define her situation. But let us say that circumstances have forced her to abandon everything so that the other society will accept her, but it wont accept her anyway...there are women who have done this...and it is dangerous, dangerous to devalue {us}. The majority of women are {already} devalued. The Mayan culture is starting to decay...and we women are those who supported it the most and in {such a} case, she loses everything, its dangerous because she is decaying the culture...it is not necessary to arrive at this...losing being Mayan, instead she needs to be sure of herself, valorize herself and be conscious of her role as a woman.

—”Mathilde” (born 1960)

The fear, threats, danger and harm that these Mayan-woman experience are clearly relevant for thinking about security and insecurity in terms of global politics. However, the fields of International Relations (IR) have not adequately addressed the security and insecurity of people like Mayan women.

What many Mayan women consider to be security issues do not fit into the narrow definitions of in/security found in IR.² Within established mainstream IR discourse, as well as ‘alternative’ challenging discourses, the ‘who?, what?, when?, and where?’ of security mostly revolve around the nation-state. The primacy of state sovereignty in the way politics is defined precludes alternative conceptualizations.³ It also renders the defining relationship between national identity and security as a natural and therefore moot point. People who do not feel represented or protected by the state, or people whose political identities reside elsewhere (such as in an ethnic or women’s movement which opposes state policies) rarely grace the pages of IR theory. Their voices are not included in formulating what is considered a relevant threat under the label “security.” They are certainly evacuated from consideration in the formation of security policies. In/security is a historically specific concept within IR which leaves little room for women and people of

marginalized ethnic groups—and little room for understanding in/security as it relates to identity and power. The central concepts of security are therefore problematic once one tries to make sense of the notions of security that are meaningful to and constitute the lives of Mayan women in Guatemala.

Although the bulk of IR literature claims otherwise, it is not a given that the relationship between identity and security is governed by states. The very givens in IR, i.e. the boundaries which discern IR from ‘Domestic politics,’ and which define the “subject of security” become themselves a source of insecurity for Mayan women (Walker, 1993: 78). These delimitations silence Mayan women’s voices, sanction the acts which threaten them, and obscure relations of power which place them in marginalized positions within many different and interfacing systems of domination.

Hence, one needs to question if the ‘citizens’ who live within the geographical borders of states accept the direct connection between their subjectivity and the claims about sovereignty expressed as national security.⁴ Or is security for people like Mayan women tied to other forms of identity? In Guatemala, there have been violent attempts to convert the various meanings of security and identity that people have into something unitary like national security and national identity. Yet, this project has failed. There is therefore a great gap, crafted out of violence, between meanings prevalent among the people and the meanings manipulated by the state. I therefore aim to explore some of the meanings of security in the narratives of 18 politically active Mayan women, with implicit juxtaposition to those dominated by the nation-state.

However, the way in which politics are defined and played out are so deeply rooted in an unbridled acceptance of the givens of IR that attempts to redefine in/security to take into account the perspective of marginalized sites, such as that of Mayan women, risk repeating the traditional logic of IR—or are left flailing about in search of an alternative conceptual apparatus. Exploring in/security from the starting point of Mayan women therefore has proven to be a tricky albeit, crucial endeavor.

This article is an attempt to begin exploring some of the methodological problems I have encountered in my efforts at investigating what security and insecurity can mean to politically active Mayan women in contemporary Guatemala.⁵ I also aim to raise some questions around how it may be possible to responsibly and effectively shift the focus of in/security to take into account the in/security of those who do not identify themselves in the ways prescribed by the architects of security policies, or according to the ways one commonly thinks about global politics.

The Political Subject: ‘Mayan Women’

Many Mayan women in Guatemala claim that they are insecure in multiple ways: as women, as members of an ethnic group, and as members of a socio-economic class which struggles to attain the basic requirements for survival. Many also feel threatened in different and related manners in the variant spatio-temporal contexts, such as the family, society at large, their organizations, or the Guatemalan nation-state project, which inform their lives. Similarly, those who threaten these persons may, in a different context, be their closest ally. Many Mayan women’s in/security is therefore contingent and multiple—even hybrid.

However, despite (and in the function of) their subaltern positions, many Mayan-women have

begun to make their voices heard in protest of their self-defined triple discrimination, both on a national level, and within their own communities and organizations.⁶ For the first time in Guatemala's history, Mayan-women are making claims for security and identity *as Mayan-women*, negotiating their struggles in the simultaneous sites of subjugation and resistance. They are forging a vision of a more secure existence, and re-defining who they are in relation to those who threaten them, thereby altering the very relations of power which rendered them 'insecure.' They are thus re-constructing both what this identity and what security and insecurity mean in the many different contexts of their lives. They are also making it increasingly clear that they too are subjects in the fashioning of the society in which they are living.

Mayan women's claims must be seen in light of the current conjuncture in Guatemala. In 1995, an accord on the Rights and Identity of the Indigenous Population was signed by both the URNG and the government as part of the peace process.⁷ After seven years of negotiations, on December 4, 1996, the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) and the government signed a peace agreement to put an end to the insurgency/counter-insurgency war. Yet, although the 'dirty' war no longer terrorizes the majority of people who live within (and were forced to flee) Guatemala's borders to the extent that it did in the late 70s and early 80s, many still suffer the heritage of over 30 years of armed conflict, counter-insurgency tactics, and unjust distributions of resources. Together with the legacy of colonialism and US imperialism, the brutal policies of these years crafted and institutionalized a modern society largely characterized by violence, fear, poverty and crime. Nevertheless, hope can be found in the quelling of the direct violence. Furthermore, popular protest—more and more often articulated in terms of ethnic identity—has burgeoned, although with trepidation.⁸ Recently, the 'Mayan *pueblo*' has become an increasingly unifying political identity—an identity celebrated both as a source of pride and a basis for political rights for a growing movement which includes many sectors of civil society.⁹

Given Mayan-women's particular locations in different power relations and the specificity of their struggles, what can in/security possible mean to and for them—and for thinking about in/security more generally? For instance, what are their war-time/post war-time constructions of in/security? What can they tell us about possible relationships between identity and security?

In today's world, it has become increasingly obvious that peoples come into conflict with each other over issues related to identity: be it national, ethnic, or gender. Violence that is poorly understood through the lenses of state-centered security thinking could perhaps be better understood if we began asking questions around the injury that can occur at the interface of competing identity claims and the efforts at securing subject positions. Mayan women are specifically interesting in this light because their self-defined political identity is hybrid: they are 'Mayan women,' not just Mayan, not just women. (Some also identify themselves as Mayan *Campesina* women).¹⁰ They have lived in a situation of extreme violence and hardship in a war-torn society where they have been, and continue to be, victimized because they are women, Mayan and poor. The political claims that they make have everything to do with who they are. Because of the extent and pervasiveness of the violence of the society in which they live, in/security is an *explicit* organizing principle in the construction of themselves as political subjects. These narratives therefore shed light on the very crucialness of the subject of security being identity and, more specifically, identity construction in all of its complex, hybrid constellations.

In/Security in Global Politics—A Brief Historical Journey

Exploring Mayan women's in/security involves grappling with in/security as it has been defined and conceptualized within the discourses which both govern and attempt to understand global politics. 'Security and Insecurity,' are central and hotly debated concepts in IR theory and policy. Even the authorization to talk about an issue or a body in terms of 'Security' or 'Insecurity' is disputed. Understanding what one means by stating, for instance, that Mayan women are insecure and struggle for security, although apparently easy, becomes difficult once one begins to scratch the surface of the concept and its friction-filled place in thinking about global politics.

Discussions around security have focused primarily on its '*conceptualization*,' while its *definition* has been less of a contested terrain (Hansen, 1995: 12-22). In both the dominant and the alternative discourses, the definition of 'security' is rather unproblematic. Buzan's definition, the "pursuit of freedom from threat," is now perhaps the most widely used and accepted (Buzan, 1991: 18). That security is about threats, danger, and a struggle for safety seems then to be well established.

Roughly speaking, the development of thinking on security can be summarized as follows¹¹: (1) Primarily there has been a set of variations of one central conceptualization of security which stems from an uncritical faith in national sovereignty and a militarization of danger. One could place what is traditionally known as the Idealist-Realists debate under the same umbrella.¹² Currently, this line of thinking is often referred to as the traditional or dominant security discourse. (2) In response as to the state-centered and 'negative military emphasis on security found in mainstream analysis, a so-called 'alternative security discourse' arose.¹³ Theorists and practitioners alike undertook efforts to rethink the source as well as the referent of security. (One could place most peace research on security in this discourse). (3) However, even the 'alternative security discourse' has come under critique for its uncritical acceptance of the basic building blocks of IR. Largely influenced by the post-modernist/post-structuralist movement in the social sciences and humanities, IR theorists have begun exploring the conditions under which the underlying claims of security—in both the dominant and the alternative discourses—are made sustainable. Most of this work has centered around the claims about the primacy of state sovereignty and therewith narrow definition of security embedded in these claims. Recently, many of these theorists have turned their attention to questions of political identity.

Statist In/Security: Mainstream and Alternative Understandings

In traditional IR (dominated by so-called 'realists'), the state is the predominant if not sole recipient and agent of security. 'National' security is viewed in military terms, where security signifies military defense and the strategies designed for this defense. According to this logic, the state does not pose a threat to 'its' people, but, instead is their protector. The 'state' (also a fixed category) therefore enjoys a monopoly over the use of 'legitimate' violence in both the 'domestic' and the international environment. 'National' security is paramount because, as the principle of state sovereignty dictates, states compete in a hostile international system characterized by belligerent

'others.' Danger resides 'outside' the borders of the state in aggressive ambitions of similar, yet significantly different, political bodies, i.e. in other states. *The nation-state is therefore the ultimate target and the agent of security.* Historically, the debate between Idealism and Realism can also be seen as a non-debate. Idealism shared many of the same claims about politics that Realism enjoyed: namely the specific resolution between particularity and universalism offered by state sovereignty (Walker, 1993). They were therefore both based on a common acceptance of state sovereignty as the cornerstone of politics and uncritically accepted as natural the hierarchy of identities it generates. National identity predominates and incorporates all other political identifications; any challenges to its hegemony are thereby waylaid.

The mainstream security discourse and the absolute place of the nation-state in that discourse, however, has been challenged in 'alternative' attempts to include other referent and sources of security into discussions on global politics. Critics of traditional understandings have ruminated over what should be included as referent objects of security (the state?, the individual?, the globe?), what should be included as threats (military attack? human rights abuses? environmental damage? economic dependence?), and what should be considered proper strategy (military deterrence/common security?, intervention?, economic sanctions?). Security has therefore been widened to encompass referent objects other than the state. It has also been deepened to include threats that are non-military which effect different sectors within the state (i.e. the economy) (Wæver, 1993a). Buzan (who can be categorized as both a mainstream and 'alternative' theorist) discussed security in terms of 'levels' of analysis (the individual, national, regional and global levels), although conceding that nation-state security was indeed paramount (Buzan, 1991). Feminist literature succeeded in 'bringing women in' to the discussion on IR Theory and Security Studies; most common were analysis which drew connections between nation-state security (militarization) and women's insecurity, and the 'masculinity' of traditional security thinking.¹⁴

This 'alternative security' discourse provided the impetus to look beyond the nation-state and towards other referent objects: women and peoples of marginalized groups—people who were not only left out of the discussions of mainstream security, but also threatened by the very state which was supposed to protect them. Given this widening of 'Security,' is it then possible to use the tools developed in the 'Alternative security discourse' to discover what security meant for Mayan women and then add it to the incomplete picture of IR?

Security, according to such 'alternative' critiques, is still considered a thing which could be applied to different objects, and procured by different agents. Questions revolved around, 'who should be secured from what?' Questions such as 'Who it was who was threatening?' and 'who should be doing the securing?,' however, were less prevalent (although present in most feminist writings). Furthermore, inquiries into the core of security—its history, ontology and use in different economies of power remain mostly unasked—as did questions around identity and context.¹⁵

The 'levels' of analysis approach developed by Buzan, although arguably more inclusive than a focus solely on the state, sustains an understanding of global politics as something that can be relatively neatly divided into separate levels. These levels are arranged in a hierarchical order and always subject to the predominance of the state. Such an approach misses reflecting the complexity of the many intersecting power relations which place people in different positions in different

contexts. The world is simply more messy than Buzan would like us to believe. Furthermore, clearly (as Buzan also concedes) these levels are interrelated and interdependent. Focusing on one analytical level, such as the individual, allows us to cast a blind eye to the ways in which individuals are effected by—and even constructed in relation to—actors, relations, and institutions at other ‘levels, and *visa versa*. Mayan women’s security, for example, is informed by relations in the family/community, racism from Ladinos, the political claims of the Mayan pueblo, Guatemala’s national security policy (which, in turn, is highly determined by which individuals are in power,) the current IPE climate, US policy (with all of its ‘internal’ power politics), and religious groups in California.

The levels of analysis approach also misleads us into thinking that one can talk about, for instance, individual security as if it were an identifiable static thing that reflects the experiences and desires of all people in all contexts. Feminist analysis has asked the questions: ‘which individuals, in which contexts?,’ and have disclosed security as a gendered construct which disregards many women’s experiences. The category ‘individual’ becomes even more unstable when one begins to ask questions around identity. Attempting to address Mayan women’s in/security through the lenses provided by, for example, the concept of ‘individual security’ becomes therefore highly problematic.

Critical IR: Rethinking the ‘Subject’ of In/Security

A more fundamentally critical discussion grounded in philosophical questions and inspired by post-structuralist, post-modernist thinking bring to the fore a metatheoretical conversation in which ontological assumptions and the epistemology of security studies came under consideration (Hansen, 1995). Attention to the textual politics of security, and an emphasis on the interrelations between identity/subjectivity and in/security have provided useful insights into the very contingency of security. So-called ‘Post-structuralist’ and ‘post modern-feminist’ writings highlighted the problems of just ‘adding’ women, or just ‘adding an ethnic group,’ to the equation that has been sculpted out of nation-security.¹⁶ In attempts to re-think or un-pack security, simply adding different or new variables without questioning the history of the concept and practice of security in IR theory, as well as in the world of policy, risks repeating the logic of (realist) nation-state security—a logic which has led to much violence and harm. Several scholars have emphasized the eminence of political identity and the centrality of discourse in thinking—and re-thinking—security.¹⁷

Wæver, for instance, claims that security has two meanings, an everyday one and one that has been crafted in the specific discourse of IR—and is thus limited to the ‘nation-state’ security (Wæver, 1993a: 4). He explains that there is a difference between the abstract ‘everyday’ idea of security, which is an un-analytical term, and the concept of security as it has been written in IR theory and practice. The everyday meaning of security signifies “being safe, secure, not threatened” The label ‘security,’ on the other hand, “has become the indicator of a specific problematic...it is historically the field where states threaten each other, challenge sovereignties, try to impose their will on others, defend their independence.” He states that security therefore does not have “an independent, stable, context free meaning.” The everyday meaning can not just be applied to the nation state, but instead nation-state security means the *specific* conversation within IR theory and

practice. He explains that one remains outside of IR Theory—and within “another language game”—if one does not engage security from ‘within the discourse,’ meaning that the formalized referent object of security must remain the nation-state (Wæver, 1993a: 4).¹⁸

Wæver therefore criticizes the alternative security discourse for ‘infinitely expanding the concept’ and for reifying security and having it mean ‘all that is politically good’ (Wæver, 1993a: 2). Security in these alternative definitions and conceptualizations, he explains, becomes something ‘true,’ universal—pre textual, and thus outside of the security discourse. These critiques, therefore have little, if any, bearing on the security of IR theory and politics. Wæver suggests, then, that security is a *speech act*, uttered by official representatives of the state and in reference to nation-state security.¹⁹ It can only be defined and conceived *within* this discourse; there is no security outside of this discourse. He defines a security problem rather narrowly, saying that:

Security problems...can undercut the political order and thereby ‘alter the premises for all other questions’—therefore they have to be addressed before all other questions because if they are not, there will not be any other questions because the unit will cease to exist (as a sovereign unit) (Wæver, 1993a: 5).

By Naming a certain development a security problem, the ‘state’ claims a special right {...}a right which will in the final instance always be defined by the one using it. {...}Power holders can always use the instrument of securitization; by definition a problem is a security problem when they declare it to be (Wæver, 1993a: 7).

Furthermore, Wæver questions the positive value assigned ‘security,’ stating that, because of its status as a tool of language, it does not have a value of its own. Instead of striving for security (which inherently implies insecurity) one should struggle for de-securitizing an issue, for a-securitization (Wæver, 1993a: 8).

Like Wæver, I found that the attention to ‘alternative security’ has not adequately provided a framework for understanding security. However, I have found his focus on the state as the referent and agent of security limiting, especially since I am interested in how in/security is constituted for people whose political subjectivity resides in spheres other than the nation-state. Much feminist work stresses that IR takes its starting point from a site which ignores or “evacuates” women and highlights the value of insights that can be gained from re-thinking both practice and theory from the perspective of women and their lives, work, fears, etc (Sylvester, 1994).²⁰ Learning from this body of work, I deem it important to look at ‘Security’ *starting from* the political site of ‘Mayan-women.’ Furthermore, the relationship between politics and identity in his analysis remains too narrow to seriously take into account the security of peoples who do not identify with the state—people who are often marginalized by statist discourses. Wæver draws a distinction between political issues and security issues, whereby security issues remain the domain of the official spokespeople of the state.²¹ This distinction reinforces the hierarchy of identities established by the dominance of state sovereignty and thereby silences Mayan women. Nonetheless, Wæver’s emphasis on in/security—the speech act—as constructed within discourse helps discharge the idea of security

as a thing which can be applied to different bodies at different times.

In/Security-Identity

Given the centrality of the significance of identity in the experiences of insecurity and struggles for security articulated by Mayan-women, questions regarding the dynamic relationship between political identity and in/security demand attention. Peterson questions, for instance: “through what identity do we seek security?” (Peterson, 1992: 53).

Many of the so-called post structuralist writings offer insightful inquiries into the crucial place of political identity in IR theory generally, and in the concept of in/security more specifically. Much of this work, in turn, revolves around the hegemony of the principle of state sovereignty. R.B.J. Walker, for instance, explains that the principle of state sovereignty has become the basic language which expresses other defining principles of political life, such as security and democracy. Although clearly marginalized, the site Mayan-woman does not occupy a place ‘outside’ (nor does it reside purely and unscathed above) the masculine-dominated discourse of nation-state security. It is a site which includes relations to the Guatemalan nation-state, as well as to a myriad other factors such as *Ladino* society, and to ‘men.’ Mayan women’s security discourse is also constructed out of the dominate understanding of politics built into the nation-state system. Hence, not only are their experiences of insecurity and struggles for security informed by the specific political context of the Guatemalan state, but their narratives are constructed in relation to dominant understandings of what is politically possible.

The particular organization of political community offered by state sovereignty therefore defines the parameters of legitimate claims to political identity and sculpts the meanings we give to other social identities (Walker, 1993: 161, 173). In the current world order(s), the globalization of capital and even identity pose grave challenges to the hegemony of the principle of state-sovereignty; despite these provocations, the principle endures. What David Campbell calls the “sovereignty paradigm” continues to order politics and notions of both political identity and security.²² Sovereignty therefore offers a helpful starting point for addressing questions around security and identity. How does faith in a sovereign subject and the articulation of identity politics become a means for *both securing and in-securing* people in respect to who they are as political subjects? Unfortunately, there has been little work which examines how the hegemony of state sovereignty—and faith in a sovereign subject more generally—becomes manifested in identity politics in marginalized sites, such as Mayan women. In this sense, one could criticize the critics of statist discourses for being state-centric themselves. Nonetheless, many insights which are helpful in devising a methodology for studying Mayan women’s in/security can be drawn from so called ‘post-structuralist’ critiques of security and its relationship to sovereignty.

G.M. Dillon draws our attention to how danger, fear and threat are employed in power discourses to secure sovereign identities and to imperil identities which challenge the sovereign subject’s hegemony. He describes the power/knowledge mechanisms which ensure sovereignty by “legislat(ing) fear; shaped, disciplined, and civilized by authorized articulations of danger” as an “*in/security discourse*” (Dillon, 1990-91: 108). He explains that this discourse is a self-securing

process which constitutes legitimate political subjectivities. Through maintaining the exclusive rights to define the 'enemy'—who is within the realm of politics and who is outside—the principle of state sovereignty controls the definitions of danger. Therefore, the primacy of the state, and the definition of what 'stateness' means *vis a vis* other states (and *vis a vis* the people and institutions which make up the state) are also assured through what Dillon calls the "in/security discourse." As is the meaning of the Other.

According to Dillon, within the in/security discourse, norms of identity are created through the decision of who/what is excluded. "Sovereignty is the power to invest all circumstances with threat" (Dillon, 1990-91: 108). *A particular community maintains its salience from the perpetual need to protect itself from different, challenging orders; notions of threat and survival can become the legitimizing reason for sustaining the order, and can even be seen as constructing the order.* The prevailing order/discourse of in/security rests on a hierarchy of identities where the nation-state and the individual (read: propertied man) in contract with the nation state are seen as rational and legitimate political subjects. The hegemony of the state—and the invested definition of man/citizen—is thus perpetuated.

The mechanisms of state sovereignty therefore also locate danger 'inside' the community which challenges the 'internal' universality of the political identity of the state. Danger can be found in ulterior expressions and interpretations of political subjectivity (such as claims to class, ethnic, gender, race, sexual identity). Such ulterior identity claims are perceived to undermine the necessary monopoly over identity held by state nationalism (Campbell, 1992: 71). Hence, despite what might be a 'weak' or 'failing' project (such as is arguably the case in Guatemala), the need to create a homogenous and overriding national political identity supersedes all other claims to political identity.

David Campbell explains that by "telling us what to fear," the operations of "discourses of danger" have been able to "fix where we are" and even who we are (Campbell, 1992: 195). Campbell explains the workings of discourses of danger and "in/security" by exploring alternative narratives about US foreign policy. He describes foreign policy as:

all practices of differentiation or modes of exclusion (possibly figured as relationships of otherness) which constitute their objects as 'foreign' in the process of dealing with them. {...} {It} applies to confrontations between self and other located in different sites of ethnicity, race, class, gender, or geography (Campbell, 1992: 76).

The construction of the 'foreign' is made possible by practices that also constitute the 'domestic.' {...} one of a range of practices that make up the discourses of danger which serve as 'art of domesticating the meaning of man by constructing his problems, his dangers, his fears' (Campbell, 1992: 69).

Hence, regulatory practices of locating and naming danger externally in the Other tame and discipline the 'self.' Dominant claims to identity act as what Butler terms a "normative ideal instead

of a descriptive feature of experience” (Butler, 1990: 16). Members of a collective expect and are expected to adhere to these norms for they become internalized in the workings of society and in the world view of individuals. Power—both capillary power, and overt force—ensure the coherence of the dominant identity by making precautionary examples out of the danger of deviance (Foucault, 1980: 78-133). Danger, therefore, resides in any threat to the coherence of identity. When a nation (ethnic group, or other collective identity category) is threatened from the ‘outside,’ coherence becomes even more crucial for group survival (for the security of the sovereign subject); deviance from the norm is then often considered apostasy.

One of the ironies in Campbell’s ‘foreign policy’ is that the regulative practices of the discourses of in/security and danger compose both a necessary complement *and* a menace to the dominant identity in the forming of an Other. This point is particularly salient for understanding how Guatemala’s national security policy has constructed the Mayan pueblo (and Mayan women) as Other and *visa versa*; and how both Guatemala’s and Mayan women’s discourses of in/security-identity are deeply implicated in each other. Connolly remarks that if difference and the drive to identity are inevitable, and if the claim to a natural or true identity is always an exaggeration, then:

a powerful identity will strive to constitute a range of differences as *intrinsically* evil—as other. It does so in order to secure itself as intrinsically good, coherent, complete, or rational and in order to protect itself from that other that would unravel its self-certainty and capacity for collective mobilization if it established its legitimacy. This constellation of constructed others now becomes both essential to the truth of the powerful identity and a threat to it. The threat is posed not merely by *actions* the other might take to injure or defeat the true identity but by the very visibility of its mode of *being* as other (Connolly, 1991: 65-66).

Parker et al. explore this duplicity, emphasizing how the formation of national identity relies on binary oppositional categorizations—the creation of the self of the nation in relation to the others who are not us.

Like gender—nationality is a relational term whose identity derives from its inherence in a system of differences. In the same way that ‘man and woman’ define themselves reciprocally (though never symmetrically) national identity is determined not on the basis of its own intrinsic properties, but as a function of what it (presumably) is not. Implying ‘some element of alterity for its definition’ a nation is ineluctably shaped by what it opposes (1992: 5).

Feminist theorists have also sought to un-pack the concept of ‘security’ in IR and in the world of policy. They have rendered explicit how constructions of security in Western political theory and policy have been gendered and how gender is deeply implicated in the way in which particular bodies experience and execute threat and violence.²³ Christine Sylvester repeats Germain Greer’s statements: “security is a chimera” (Germain Greer), and goes on to explain, “there simply

can be no coherent statement inscription or morality that makes the definitive home, covers all the contingencies of contingent existence, and thereby ends insecurity. Security is always partial and therefore strategy is always, as a result, somewhat undecidable” (Sylvester, 1994: 183).

Feminist theorists have also drawn attention to how ‘discourses of danger’ depend upon certain articulations of gender identity. For instance, in writing about the Gulf war, Cynthia Enloe explains how gender underpins militarization in the process of nation-building and national security by showing the ‘commingling’ of militarization, masculinity, and security among marine soldiers (Enloe, 1993: 199). Feminist theorists have also underscored how different ‘discourses of danger,’ such as those that regulate the meaning and articulation of national identity, ethnic identity, and gender identity, work together.²⁴ These discourses thus create hybrid in/securities, as well as hybrid identities.

Hence, although extremely important work has been done in the field of security studies in expanding the concept of security to encompass aspirations for equality, justice, and peace—and in effectively challenging the sovereignty of the nation-state—security (generally) continues to be treated as a fixed, gender neutral, and universal concept—a concept reliant upon a sovereign (masculine) subject; it therefore remains the domain of those at the top of national, gender, class and racial hierarchies. Theorists who have steered the course of security studies away from blindly accepting the natural essence of a conception of in/security which follows the logic of nation-state security have cleared space for addressing the contingency and hybridity of in/security-identity and its construction in contesting discourses.

In/Security as a Discursive Practice: Reading Mayan Women's Narratives

As noted above, many politically active Mayan women in Guatemala explain that they are “triplely oppressed: they are Mayan, women, and poor.” In this statement, the speaker is specifying the different power relations/discourses/systems that oppress them, such as particular articulations of nationalism, racism, sexism. Perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this article, these women are naming the identities inscribed by these relations, including their struggles of resistance. To ask what in/security means for these people must also involve—at the very least—asking what in/security means in terms of the identities they locate and name. It also means exploring the interwoven systems of power relations which inform their lives. Focusing on political identity becomes especially salient when one takes into account that their struggles are explicitly articulated in terms of identity, as witnessed in the central role the Accord on the Rights and Identity of the Mayan Pueblo has played in the formulation of Mayan claims in the peace process. I have therefore chosen to center my inquiry on the interrelationship between in/security and political identity. I conceive of political identity as a process of constant re-constructions which depends on the establishment of both a Self (We/similarity) and an Other (Them/difference) partially through ‘discourses of danger.’²⁵ Exploring in/security to/for Mayan women therefore has also involved exploring their processes of politicization.

Because I view in/security as a discursive practice, I have centered my research around the

discourse of 18 politically active Mayan women in contemporary Guatemala. I asked the people whom I interviewed to tell me about their struggles as Mayan women; to tell me their partial life story around this theme.²⁶ My inquiry is therefore limited to the study of in/security as it is inscribed within the narratives I ‘collected’ while in Guatemala.

What is a Narrative?

I have focused the processes of in/security-identity construction and what one can learn from them in the narratives of 18 Mayan women. My ambitions are not to speak *for* Mayan women or to generalize from them but to pose some questions around in/security-identity from reading their narratives as valid texts of global politics.

Like all narratives, life story (or partial life story, as in my case) narratives can be seen as ‘meaning-constructing activities,’ instead of ‘meaning preserving’ ones. When one constructs a (semi)coherent story, certain meaning is imposed on the series of events and their connections. This meaning emerges through the act of narrating; it does not exist as some sort of pre-determined mold into which the events are poured. This is not to claim that the events did not mean certain things when they were experienced. However, the process of making connections, of developing a plot (or many plots) in a narrative of one’s life, fashions new meanings to these events—meanings that make sense within that narrative. The spoken story must also be seen as an act of writing—and therewith invention—of not only the narrative, but also of the self as: character in narrative (textualized subject), and narrator. This story is constructed within many different relations of power. The (at least) four part cacophony of the story is fashioned by the discourses of power that: governed political life in Guatemala over the period of the narrators’ lives; framed the particular moment of the telling of their story; placed me as a white-North American-privileged-academic in the position of ‘researcher’ and the narrators in the position of ‘researched.’²⁷

The narratives of the Mayan women whom I have interviewed are stories of the development of these persons’ political consciousness: how they make sense of their past and how they have come to be who they are at the time of the interview.²⁸ The texts give a personal account of the narrators’ process of politicization. I therefore read them as stories of the construction of the political identity: ‘Mayan-women.’ These personal accounts, however, are motivated by specific political goals; they smudge the lines between individual and collective subjectivities. Often, the narrators write their personal experiences into the collective story of oppression of the Mayan people—a story of over 500 years of Mayan generations together living one long life of suffering and revolution. They are therefore explicitly political (and may be classifiable as ‘Resistance or Testimonial Literature.’)

The story the narrators tell constitute a counter-hegemonic move against the violent totalitarianism of the Guatemalan state racism, as well as, in some cases, an act of resistance against sexism both within their communities and in society at large. They may also be an attempt to validate their struggles in a global context. Memory within the narratives is then contingent on the present—in fact constructed in the moment, and thus also subject to the power of discourse. Writing on memory and totalitarianism, Passerini explains that:

Remembering has to be conceived as a highly inter-subjective relationship... Memory is the tool we have in order to give meaning to our lives, if we understand it in the sense of an inter-subjective (or inter-human) word that connects different generations, times, and places (Passerini, 1992: 2).

Hence memory (and thus remembered stories) are as much a part of the present as they are a part of the past. They are also shaped by expectations for the future (Passerini, 1992: 12). A life story is therefore not one story based on a string of memories that depict 'reality' as it was experienced by the individual at the time. The memory of these experiences is constantly re-constructed out of the context and the telling.

Different subjectivities act in different contexts: the textualized subject is related, but different from the narrating one. The narrative was decided (in part) by what the narrators included, excluded, as well as what they wanted *me* to know, what they wanted me to tell *other people*, who these other people are, as well as what they *did not* want me to know. Safety concerns, personal trust, as well as political aims were all significant factors in the construction of their stories. A focus on the constructed character of stories, or lives, does not deny that people *really* live, experience threat and harm, or safety and well-being, to disclaim that this were so would be silly. "...The stories people tell are not only about their lives but also part of their lives....What is told and what is lived promote each other" (Ochberg, 1992). We act, experience and live, but the *meaning* we give to our actions is continually constructed. Similarly, a political self can be-reconstructed or re-inscribed through the narrative. *In/security becomes a discursive practice in this process*. Nevertheless, a textual treatment of in/security is not intended to preclude attention to, or to call into question, the very real terror and danger that Mayan-women experience!

Reading In/security in Mayan Women's Narratives

Focusing on the narratives of Mayan women, and attempting to understand in/security in terms of this particular political identity remains a problematic task. As indicated above, any strict, predetermined definition of security which includes an assigned referent object and subject (e.g. 'nation-state, or 'individual') pose theoretical limitations to a study of in/security-identity that does not directly adhere to the dictates of state sovereignty, such as is the case with Mayan women. My intention is therefore to explore other forms of connections between subjectivity, security and indeed sovereignty—all of which depict alternative forms of politics. Through reading Mayan women's narratives in terms of security, I aim to highlight the gap between the constructions of security that are linked to national identity and those in marginal sites, as well as the violence that occurs in these gaps. Yet I also find that the very pervasiveness of dominant understandings of politics (i.e. the need for a cohesive sovereign subject in the face of threat and danger) can be seen in repetitions of many of the same processes of inclusion/exclusion in marginal sites.

Specifically, when reading the narratives I focus on the following sets of questions: (1) In what ways are definitions of in/security tied to the identities of the narrator? What is the relationship between marginal constructions of in/security-identity and the state's attempts at monopolizing the

definition of in/security-identity? What forms of violence are involved in the marginalization and silencing of other identity-security solutions? (2) Given that I believe that the meanings of security are contested and always being reconstructed, I explore the process of defining in/security for an emerging political identity (Mayan women) which is vying for political space. What are the tools used in determining their in/security? How is naming in/security an integral part of the construction of identities?

For example, many of the narratives addressed the highly sexualized form of violent militarism informing Guatemala's counter-insurgency tactics. The state/army mobilized particular versions of idealized and violent masculinities (i.e. the macho soldier) in order to secure a (masculinized) national identity in the face of what they considered dangerous challenges to national unity. According to many of the narratives, the army and (perhaps even more so) patrollers routinely used rape and sexual harassment as a way of demonstrating their power and 'disciplining' wayward citizens. Embedded in these tactics were strict definitions of what was and wasn't acceptable for men and women to do and be. Transgressions outside of these gendered roles became seen also as subversive acts against the state.

Many of the narrators explain instances of sexual abuse and sexism in their narratives by distinguishing between Us/them. They draw both explicit and implicit connections between sexism, classism, racism, and the violent nationalism of the counter-insurgency state. They explain how these forms of oppression were deeply implicated in the violence against the indigenous and peasant populations—and against women specifically. Hence, the narrators underscore that in addition to direct genocide and ethnocide, sexism, racism, classism and nationalism, and the way they worked together, threatened the indigenous communities in sometimes less directly brutal, but perhaps more insidious ways. They also definitively specify who deserves the blame (the army/state), even when those who are causing the direct harm are members of their own community.²⁹ They thus establish themselves as political subjects in resistance to these tactics.

For example, the theme of indoctrination/*Ladinoization*³⁰ in the military looms large in the narratives, especially in explaining the altered behavior of boys from the communities who participated in the army and the PACs. According to the narratives, joining the army poses not only a threat to the boys, for they risk being killed, and to the community, because the army gains more manpower and robs them of their male youths, but it also poses a threat to the community because the boys become effectively 'brainwashed.' The 'enemy' enters into their heads. They are forced to do terrible things, and soon they become terrible themselves, becoming the tools of the army/state's ambition to divide and destroy the Mayan pueblo. The boys—the future generation of the Mayan communities—are then lost to the community and to themselves. They are divorced from their 'roots,' yet they are not accepted into racist Ladino society. One narrator explains, for example: "I have some friends who were there in the army. They said to them: go there and take advantage of what you can, they left then the freedom to do all that they could, so an order, a mentality already formed and it was valued..." ("Maria," born 1971)).

By "freedom to do all that they could" she alludes to the soldiers taking advantage of their powerful situation to rape the women in the communities. The soldiers 'learned' a mentality that was not originally theirs because it was encouraged (even forced) and valued within the context of the

army. Another narrator talks even more directly about how young boys from the community become vessels of (sexualized) violence through their experiences in the army and PACs:

{The boys} they are 12, or 14 years when they join the patrols...some people do not want to patrol because they know that it is not good and how before there were no patrols and no army and things were good. There were massacres and they began to discriminate against the woman... Now it does not make a man afraid to kill a woman, his wife or his daughter for motives of this [his experiences in the army], for the motives of the arms in his hands.. 'Carmen' (born 1978).

She distinguishes between the time before “when things were good” and now when they are “not good.” Her distinction resonates with a common theme which runs through the narratives: The narrators refer to the harmonious community with a cohesive identity that is ruptured by the Violence. In their narratives (and through their telling) the narrators' political identities emerge in relation to what the army was threatening: an ‘I’ and ‘we’ form out of the descriptions of the valued life that was under attack. Images of a longed-for sphere which exists somehow apart from the state thus underscore the violence and harm inflicted by the army in relation to the harmony that would otherwise reign. (These images of family and community life are then elsewhere complicated by accounts of gender oppression within the family-community.) Ironically, this harmonious vision of family-community life may also be shared by the army—enough so that it is a threat to and therefore warrants attack by the state.

In the above citation, Carmen explains how the violence enters into the families and the homes of the Mayan peoples and violates the sacred, intimate relationships that bond the family together. The boys/men lose respect for the women of the family/community—respect that serves as glue for the maintenance and transmission of the Mayan identity. (Women's role as sources, defense lines, and transmitters of the Mayan identity has been lauded in recent public articulations of Mayan identity, including the 1995 Accord). ‘Foreign’ sexism coupled with racism therefore endangers the very identity of the Mayan pueblo.

Another narrator elaborates this point. She explains, for example, that she knows of several cases where young indigenous boys (after being in the military) felt superior to and even depreciated the cultural values of their own family. “I know a lot of youths who, when they return, don't want their mother to show herself in her *corte* with her typical *traje* because this is poorly looked upon.”³¹ The gendered, racist ideology of the military was incorporated by the boys and turned inward to the holiest of spheres of the Mayan community: the family—and in particular, against their mothers. The boys political subjectivity, crafted in the military institution, in many cases collided with the identities fostered in their homes (and often, in relation to the threatening political subjectivity of the state/military.) The boys became then a threat not only against their mothers, but against the whole community.

Another narrator develops this theme one step further, specifically naming the identities that are endangered through the army's process of indoctrination:

the army is [made up of] sons of the Mayas...Sons of the rich? No. Our own brothers they gather up, they recruit and bring to service and there they give them the education which is contradictory to the one which we have...Brain washing and creating another mentality...makes the youths believe that when they arrive at their community, they should devalue even their own people, their family...It is a problem because it creates conflict in families...to the point where [boys] are able to kill their own parents for being indigenous and if not [killing them] they are ashamed when their poor mother walks behind them because she is seen as a woman who is not worth anything, not only for her condition of being a woman, but also for being indigenous...She is rejected by her own son...this is what the government wants with this, to create a division between our own parents and children...Its a strategy which the government is employing...to not let us realize the larger problems which we have — ‘Clara’ (born 1968).

In this description, she draws attention the identity of the boys when they are “gathered up” and recruited. Her view of their identity after they have been “brainwashed” becomes a bit more ambiguous. One could surmise from the tenor of her description that the boys lose their connection to their fathers and mothers (both figuratively and literally); they become disconnected to their ‘roots.’ They receive a different education from them than from us. She also defines the ways in which the woman/mother is harmed by her returning sons: for her “condition of being a woman, but also for being indigenous.” Put in more theoretical terms: her gender-ethnic identity comes under attack. Through defining the identities that are threatened and those that threaten, as well as the nature of the threats, she, as the narrator, establishes her own political subjectivity. She sculpts who she is, in part, out of identifying these experiences of in/security.

I therefore do not depend upon a fixed definition of in/security to understand Mayan women’s narratives in terms of in/security. Instead, I hope to better learn what in/security means within the grammar of their narratives. Yet, one still needs a way to identify when the narratives are relevant in terms of security, especially since the narrators do not talk about security per se, except in a very narrow sense. The word ‘security’ (*seguridad*) often means freedom from the threat of the state/military/death squads; that they ‘leave us in peace.’ The word ‘threat’ (*amenaza*) is often used to connote specific and physical danger having to do with life and death which has a definite source (e.g. the death squads). One narrator explained, for instance, “No, I have not received any threats this past month.” I however, choose to read security in broader strokes in order to better understand the questions stated above.

How, then, do I address security in their narratives without falling into the trap of employing a fixed or essentialized definition of in/security and thereby inhibiting other understandings of in/security to emerge from the text? When looking at other security discourses, such as the dominant and alternative ones in IR, one can discern that *insecurity has to do with danger, threat, harm, and the peril involved with change and openness. The security of someone/thing refers to its safety, its well-being as well as to its limitation, its stability in order to assure its safety.* I accept this broad definition of security as a working modality, for these are also organizing terms/principles in the

Mayan women's text. (This modality has been refined through learning from the narratives as well as looking closely at other discourses of in/security).³² Furthermore, there is little point in talking about Mayan women's in/security if there is no basic common reference point between meanings of security.

However, I reject the supposition that the referent objects, the sources and the specific content of in/security exist outside of specific discourses. As Crawford and Lipchutz state, "what does the term security mean? The answer quite clearly depends on the object to which the condition refers" (Krause and Williams, 1997: 151). I have therefore defined in/security in the broadest terms and left the assignment of referent objects, agents, recipients, etc. to be determined by the texts formed within Mayan women's discourse.³³

For example, in analyzing the spatio-temporal context, *Ladino Society*, I read the subsequent citations in the following manner:

We are discriminated because of our *{traditional dress}*...we have suffered without education or 'development.' This is the difference between Mayans and *Ladinos*.{...} We haven't had the right to vote, to elect our own authorities...The majority of us are illiterate, we have no 'development..'yes, we have the same rights...as a *Ladina* woman...but we've never been given an opportunity — "Andrea" (born 1970).

Its a big shock when one is told—'no, no its because you are an *India*.' It hurts....When I learned the history of the invasion it hurt — "Rosa" (born 1956).

Ladinos are looking for their identity, but they are not going to find it...we can identify ourselves as Mayans...we have made forums and meetings to identify ourselves because we don't want confusion that we are the Mayans — "Andrea"

In each of the texts the narrators focus on their experiences of discrimination and marginalization, expressing the pain they felt as subjugated persons in hierarchical relations of power and resources—pain that can be traced back to their ancestors 500 years ago. The narrators also explained how their subordinate positions hinder them (as textualized subjects) from critical necessities in Guatemala's modern society: fluency in the language of power, education, health care, etc. They depict a hierarchical relationship where *Ladinos* enjoy access to resources, power, opportunities to better their situation, and Mayans are marginalized, handicapped, discriminated against. In the last quotation, Andrea also struggles to reject and subvert the power relations which render her subordinate. She seeks security in constructing a new political identity, in resistance—in part—to the inherited identities dictated by racism. This political identity is imbedded in a collective movement for (re)construction and "re-vindication" of a group identity that spans centuries. In recollecting these memories of insecurity, the narrator, as a political subject, establishes her political identity, as well as the specific political projects (for safety and security) in which she is engaged: namely respect for their difference and the rights that this respect bears.

In/security in these narratives can be seen as the foundation for the establishment of political

subjects. Experiences of violence and victimization are transvalued to become the skeletons of a political identity, and the legitimization for the making of certain political claims. Through the ‘fact’ of being threatened by, for example, the Guatemalan army and their ancestors, the Spanish, the narrators establish themselves in resistance—and as righteous political subjects.³⁴

One narrator, for example, talks about her process of politicization as a turning point, a gaining of “clarity,” and a connecting of her experiences to those of the collective. She describes, in detail, the injustices against Mayan women, as well as the reasons why Mayan women should be re-vindicated, drawing upon the myths surrounding the history of the Mayan *pueblo*. She (re)interprets her experiences and places them in the context of Mayan women throughout history, as ever sacrificing and resisting. In so doing she also defines who she is in relation to those who threaten her today, such as the military, the state, and men, as well as her enemies of the past, the Spanish (who become easily interchanged with their descendants: the *Ladinos*.)

So, my consciousness was born there {in the jungle and the CPR's } and its not correct when they tell us today that we are not worth anything that we don't have any participation in the society, in the development of Guatemala...the same situation that I have experienced since I was a child up until today has made me have this consciousness to rise up as women to guard our heritage, to guard our sacrifices, these pains that we have had and that I have had when I felt this situation. Always the female elders said that our grandmothers were like this, our ancestors, when the Spanish came here to Guatemala, when they came to invade, our grandparents were burned, were tortured, were burned alive. All the books where they had their scriptures were burned...in this sense I understood, I understood the situation which they talked about when I had to live it. So I came to appreciate the elders because it is they who know more of the culture, how we have been for 500 years...for me its painful that we have not {only} been suffering for 10, 15 years, but we have resisted for 500 years. — “Andrea”

She thus establishes her political identity, places it in the context of her past, and fixes it as a timeless given. She thereby establishes for herself (and her textualized subject) a stable base for resistance which rests upon the heritage of over 500 years. However, her need to maintain cohesion in the face of external threat seems to have led to a certain circumscribing—in relation to her recollections of the past—of the identity categories upon which claims for change are being made. Security/safety may then necessarily involve cautiously defining and limiting who she is in the many different power relations which affect her life, as well as carefully weaving a direct life-line to a certain and linear history to which she belongs.

Treating in/security as a construction site of political identities, whereby in writing in/security, the subjects write themselves, their histories, and their visions of a better future (a more ‘secure’ world), indicates the political and contingent nature of the assignment of threat and danger, as well as safety and well-being. In/security thus can be seen as an ontological yet contingent condition of identity, (hence, the term: in/security-identity).³⁵ This rings true not only for

'marginalized' in/securities, but also those perceived as given or 'objective' such as national security. Guatemala's national security discourse has defined Mayan-woman as dangerous threats to national identity, constructing a hegemonic national subjectivity based, in part, on the exclusion and fear of contesting political identities; similarly, the political identity 'Mayan-women' is constructed in relation to the assignment of those who threaten, namely, the Guatemalan government/military, *Ladino* society, men, etc.

Mayan-Women's In/security Discourse

In doing research of any kind, and, in particular, research *on* others, there is always the problem of a starting point. Feminist literature has taught me the importance of theorizing from women's lives, of not fitting women or other marginalized groups and their experiences into the already formed molds of IR theory. One can learn surprising things, and disrupt existing theories that purport to explain 'reality' from grounding an inquiry in an 'empirical' material that is otherwise silenced or 'evacuated' from the authorized subjects of research.

The Researcher as Writer

Since I conceive of in/security as a discursive practice that is intimately bound with identity, what role do I—the researcher—play in the production of the text, and therefore in the inscribing of Mayan-women's in/security? In the specifically choreographed physical research process itself, *at least* four different subjects co-author the text being recorded on my tape: (1) the narrator, (2) myself—the 'researcher,' (3) the anticipated audience in the eyes of the narrator, as well as (4) the anticipated audience in my (researcher's) eyes.³⁶ As I briefly explained above, the narrator obviously crafts her text out of a myriad of discourses. In addition, my stated research goals, guiding questions, silent presence, and encouraging smiles all surely frame her story (Gluck and Patai, 1991: 28). This frame guides her narrative in distinct directions, as does who she thinks I am and what I may represent to her. Furthermore, those who narrate their life stories often speak to a specific audience, such as an international community which may have funds for her organization.

Because I deem it fruitful to focus my research on Mayan women's political discourse, how should I treat to the 'product' of the interview: the narrative? Should, for example, the text 'speak for itself,' as is proposed in much 'resistance' and feminist literature? What are my ethical obligations as researcher towards the people whose stories I am using, and towards the integrity of the texts themselves? These questions become increasingly salient given that I entertain a specific purpose besides 'publicizing and 'giving voice' to otherwise marginalized voices. I have already decided the important areas of interest—and have superimposed my conceptualizations of in/security on the text and am therefore less open to the knowledge imbedded in the stories which lie 'outside' my area of interest. Furthermore, the narrators do not generally speak of 'security' per se; I interpret their words according to the modality of in/security I described above.

One way of dealing with the seemingly irresolvable puzzle of authority over the text is to acknowledge that I have co-authored the text, but to not belittle the sense of ownership that the narrators feel over their story. Through the interview process, I attempted to hold my theoretical framework in abeyance, at least in the writing of the text, so that the narrators would feel represented by the narrative.³⁷ I found this to be both a valuable effort, and also impossible. I believe I succeeded in most cases in co-creating a text that the narrators stand for as *their* story. *This is important, at the very least, for the ethical responsibility of conducting such research. It also lends credibility to the effort of understanding in/security-identity in the site 'Mayan women.'* However, I was unable (and unwilling) to shuck my own perspective, and intellectual analysis of the narrative as it unfolded; this surely guided the telling of the story, no matter how silent I strove to be. The narratives—like all texts, including Guatemala's official security discourse—are therefore indisputably at least a joint production.

How then does one responsibly read such a narrative--or any narrative-- in a way that is relevant for understanding global politics? It is clear that "no one reads from a neutral and final position." Culture, subjectivity, and the narratives that structure and give meaning to peoples lives "do not stand still for their portraits" (Clifford, 1986: 18, 10). The way I read (and then write about) Mayan-women's experiences of security and identity will offer only one reading. This reading will hopefully not be an arbitrary reading--or one borne *only* out of a pre-configured frame of reference. Nor, however, will it be a representative reading of 'Security and How It is Experienced by the Contemporary Identity of 'Mayan-Woman' or the reading that Mayan-Women, themselves, might make.

Yet, the very act of placing these (contingent) texts in the context of thinking about in/security shed light on the contingency of accepted descriptions of 'reality.' It also highlights lacunas in existing theory: how can it be that these experiences are not included in a conceptualization of in/security that—ultimately—is about people? In this sense, a 'feminist empiricist' stance, which brings silenced voices into the (vicinity) of the center, disrupts hegemonic discourses. For example, in instances where the narrative is about marginalized experiences and lives, it constitutes a political act which can challenge dominant and oppressive readings of these lives. The narrative, although partial and contingent, may serve to destabilize hegemonic and homogenizing discourses by calling attention to difference. In more concrete terms, this may mean, for example, that a narrative which maps the politicization of an 'ancient' Mayan identity and discredits the Guatemalan military's assertions that the Mayan claims to political identity are dangerous subversive ploys, effectively challenges the military/state's monopoly over 'reality' and over in/security. The 'Mayan' narrative challenges the notion that difference is only deviance, and celebrates 'difference' as a viable political alternative.

Yet, as Rabinow explains, such narratives risk reifying the 'difference' they celebrate because of their very cohesiveness. He suggests, then, that the researcher finds herself caught in her own re-writing/re-reading of these texts between "reifying local identities" and "constructing universalizing ones" (Clifford, 1986: 258). This space in between, however, may enable creativity. The researcher can disrupt dominant readings of the Other by locating spaces where the 'subaltern is already speaking.' She can also be a trickster by disrupting the coherence of the research subject's narrative

through calling attention to contingencies, incoherencies, and partiality in her interpretation of this text. If performed with respect, and with an acknowledgment of one's own contingency, these latter disrupting moves need not foreclose an explicit solidarity with the struggles of the people whose 'textualized selves' play a leading role in these narratives. That is to say, with the very real people whom one talks with during the interview process. Nor need one purport to replace one story, such as the one told by Guatemalan policy, with another more 'true' or 'pure' story. In this sense, the researcher can "dislodge the ground from which persons and groups securely represent others," thus underscoring that "cultural analysis [and the politics of everyday life are] always enmeshed in global movements of difference and power"(Clifford, 1986: 22).³⁸ Yet she need not attempt to dislodge the political projects in which these people engage.

Given these methodological and ethical considerations, what may be some—but by no means all!—of the contributions to the understanding of in/security-identity as both general and particular concept/practices, that I learned from Mayan women's texts?

Lessons to be Learned?

Many Mayan-women state that they feel that they are triply discriminated against—triply insecure. Yet, in their narratives they also make it clear that security in one context may differ drastically in another context; what security means in the family, for example may differ from what it means in encounters with *Ladino* society, or in the Guatemalan state in general. Moreover, security for one person may represent insecurity for someone else, or for that same person in a different context, depending upon which piece of their mobile, hyphenated subjectivities demands 'securing.'³⁹ For instance, security in relation to their gender identity may involve insecuritying their ethnic identity, or that of those who define the norms of the collective ethnic identity, for instance, when a Mayan woman joins with other (*Ladina*) women to protest sexism in their homes and organizations. Which security needs become most pressing depends upon the context, and upon the relationship and identity of the Other who threatens. Similarly, their in/security is contingent upon where they are located in intersecting systems of oppression or ruling, such as sexism, classism, or racism.

Therefore, it became clear to me as I worked with the narratives that in order to understand particular meaning(s) of security it is helpful to address the different spatio-temporal contexts that appear as 'nodule moments' in the narrative. Spatio-temporal contexts, in this sense, are composed of particular spaces (such as the family) during particular moments in the narrative (i.e. the historically specific time period of the Violence and its aftermath), as well as all the discourses of power and relations which inform these spaces and moments (i.e. nationalism, sexism, racism, classism).⁴⁰

Campbell and Dillon, for example, stress the importance of discourses of danger and insecurity in the mutual constructions of hegemonic sovereign identities and the Other (Campbell, 1992: 257). The narrators employ evocations of in/security in the inscription of their sub-sub altern identities. In a collection of articles about totalitarianism and memory, Irene Sherbakova explains

that as the wave of previously forbidden memories about a totalitarian era gains momentum, “it begins to seem as if everything {the narrator} know{s} happened to them personally.” (Passerini, 1992: 113). As Salazar and Sommer point out, notions of ‘individual’ subjectivity can include the subjectivity of the ‘ethnic’ group; hence, the difference between one person’s experience and the group’s may lose significance (Salazar, 1991: 97; Sommer in Gluck and Patai, 1991: 38). The Guatemalan military, for example, physically tortured one person’s mother, but in doing so they also tortured all of ‘our’ mothers. The calling of attention to particular instances of terror—of insecurity—becomes integral to the sculpting of an identity in resistance, and opposition to the dangerous, evil, Other. I found that certain moments became almost a symbolic experience which signified the violence committed against the Mayan pueblo, its traditions (gender identities), heritage, and future.⁴¹ Inquiries into the content of this terror, i.e. ‘who/what is doing the threatening, who/what is being threatened?’, may offer insight into in/security-identity in the particular site. *How* subjects call forth terror or insecurity within a discourse also sheds light on the process of identity formation in resistance, as well as in a hegemonic practice.

In the narratives of Mayan women, it also becomes clear that sovereignty is indeed a key concept/practice in the constructions of their in/security—identity.⁴² Sovereignty, in the sense described in the works of these theorists, thus also inscribes the ordering of identity in sites such as ethnic communities ‘within’ states. People whose different identities do not fit into (or compete within) the recognized spheres of political identity threaten the required unity, and thus the very subjectivity of the group. As illustrated in the introductory citation of ‘Mathilde’ (“The Mayan culture is starting to decay...and we women are those who supported it the most and in {such a} case, she loses everything, its dangerous because she is decaying the culture...”), *Mayan women’s narratives underscore that dynamics similar to those directly determined by state sovereignty occur in instances of hybrid ‘sub-national’ political identity formation. Hence, when mapping interlocking in/security discourses, one must pay attention to the inter-subjective formation of identity within and between alternative narratives of security and danger and dominant ones.*

In these narratives, the challenging sites of resistance, such as the political identities ‘Mayan,’ or ‘Woman’ also become a continuously contested terrain, where the (necessary) Other forms or is formed around other social divisions with their own interrelated power discourses. These alternative sites of politics both endanger the cohesive identity of the original community, *and* legitimize its very existence. Gender and ethnicity thus become mutually constitutive categories not only as identities imposed by the “foreign policy” of the nation-state (or the ethnic group), but also in the formation of points of resistance to the disciplining economies of these states/communities.

The narratives therefore suggest that struggles for security do not necessarily avoid causing harm and re-constituting ‘discourses of danger’ in order to maintain internal homogeneity and sovereignty—discourses that re-produce injurious practices of exclusion and inclusion. The narratives thus illustrate an inherent conundrum in in/security. Their security sometimes demands prioritizing ‘one struggle over another’—or fixing subjectivities in one position in relation to each other, such as strictly defining that being a Mayan woman requires that she wear traditional dress; if the woman refuses to follow this norm because she feels oppressed by her ascribed gender identity, she is accused of betraying her ethnic identity. How the narrators handle conflicts which arise from

competing loyalties around the immediacy of their perceived insecurity may offer some powerful insights into the conundrum of in/security-identity. All of the narrators deal with such conflicts in different (and arguably more or less 'constructive') ways. Their attention to these very negotiations sheds light upon need to look at in/security and identity as *hybrid and contingent constructions* in order to understand, in particular, Mayan women's struggles, and more generally, the complex and violent conflicts that arise within and between conflicting identity sites.

Conclusion

It has become almost a cliché to state that the nation-state system, both as a way of ordering global politics, and as the basis of theory about politics, lacks viability. Yet, in many different parts of the world, the hegemonic political identification with the nation-state may be losing a competition for loyalty and allegiance among other competing identities—identities which both follow and subvert the logic of state sovereignty. Attempts to widen the concept of in/security to reflect this conceptual dearth have set the stage for an un-packing and re-thinking of in/security which can, if not answer, than at least ask relevant questions around a conceptions of in/security which takes into account the centrality of identity, and the manifoldedness of struggle and conflict.

As many of the theorists discussed above have shown, 'security' as it has been conceived in mainstream IR and among the architects of most national security policies has been inadequate to explain—or prescribe solutions for—many of the most pressing and violent conflicts both within states and between states. The oft-cited war in former Yugoslavia provides an excellent example of this ineptitude, as do Mayan women's hybrid experiences of violence. Attempts to address this debacle can not help but flail about (to some degree) in search of an alternative conceptual apparatus with which to grapple with the complex problems at hand.

Yet, through such flailing, the traditional boundaries/spheres of IR are seen differently. For instance, by taking my starting point from a particular political identity, 'Mayan women,' which poses an explicit challenge against the Guatemalan nation-state, I am forced to question relationships between domestic and 'foreign (inside-outside, Us-Them) and become sensitive to the intricate and inseparable relationship between in/security and identity. I am also forced to recognize the oft-violent conflict and marginalization that occurs at the interface of identities and in attempts at securing identity positions, including dominant ones, such as masculinized national identity. Moreover, I am compelled to grapple with how discourses of insecurity (like the ones in traditional IR) are reproduced in marginal ones (such as Mayan women's narratives), risking an never-ending repetition of exclusions and inclusions. Furthermore, it becomes clear how Mayan women are in fact already 'there,' even in accepted so-called security politics: the Guatemalan state security policy, Nicaraguan elections, US foreign policy, German and Israeli arms sales, NAFTA, multinational corporations, structural adjustment programs, etc., United Nations' Convention 169, Human Rights commissions etc. all make an appearance in the narratives, and inform the in/security-identity of the narrator. Marginal discourses, such as Mayan women's narratives, therefore *also* offer variations on the familiar themes of the construction of security-identity and therewith possible alternatives for

its constitution.

My research is motivated by a concern with the very real violence that Mayan women have endured and that somehow gets left out of most discussions on security in IR and Peace and Development Studies. Nevertheless, I do not purport to come up with the solutions to the lacunas in IR theory or global politics through the study of 18 partial life stories of politically active Mayan women in Guatemala. In focusing on Mayan-women's narratives, I do not intend to step out of the discourse of IR, or replace the mainstream in/security discourse with the somehow purer marginalized discourse (Wæver, 1993a: 4). My aim is to inquire into what both I, and the security field in general, can learn from looking at security from within another, related—but yes, marginalized, or silenced—text. Learning from the those theorists writing on security as a discursive practice, I suggest that this marginalized account invariably has been written both in reaction and in concert with dominant ones, such as Guatemala's national security discourse and the globalization of both capital and resistance.

In/security-identity in these narratives is gendered, hybrid, constructed in discourse and borne out a matrix of interrelated power relations, and 'spatio-temporal contexts.' Treating Mayan women's stories as a valid point of departure for a reading of in/security-identity as a discursive practice highlights the contingencies of all 'stories' about in/security-identity and opens up the possibility that these stories could be written differently.

Notes

1. The army has forced civilians to serve in Civil Patrol Units (PACs) in order to discourage guerrilla activity in the communities. The PACs act as an extended arm of the army and a key counter-insurgency strategy.

2. The concepts of security bears with it 'insecurity.' As I have explained elsewhere, "the mere reference to security implies a measure of insecurity. If one were totally 'secure,' then one would not 1993 need security, of there would be no threat" (Stern, 1990: 22) For example, in the struggle to 'secure' someone or something, to render it 'safe,' one limits its possibilities, thus causing it 'harm' or 'endangering' it. I therefore will use the term 'in/security' throughout this article to connote the interconnectedness of the terms security and insecurity. (see also Wæver 1993a; Campbell, 1992; Connolly, 1991 for discussions on this relationship.) Distinctions between IR and Peace and Development Studies clearly exist. However, since Peace Studies has not developed its own 'security studies,' peace researchers dealing with issues of security can be placed within different schools within IR.

3 Walker, 1993, especially p. 177

4. I am grateful to RBJ Walker for helping me clarify this point.

5. This paper is part of my dissertation work. It is based on fieldwork in Guatemala (June-October, 1995). During this period, I conducted partial life stories with 18 leaders of different organizations on the theme of their *struggles as Mayan women*. It should therefore be read as part of a work-in-progress.

6. Mayan-women's "triple oppression": "as women, Mayan, and poor" is a common description made by members of popular /cultural movements.

7. This document forges significant new paths in the history of Guatemala, and in Indigenous-*Ladino* relations; it reflects the growing salience of the political identity of the Mayan *pueblo*. Furthermore, the accord provides the Mayan *pueblo* with an internationally recognized document which validates critical and highly charged *collective* demands on the Guatemalan state. Among those rights stipulated are access to land, educational reform, political regionalization and decentralization based on cultural and economic criteria, and *specific rights of indigenous women*. Even if the accord may be unrealistic and vague in its provisions (and difficult to enforce), it achieves an undeniably monumental goal: It has named the indigenous peoples—and in particular, indigenous women—as citizens of Guatemala.

8. Previously, any sign of 'deviance' or subversion' was quickly attacked through the workings of, for example, death squads.

9. The recent Mayan movement is understood by many as anchored in the celebration of 500 Years of Resistance, and Rigoberta Menchú's winning of the Nobel Peace Prize (Interviews and Bastos and Camus, 1993, 1995.) Although far from wide-spread or wholly unified, this 'movement' is becoming increasingly vocal and influential as democratic openings appear in society.

10. *Campesina* means literally 'peasant' in Spanish. It has also become a political identity among the poor, peasant population which is struggling for a just distribution of land. I have not focused specifically on this identity because the majority of Mayan women make clear that their *campesina* identity is an integral component of their Mayan identity and is therefore included in their identification as 'Mayan woman.'

11. In reflecting upon the development of the thinking of security, I do not mean that there has been a linear line of development: tenets of thinking overlap in time and are often developed in relation to each other. Comments made by R.B.J. Walker.

12. A description of the Realist (and Idealist) schools in International Relations can be found in Stern, 1990. Convincing critiques of these schools, and of their very dominance over interpretations of global relations can be found in Peterson and Runyan, 1987; Peterson, 1992; Sylvester, 1994; Tickner, 1993; Walker, 1993.

13. A further discussion of negative security can be found in Stern, 1990.

14. e.g. Enloe, 1990, 1988; Peterson, 1992; Reardon, 1985, 1993

15. With the exception of feminism which concentrated questions also around gender and sexism.

16. e.g. Peterson, 1992; Sylvester, 1994

17. e.g. Campbell, 1992; Connolly, 1991; Dillon and Peterson, 1992; Sylvester, 1994; Wæver, 1993a, b; Walker, 1993)

18. Wæver later included 'society' also as an appropriate reference for security within security studies (Wæver, 1993b). Due to the constraints of this paper, I have not taken up a discussion of his concept of 'Societal Security.'

19. "One can view 'security' as that which is the in language theory called a speech act: it is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real-- it is utterance in itself that is the act: by saying something is done... By saying 'security' a state-representative moves the particular case

into a specific area; claiming a special right to use the means necessary to block this development.” (Wæver, 1993a: 7).

20. For example, see Enloe, 1990, 1993; Peterson and Runyan, Pettman, 1996.

21. Wæver widens his criterion to include ‘societal security’ in Wæver 1993b. However, this concept is so closely tied to the system of states that it does not include peoples who are making claims based on gender or other marginalized identities. For a critique of Wæver’s concept of society, see Shaw, 1994.

22. “The paradigm of Sovereignty is not a paradigm in the Kuhnian sense of a conceptual resource that man applies to make sense of the world: it is a problematization in the Foucauldian sense that serves to discipline the ambiguity and contingency of history by differentiating, hierarchizing, and normalizing the site in which it operates. {...} The paradigm of sovereignty operates on the basis of a simple dichotomy: sovereignty versus anarchy. {...} Sovereignty and anarchy are replicable concepts that are pivotal for the construction in various realms of mutually reinforcing dichotomies such as subject/object, inside/outside, self/other, rational/irrational, true/false, order/disorder, and so on. In each instance the former is higher, regulative ideal to which the latter is derivative and inferior, and a source of danger to the former’s existence. In each instance, ‘sovereignty’ (or its equivalent) signifies a center of decision presiding over a self that is to be valued and demarcated from an external domain that cannot or will not be assimilated to the identity of the sovereign domain.” (Campbell, 1992: 72). David Campbell explains that the ‘sovereignty paradigm’ does indeed have broader implications than those de-limited by the traditional understandings of what is relevant for world politics. The International relations discourse does not consist of one monolithic theory to which all of the people in power adhere. Nor is it one great big conspiracy crafted by those in positions of power. This discussion is intended to reflect the dominant ideas and ways of looking at the world which determine mainstream world politics. It attempts to un-pack an ontology which reinforces certain power structures, sustains some in positions of privilege, and places others in positions of subordination. The notion of the sovereign man provides just one of many salient examples of how this ‘paradigm’ can offer insight into other interwoven self-other constitutions, such as those which determine racism, heterosexism, or ethnic oppression.

23. See Tickner, 1993; Peterson, 1992; and Sylvester, 1987, 1994, for example.

24. For discussion of how nationalism, national identity, and ethnicity are gendered constructs, see, for example, Anthias & Yuval-Davis, eds., 1989; Anzaldúa, 1987; Enloe, 1993, *Feminist Review*, Nos. 44 and 45; Kandiyoti, 1991; Lindholm, ed., 1994; Moghadam ed., 1994; Peterson, 1994; Pettman, 1996; Radcliffe and Westwood, eds., 1993.

25. I have discussed how I conceive of political identity elsewhere (Stern-Pettersson, 1995)

26. I took as my starting point that these women identified themselves as Mayan women without asking them openly at first how they identified themselves because all of the participants in my study were acting politically and making explicit political claims as ‘Mayan woman.’ This was one of the criterion I used to select the participants.

27. I am borrowing this term from Christine Sylvester, 1993. By “at least four part cacophony”, I am referring to the following parts: (1) the story; (2) the self as character in the narrative (textualized subject); (3) the self as narrator; (4) the self of the researcher.

28. The interviews were conducted in Spanish; I bear full responsibility for all translations from Spanish to English.

29. In the narratives, the relationship between the army and the state is ambiguous; the narrators tend to refer to the army or the state as interchangeable institutions which are separate from the soldiers which defend it. Hence I use the term 'army/state.'

30. The Guatemalan state, although multi-ethnic and multi-cultural has for many reasons (economic, political, ideological etc.) engaged in a particularly violent form of nation-state building. Those in power have implemented pervasive and brutal policies designed to homogenize and *Ladinoize* the population—even if this has meant genocide and ethnocide. Any difference which challenged the national version of what being 'Guatemalan' means (such as ethnicity) was considered subversive. The military represents perhaps the highest form of *Ladino-izing* institution. *Ladinoization* also refers to the process whereby an ethnic (indigenous) identity is (consciously or unconsciously) rejected or 'lost' because of the demands of a racist modern society.

31. In Spanish *corte* means "piece of cloth"; however, in the context of Guatemala, it has come to also mean the traditional skirt worn by indigenous women (and sometimes men).

32. This broad working definition arises out of reflection inspired from numerous texts on the concept of security—documented elsewhere (Stern-Pettersson, 1995).

33. In reading the narratives in above manner, I place myself in the position of deciding when and where in the text the textualized subjects experience 'in/security'—of giving meaning to their words. Yet, how does one justify interpreting and analyzing a text which is created in a site which is otherwise silenced in terms of in/security (especially if the actual label 'in/security' is not used) without some sort of pre-textual working definition? Throughout the research process I have remained aware of these problems and have striven to be open to different understandings of in/security expressed by Mayan women and to whether or not my working definition resonates with what I read in their texts. I have also striven to be sensitive to ways of possibly tempering the violence that my interpretations inevitably inflict on the narrative and the narrators.

34. Ironically, much of the army is made up of Mayans, especially in the lower echelons. (Forced recruitment of young boys was commonplace until recently.) However, the army as an institution is seen as an extension of colonial rule.

35. I am grateful to David Campbell for this point.

36. Later re-writing in the processes of interpretation, analysis, re-presentation, and reading involve yet even more authors.

37. During the interview process, I attempted to interfere as little as possible in the unfolding of the narratives. My aim was to set the stage by asking them a specific question, but then to allow the interview to flow as unhindered as possible from interjections on my part. Moreover, I shared the transcribed interviews with the narrators, giving them veto-right over the use of their words. I also encouraged them to revise the text if so desired and engaged in discussion with them about the text—and some of my interpretations—in a second interview. Furthermore, by citing them, I have made clear that which is their words, and that which is my interpretation of their words in my analysis of the text.

38. Furthermore, an awareness of one's contingent location when interpreting the texts of another culture (or for that matter, anyone else) may waylay such subtle universalizing moves so

common in attempts to understand the Other (or 'native'). Hence, the capacity to listen to Mayan-women's explanations of who and where they are requires continuously striving to know (and disrupt) who and where I am.

39. I am borrowing the term 'mobile subjectivities' from Kathy Ferguson (Ferguson, 1993).

40. In the narratives I have analyzed the contexts are as follows: (1) Family; (2) Ladino Society; (3) Flight/Exile; (4) Organization/Political Movement; (5) International Political Economy; (6) Guatemala. I determined these contexts by identifying the crucial moments and spaces in the text and then crafted appropriate headings. The narrators have corroborated that these are the important contexts in their testimonies.

41. One particularly heinous memory was witnessing the military's brutal ripping open of Mayan women's pregnant belly's to murder the growing baby and then rape and kill the mother.

42. One narrator (born 1969) stated, for instance: "We talked before about the necessity to present a common front, cohesive, before a situation of discrimination and exploitation of more than 500 years. But I personally believe that it is a risk not to recognize the differences and it is a risk not to take a stand as Mayan women, because at least in my daily life and in the processes which I have had, seen, and lived, discrimination {occurs} even by Mayan men towards Mayan women. And I believe that it is almost taboo to talk about these things...but its like moving the floor because its a delicate theme. On one occasion a woman said that she felt that she was betraying her ethnic identity by the fact of taking a stand and saying, 'I also feel discriminated as a woman in my own organization.'"

She goes on to explain: "If you go and ask any woman in any community what she is, she'll tell you: 'I am Mam, Pocomam, Tzutuil, I am Canjobal' whatever it is. I believe that in many circles they use the word, the name, or the denomination of 'Maya-Kaqchikel, Maya-Pocomchi, Maya-quiche, Maya-I-don't-know-what. It has to do with political questions, that is to say with the necessity to construct themselves as a nation, as a *pueblo* with the necessity to take a stand as social subjects with sufficient force and sufficient thrust to really obtain some change, some benefits. In this meaning, I am in accordance that this denomination is used, but now the question is that we can not generalize...there is a tendency to homogenize to say 'we are all Mayas..' and if I am not in agreement {with the definition}?...There are different visions from the different *pueblos* Mayas in Guatemala...{The movement's definition} is converted into a dogma, like the religious dogmas."

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