

**Paul Sullivan. Estrategias identitarias: Educación y la antropología histórica en Yucatán (Review). Ethnohistory, Summer 2007, vol. 54: 576 - 578.**

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Estrategias identitarias: Educación y la antropología histórica en Yucatán. Edited by Juan A. Castillo Cocom and Quetzil Castañeda. (Mérida, Yucatán: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Unidad 31-A; Open School of Ethnography and Anthropology; Secretaría de Educación de Yucatan, 2004. 293 pp., preface, maps, bibliography, photos, tables, figures. \$22.50 paper.)

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Twelve fine ethnographic and historical essays delve deeply into problems of ethnicity, governance, and politics on the Yucatán Peninsula and, in the case of one contribution, among Yucatecan migrants to the United States. The book is divided into two parts, each with separate, analytically rich introductions by Quetzil Castañeda.

The six essays of the first half were published previously in English in the spring 2004 issue of the *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*. Based for the most part on exhaustive archival research, these essays question the very meaning of the word Maya and explore the changing contours and relevance of “Maya ethnicity” from conquest to the twentieth century. In an essay on Maya “ethnogenesis,” for example, Matthew Restall convincingly documents that the term Maya had a very restricted use in the colonial era and that the indigenous population of the peninsula did not share any broad ethnic consciousness. Colonial policies and practices did slowly foster an implied ethnic identity, Restall argues, but only in the twentieth century did a modern ethnopolitics give rise to explicit claims of Maya ethnicity. Following a similar line of inquiry for the nineteenth century, especially for the period of the War of the Castes, Wolfgang Gabbert equally convincingly argues that indigenous peoples were not united by an ethnic consciousness or a shared ethnic program. They were, on the contrary, divided in their perspectives and their loyalties, as were, to some extent, their peninsular counterparts of European origin. The War of the Castes did not arise from ethnic/racial antagonism, although, as Gabbert shows, the long conflict did engender some such hostility among some of its participants, giving rise to a rather limited and localized “ethnic” consciousness only among Caste War rebels in what later became central Quintana Roo.

In another exploration of similar questions, Ben Fallaw asks whether rural indigenous peoples' sometimes hostile reception of federal schools in their communities in the early 1930s resulted from ethnic hostility and the desire to preserve their distinctive cultures and identities. A detailed study of two contrasting cases, from Chan Kom and Kanxoc, suggests clearly that this was not the case—the decision of locals to cooperate with or to oppose schools was made on quite different, more local, and often prosaic bases.

The essays in the second half of the book are a more eclectic set. Juan R. Manzanilla Dorantes charts the evolution of rural education policy on the Yucatan Peninsula in the first several decades after the Mexican Revolution. Ueli Hostettler examines in fine detail how the agrarian reform and federal teachers were deployed to coax and pacify the once-rebel Maya of central Quintana Roo from the 1920s to the 1960s. Quetzil Castañeda provides a similarly detailed study of one Yucatecan community's long struggle to reshape local political authority and erect itself as the state's newest municipio. Patricia Fortuny Loret de Mola provides a rare glimpse of Yucatecan migrants to San Francisco, where, over several decades, families from Oxkutzcab have established a permanent outlying community, or as she puts it, a "transnational community" comprising both the Yucatecan town and the part of the California city. Finally, a witty and provocative essay by Juan A. Castillo Cocom exposes how state elites have cynically twisted genealogy and claims of Maya nobility to promote their own Maya "princes" as spokesmen for the causes of one political party or another. This is a very valuable and welcome collection of essays—most deeply researched, all well written, and very insightfully presented by the

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