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*Sacred Landscape of the Ixil Maya of Guatemala: relationship between people and sacred places in ritual, oral tradition and contemporary storytelling*

This dissertation presents anthropological analysis of spiritual relationships that the Ixil Maya of Guatemala hold with sacred places, and how these relationships are represented in oral history, tradition, and ritual. I argue that the old as well as recent threats to these sacred sites had influenced the ways in which the Ixil narrate their relationship with the land and historical legacy. Historical land dispossession, spiritual repression, exclusion, and disregarding of indigenous rights, state violence, as well as recent extractive development projects can be mentioned as some of these threats that are visible in the oral tradition, history, toponymy, and physical bodies of the sacred landscape. Learning on the example of the community of Ilom I document sacred places and analyze how these factors relate to oral narratives and spiritual expressions. First, I introduce to the context the Ixil region and provide theoretical framework, literature review, and methodological approach to conducting field research. Part I is an overall view of the sacred landscape of Ilom, including an explanation of the terminology and an analysis of their redistribution. Parts II and III concentrate on selected narratives from the oral history and tradition of Ilom and Ixil region with emphasis on the inhabitants' perspective on places and beings that conform the sacred landscape.

 