The Construction of Independent Values among Maya Women at the Forefront of Social Change: Four Case Studies

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Abstract   Life narratives of four middle-aged Maya women in Chiapas, Mexico illustrate how social change toward a Gesellschaft environment—formal schooling, urbanization, and the development of commerce—leads to an indigenous form of feminism, marked by a desire for autonomy and egalitarian relations between men and women. The study advances Greenfield's theory of social change and human development by illustrating processes of adapting to Gesellschaft conditions that move women to adopt an individualistic approach to female empowerment. Data also reveal how collectivistic frameworks are combined with new individualistic values and how Maya women are applying new socialization practices designed to transmit these individualistic feminist values to their children, both boys and girls. Their life stories reflect changing power dynamics in gender relations occurring at the level of the family and society among indigenous populations in Chiapas. [Maya, women, autonomy, interdependence, social change, life narratives]

In the late 1980s, the first indigenous Maya female actors performed with an otherwise all-male Maya theater group in a play that traveled to indigenous communities throughout the state of Chiapas, Mexico. The spectacle of indigenous women working and expressing themselves in public alongside men was shockingly incongruous with traditional Maya norms that stipulate gender segregation and complementary gender roles (see Lynch 1971; Vogt 1969). The women, who were perceived as prostitutes by some indigenous audiences, were enacting on stage new forms of female behavior that exemplified how changes such as increasing urbanization and commercialization emerging in these communities have been transforming traditional gender norms. In 1994, after a variety of personal struggles, these women established their own theater group and community center, called Fortaleza de la Mujer Maya (Strength of the Maya Woman, abbreviated FOMMA), in the colonial city of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, negotiating new cultural values in an urban cosmopolitan setting as pioneers of a new Maya womanhood.

In becoming some of the first professional Maya women in an urban center in Chiapas, these women's life stories reflect a larger pattern of social change happening among the Maya in southern Mexico. The rural and relatively closed communities that characterized indigenous cultures in Chiapas in the 1950s and 1960s (see Wolf 1957, 1986 for discussion of Mesoamerican indigenous villages as closed corporate communities in the context of the economic and political history of colonization) transformed in the 1970s and especially in

the 1980s into more urban, outwardly connected commercial enterprises (Cancian 1994). Beginning in the 1970s there has been a massive migration of indigenous peoples into urban centers; by the year 2000, approximately 200,000 of the 1.5 million indigenous inhabitants of Chiapas had relocated to one of the seven major cities in the state and tens of thousands had migrated to various cities across Mexico (Rus 2009). These changing social ecologies are transforming traditional gender roles and gender power dynamics in ways scholars in Chiapas are attempting to understand (Eber and Rosenbaum 1993; Kintz 1998; Re Cruz 1998; Rus 1988). In this study, we explore how the life narratives of four adult Maya female actors at FOMMA depict adaptations to such social changes and how these adaptations are related to the nature of the women's personal construction of values in terms of such issues as gender roles, independence, and relatedness. In doing so, we hope to carry forward a feminist psychological anthropological approach, initiated in an *Ethos* special issue "Contributions to a Feminist Psychological Anthropology" (Frank et al. 2004), by connecting psychological concerns at the level of the individual with broad patterns of social ecological change and cultural phenomena of interest to feminist scholars.

Theoretical Background

Greenfield's theory of social change and human development (2009), provides a framework for linking psychological and cultural phenomena. Formulated from 30 years of longitudinal research studying social change in Chiapas and from research among Mexican immigrant populations in Los Angeles, the theory predicts that when a community moves from an environment characterized as closed, rural, and agrarian-based with low levels of technology and formal education to one that is open, urban, and commerce-based with higher levels of technology and formal education, there is a corresponding shift from a collectivistic family orientation to an individualistic orientation in cultural values. The theory builds on German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies's (1957) depiction of two types of sociodemographic settings, Gemeinschaft (community) and Gesellschaft (society); it posits that qualities such as interdependence and prioritizing the goals of the family over the goals of the individual are adaptations to Gemeinschaft environments (closed, rural, agrarian, low levels of technology and schooling), whereas qualities such as independence and pursuit of individual desires are adaptations to Gesellschaft environments (open, urban, commercial, high levels of technology and schooling). In terms of human relations, lifelong relations (mainly with kin) in a small, homogenous, relatively isolated community are adapted to Gemeinschaft conditions, whereas impermanent or fleeting relations with diverse strangers from a variety of different ethnic, religious, linguistic, regional or political groups are necessary under Gesellschaft conditions. As such, when there is transformation from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft contexts, people adapt their values and practices to the changing conditions in a process that entails psychological change in the direction of increasing individualism and development of an orientation to relations with unrelated and diverse others (Greenfield 2009).

Scholars have pointed out that there is likely more than a single dimension of values related to collectivistic and individualistic orientations (Oyserman et al. 2002; Singelis 1994) and

that values for autonomy and relatedness coexist in many cultures (Kağıtçıbaşı 2005; Raeff 2006). The theory acknowledges that values emphasizing autonomy are not to the exclusion of human connectedness and an emphasis on interdependence is not to the exclusion of the agency of individuals (see also Killen and Wainryb 2000). Values of autonomy and interdependence may be simultaneously present in a society and within a cultural system; however, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft cultures differ in the way they structure these values and in the extent to which one or the other is given precedence. This could be thought of as variation along a continuum, with cultures in transition likely showing a substantial blend between the two orientations. Our goal here is not only to examine how change toward increasingly Gesellschaft conditions leads to a psychological shift toward increasing individualism, but also to illuminate the multiplicity of dimensions in which a more individualistic orientation might manifest, how individuals negotiate their current values with perceptions of values held by previous generations, and how values for independence and interdependence may be fused when individuals adapt to changing circumstances.

Work across a variety of disciplines and cultures yields data supporting Greenfield's theory. Cross-cultural survey research shows that economically developed Gesellschaft countries tend to be higher on individualistic cultural values (Hofstede 2001); however, changing practices resulting from the advent of Gesellschaft factors in specific cultural contexts provide more useful insights for understanding causal links between ecological and psychological change. For example, in Zinacantán, Chiapas, young men's increased involvement in wage labor renders them economically independent, deterring their motivation to participate in traditionally collectivistic practices such as the cargo system (community service without pay) and traditional service to their new wives' families (Cancian 1994; Collier with Quaratiello 1992). A shift toward a monetary economy in Zinacantán has also been tied to higher numbers of men and women eloping, that is, making their own marriage choices, rather than fulfilling rituals that place decisions about partnering in the hands of families (Flood 1994). In the village of Nabenchauk in Chiapas, children who attend school have more individualistic sibling relationship behaviors (Maynard 2004) and mothers who are involved in commerce are more likely to encourage trial and error independent learning in their daughters (Greenfield 2004). Work outside of Chiapas, among Maya communities in the Yucatan (Redfield 1941) and in Guatemala (Rogoff et al. 2005), in India (Keller 2007; Seymour 1999), Korea (Kim and Park 2005), Spain (Collier 1997), Cuernavaca, Mexico (LeVine 1980), and Africa (Bradley 1995; Kilbride and Kilbride 1997; Pope-Edwards 1997) also demonstrates relationships between increasingly Gesellschaft conditions and shifts toward more individualistic socialization contexts. For example, Susan Seymour's (1999) systematic observations in Bhubaneswar, India from the 1960s to the 1980s shows families who had moved into urban contexts were more likely to foster children's autonomy with practices such as independent bathing.

Focusing on the construction of values of women amid social change is important because, as mothers, women are central in the socialization of the next generation. Although Mead (1978) wrote extensively about the topic, understanding of the effects of social change on the intergenerational transmission of values is limited. A variety of studies do show that mothers

with higher levels of formal education are more likely to socialize their children in more individualistic ways (Chavajay 2006; Chavajay and Rogoff 2002; LeVine et al. 1991; Rogoff et al. 2005). Thus, one of the questions we explore in this study is how adult women's exposure to increasing Gesellschaft conditions leads to individualistic values that may be then used to socialize their children, and how these mothers contrast their practices of socialization for their own children with their own upbringing.

Gesellschaft Environments, Individualistic Values, Gender Roles, and Relations

Change toward Gesellschaft conditions and growth of individualism likely have an influence on gender roles and values for power relations between men and women in a society. In developing her theory of social change and human development, Greenfield proposes that when Gesellschaft conditions shift cultural values toward individualism, notions such as personal choice, achievement, and pleasure are applied to women's roles, expanding ascribed family roles such as mother, wife, and daughter to a diversity of potential domains outside the family. In Chiapas, the traditional gender roles anthropologists observed in the 1950s and 1960s emphasized a harmonious duality between men's and women's contributions to the family: women were barefoot and responsible for household tasks such as cooking, weaving, taking care of children and small animals around the house; men worked the fields, made economic decisions for the family, and represented the family in public (Collier 1962; Lynch 1971; Vogt 1969). Cross-sex relations before marriage were largely prohibited and elders mediated marriage through elaborate protracted rituals (Collier 1962).

However, more recent descriptions of gender relations, after the 1970s and 1980s, show that migration and the growth of commerce have been expanding opportunities for women to undertake wage labor, sell goods outside of their communities, and make decisions for the family when their husbands travel for work in nearby cities or the United States (Kintz 1998; Nash 1993; Re Cruz 1998; Rus 1988). Urbanization and commercialization are giving women access to economic responsibilities previously granted primarily to men and are also providing women more freedom and status in their interactions with men (Eber and Rosenbaum 1993; Greenfield et al. 2009; Nash 1993). Moreover, new economic opportunities are making young men and women more independent, breaking down elder control over partnering and threatening men's roles as the primary public representative and decision maker for the family (Eber and Rosenbaum 1993; Flood 1994; Kintz 1998; Nash 1993; Re Cruz 1998). In some cases, women's engagement in commercial activities has been perceived as a threat to men's dominance, inciting domestic violence (Rosenbaum 1993) and illustrating the tremendous social upheaval in gender relations that Gesellschaft changes may induce.

It has been suggested that, as the worldwide movement away from agrarian to industrialized and post industrialized societies brings women into work and education roles outside the home, the process fosters increased gender equality because women receive entrée to settings and tools needed to participate in public spheres of influence (Inglehart and Norris

2003). Correspondingly, greater endorsement of gender egalitarianism among both men and women is found in more economically developed and individualistic cultures (Chia et al. 1997; Gibbons et al. 1997; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Williams and Best 1990). However, scholars have yet to fully understand the mechanisms behind this correlation. Greenfield's theory implies that gender egalitarianism is an outcome of Gesellschaft conditions, but it does not draw out the mechanisms by which values for personal choice, pleasure, and achievement in women's roles influence values for power relations between men and women.

It is established that there is a psychological relationship between individualistic and egalitarian concepts (Schwartz 1994) and that belief in equality between the sexes may be embedded in the promotion of values for everyone's individual fulfillment in market economies (Yang 1988), but these conceptual relationships do not reveal the processes involved in the application of individualistic values derived from Gesellschaft conditions to gender relations. Ernestine McHugh's (2004) analysis of one Nepalese woman's incorporation of values such as freedom, choice, agency, and assertiveness in response to Gesellschaft development in Nepal provides an example of the utility of case studies in illuminating connections between individualistic values and gender egalitarianism. In this study, we attempt to unpack connections between individualistic values, gender equality, and Gesellschaft factors identified by McHugh by examining the role of these values in women's descriptions of their phenomenological experience of movement toward more Gesellschaft conditions and how this experience feeds into their views of gender relations.

Our analysis of these processes is especially important because an absolute individualistic orientation is not the only route to women's empowerment. Christine Eber (1999) provides an illustration of how indigenous women in weaving and bakery cooperatives in Chenalhó, Chiapas reclaim traditional collectivistic values such as complementary gender roles and service to the community to make an individualistically oriented women's rights movement more relevant to their cultural values, beliefs, and practices. She points out that there has been a scholarly focus on Maya cultural traditions that oppress women, overshadowing the high esteem and value of women's roles in the home and in religious cargos, and constraints on men's dominance achieved by a collective respect for hard work in service to the family. Eber's ethnography suggests that women can create a form of social activism that harnesses Maya cultural traditions and collectivistic values conducive to the goal of women's empowerment. Notwithstanding this potential, we know that women's rights movements often invoke individualistic notions (e.g., Greenfield 1996); our analysis can provide insights into the kinds of circumstances related to Gesellschaft factors that may draw women to individualistic approaches to their empowerment.

Background Observations and Participant Role

In the summer of 2007, the first author, interested in how the FOMMA women represented shifts in gender roles among indigenous cultures in Chiapas, volunteered at the

organization. In the first author's role as a volunteer, she helped to develop videos that encapsulated FOMMA's theater and community outreach activities; these videos have been used to showcase the organization to potential funding organizations. During her two months working in the organization, the first author observed that, although the women do not identify as feminists, FOMMA's events attracted many feminists from Western countries living in San Cristóbal and significant aspects of their work reflected many of the goals of an individualistic feminism in the West. For example, workshops in bread making and sewing are aimed at giving women access to economic opportunities so that they can help support their families and free themselves from complete financial dependence on men. FOMMA's workshops on sexual health affirm liberal feminists' mandates for reproductive rights and bodily integrity, while courses on voice and self-expression for the actresses resonate with liberal feminist notions declaring the need for women to assert their agency in maintaining their equal status with men.

Indeed, conversations the first author had with the actresses at FOMMA during her time as a volunteer indicated that the women were identifying with various premises of the international human rights movement in San Cristóbal, a potential outcome of exposure to the diverse discourses in a Gesellschaft environment. Some spoke about the importance of women realizing that they have the same rights as men to work outside of the house, to be in public spaces, and to study. Others specifically used the words "igualdad de género" (gender equality) in terms of women being able to do the same work as men and in terms of women's opinions being of equal value to those of men. Some women also talked about how the experience of using their voices in the theater had taught them how to assert their opinions, rather than remaining quiet and obeying men's decisions. These notions were embedded in a larger dialogue at FOMMA about shedding light on the unique difficulties indigenous women face and empowering them to overcome these challenges.

In addition, themes in some of the plays FOMMA women perform and write from their personal experiences also reflect common liberal feminist agendas such as reproductive rights, voting rights, and prevention of violence against women. For example *Amor en la Barranca* deals with the issue of birth control, *Voz y la Fuerza de la Mujer* deals with women's right to vote, and *Una Mujer Desesperada* illuminates the realities of domestic violence against women. However, these issues take on meanings specific to circumstances confronting indigenous women in Chiapas; FOMMA's work in general explores the intersections of ethnicity, class, and gender in that setting. As Tamara Underiner (2004) has written, FOMMA's plays often elucidate the dilemmas of indigenous people in the face of global economic policies. For example, the plays *La Migración*, *La Vida de Las Juanas*, and *Victimas del Engaño*, depict neoliberal economic policies forcing indigenous men to move from subsistence farming into unskilled urban jobs, with women and children in particular suffering the consequences (Underiner 2004). Certainly, FOMMA's work regarding gender and women's issues, despite aforementioned congruencies with Western feminism, is uniquely situated within its own local context and at the intersection of various local and global identities.

Narrative Analysis: Structure and Goals

In this article, we explore the life stories of four indigenous Maya women who are all mothers and who are positioned at the forefront of social change as some of the first professional Maya women. Analysis focused on three aspects of their narratives. First, we identified the ways in which experiences with Gesellschaft factors engender particular manifestations of individualism and how this situation draws them to individualistic approaches to female empowerment and Western feminist discourses. Secondly, we identified ways in which the women are combining collectivistic and individualistic notions to clarify how collectivistic values frame newfound values deriving from Gesellschaft conditions. Finally, to examine how social change might affect intergenerational transmission of values, we identified how more individualistic notions appearing in these women's narratives give rise to the values they are intending to socialize in their children. Our goal here is not to determine the extent to which these women are individualistic or collectivistic, or to determine the extent to which their narratives contain individualistic or collectivistic values; rather, it is to provide examples of the kinds of experiences in Gesellschaft environments that are associated with individualism and gender egalitarianism, to show how they are combined with the older collectivistic frameworks, and to explore how they might influence socialization of the next generation.

The Women and the Interviews

The four women collaborating in this study are Petrona (in Spanish, Petu' in Tzotzil) de la Cruz Cruz, Isabel Juárez Espinoza, Maria Francisca Oseguera Cruz, and Victoria Patishtan Gómez, all actresses at FOMMA. Petu' and Isabel were the first female Maya theater actors in Sna' Jtzi'bajom (House of the Writer), an indigenous organization working to preserve indigenous languages of Tzotzil and Tzeltal; they subsequently founded FOMMA in 1994. Maria Francisca joined the group in 1996 and Victoria in 2002. Petu' and Isabel moved to the city from Maya communities as adolescents and Victoria moved to the city in adulthood. Maria Francisca moved to the city with her family from the Tzotzil-Spanish speaking suburban community of Florecilla just outside the city when she was seven years old. All live in San Cristóbal de Las Casas and occasionally return to their communities to visit family, except for Victoria whose family, along with other Protestant families, was expelled from Catholic San Juan Chamula. The first author interviewed all five actresses currently at FOMMA; however, these four were selected because they were all mothers and talked about child socialization, allowing us to include this element in our analysis of their narratives (the fifth actress is from San Juan Chamula but has never been married and has no children). In terms of the transition of human relations in the Gesellschaft environment, it is significant that FOMMA, like Sna' Jtzi'bajom, is a linguistically diverse voluntary group composed of unrelated strangers from a variety of Maya communities; it is more panethnic than ethnic.

Petu' finished junior high school in her early twenties after her first child; Isabel also finished junior high school in her early twenties and then finished high school in 2009; Maria Francisca completed two years of primary school as a child, completed primary school in

adulthood and is now working through a junior high school curriculum; Victoria had no formal schooling as a child and completed the first two years of primary school in adulthood. At the time the women were children, most indigenous women had at most a year or two of elementary school education. The women are from four different Maya communities, reflecting the diversity of the indigenous Maya groups in San Cristóbal. Petu' is from the Tzotzil community of Zinacantán, Isabel from the Tzeltal community of Aguacatenango. Francisca is from the Tzotzil-Spanish speaking community of Florecilla, a suburb (colonia) of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, and Victoria is from the Tzotzil speaking community of San Juan Chamula. With the exception of Maria Francisca, who considers Spanish to be her first language, Spanish is their second language; they all speak it fluently.

To begin, the second author contacted Mimi Laughlin; Mimi, a woman from the U.S. with long-term residence in San Cristóbal, has provided ongoing support to FOMMA from its founding. The authors presented Mimi with the idea of writing a paper about the FOMMA women's life experiences and their perspectives on the social changes that had occurred during their lives and asked her to propose the project at FOMMA. The women of FOMMA agreed because they liked the idea of telling their stories and also generously wanted to help the first author, as a beginning graduate student eager to study gender and social change in Chiapas, learn about how the changes in Chiapas were affecting women's lives.

The interviews eliciting women's self-narratives were conducted in Spanish by the first author (who is a fluent Spanish speaker) in the women's offices at FOMMA; interviews lasted for about 1.5 hours. They were guided by one question: How have things changed since the time when you were growing up in your community? From that initial question, interviews flowed freely and were guided by the issues of change most salient to the interviewee. Quinn (2005) has written about this interview technique as a way to produce ordinary conversation yielding data based on "ordinary cultural understandings." In the interviews, participants articulated personal narratives of their experiences of the social changes; these narratives were then used to analyze how they constructed values from their experiences of adapting to an urban commercial social environment and how they combined these values with the values of their upbringings in more homogenous, small-scale communities (see Holloway and Jefferson 2000; Lucius-Hoene and Deppermann 2000; Luttrell 2005; McAdams 1996 for discussion on how personal narratives can be used as analytic tools). In addition, at some point in all of the interviews, participants discussed motherhood and socialization of children, allowing us to also systematically examine the ways in which the women's construction of values in their self-narratives was associated with their values for child socialization.

Initial interviews were done in the summer of 2007. After these interviews had been analyzed, follow-up interviews were carried out two years later, in the summer of 2009. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed in Spanish, and translated into English by a native Spanish speaker living in Chiapas, a professional writer and translator with a degree in Computer Science from the University of Chiapas who has lived in an English-speaking country. The translator worked independently and provided both the Spanish and English versions of the interviews together in one document so that during analysis, the first author

could reference comments in both the Spanish and English at the same time to ensure accuracy in the translations.

Petrona (Petu') de la Cruz Cruz

At the time of the interview, Petu' (her name in Tzotzil) was 41 years old, living with her partner and her three sons, a 23-year-old, a 12-year-old, and a 1-year-old. Petu''s narrative is powerfully shaped by a tragic experience of abduction, rape, and subsequent pregnancy at 17. Her story is even more painful in that neither Petu' nor her family understood that she was pregnant:

> I didn't know that by having sex my belly would grow . . . I told my mom, something is moving in my stomach, then they brought a traditional shaman, he said, what you've got is sorcery . . . then it was in August, my stomach began to hurt . . . my aunt went to call the doctor . . . he said she is having a baby . . . and my mom fell, she fainted . . . after that my mom was in a coma . . . and then he died one month later . . . my life was destroyed, my heart and everything. [interview, August 2007]

For a variety of reasons that she does not wish to discuss, these events prompted Petu''s migration to the city to look for work to support herself and her son on her own, without a family support system. She worked as a housekeeper in San Cristóbal, but then an aunt in Zinacantán took her in and helped her continue secondary school. She was asked to join Sna Jtz'ibajom when the group began looking for female actors who could read and write:

> I thought, if I don't do this [work with Sna], what will happen to me? What will happen to my son? I have to overcome this fear [of performing and working with men]. . . . I have to encourage myself, because I have to be strong for my son. [interview, August 2007]

Her comments about encouraging herself and being strong suggests that by working professionally and making money to support herself and her son, activities made possible through Gesellschaft factors of schooling and a cash economy, she cultivated a sense of self-reliance because she had to look to her own skills and capacities for survival, rather than an interdependent family support system.

Working professionally alongside men and acting on stage also appear to have nurtured her values for self-expression. She says that when she first began working at Sna, the men in the group did not consider the women's opinions important, she was fearful and "obeyed" what the men suggested, and, for this reason, she did not feel like she really was part of the group. Over time, she says "performing helped me to go on," and that learning to project her voice on stage taught her to express her opinions. When Petu' wrote *Una Mujer Desesperada* (A Desperate Woman), a play about domestic violence for which she received the prestigious Rosario Castellano Prize in 1992, the men did not want to stage it; but she persisted and they eventually performed the play (Marrero 2003). She says that it is important for women to use their voices and, when asked why, she responded:

> So that women become independent, so that they learn to value themselves, so that they have self-esteem *(auto-estima)*, and so that they value their rights *(derechos)*; so that they know their rights themselves, so that they are no longer humiliated nor stomped on nor hit by their husbands. [interview, August 2007]

These values for self-esteem and standing up for yourself are manifestations of an individualistic orientation centered around the importance of the individual's perspective, and they provide a foundation to the values she talks about passing on to her sons:

> I've said to my eldest son . . . love yourself and then love the others, don't begin to love others and not love yourself because then you won't have self-esteem *(tú quiérete a ti mismo y después quiere a los demás, no empieces a querer a los demás y tú no te quieras porque entonces no tienen una autoestima)* . . . [I've encouraged my eldest son] to respect grownups the way he respects himself *(y que respeta a los mayors como se respete a el mismo).* [interview, August 2007]

This last sentiment referencing respect for elders demonstrates how Petu' combines values for the self with the values for hierarchical relations, important in the cultural context in which she was raised as a child. Petu''s comments suggest a transformation from valuing a kind of respect for elders that is self-deprecating and laden with power to a more individualistic kind of respect for elders associated with proper courtesy. In fact, in more individualistic North America, the word respect is associated with equality and the democratic spirit, whereas *respeto* in Spanish implies emotional dependence, devotion, and power (Diaz-Guerrero 1975). Petu' makes the transformation to a more individualistic form a respect by framing an individualistic notion of self-love or self-worth in terms of the hierarchical concept of respect for elders, directing the concept of respeto she learned as a child back at the self, and prioritizing self-devotion when she affirms that it must come before one can give respect to elders.

Evidence that her values are moving from hierarchical relations and family interdependence toward increasing independence and individualism is reflected in the position Petu' takes when contrasting her upbringing with her son's upbringing:

> When I was growing up we were told you have to obey, you have to fetch the wood, you have to work; I was raised like this, and [my elders said] "you'll be just like us . . . you can't be independent as long as I live, as long as I order you." But now it's not the same, for instance, in my case, I let my sons be independent. . . . I let them make their own decisions . . . as long as I'm watching what's right or wrong for them; it's like advising them, letting them know [I think] something is wrong for this or that reason, because it's for their benefit. [interview, August 2007]

One can see the social changes through Petu''s construction of herself as a mother in terms of a teacher and mentor, in contrast to the authoritarian norm for parenthood she perceives was common in traditional Maya culture. One can also see that she is raising the next generation in accord with her current values.

Many of the comments in Petu''s interview suggest that teaching children independence and self-worth are important to her because they serve an end goal of achieving something for oneself, a quality less relevant in traditional Maya culture where adolescents, before the 1970s, largely moved into adulthood by following ascribed roles adapted to a rural subsistence environment where achievement is about family survival, but relevant to her own experiences of survival, breaking through barriers in an urban commercial environment. Thus, Petu' endorses a parenting style that encourages children to rely on themselves,

rather than their parents, so that they will eventually achieve success for themselves first and then their families:

> We sometimes say. . . . You'll go to the university and here are your expenses, everything. But I sometimes think this is wrong, because our boys and girls have got everything and they don't value it. But instead, when a boy or a girl leaves and this boy or girl wants to succeed, he or she wants to study, then he or she is valuing himself or herself first and then valuing his or her family and parents. [interview, August 2007]

Petu"s construction of independence as paving a pathway toward personal achievement is a developmental pathway more adaptive for a Gesellschaft environment where there are higher levels of education available, a diversity of job roles to choose from, and a cash economy that measures success monetarily. As the following comments show, she also applies these more independent values, in terms of self-responsibility, with respect to gender roles in the home:

> My responsibility as a mother is also to prepare the meals, but I say, there will be a time when I won't have time to . . . then [I tell my children] you have to take care of it yourselves . . . so you don't starve. Then they have to learn to be independent; don't expect someone to make your bed . . . Because like me, you've got hands too to do it; the only thing that changes is the gender, all the parts of our bodies are alike, then you can wash, you can cook, you can sweep. [interview, August 2007]

These remarks directly oppose traditional Maya gender roles that require the interdependence of men and women; in fact, marriage in traditional Maya society is about a woman needing a man to provide her with corn and a man needing a woman to cook his tortillas (Freeman 1972). The quote also reveals that Petu"s appreciation of independence is deeply interconnected with the value she places on gender equality. The following makes the ideal of equality even more explicit and also shows that her goals and practices are oriented to transmit this ideal of equality to the next generation:

> We can't achieve this equity out of our homes, because respect, equity, the ideal man, the ideal woman are formed at home . . . I tell my son . . . you need to learn how to cook . . . how to wash your clothes . . . because the day you ever get your wife, she won't be your maid, she will be a mate for you, for sharing your lives in good and bad times . . . that's why it is said that mothers are the source of education, of their homes and of love. [interview, August 2007]

The previous comment shows how gender equivalent roles in the home provide a basis for Petu's notions of marriage as a partnership between two people, rather than a contract between families. In her narrative, Petu' connects her ideals of men and women in loving partnership with her personal story overcoming struggles enduring an abusive relationship with her former partner, as well as the rape she suffered as an adolescent. She constructs herself as overcoming fears of men, triumphing over a psychological addiction to an abusive partner, and finally meeting a man who respects her and with whom she finds great comfort, love, and happiness.

> In a lecture I met him. . . . We began to date and everything, and I thought to myself, it's true, there are better men. He has many things, he is a man with a great self-esteem

(auto-estima), he is a man who loves, and you feel deeply the love he gives . . . he behaves tenderly, he loves the baby, he hugs the baby. [interview, August 2007]

For her, this kind of loving partnership is actualized when men develop a respect for women's self-worth, agency, and abilities and move toward egalitarian roles at home:

An ideal man . . . must let his woman be free, value her, respect and consider her, and help her in the housework . . . he must not let his woman do everything . . . help her with the expenses. Surely, we as women, when we've got a job, we help each other. [interview, August 2007]

In these comments, Petu' not only expresses new individualistic ideals of female independence and freedom; she also transforms more traditional collectivistic notions of mutual help within the family into gender-egalitarian household roles.

Summary. Petu''s narrative contains dimensions of individualism that relate to a building up of the self with notions such as self-reliance, self-esteem, self-expression, and achievement. She also places importance on independence and gender equality. These new values derive from her experiences supporting herself and her son on her own in a Gesellschaft urban commercial environment, as well as working with men and expressing herself in theater on a public stage. She combines these notions of self-love, independence, and equality with a transformation of collectivistic frameworks for interdependence and respect. She expresses the idea that personal self-worth leads to a valuing of one's family, a mutual sense of respect based on individualistic values for equality, rather than a concept of respeto based on a more collectivistic concept of subordination to more powerful elders. When she talks about what she wants to teach her children, she constructs values prioritizing self-development and independence for achievement as the end goal of development.

Isabel Juárez Espinoza

At the time of the initial interview Isabel was 48 years old, a single mother of three sons, a married 25-year-old, a 15-year-old, and a 13-year-old. Isabel's story of migration to the city first happened by way of her desire to pursue formal schooling:

I went to school in my village, but I never finished a school year, because I would always have work . . . that's why I came to live with my aunt [in San Cristóbal], because she promised my mom she would let me study, that she would register me at the school where she taught . . . but she never registered me at school. [interview, August 2007]

So Isabel returned to her village, and, at age 12, her family was receiving gifts of bread and requests from the elders for Isabel to marry a young man in her village. It was then that she sought out another opportunity to attend school in the city and avoid marriage:

As my dad worked for the government many people from the city knew us, there was a young lawyer . . . he asked my widow sister if she wanted to work in his house for keeping his wife company, then I quickly answered, I'll go, I told him. I came to work with them . . . and after a month I think I told her that I wanted to study. [interview, August 2007]

Isabel later married a man she met in school who was from another Maya community. When he suddenly died, she was left as a widowed single mother working as a housekeeper with a family, and again, schooling enters her narrative:

> the family I was working with told me that I should keep studying, that they would help me to continue studying; that's why I kept studying. [interview, August 2007]

Isabel's inclinations toward formal education provide a backdrop to a salient feature of her perspective on social change: the connection between education and individualistic values. Higher levels of formal education are becoming more common among Maya youth (Manago and Greenfield n.d.). Formal education, with its emphasis on individual tasks and development of the self through knowledge acquisition, puts the focus of skill development on the individual, shifting skill development away from the purpose of serving the family, as is the case in traditional Maya culture (Greenfield 2004):

> Education was more traditional in the past; girls would only do the housework, they would weave, they would embroider, they would prepare the meals, or they would serve the man and everything. That's what parents were concerned about as we were growing up before getting married. ... My mother would make me do this and that because whenever you get married your husband won't be yelling at you because you'll know how to do things. [interview, August 2007]

In contrast to this traditional form of informal female education, Isabel values formal education in terms of its capacity to provide women with a sense of self-competence and self-efficacy. These values are evident in the ways that Isabel constructs the meaning of her work at FOMMA, which provides literacy classes for women, as well as workshops such as sewing and bread making, that women can apply as a means for supporting themselves:

> Part of the satisfaction [we have for working at FOMMA] is that there are women who can obtain their objectives. ... I believe that it is a satisfaction when they know how to write their names or when they recognize a word or a letter. [interview, August 2007]

Isabel's construction of values associated with education and the development of intelligence serves an end goal for independence and manifestation of individual desires. These goals are in opposition to traditional norms for behaviors that urge women to adopt roles in harmony with the group's desires:

> All women are intelligent, the problem is that we sometimes don't develop our intelligence well ... because we are sometimes scared, fearful about our neighbors, about our family ... but if you think about your personal situation not taking into account the other people around you, you'll find a way out, you'll have to look for it, you'll have to knock on the doors, because nobody will come here knocking at your door and go like, do you want to do this? [interview, August 2007]

This self-development through skill learning leading to independence is a means by which Isabel and her coworkers at FOMMA endeavor to empower women:

> We decided to tell women that anyone who wants to come here and learn how to read and write, they can express everything they want; they not only learn how to read

lectures or writings but also other things . . . we combine notions of women's rights with learning to read and write and the importance of things that happen during our lives as people . . . in my case, I help women in groups, and in these groups women express all their feelings and they lose some shyness. [interview, August 2007]

A value for self-expression, again in opposition to traditional Maya female behaviors before the 1970s where it was assumed that women had nothing of value to say (see Lynch 1971), is a cornerstone of Isabel's narrative. When asked what she has learned through her experience working in the theater groups at Sna Jtz'ibajom and at FOMMA, Isabel constructs a narrative about learning over time how to use her voice to assert herself:

> Performing has helped us to be able to talk, to express ourselves, to scream everything you feel, whether there is an audience or not, you are expressing yourself, then you take all your stress deep inside out. It helps a lot, it's a therapy. [interview, August 2007]

> Now I observe and analyze things. . . . I believe that things that I feel I express and I express them directly. [interview, August 2007]

In the following quote, Isabel describes her growth after her first experiences as an actor at Sna Jtz'ibajom. It demonstrates how Isabel constructs her life narrative in terms of development and learning experiences that expand her knowledge and give her the competency to feel confident expressing herself:

> I never gave my opinions in the meetings, I never said anything, nobody asked me if I agreed. I was afraid to give my opinion . . . it seemed to me that I had nothing to say. So then the men were the ones that decided, what the majority agreed, they took into account what we decided too. But little by little, we were getting more rights, as women, as people, as humans. So then, I believe that it helped a lot to participate in different workshops, events, courses, conversations. . . . Everyone is going to be learning and everyone is going to get better. [interview, August 2007]

Here we can see how she connects values for individual expression to egalitarianism in terms of everyone having the capacity to learn and get better, including women. She constructs female empowerment from her experiences gaining the confidence and competence over time while working at Sna Jtz'ibajom to express herself and her opinions, until finally:

> I was the one who expressed most of the opinions in Sna, even though men would tell me, oh, this woman wants to be . . . she wants her voice to be heard, because she never stops talking. . . . But later they realized, after I left . . . that I talked a lot but positively for the sake of the organization, I didn't talk about people, I talked about the well-being of the organization . . . they thought I was a greater leader in Sna, because I would make suggestions, I would give opinions, whatever that was needed to do and how to support the organization . . . when I left, they thought about it, no, your ideas were right, it's a pity you left. [interview, August 2007]

Challenging traditional customs and diverging from the consensus of the group violates the endorsement of group harmony in highly collectivistic Gemeinschaft cultures. The development of personal opinions has been a central thesis of modernization theory and

research for more than 50 years (Lerner 1958). Thus, Isabel challenging male dominance over ideas and affecting change toward her opinion among those around her is an indication of her values and perhaps the group's values moving in the direction of increasing individualism. This tendency to speak up against the traditional belief systems of people with whom she is interacting is another common theme in Isabel's narrative. In her description of her life, education provides her with the confidence to express her opinions and teach those around her the more gender-egalitarian value system in which she believes:

> I'm the only daughter who has left the village in my family and I've realized I'm different . . . my brothers-in-law have understood me well, because I've gathered my sisters and told them, look, men have got hands for getting a glass of water, you don't have to stand and give it to them . . . and my brothers-in-law are present, oh, yes, you and your big mouth; it's true, yes, they say, it's true. Then like my brothers-in-law analyzed it, and well, now they help each other. . . . Then . . . women can stay at home or women can go out too. [interview, August 2007]

> My mom sometimes gets mad at my sister, she tells her, why do you ask him to do those things? That's your job, she says, not his; a man's job is to work in the fields, it's not being in the kitchen or doing the housework or ironing clothes; that's your obligation. . . . Then I intercede sometimes, I tell her, look mom, that was in your time, when you were raised, it's different now, we are all equal. [interview, August 2007]

In these comments Isabel articulates clear examples of how she applies the individualistic value of egalitarianism to gender roles in the home, because "women can go out too" to take advantage of Gesellschaft opportunities, and then she draws this point out to assert men and women's equal status.

Gender equality is also important in the values Isabel is transmitting to her son, and competence for men in traditional woman's work continues to be a theme. In addition, sharing housework is not only important for gender equality per se, but also because it means that her children know how to be self-sufficient:

> I raised my son with this value ever since he was a little boy; he can cook, he can wash, he can iron, he can do the housework and he is not commanding his wife to do it, my son. But not in other men, their women have to be there all the time; if their women aren't around they've got no tortillas, they've got no food, they've got no beans, they've got nothing. [interview, August 2007]

> I think that both girls and boys must take care of themselves. Then I have always told my sons, ever since they were little, that they must take care of themselves. [interview, August 2007]

Summary. A pervasive value throughout Isabel's self-narrative is self-competence achieved through learning experiences that expand one's knowledge. What stands out most for her among all the social changes happening in the urban commercial environment is that women have opportunities to develop a variety of skills and competencies so that they can contribute in the public domain equally as men do. Associated with this sense of self-competence is confidence in one's voice and valuing the expression of diverse opinions

indicative of a culture that assumes the individuality of social actors. Isabel uses her voice to challenge her Aguacatenango family's values for gender hierarchy, such as their endorsement of women's roles as serving their husbands. Most important for lasting social change, she passes values for gender egalitarianism on to her sons through a foundation of values for independence and self-sufficiency.

Victoria Patishtan Gómez

At the time of the interview, Victoria was 43 years old, a single mother of a 21-year-old married daughter, 19-year-old and 15-year-old daughters in high school, and an 11-year-old son in primary school. Victoria's immigration to the city comes at a much later stage in life, after she was married with children, when her Protestant family was forced to relocate to the outskirts of San Cristóbal because the community of San Juan Chamula expelled those who had converted to Protestantism. She began working at FOMMA when her husband abandoned her and her family in San Cristóbal, leaving her without a way to attain resources:

> My husband worked, I was there in the house with my smallest children . . . we are there every day and I think it was boring for him, this is why when he leaves for work maybe he sees other women, younger, prettier, and better. [interview, August 2007]

> At first I didn't know what to do, I felt that I couldn't eat alone with my children, I felt that I couldn't work, I felt a deficit that I couldn't acquire my food, my money, and I felt that I couldn't live without a man. [interview, August 2007]

Like Petu' and Isabel, a precipitating event for Victoria was a need to support herself and her family; by going out and earning her own way, she begins to construct a sense of self that expands beyond the boundaries of the domestic sphere and, as she does so, she adopts values for gender equality in terms of men and women doing the same kinds of activities.

> I have changed a lot [since working at FOMMA]. . . . I thought that only men had rights to work or to go out in the streets . . . because in my community they say that only the man leaves and the woman stays in the house doing everything . . . but when I came here, I could work with women, we could study. [interview, August 2007]

> When I came here, I couldn't talk. . . . Now I act in the [dramatic] role of a woman, of a man, of an old person, everyone. When we arrive in a community to act, I scrutinize everything that people say. They say this woman . . . does not feel embarrassment, no shame, she does it like this without laughing. [interview, August 2007]

Victoria defies gender norms in her community, not only by taking on roles previously occupied by men, but also by showcasing her abilities on a theater stage before her indigenous community, representing new ways of being a woman that are shocking to those who hold to traditional everyday norms.

When Victoria incorporated a sense of self-sufficiency and confidence in public spaces into her identity, the traditional framework for male–female relations, a woman needing a man for survival and to represent her, became irrelevant. Her work at FOMMA liberated her

from this male–female interdependent arrangement and, as a consequence, she values independence and freedom.

> I am not thinking of getting married again. I like being alone because already I see that I can eat, I can buy things, it's good. [interview, August 2007]

Victoria's perspective on social changes is more concrete than the other women in this study, a perspective perhaps explained by her more recent immigration to the city and her lower level of formal education than the other women. In her interview, she talks more about change in terms of how the houses and roads have changed and how modes for survival have changed from subsistence to commercial activities. Thus, what is most salient to her feminine identity is something more material: the capacity to survive on her own, without a man. As she tells the story of how her mother (who also moved to the city during the expulsion of Protestants) praises her for earning her own money working at FOMMA, she constructs herself as more independent and self-sufficient than she was before she worked at FOMMA.

> She thinks it is good because, "How did you find your job? Who looked for a job for you? Alone I said, alone I looked. It's good she says because a woman like this sometimes when her husband leaves her, she looks for another man quickly, also comes another child, but also maybe it is the same suffering another time, and you think well because you look for your job and you go alone and if you want to marry after it is good, she tells me. [interview, August 2007]

As a mother herself, the value Victoria wants to pass on to her children is material security.

> I also want them to have a good job so that they don't suffer. . . . I want them to have a house that they live well. [interview, August 2007]

As the next quote will show, desiring material security for her daughters means that she sees new educational and commercial opportunities as providing an avenue by which they can gain stability, without having to depend on a man. Thus, Victoria contests the traditional framework for female dependence on men for resources in the socialization of her daughters. We can also see in Victoria's quote that, as the traditional framework for male–female unions becomes less relevant, it is replaced with notions of choice and romantic love in the next generation:

> I talk to my daughters about this problem and it is better that they don't leave their studies, that they study well so that they don't suffer later. We don't know when they are going to get married, but also we don't know, even if the man is, if he appears good, if he appears that he loves you, but later come problems . . . they must choose a man that, yes, wants to get married, they must look first, choose, talk with him first so that they don't suffer the way that I suffered . . . when a woman has a job she won't suffer as much. [interview, August 2007]

This equal opportunity for both men and women to support themselves and acquire resources is the foundation for Victoria's incorporation of gender-egalitarian beliefs into her values, although her comments also demonstrate that ideas of male–female interdependence persist:

> Women can do work equally as men, but there are things that no, because women can't lift great weight and we can't do construction work. For this reason, the work has to be different . . . for this reason there has to be a man and a woman. [interview, August 2007]

Victoria was the only one of the women to mention complementary gender roles.

There is another way in which traditional schemas and values persist in the case of Victoria, who has more recently transitioned to a more urban commercial environment. Her traditional values of a more deferential respeto for elders remain, maybe more so than for the other women in this study. None of the other women talked about childrearing being better in the past, but Victoria did talk about the cultural values that are being lost, in terms of socialization based on family obligation, respect, and compliance.

> Some of the youngsters don't take the advice of their parents. Before when my mother was growing up . . . if people came to the house, quickly they [the children] looked for a chair, quickly they brought water, a drink, like this they taught their children, but now the youngsters don't want, they don't obey. . . . They [the youngsters] grow and grow and don't listen to advice, they don't know what is good. [They follow] nothing more than "I think alone." "I do it." If they want to go out in the streets, they go, if they want to talk to someone, they don't obey their elders, they don't greet them. And also they will have kids and they won't educate them and this is why more criminals are growing. [interview, August 2007]

As this last quote begins to show, Victoria connects lack of respeto for elders with antisocial behaviors she sees as increasing as part of the social change in the urban milieu.

Summary. Victoria's focus in talking about the social changes is on concrete material and behavioral changes, and as such, she constructs her values during her movement from a Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft environment in terms of a fundamental ability of women to exist in circles outside of the domestic sphere to earn their own resources for survival. Through such activities, she derives a sense of independence and self-reliance that she wants to pass on to her children so that they can gain material security. As she does this, she contests the traditional frameworks for male–female interdependence for survival. However, she is attuned to the values for family obligation and compliance to elders being lost during this social change and she attributes the loss of prosocial values in society to this loss of family values.

Maria Francisca Oseguera Cruz

At the time of the interview, Francisca was 47 years old, divorced, and living with a second husband. She had two married sons, 29 and 27 years old, and two daughters, a 21-year-old and a married 19-year-old. Whereas Petu"'s, Isabel's, and Victoria's value constructions center around women's development of self-esteem, self-competence, and independence leading to more egalitarian gender relations, Maria Francisca is particularly attuned to the ways in which the social changes are reflected in shifting norms about sexuality. Maria Francisca sees sexual openness as an important aspect of the movement to more egalitarian social relations between men and women.

> In some of the communities the culture of women as very closed continues and they believe men are the ones that lead and give orders. . . . They then have daughters, they go on like a

chain, they are going to do the same . . . but these days some of these women that have left the communities for the city have had many changes. Like for example, we have here a group of university students from the communities and with some of them I have chatted, they tell me that still their mothers have these customs, such that they can't speak anything of sex. [interview, August 2007]

Like Victoria, Francisca came to FOMMA seeking resources and potential work after she and her first husband separated because of domestic violence when she was 35 years old, and she recalls the workshops on sexual health and bodily integrity as the most powerful eye-opening experience she had at the organization. In constructing her life story, Maria Francisca recounts her experiences with menarche and avoiding a stepfather who wanted to rape her as the beginning of a sequence of events in which she understood sexuality as fearful, shameful, and mysterious:

When I began to menstruate at almost 15 years old I didn't know that I was going to have my period, so when I began to bleed it scared me. It was terrible. I said, "but what happened to me?" Do I tell my mom or not tell my mom? . . . It was 6:00 pm, we were going to eat at this hour, and when I sat down my clothes got stained, I had a dress the color of pink. . . . I stood up and my mother says, "Sit down!" Because my little sisters and my stepfather were there . . . surreptitiously my mother took off her sweater and told me "Stand up!" She put the sweater on me but why? And she took me outside and said, "Look your dress is stained" and I scared myself and I felt that I began to sweat all over and I say to her, but I don't know what I have, she told me let's go to the room, she began to explain to me, we are going to have this, each month it is going to happen to you. [interview, August 2007]

She connects this sexual socialization to the quality of her interactions with her husband, with whom she fled in a desperate attempt to escape her stepfather. She characterizes her partnership with her husband as a kind of servant-to-master relationship in which she is not able to fully experience being a woman:

I escaped from my house because . . . like three times my stepfather wanted to rape me. . . . Like this I was at 17 years old when I left with my husband, the father of my children, but neither did I know what was going to happen with him, that I was going to have sex with him. During the course of time that I was with my husband never did I feel what it was to be a woman, it was like an obligation, nothing more to have sex with him and wash the clothes. [interview, August 2007]

No, he didn't care what I wanted, it wasn't important if I was feeling well . . . if he wanted [sex], well fine. My mother tells me, "it is that he is your husband so you have to accept it, so then like this passed many years. [interview, August 2007]

Through her experiences working at FOMMA, Maria Francisca found empowerment in a new perspective on sexuality, including ideas of personal pleasure and awareness of one's body.

They began to invite me to workshops. . . . I began to see that they were doing group dynamics, games, and I said, is this sexuality? Then during the course of this week of the workshop, I came to realize, well how nice, sexuality is so much more . . . what it is to have sexual relations . . . what is puberty . . . menopause.

And I was listening to what they were talking about sexuality, that a woman has an orgasm, but what is this? What is an orgasm? I don't know, I never felt an orgasm with my

husband . . . The women in the communities or also here in the city, there are a lot of women that don't know what an orgasm is, what it is to feel pleasure . . . it is something very closed that one doesn't talk about. [interview, August 2007]

She incorporates these values for sexual knowledge and pleasure and passes them on to the next generation:

I like very much to converse with people. . . . One university student has a husband and still she doesn't know what is sexuality. . . . It surprised me a lot when I spoke to her about the clitoris of a woman, she didn't know. . . . I say, you haven't touched yourself, you haven't felt your body? Oh my no! For me, it makes me embarrassed to feel myself, to touch myself, but if it is your body, you should know it so that you give it the care that it deserves. [interview, August 2007]

Maria Francisca is socializing her daughters with the value of women's sexual self-knowledge and pursuit of personal pleasure. These values challenge the sexual double standard socialized in previous generations:

My daughters began to grow and I began to talk to them like this, my daughters also were surprised, because before, for example, the fathers only spoke with the son, but they didn't explain much to him. The education they gave to him was that the woman's role in sex is to serve the man, that the woman doesn't have a right to pleasure, and that the sons at 12 or 13 years old, have to go with women prostitutes, for the sons to develop . . . but the women can't have sex before they get married because it is prohibited for them. So then, the woman there has this concept that she has to preserve her virginity only for her husband and the husband has to have sex when he wants it and the woman can't say no. [interview, August 2007]

This quote demonstrates the connection Maria Francisca makes between women's sexual empowerment and male–female relations.

As she weaves her personal narrative, notions of women's sexual empowerment lead her to a description of her relationship with her current husband, suggesting that sexual empowerment becomes a critical foundation of her more gender-egalitarian relationships:

Women from Chiapas, we are afraid of men, he is going to scold me [many think]. . . . But not me, when I feel something in the moment, I say, you know what? I don't like this, don't yell at me because if not, I am going to yell at you, so then respect me and I will respect you. . . . I love you but you are not my property and I am not your property . . . we have the same rights, the only difference is biology, our genitalia are not the same, but our rights as people are the same . . . you feel in your heart, I also feel, if you cry, I cry, so then we are the same in all our feelings. [interview, August 2007]

Maria Francisca's personal transformations are a reflection of broader social changes taking place within the institution of marriage. Maria Francisca describes how the meaning of unions between men and women was previously based on agreements between families but is now more likely to incorporate notions of romantic love and sexual expression:

The parents make a deal . . . in some villages they are accustomed to give money, in others food, meat, fruit and pox, that is the drink . . . in other villages, they ask for the little girl

from when she is 8 years old, or 9, already she is put aside for marriage . . . in some other villages they let falling in love happen, for example they give the two youngsters permission to talk, after they are speaking, then it is the wedding, but the girl has to be a virgin. [interview, August 2007]

In the city now yes the young women already have freedom, because they fall in love, the women speak to the young men and they say you are good-looking, do you want to be my boyfriend? But already here and including it happened to me with my daughter. [interview, August 2007]

As Maria Francisca tells the story of her youngest daughter, another aspect of social change in sexual norms is revealed, one where sexual freedom and prosex messages give way to a responsibility for sexual restraint in the hands of youth:

It was the youngest, the 15-year-old, the one that had more information about sexuality. . . . It was a contradiction about the topic of sexuality, the youngsters had destroyed it all, the moment arrives that they don't abide by what is known, instead they wanted to do it, because I am free my mother says that sex is beautiful. . . . The information is good when youngsters know to take it in a positive way. . . . They perceive sexuality negatively when they want to go to practice it, because then they feel free and they know it all according to them, this happened with my daughter, already she knew everything of sexuality, the only thing that she wanted was to know and practice with a partner, so then she left from school at 15 years old, at 16 she has a baby. [interview, August 2007]

Maria Francisca perceives this shift in responsibility for sexual restraint from external social forces to an internal compass as necessitating a more child-centered approach to child rearing during adolescence that encompasses explicit communication. This kind of socialization departs from traditional forms of child rearing based on obeying elders:

Parents should listen to the son or daughter, what is it that you want to talk about daughter? Parents should not say, "Don't do it!" . . . They should put things on the table, if you do this, there is this. This is the result; what do you want to happen? Do you want this or do you want that? . . . Adolescents are in the period in which they need a lot of trust, they need us to listen to them. [interview, August 2007]

Francisca's shift from the tradition of children listening to and obeying their parents, to valuing parents listening to their children is an interesting change in socialization practices and presents an important future area of examination to see if this practice is more widespread among other mothers experiencing movement from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft environments.

Summary. The most salient aspect of the social changes that is articulated in Maria Francisca's life narrative is a transformation in meanings surrounding sexuality with increasing emphasis on personal body awareness and pleasure. Maria Francisca perceives these shifts as engendering a stronger sense of self in women, leading to more gender-egalitarian and romantic love relationships between men and women. However, this shift in sexual norms also creates potential dangers in shifting the locus of sexual responsibility onto

adolescents themselves. This situation pushes Maria Francisca's parenting in the direction of an explicit, child-centered communication style.

Discussion

A Gesellschaft environment has been developing in Chiapas since the 1980s, when the main change was in the transition from subsistence and agriculture to a cash economy. Since then, scholars have been trying to understand the profound social changes indigenous people in Chiapas are experiencing as their communities become increasingly open to the effects of globalization and they migrate to urban centers (Rus 2009). Greenfield's theory of social change and human development provides a useful framework for understanding the psychological impacts of these changes. By applying this theoretical lens to FOMMA women's life stories, we have connected broad sociocultural changes with individual psychologies by showing how personal experiences with urbanization, professional work, and education have engendered individualistic values among a group of Mayan women in Chiapas and how these women have applied these values to transforming gender relations.

The women's narratives reveal that experiences such as earning their own money, expressing their opinions in a public work environment, and having the same access to education and public spheres of influence as do men constitute expressions of and further promote development of individualistic values—notably independence and gender egalitarianism. Our case study approach has allowed us to build on Greenfield's theory. We offer insight into the mechanisms responsible for correlations between gender egalitarianism, education, and urbanization by highlighting idiosyncratic ways individuals construct particular types of individualistic and gender-egalitarian values associated with their personal engagement with the Gesellschaft factors of urbanization, formal education, and professional work.

The women came to Gesellschaft environments in unique ways with differing backgrounds, although each found herself in some way isolated from a family structure that traditionally would provide for her well-being. Thus, it may be this particular circumstance that draws women to a more individualistic orientation to their empowerment. Although the circumstances that brought each of the women to interact with Gesellschaft conditions were beyond their control—Petu''s rape, the death of Isabel's husband, Francisca's abusive stepfather and husband, and the expulsion of Victoria's family from their village, followed by abandonment by her husband—we can also see their individual agency in taking the opportunities that a Gesellschaft environment offers: Petu' and Isabel pursue schooling, Francisca flees her abusive stepfather and husband, and Victoria takes economic opportunities available in the city. Years earlier, this opportunity structure would not have been available. Thus, it is not that women are pawns in sociocultural changes, but, rather, they act on new affordances in the environment to construct greater independence, more choice, gender-egalitarian values, and new discourses that are compelling to them in this Gesellschaft environment.

Moreover, each finds empowerment through this suite of individualistic values in particular ways. Petu' came to a Gesellschaft environment after a tragically degrading experience of rape that likely had severe ramifications for her feelings about herself and her relationships. Thus, notions of self-esteem and self-love were dimensions of individualism that were most salient to her as she overcame her fears and trauma to achieve success in playwriting and to establish her own theater and community organization. These ideas became the foundation for a gender-egalitarian ideology, including independence, public expression, and equal gender roles in the home. Isabel emigrated to a Gesellschaft environment through an affinity for formal education and, thus, oriented to this opportunity afforded in an urban commercial environment. Through her experience in schooling and taking on participatory roles alongside men in a formal work environment, she developed gender-egalitarian values of public expression and the notion that men and women have the same capacities and mental acuity. Victoria found herself in a Gesellschaft environment later in life and is primarily concerned with a more concrete aspect of women's empowerment: economic survival. Her experience of being abandoned by her husband, but then finding her own opportunities for financial independence in an urban setting, tunes her into the possibilities that women have for self-reliance, rather than being dependent on a husband who might not fulfill his obligations to the family. Finally, Francisca moved to a Gesellschaft environment escaping a sexually threatening stepfather, only to find herself fleeing into the hands of an abusive husband. These experiences made her particularly attuned to issues surrounding sexuality and women's rights to control their bodies and experience sexuality as pleasurable.

Their stories illustrate a diversity of human experiences and how various aspects of gender egalitarianism resonate for different women; but underlying all of their orientations toward women's empowerment are assumptions of the value of the individual, of honoring agency, desires, opinions and bodily integrity of the person over any group's goals. This prioritizing of the individual provides women with the means to take their well-being into their own hands, to have control over what happens to them. Their active construction of unique personal values from distinctive experiences suggests that feminist consciousness will develop unevenly among women in a Gesellschaft environment, yet values will coalesce around an individualistic orientation featuring gender egalitarianism.

One aspect of a Gesellschaft environment is its contact with outside influences and cultures; in Chiapas an instantiation of this are the international human rights groups that have become prevalent in southern Mexico in the last 20 years. The language of "human rights" Isabel utilizes likely has its roots from these groups and is a concept not easily expressed in the indigenous languages. For example, in Tzotzil, personal rights or "derechos" would be conceptualized as a combination of terms of "doing what my heart wants" [ja' yech sk'an ko'on] and "respecting the decisions of other people" [yich'el ta muk' krixanoetik]. Adopting concepts and language outside of traditional frameworks is thus part and parcel of individuals' adaptations to Gesellschaft conditions. Similarly, Tzotzil does not lexicalize a concept corresponding to auto-estima (self-esteem). Thus, aspects of the women's narratives that show their use of concepts such as rights and self-esteem exemplify how

individuals adopt new concepts outside of their traditional frameworks to make sense out of their experiences.

Our study has also provided examples of each individual's collectivistic framework being expanded to absorb individualistic values. Data from women's stories demonstrate that relational values do not disappear completely, but persist as they are combined with individualistic values. For example, Victoria's comments about feeling happy about her financial independence, not needing a man, and gender equality in work roles are combined with her affirmations of gender duality when she says "the work has to be different . . . for this reason there has to be a man and a woman." Further, the ways the women endorse equivalent gender roles in the home, with both men and women performing household chores, is conceptualized in terms of individual responsibility and capacities, but also in terms of a collectivistic orientation where everyone contributes to the well-being of the family. This is a particularly useful approach because, as Hochschild with Machung writes in *The Second Shift* (1989), an individualistically oriented feminism in the United States focusing on women's rights to work outside the home has given less emphasis to the importance of men's contributions to household chores.

Another theoretcial advance is that we have provided insight into how styles of parenting may also change with a movement from Gemeinschaft to Gesesllchaft environments. Petu"s and Francisca's narratives suggests that there may be a shift in socialization from more authoritarian to more critically engaged (authoritative) parenting; this is an area that deserves further research. Although Baumrind (1966) developed the classification system contrasting authoritarian and authoritative modes of parenting, she did not recognize authoritative parenting as a cultural style. However, following Chao (1994), our findings demonstrate this point dramatically. Authoritative parenting appears to be most adaptive in a Gesellschaft environment because it involves discussion and reasoning, as well as firmness with children. This mode of parenting thereby aims to establish an internal compass in children that operates in the absence of the social controls found in village life. Baumrind has found that authoritative parenting, compared with authoritarian or permissive alternatives, generates child behavior that, "while well socialized is also willful and independent" (Baumrind 1966:887). Other evidence that this is an adaptation to Gesellschaft conditions is found in the fact that mothers who work are more likely to engage in authoritative parenting than mothers who do not (Greenberger and Goldberg 1989).

Another change in parental practices suggested by these women's life narratives is a shift from implicit to explicit sexual socialization. Explicit sexual socialization is more adaptive for more Gesellschaft environments, as Raffaelli and Ontai (2001) demonstrate in a study of sexual socialization among Latino immigrant families in the United States. Parents, socialized in more Gemeinschaft environments, had unspoken expectations for sexual abstinence and imposed sexual restrictions that were not effective as socialization goals in the more anonymous and open Gesellschaft cultural environment in which their adolescent daughters were experiencing sexual development. Daughters reported that implicit messages about avoiding sex, and an absence of explicit information about sex, rendered them ill-equipped

to manage sexual relations with men in a cultural environment consisting of liberal norms for mixed sex interactions. In more collectivistic cultures, the locus of control for sexuality is outside of the individual; control is exerted through external restrictions such as gender segregation and formal rituals for partnering (Raffaelli and Ontai 2001). In more individualistic cultures, the assumption is that control lies in the hands of individuals, who must ultimately make choices about their sexual behaviors in the absence of external controls enforced throughout the community.

Moreover, we have also shown the socializing influence that women migrating to urban centers may have on older generations and families who remain in the villages. This is particularly notable in the narratives of Isabel and Victoria. Isabel is somewhat successful in arguing for gender-egalitarian distribution of household chores with her mother, brothers and sisters, and Victoria's ability to financially support herself and her children elicits admiration from her mother. Scholars working among Maya communities in southern Mexico such as Bianet Castellanos (2007) are beginning to focus on how the rural–urban shift transforms traditions in the communities of origin and our study suggests that one way this is happening derives from migrant women promoting new kinds of gender models their families find relevant, a potentially fruitful area for continuing research.

Feminist scholars in Chiapas have warned Western feminists doing research among indigenous communities that we face the challenge of applying our own assumptions about gender to indigenous women and of interpreting asymmetrical gender relations in the communities in terms of what exists in our own cultures (Marcos 2005). However, we do not suggest that women are necessarily better off under Gesellschaft conditions and gender-egalitarian beliefs. It is clear that traditional Maya culture has honored women's role, that gender duality can serve the goal of harmonious interdependent relations between men and women, and that prioritizing the group over the individual can benefit women because the group's goal is to perpetuate the health and integrity of the family.

What we do show is that women who take the opportunities afforded in Gesellschaft environments—such as schooling, financial independence, and self-expression—take the responsibility of their well-being into their own hands. This individualistic perspective—valuing a person's capacity to take care of himself or herself by means of individual capacities and desires for well-being—is adaptive for women's well-being in a Gesellschaft environment because Gesellschaft environments do not provide a collective structure obligating men and women to care for everyone in the group. Although there are aspects of a collectivistic orientation that benefit women, our findings suggest that Gesellschaft conditions nourishes an individualistic approach to women's empowerment featuring independence and equality.

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