The Praxis of Cultural Sustainability:
A Q’eqchi’ Maya Case of Cultural Autonomy and Resistance against
the Monsanto Law in Guatemala

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This paper explores the cultural ideology of the Mayas in regards to
cultural sustenance from multiple perspectives. Rural consciousness
and agricultural related rituals are described and analyzed to illustrate
the ideological continuity concerning the cultural sustenance of the
contemporary rural Q’eqchi’ people. The embedded cultural symbols
and agricultural ritual are examined to shed light on indigenous
identity and to account for the cultural agency as the foundation of the
praxis of cultural sustenance. The Q’eqchi’ Maya consciousness in
relation to their praxis of cultural sustainability will be discussed in
five dimensions: 1). Indigenous rural consciousness and historical
resistance, 2). The subsistence based economy model of milpa
system, 3). A landscape of signs and symbols of Maya cosmology, 4). The ritual model of Maya cosmogony and the agricultural rituals for
sowing and healing, 5). The indigenous peasant organizing for
resistance and defeating the Monsanto Law. [Article copies available
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KEYWORDS: Praxis of Cultural Sustenance, Q’eqchi’ Mayas, Maya Animism, The Monsanto Law, San Agustin Lanquin, Guatemala.

INTRODUCTION

Multiple disciplines have observed cultural conservation in Maya
communities from the 1980s to 2010, and from 2010 to 2015. Sapper
observed that “the [Q’eqchi’] were very concerned, at least in the

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