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# MAYA WOMEN IN POWER: VIRTUAL DIALOGUES

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– ETHNOGRAPHY – CULTURAL RESISTANCE – INDIGENOUS COMMUNAL ORGANISATIONS –  
– DECOLONISATION – FEMINISM –  
– NON-MAINSTREAM VOICES – IDENTITY – ONLINE/VIRTUAL PLACE –

# THIS IS GUATEMALA

- Central American Country.
- Colonised by Spain 1519.
- The *Criollo* Republic 1821, 1847.
- Civil War or Armed Conflict 1960-1997.
- 1980s Indigenous Genocide.
- 1997 Peace Agreements recognise Indigenous Population Rights.
- 43.5% of the population is indigenous, 41.7% identify themselves as Maya.
- 2.5% Indigenous Parliamentary Representation





In the governments of President General Romeo Lucas García and the defacto President General Efraín Ríos Montt. (1980-1983), the counterinsurgent state implemented the 'scorched earth' plan. Security forces arbitrarily burned more than 440 villages, committing indigenous genocide.

# ARMED CONFLICT – INDIGENOUS GENOCIDE – AND THE PEACE AGREEMENTS

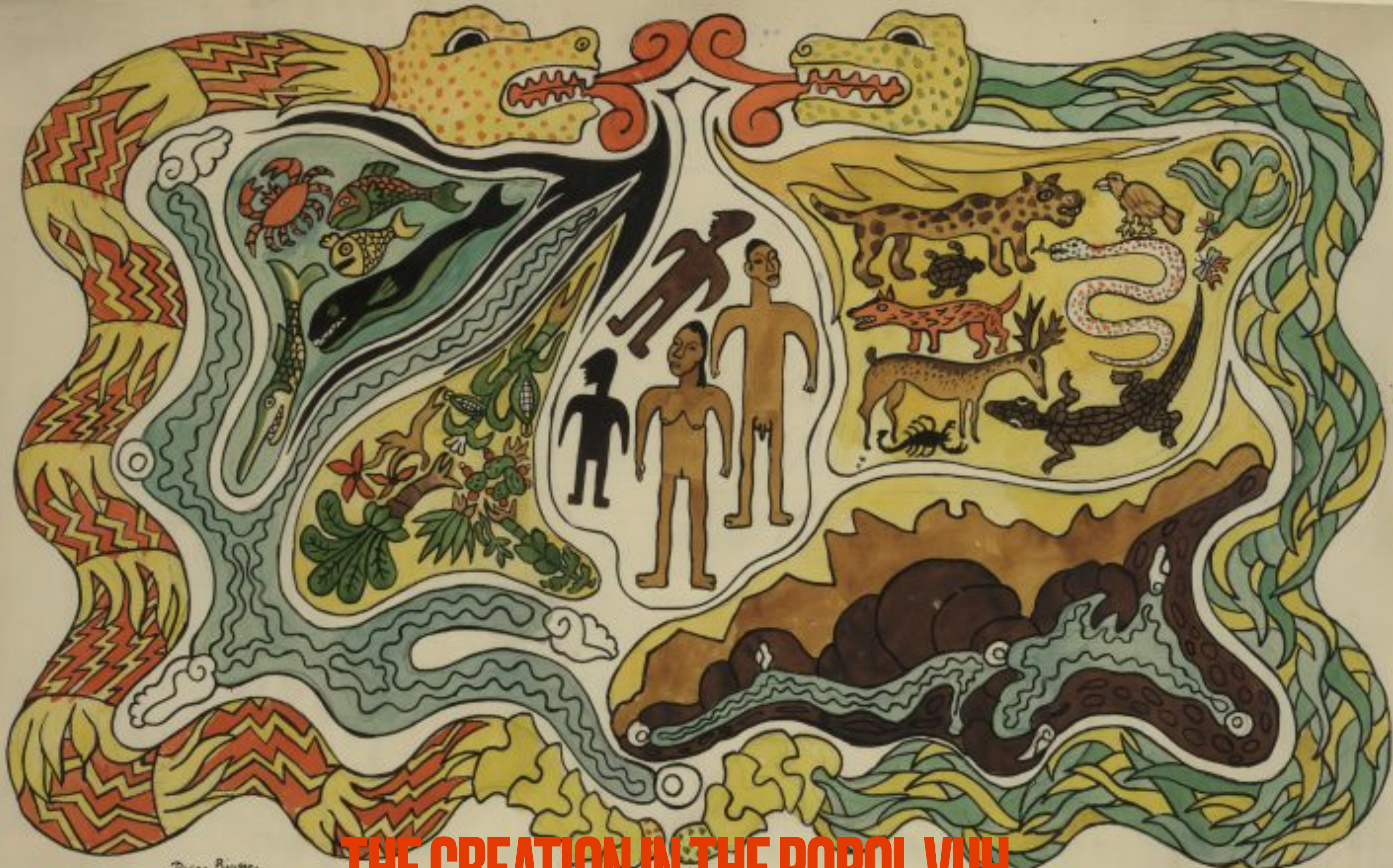


**NARRATIVES OF POWER: PATRIARCHAL NARRATIVES**

# **COLONIALISM AND PATRIARCHY**

**FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE IS POSSIBLE TO THINK THAT PATRIARCHY IS THE MOST ARCHAIC AND FUNDAMENTAL FORM OF INEQUALITY.**

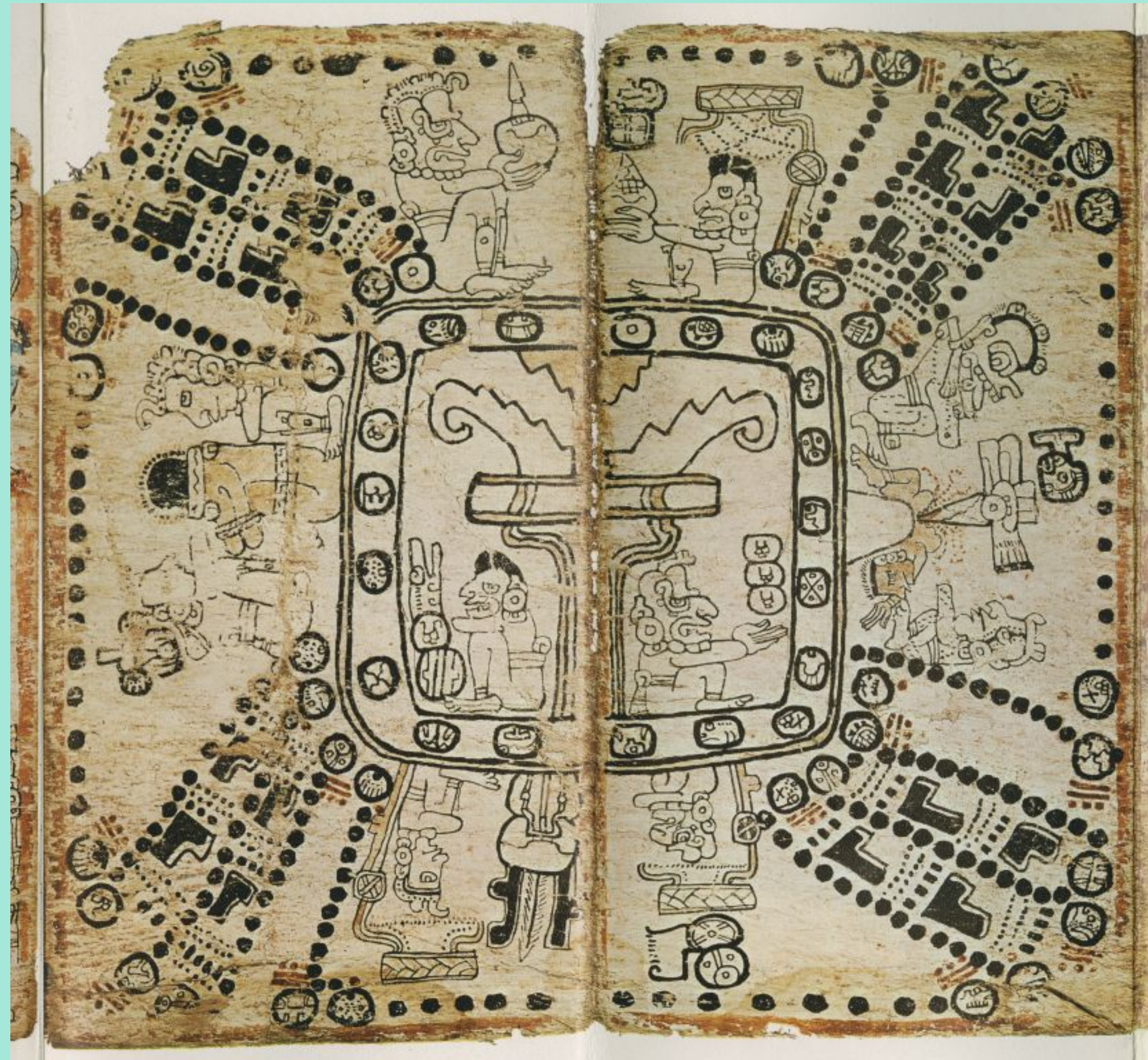
**RITA SEGATO, 2019, P. 37**



Diego Rivera

# THE CREATION IN THE POPOL VUH

# NARRATIVES OF POWER: COMPLEMENTARY DUALITY



The Madrid Codex (Tro-Cortesianus Codex), pp. 75-76



Picture Carla Molina

The Kakchiquel anthropologist Aura Cumes (2021, p. 23) finds this diversity represented in ‘the generation of life is always in pairs, and not always in the pair woman and man, there is the other close pair: lake and river for example.’

# Narratives of Resistance: Maintaining knowledge, cosmovision and identity



Saq' Be' Organisation



National Movement of Midwives *Nim Alaxik* Facebook 08-10-2021



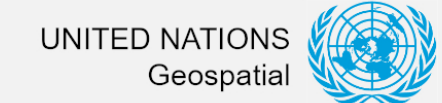


**WE SHOULD NOT IGNORE THE UNEQUAL RELATIONS CREATED BY A PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM, THE STATE, CAPITALISM, SOCIAL PREJUDICES AND MEDIA-IMPOSED PERCEPTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY GUATEMALA.**

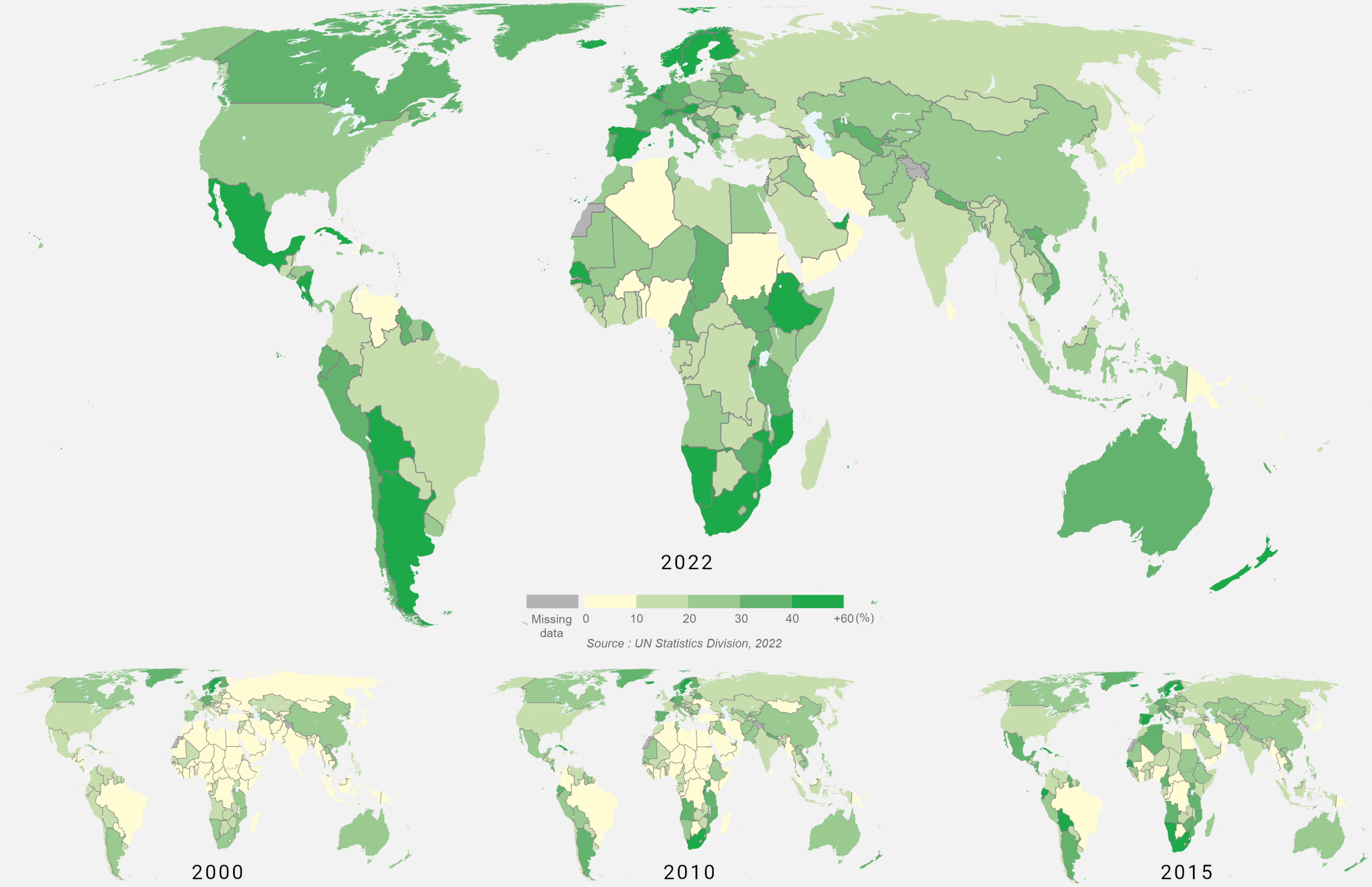
**AMANDA POP**



# ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS



## Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments since 2000



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
 Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.  
 Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.  
 A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

**THE COMMUNITIES WERE ALWAYS SUSTAINED THROUGH  
THE WOMEN. WOMEN ARE STRUCTURAL AND NOT  
PERIPHERAL IN THE COMMUNITY WORLDS.**

**GLADYS TZUL TZUL, 2020**

## WOMEN IN POWER

# AJ'QUIJAB' TAKING CARE OF THE TRADITIONS

- The indigenous population of Guatemala has been able to protect their culture, languages and knowledge by maintaining their beliefs and spiritual practices.
- The role of the Aj'quijab' is to be a Maya living memory.
- Symbols of power: *Pixom Kakal* or *la vara* the bundle of glory and majesty, and the Maya cross.
- La vara is used as a mnemonic system and sacred divination.



Giovanna Miralles' Archive

**MAYA WOMEN IN POWER**

# MIDWIVES

**“A MIDWIFE IS BORN NOT MADE.”**

**MANY OF THEM COME FROM A LINEAGE OF MIDWIVES, OTHERS WERE BORN IN A DAY PROPITIOUS IN THE *CHOLQ’IJ* CALENDAR TO TAKE THIS MISSION.**

**A MAYA MIDWIFE DOES NOT RECEIVE A SALARY, THEY RECEIVE A DONATION FOR THEIR WORK. THIS CAN RANGE FROM A MONETARY CONTRIBUTION, TO ANIMALS OR PROVISIONS.**

**‘I LOVE MY WORK , I LOVE TO BE A MIDWIFE.’**

**VERÓNICA IXCOT**



**19 de mayo**

**Día Nacional de la  
Abuela Comadrona**

# ANCESTRAL AUTHORITIES



Juana Vásquez  
Ajquij



Encuentro Mujeres y Poder | Cuarta Jornada | 06 de Oct 2021  
Panel I: Participación de las Mujeres Mayas en el Sistema de Autoridades Ancestrales

Sebastiana Par  
Autoridad Ancestral Santa Cruz El Quiché



Chomija Women Lawyers' Association, Facebook.

**An Aj'quijab' performing a blessing for the success of the Encounter of Women and Power organised by the Association of Maya Lawyers *Chomija*. (Streamed via Facebook)**



# **WOMEN IN POWER – CHALLENGES –**

- AUTHORITY CHALLENGED OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY**
- CONFLICT WITH THE POLICE**
- THE STATE BIOMEDICAL HEALTH SYSTEM**
- VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY**
- THE LANGUAGE BARRIER**

**THE PROCESS OF CONVEYING CULTURAL CONCEPTS IN A CONTESTED MEDIA,  
SUCH AS AN ONLINE/VIRTUAL PLACE,  
CERTAINLY IMPLIES A PROCESS OF CULTURAL SURRENDER,  
YET PARADOXICALLY NECESSARY AND EMPOWERING TO MAYA IDENTITY AND CULTURE.**



**THANK YOU**

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