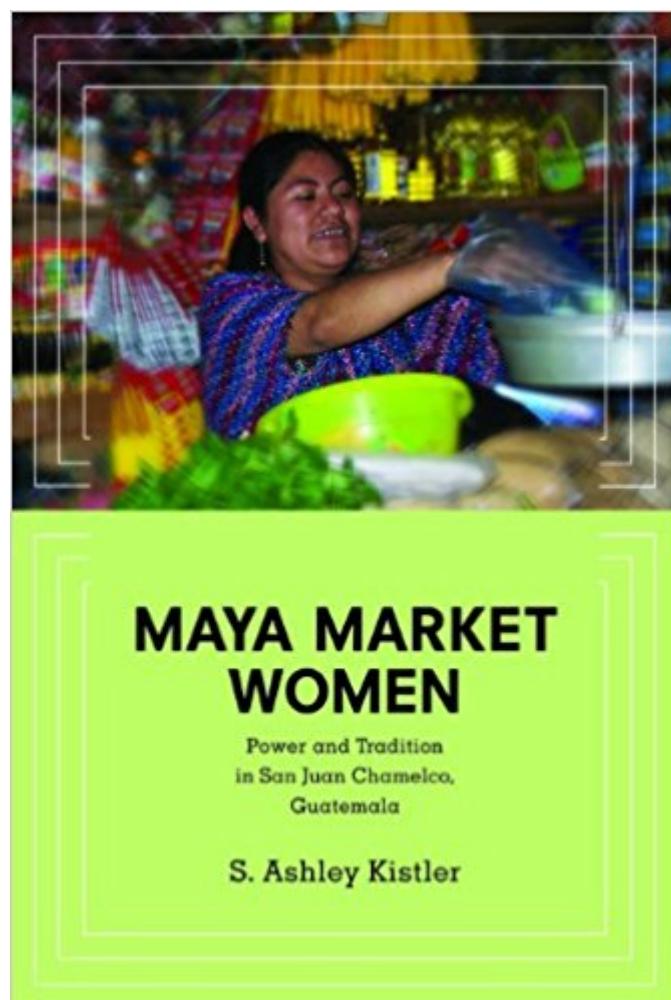


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# **Maya Market Women: Power And Tradition In San Juan Chamelco, Guatemala (Interp Culture New Millennium)**



## Synopsis

As cultural mediators, Chamelco's market women offer a model of contemporary Q'eqchi' identity grounded in the strength of the Maya historical legacy. Guatemala's Maya communities have faced nearly five hundred years of constant challenges to their culture, from colonial oppression to the instability of violent military dictatorships and the advent of new global technologies. In spite of this history, the people of San Juan Chamelco, Guatemala, have effectively resisted significant changes to their cultural identities. Chamelco residents embrace new technologies, ideas, and resources to strengthen their indigenous identities and maintain Maya practice in the 21st century, a resilience that sets Chamelco apart from other Maya towns. Unlike the region's other indigenous women, Chamelco's Q'eqchi' market women achieve both prominence and visibility as vendors, dominating social domains from religion to local politics. These women honor their families' legacies through continuation of the inherited, high-status marketing trade. In *Maya Market Women*, S. Ashley Kistler describes how market women gain social standing as mediators of sometimes conflicting realities, harnessing the forces of global capitalism to revitalize Chamelco's indigenous identity. Working at the intersections of globalization, kinship, gender, and memory, Kistler presents a firsthand look at Maya markets as a domain in which the values of capitalism and indigenous communities meet.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Kistler not only describes the daily lives of vendor women, she captures the broader contexts of their lives as they participate in local community politics, consider national-level Maya cultural

movements, and confront typical non-Maya patriarchal forms of decision making and power that Mayas throughout Guatemala experience."-American Anthropologist "Maya Market Women: Power and Tradition in San Juan Chamelco, Guatemala is an excellent modern ethnography of the Maya that takes globalization into account without losing any of the unique ethnographic insights of traditional case studies. Using a very descriptive writing style, S. Ashley Kistler gives an up-to-date analysis of Maya women who use modern marketing and exchange to maintain local social and cultural institutions such as religious brotherhoods, ritual co-parenthood, and folkloric performances." --Rachel Corr, author of *Ritual and Remembrance in the Ecuadorian Andes* "A delightfully readable and illuminating ethnography of the Maya market women of Chamelco. . . . It offers opportunities for reflection and debate about how cultural and economic practices work in tandem."--*Journal of Anthropological Research*"This book has much to offer those interested in embodied memory, perception, and action. There are tantalizing strands for explorations of performance theory, language praxis, and spatial associations and resonances. It succeeds in its aim to elucidate the process by which Q'eqchi' women entail capitalistic systems in their own projects of personhood and social institutions, and thereby maintain the cultural fabric. Indeed this ethnography displays the many meshed systems that have enabled the reemergence of Maya values onto the Guatemalan national scene."-*Western Folklore*

A study of resilient Q'eqchi'-Maya vendors using capitalism to preserve their traditional cultural identities

Dr. Kistler eloquently tells the tales of Maya women and the empowerment they gain through their place in the market. This book shines a light on the little known struggles today's Maya face; especially gender inequality that takes place in many Maya communities. I would recommend this book to anyone that wants to learn more about how women are gaining power in places where power is not easily allotted to them. It is a great read and helps to broaden your understanding of the world we live in and the challenges that are being faced everyday. Dr. Kistler is an expert in her field, and her knowledge and passion about Maya women shine through the pages of her book.

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