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### **Faculty Conference 2023**

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Title: **Maya Women in Power: Virtual Dialogues**

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A sign of ethnic revindication for the indigenous Maya people of Guatemala has taken place through a positive ethnic and politic reaffirmation, which tries to create different notions to the ones inherited from the colonial system (Cumes, 2007). Amanda Pop, a feminist Maya woman calls not to ignore the unequal relations created by a patriarchal system, the state, capitalism, social prejudices and media-imposed perceptions in contemporary Guatemala. Although in rural communities Maya Women traditionally are a part of the communal government, that does not mean that their experiences and stances would be the same as the ones of men, and that women will live the same experiences as them in the same circumstances.

During the online ‘Encounter of Women and Power’ organised by the Guatemalan *Chomija* Lawyers’ Association (October 2021), non-mainstream voices could be heard in a dialogue about the participation of Maya Women in the system of ancestral authorities. The women who participated discussed the difficulties they face in their role, specifically when they need to confront situations of violence in the community, and how they negotiate for their authority to be respected, appealing to the Maya cosmovision and beliefs. However, social media cannot be fully representative of their culture, yet it gives us the opportunity to uncover and analyse: how indigenous women define their identity in relation to their knowledge, world-views and philosophies in a contentious medium, such as social media – to learn from their communal organisational and communication strategies, which differ from Western individualism.