

Cultural Tourism in Latin America

The Politics of Space and Imagery

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

HERITAGE AND INDIGENEITY:
TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE POLITICS OF TOURISM

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Just after Christmas 2004, a group of handicraft vendors and artisans invaded the archaeological zone of Chichén Itzá in order to sell their products directly to tourists. Throughout Mexico, the sale of souvenirs inside sites of patrimony is regulated by law, and the unsanctioned mass entry into sites by locals for this purpose is illegal and typically referred to as an invasion. This was the third such invasion of Chichén since 1982 and it seemed to follow a previously established pattern. Within two months (February 2005), however, a radically new political strategy emerged that centred on Maya and indigenous identity. This strategy was designed by the vendors' new legal representative—a Maya lawyer who had recently been fired as chief administrator of Chichén Itzá, a post he had held since the 1990s when he had been hired to bring the unruly vendors of the second invasion under control. In Mexican political slang, he 'flipped the tortilla' (*dio vuelta a la tortilla*). As their new lawyer, he created a network of alliances with indigenous organizations, rights advocacy NGOs, social movements (EZLN) and international governmental organizations, and deployed an array of legalities and laws.

This intervention of identity politics and the concomitant 'use of law as tactics' (Foucault 1991: 95) significantly transformed the usual politics of tourism at Chichén into a new form of conflict that takes heritage as the means, mode and goal of struggle. By situating the third invasion in the historical contexts of previous conflicts, I argue that these changes in the politics of tourism constitute a transformation in the nature and mode of heritage of Chichén Itzá. According to the theory I propose here, these ruins of national 'patrimony' became 'heritage'; that is, there has emerged a new configuration of conflicts over the ownership, use rights, control, regulation and management of this materiality that are, properly speaking, heritage politics. This thesis

is argued through an ethnographic history of the politics of Chichén, whose key moments are synthesized in table 1.

Politics of tourism: contexts

Chichén Itzá was reconstructed into an archaeological site of tourism by Mexican and North American archaeologists between 1923 and 1941 (Kidder 1930; Jones 1995; Castañeda 1996, 2005c). In addition to the scientific goals of knowledge, the archaeological restoration had the objective of creating a tourism destination as a means to promote archaeology (Kidder 1930: 97–99). Tourism at Chichén, however, was sporadic until the early 1960s, when the elimination of Cuba from the US ‘pleasure periphery’ facilitated the growth of mass tourism to Yucatán.

Tourism development in Yucatán has always been contingent on broader socio-political context and factors. Thus the initial creation of the Yucatán tourism market was stimulated by the political crises that closed Cuba as a site of US tourism. Historically, large-scale tourism in the Yucatán Peninsula had been organized around Mérida in the state of Yucatán with excursions to archaeological sites, principally Chichén. Minimalist tourism developed at Isla Mujeres and Cozumel as an extension of Key West, Florida based yacht and sailing culture. The development of Cancún as a destination created a more encompassing regional tourism network with two axes, the Mexican Caribbean (which stretches from Isla Holbox, north of Cancún, to beaches south of Tulum) and the Cancún–Mérida corridor. In the early 1980s, the completion of initial construction phases of Cancún, in the state of Quintana Roo, coincided with the crash of the Mexican peso and inaugurated a tourism boom in Mexico and especially the enlarged Yucatán tourism region beginning in 1982 that lasted until the socioeconomic destruction created by Hurricane Gilberto in 1988 (García Fuentes 1979; Lee 1978; Castañeda 1996; Clancy 1999, 2001a, 2001b; Pi-Sunyer and Thomas 1997; Pi-Sunyer et al. 2001; Torres 2002; Walker 2005). Chichén Itzá, situated as the primary destination between Cancún and Mérida, benefited significantly from this exponential growth of regional tourism, despite the near total absence of strategic planning in the state of Yucatán in contrast to the highly coordinated and funded development strategies deployed in Quintana Roo.

Tourism services for and the volume of visitors to Chichén and the nearby Maya town of Pisté grew exponentially, as did the size of this Maya village. This community, whose intertwined history with Chichén goes back to pre-Columbian days, had grown in population from under 500 in the 1930s to over 1,000 in the early 1980s to reach nearly 5,000 by 1990 (Castañeda 2003, 1996: 76). Other nearby and smaller communities, such as Xcalacoop to the north and San Francisco to the east of Chichén, also grew significantly in the 1980s in relation to the rise of the local tourism economy.

One settlement that did not undergo significant growth was the small outpost of the families of the park wardens (*guardianos* or *custodios*) who were hired by the Mexican Monumentos Prehispánicos, which was later reorganized into the National Institute of Anthropology and History (hereafter, INAH), to care-take the archaeological zone. Their houses were strategically located on the main plaza of Chichén between the Ball Court, to the west, and the pyramid of Kukulcan, to the east, on the road that had been built in 1936 from Mérida to Chichén Itzá (see illustration 1). The INAH homes—from which the custodios and their families sold food, beverages, guidebooks, postcards, stamps and souvenirs—were aligned along the road, which cut across the main plaza of Chichén, the south-west corner of which was used for the ticket entrance and car park.

This organization of space, which was established by the mid 1930s, is significant, for it has structured and shaped the politics of tourism. This politics is fundamentally characterized by actors seeking to order/organize space so as to assert and maintain economic control of it as a means for economic ends—at least this is what characterizes the politics of tourism at Chichén until the third invasion, when the irruption of conflicts over the forms of legal ownership of archaeological heritage transformed the groundwork of these economic strategies.

By the early 1980s, as many as 20 men and women from Pisté were selling various products outside the entrances to Chichén on this strip of road. While the women tended to sell food and fruit, the men sold slushies (blends of water, ice and flavoured syrup), newspapers and, especially, the home-made wood carvings that one INAH custodio had invented as a souvenir in the mid 1970s (see Castañeda 2004a, 2005b). When the new entrance, the Cubertizo, was built in 1982 (directly west of the Ball Court), these men were forced into the new car park as illicit street vendors. By 1983, the number of vendors had increased from 20

Table 1. Historical time line of events at Chichén Itzá and Pisté, 1900s–2005

Years	Chichén Itzá	Pisté
1900s– 1910	Chichén Itzá owned as private property by Edward H. Thompson as a means to collect archaeological specimens for the Peabody Museum of Harvard University,	Pisté slowly became repopulated after being a war zone during the Caste War (1847–1902); low-intensity violence created by soldiers from the military garrison stationed in Pisté.
1910– 1923	Hacienda Chichén was abandoned during the period of the Mexican Revolution and the years of the governorships of Salvador Alvarado through Felipe Carrillo Puerto.	Pisté in the middle of a micro-region in which sporadic violence is used to subjugate communities during struggles between Liberales and Socialistas.
1923– 1938	Carnegie Institution of Washington and Mexican Monumentos Prehispanicos (institutional ancestor of the INAH) initiate excavation and reconstruction; CIW rented Hacienda Chichén from Thompson, who sold it to Fernando Barbachano Peon.	Political stabilization of Yucatán and region. Immigration to Pisté of skilled labourers to work for US archaeologists (Morley); Pisté is main supply of labour for the archaeologists, ranging from 50–120 men in different seasons.
1940s– 1960s	Barbachano pioneers low-volume tourism Chichén using the Hotel Mayaland and Hacienda Chichén; National Geographic sponsors an attempt to dredge and excavate the Cenote Sagrado in 1961–62.	Some Pisté men develop careers as masons and work at other archaeological sites, some become INAH <i>custodios</i> living inside Chichén, while others find employment in the Mérida office of INAH in restoration and care-taking.
1970s	Tourism to Chichén increases slightly, mostly due to the emergence of Yucatán as a tourism destination. Yucatán tourism also includes Mérida and adventure-recreational tourism on Isla Mujeres; no strategic planning or regulation of tourism by state government. Club Med built at Chichén.	Pisté continues to grow at slow pace but initiates first attempt to become an independent <i>municipio</i> in late 1960s, second attempt in 1970s; the economic power of INAH families converts into political power in town politics & society; custodios and teachers control town until 1988.

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Years	Chichén Itzá	Pisté
1974	Invention of the equinox phenomenon due to the publication of Luis Arochi's book about the interplay of light from setting sun with corners of the main pyramid; the symbolism of the configuration of light and shadow is interpreted as the arrival or descent of Maya god Kukulcan ('feathered serpent').	An INAH custodio invents a handicraft tradition, wood carvings stylized by pre-Columbian statuary; many from Pisté begin to carve wood and sell it at Chichén; with capital accumulation other regional & national crafts are commercialized; invented Pisté tourist handicrafts develops into art tradition by 1990s.
1982	State government creates a coordinated analysis of the underdevelopment and the development needs of each county; conception of a limited plan to correct infrastructural problems at Chichén, which includes: a detour of the road around north end of site, relocation of the INAH families and destruction of those houses, construction of Cubertizo (new ticket entrance).	During 1970s many communities of Yucatán experience mass out-migration to Cancun during construction phases. End of Phase 1 generates a return of Pisté men to Pisté in search of work, where they find entrepreneurial opportunities in the handicraft economy of Chichén, as well as in Pisté's growing hotel, restaurant, taxi and small-shop sectors.
1984	State begins sponsoring rituals for spring equinox, which becomes key income for locals due to the high volume of tourists (30,000–60,000 visitors to the one-day event every 21 March); Mexico signs the UNESCO Convention on World Heritage.	

Table 1 (cont.)

Years	Chichén Itzá	Pisté
1982– 1987	Invasion of Chichén Itzá by up to 600 artisans and vendors of handicrafts and food; the majority are from Pisté, a minority from smaller nearby villages, and a handful of non-local, non-Yucatecan Mexicans from Cancún and other parts of Mexico. Conflicts and crisis of control of the site, frequent police and military raids on the vendors, acts of violence between factions of vendors; federal government attempts to assert coercive control of vendors through the creation of labour unions; unique agreement between state and federal government leads to the creation of CULTUR, which is charged with supervising and regulating the touristic dimensions of archaeological and historical heritage sites of Yucatán state; the director is hand-picked and supervised by the governor—the agency is an example of state capitalism. The state constructs a handicraft market (Tianguis) as an annex to the new entrance complex (Parador); only 120 vendors enter market, others relocate to Mayaland entrance and Pisté hotels.	
1987– 1994	Relative tranquillity in Chichén, except for the increasing popularity of the equinox ritual that is sponsored by the state government to promote tourism and the Maya. Chichén placed on Mexico's World Heritage List in 1988.	Town politics in Pisté escalates into a social movement with goal of becoming an independent county; motivation is to effect greater local control of tourism benefits of Chichén for development of town infrastructure and tourism development.
1994– 1999	Barbachanos seek to displace the handicraft vendors camped in front of Hotel Mayaland; they force the closure of the Mayaland entrance to Chichén and create a disenfranchised group of vendors; begin expansion of Mayaland Hotel.	Pisté undergoes a series of intense political conflicts, factionalism and betrayals, including imprisonment of the mayor, scandals in <i>ejido</i> financing, hijacking of a tractor used to build toll road, and the creation of a local PAN party.
1994– 1997	Second invasion of Chichén Itzá by a new group of vendors dislocated from the Mayaland vending sites or who are otherwise without a legitimate market venue; they petition government for a new market inside the archaeological zone with support of Barbachano family; INAH refuses request and state government creates extension of the Tianguis marketplace to resolve crisis.	

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Years	Chichén Itzá	Pisté
1999– 2005	PAN congressman proposes privatization of archaeological heritage; mass popular mobilization against this, including by the INAH at local, state and federal levels; Barbachano senior is inspired to return from Florida retirement to initiate a takeover of the Sacred Cenote Palapa and the Cooperativa Palapa; this enabled by the political conjuncture of the rise of PAN at state and federal levels, favourable changes in INAH leadership, and the death of Cervera Pacheco, PRI caudillo or political boss in Yucatán for over 20 years. The vendors, with support from a faction of Chichén custodios (new workers), respond with a third invasion.	

Sources

- Pisté history and town politics up to 1990s, see Steggerda (1941), Castañeda (1996: 35–93, 259–297; 2001, 2003a)
- State-sponsored tourism ritual of the equinox, see Arochi (1974), Himpele and Castañeda (1997), Castañeda (1996: 175–200)
- Legal basis of the private and communal ownership of Chichén and of archaeological patrimony in Mexico, see Breglia (2006)
- First invasion, see Castañeda (1998), Peraza López & Rejón Patrón (1989), Peraza López et al. (1987), Morales Valderrama et al. (1989)
- Pisté art and Yucatán handicraft industry, see Castañeda (2004a, 2005a, 2005b), Morales Valderrama et al. (1989)
- Chichén archaeology, see Ramírez Aznar (1990); Sullivan (1991), Jones (1995), Castañeda (2003b, 2005c)

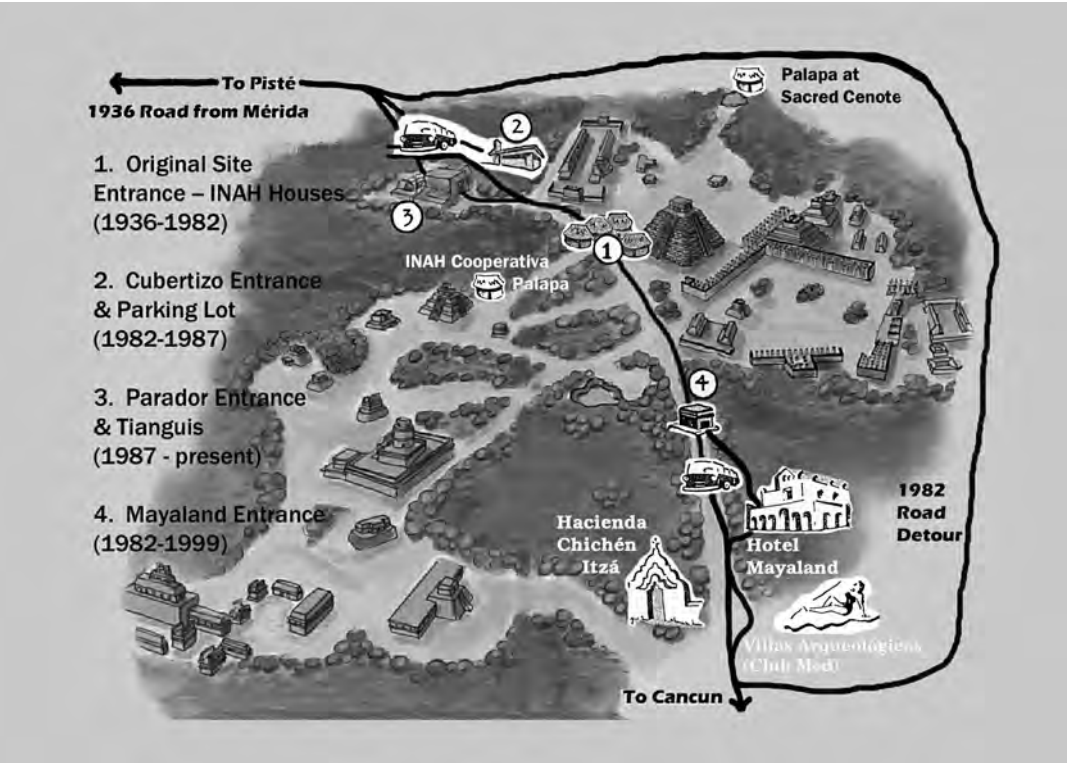


Illustration 1—Map of Chichén Itzá showing historical changes in the location of entrances and market venues. Map designed by the author, 2008

or so to 200 or 300; the number was estimated to have risen to 600 vendors during the high tourist seasons of 1985 and 1986.

The initial group of artisans and vendors petitioned the state government to construct *palapas* (traditional Maya pole-and-thatch huts without walls) to protect them against the elements. These requests encountered a bureaucratic machinery that was geared to stall, dissuade, exhaust, buy off and otherwise ignore any such demands from citizens for help. At the same time, there was an almost complete lack among Yucatecan politicians and government agencies of an understanding of the significance of tourism for the state and of a vision of tourism development. In this vacuum, the state finally constructed two makeshift venues—pole-and-thatch palapas with no walls—on the edge of the car park, for the initial group of 40 vendors (see illustration 2).

Meanwhile, the number of vendors who were excluded or who excluded themselves from these two groups increased in line with the continued skyrocketing volume of tourists. Without adequate, regulated space for them to sell, new vendors and artisans simply invaded the archaeological zone to find a space alongside the main tourist paths, rest areas and stopping points (see illustration 3). The vendors



Illustration 2—Wood carvers sit on a rock outcrop in the parking lot of the Cubertizo (1985). In the background are palapa #1 (right) and palapa #2 (left)



Illustration 3—These vendors begin wrapping up their sales of the day, while tourists walk to the Parador Turístico on the path to the left. The grandfather, father and uncles of the boy, all veterans who belonged to palapa no. 2, had always claimed this piece of territory during all three invasions. Photograph by the author, March 2005

in the car park palapas therefore also invaded the zone in a double strategy, which was to pressure the state government to create a truly adequate marketplace and to take advantage of the economic opportunity to have immediate contact with several hundreds of thousands customers. These vendors sought to establish self-governing norms of civility and conduct with the goal not only of installing order among themselves, but also of appeasing the state government and the INAH; these required that they clean up their garbage, protect archaeological remains and, especially, interact respectfully with tourists. Other vendors eschewed imposed rules of behaviour regardless of source as they sought to maximize their profits via direct sales to tourists inside the zone. The state pressure to remove the vendors—which included military and police raids, political threats, intimidation and bribing of leaders—merely entrenched the demands of those vendors who were seeking a market and fortified the refusal of other unruly vendors to submit to governmental authority and regulations.¹

The invasion was a political, social and economic crisis not only at the level of the state of Yucatán, but also for the Mérida-Cancún tourism network and for federal institutions. While the federal government sought to retain administrative control of archaeological sites throughout Mexico, and especially in such significant sites of tourism as Chichén, it had no practical means to police sites to prevent these invasions, which occurred at all major archaeological-tourism destinations in Mexico (e.g. at Tulum, Teotihuacán and Tajín). While the INAH custodios could use their whistles to dissuade tourists from climbing the pyramids, they had no regulatory mechanisms, management protocols or policing procedures to prevent the country's citizens from flooding archaeological sites with tourist goods. My thesis is that the invasions began to occur in the absence of both heritage and tourism policies, and that these invasions triggered responses that developed into explicit strategies and sets of management protocols. While the initial invasions were politics over the organization and use of space, the third invasion entailed a struggle over the ownership of space itself. It is in this sense that I argue that Chichén became heritage in a new and different way.

The first invasion at Chichén was triggered by a plan initiated by the state government to improve the infrastructure of tourism services in

¹ On the first invasion, see Peraza López & Rejón Patrón 1989; Peraza López et al. 1987, Morales Valderrama et al. 1989; Castañeda 1996: 232–258, 1998.

a way that would also protect archaeological materials. This plan had three points: the construction of a more modern entrance building (the aforementioned Cubertizo), the building of an illuminated pavement running three kilometres from Pisté to Chichén, and the re-routing of the original road built in 1936 from Mérida to Chichén around the north end of the archaeological zone so as to rid the centre of the pre-Columbian city of heavy car and bus traffic. It is important to note that this plan was a corrective device that was totally devoid of any grounded analysis of long-range planning of tourism in general, and of archaeological tourism in particular. The absence at the state level of government of both strategic development plans and management protocols for administration of 'heritage resources' contrasts strongly with the conception, design and implementation of Cancún. The chaos of the invasion is clear evidence that this very delimited 'plan' was less a programme for the future than a corrective, ameliorative device.

The closing of the road entailed razing the homes of the INAH workers, who were relocated to Pisté. The custodios were able to negotiate compensation for the loss of their homes and business interests. While senior custodios opted for choice stalls in the new Cubertizo, others sought rights to vending concessions inside the tourist zone of Chichén at two distinct venues called palapas. Two custodios were each granted a half share of the palapa venue at the Sacred Cenote. The struggle to retain rights over this palapa is a crucial element of the story. The *palapa* was run by INAH wardens and their heirs until the state government took it over in the 1990s; in 2002, it was appropriated—'privatized'—by the Barbachano family, an oligarchic and entrepreneurial family of Yucatán that had pioneered tourism to Chichén by building the first major hotel at the ruins (Hotel Mayaland) in 1930. The other palapa, located to the south of the main plaza along the pre-Columbian road leading to 'Old Chichén', was granted as a cooperative business to the twelve remaining INAH custodians. This group of *custodios* came to be known as the *antiguos*, not only because of their seniority as INAH workers but also because they formed a dominant political and economic interest group that was powerful not only in the Chichén workplace and in Pisté, but also in the regional office of the INAH (cf. Breglia 2006).

These concessions given to the INAH custodios were viewed as prejudicial by the growing number of disenfranchised vendors who had no commercial venue. The invading vendors considered that they had the same rights as the custodios to benefit from the economic use

of Chichén. In petitioning the government for a market, the rationale of the invaders was that they have the economic human right to fair working conditions; this right was infringed by the state-sanctioned privilege accorded to certain Pisté inhabitants (INAH workers) and not others. This claim in turn was built on the unquestioned assumption that the vendors had use rights to Chichén as inhabitants of Pisté, since Chichén ‘belongs’ to Pisté in two ways. First, given the intertwining histories of Chichén and Pisté, the Chichén is part of the historical-cultural and social legacy or heritage of Pisté. Second, portions of the land of Chichén were given under the federal land grant laws (*ejido* reform) to Pisté, which granted a restricted number of Pisté farmers the use rights to this land as *ejidatarios*. It is crucial to note, however, that the entitlement to use rights as *ejidatarios* is itself based on the assumption of the legitimate right of the federal government to act as the steward of the nation’s communal, agricultural lands.² Further, the *ejido* entitlement does not provide any rights to the ownership, use or control of historical-cultural materials, that is, heritage resources. In other words, the invasion was not legitimated, much less triggered, by claims that the vendors *owned* Chichén as ‘Maya heritage’!

After five years of crisis, during which tourism to Chichén, Cancún and Mérida continued to escalate, the state government, under the governorship of Víctor Cervera Pacheco, finally yielded to the vendors’ demands for a permanent market venue. The building called the Tianguis (Nahuatl for ‘market’) was added on to the second new entrance complex (the Parador Turístico) that had been opened in time for the ritual of the spring equinox on 21 March 1987 (see illustration 4 and 5). The new market, however, was not enough to persuade the vendors to give up their vending locations inside the zone. In addition, the state government had to reach an agreement with the INAH that restricted the palapas to the sale of snacks, beverages, postcards and tourist literature. In order to protect the economic human rights of the artisan-vendors who produced and sold their own wood carvings, the palapas run by INAH workers were prohibited from selling handicrafts.

The politics of tourism at Chichén had and still has multiple foci. For the vendors, their politics was primarily focused on claiming and

² Breglia (2006) analyzes the different kinds of claims and conflicts that occur over land that is simultaneously patrimonio and heritage collectively owned by ejidatarios.



Illustration 4—Vendors from the first invasion were given the option to rent stalls in the Tianguis, whose location by the site of the new entrance of the Parador Turístico created a precipitous drop in sales. The new-Maya faux-corballed arch of the Parador, middle background, was constructed to frame the temple top of the Pyramid of Kukulcan. Photograph by the author, 1989



Illustration 5—A vendor sells hats and parasols in the plaza area between the Tianguis and the Parador. Although this woman was only a child during the first invasion, her mother was one of the political leaders of one group of vendors that moved from the palapas to the Tianguis in 1987. Photograph taken from the arch entrance of the Parador. Photograph by the author, 2005

maintaining use of coveted space inside the archaeological zone. This fed internal factionalism and their solidarity against diverse economic interests that sought their expulsion from the zone. At stake for the INAH workers was the material protection of archaeological materials and their own socio-economic interests that derived from their employment. For the owners of handicraft stores and for tour guides, the issue was simply a loss of market share—not a question of identity, culture, property rights, human rights or interpretation of Maya civilization. As for the Barbachanos, they were not engaged in community politics, which included the invasions of Chichén, and until 2003 they did not assert any rights of ownership of the land on which the ruins stand. These struggles, therefore, were not about heritage as this term has come to mean in the last decades. These struggles certainly occurred in the very space of what we unthinkingly categorize and routinely label as ‘heritage’. However, these conflicts actually did not centre on heritage as the object, objective or mode of these struggles.

In fact, the legitimacy of the state control, regulation and administration of Chichén as national patrimony was presupposed by the vendors, as well as by all the other social actors. Even those vendors who refused ‘domestication’ by the state and who asserted their economic independence and rights to pursue freely their economic livelihood, only claimed rights to use Chichén—that is, use rights, not a right of any type of ownership. Further, the ongoing petitioning of the government to intervene and the recognition by the majority of vendors that the invasion was only a mechanism to put pressure on the nation-state to create a market, is the clearest expression that the vendors accepted, assumed and took as legally legitimate the state prerogative to manage the site as the steward of national patrimony.

A theory of heritage: concepts and ideal types

It is certainly true that the word heritage has come to be the dominant, all-encompassing category for any and all things that come from the past (or present) as the meaningful and valuable legacy of a social group or community. I retain the use of heritage as this umbrella category, devoid of theoretical and analytical value. It is simply a descriptive word and a marker of a diversity of forms. Precisely because of the common usage of this word, ‘heritage’ as a concept is woefully weak, underdeveloped and untheorized. Yet, the shifting terms, stakes and

forms of politics of Chichén have suggested the urgent need to theorize 'heritage'. Specifically, the disjunction between Chichén as a site of 'national patrimony' and as a site of 'world heritage' offers a path to exploit. Consider that the concept of 'heritage' is most often translated into Spanish as *patrimonio*. Thus, for example, in Mexico—and in Latin America generally—the builders of nations since the nineteenth century have been concerned with *patrimonio* as means to forge images of national belonging and unity. However, *patrimonio* translates into English as either 'patrimony' or 'heritage'. The conceptual and semantic differences between these terms suggest the potential to convert these terms into theoretical notions of analytical value. Although they could be the same and be implicated in each other, the long span of imagining and fashioning Latin American nations makes it evident that analytically, empirically and historically speaking, not all 'patrimony' is heritage and not all 'heritage' is patrimony.

I suggest that patrimony is a specific type of heritage that is distinct from and predates contemporary discourses, meanings, usages and practices of the word 'heritage' that have emerged on the global stage over the last three decades. I define the concept of patrimony as an ideal type of heritage that operates precisely as Clifford Geertz (1973) theorized his concept of primordial origins. These are materials that are appropriated by nation-states, their agents or other actors in civil society to create (that is, forge, imagine, image, narrate and build) *national* identity, belonging, passions and sentiments of community. These materials can be anything that is shared, or are invented as though they were shared: although Geertz discussed only six 'primordial origins'—blood, race, language, region, religion and 'customs' (or culture)—we can certainly add other categories and forms of primordial origins. For example, material culture, archaeological heritage and natural environment are other source materials from which primordial sentiments of identity and belonging to a national community can be created.

Ultimately, the value (and concept) of any primordial origin, including any archaeological heritage that serves as 'primordial patrimony', is that the materials, whether tangible or intangible, can be narrated, exhibited and represented in images that function to symbolize and signify the nation. It is through the narration, exhibition and representation of these origins that nation is experienced and felt with passion. While there might be conflict over the meanings and interpretation of the symbolism of this patrimony-heritage, there is no conflict over the actual materials in terms of legal ownership, use rights or market

value. The conflicts over patrimony are interpretive and representational regarding the symbolic meanings, messages, narrative elements, signification and signifying practices of the way the primordial heritage is used. Sociocultural inclusion or exclusion is typically at the heart of such controversies and conflicts, *but not as a conflict or question of the legal or cultural forms of ownership of heritage*. Heritage in this sense can be called primordial heritage, patrimony heritage or, simply, patrimony.

Given the dictionary meanings of the word 'heritage', we should not be surprised that this ideal type is fundamentally a substance that functions and is marked by transference and continuity, that is, processes and dynamics of inheriting and inheritance. The politics of patrimony is therefore primarily a politics of representation.³ A new semantic valorization of the word heritage, however, has come into existence in the social practices of people throughout the world in the last 30 years.⁴ The way people practise heritage is no longer in terms of its transferability and function to link together ancestor and descendant in a relation of continuity, but in terms of the ownership, use rights and marketability of heritage as a resource or a property. Patrimony is about symbolic and exchange value, whereas heritage is defined as a use value that demands legal mechanisms of control and management.

In this new socio-economic functioning of heritage as use value, the symbolization of identity by patrimony is no longer a diagnostic feature. Rather, socio-political and economic conditions have triggered a dynamic inversion: whereas identity is defined by patrimony, identity defines heritage. The pre-given, assumed cultural identity of groups and communities has become the social fiction that defines the legalities of ownership, use rights and the management of heritage. Further, the identity in this equation is no longer just the identity of 'nation' or the 'patri-land', but rather of diverse types of cultural, indigenous, racial-ethnic, linguistic-religious and other marginalized communities that reside within and across nation-states. Whereas patrimony was all and only about the nation, heritage is, as it were, 'relativist' (like

³ In Mexico, 'heritage' has fundamentally been a politics of patrimony from the formation of a stable nation-state in the 19th century through to the end of the twentieth century. Mexican archaeological patrimony started to become heritage only in the last decade.

⁴ The UNESCO conventions on World Heritage (1972) and on Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) serve as arbitrary landmarks for the emergence of this new heritage.

the concept of culture), which is precisely what provides this category with descriptive power.

Alongside patrimony-heritage, we can therefore identify two additional types of heritage. The second ideal type of heritage is the substantive form, whether tangible or intangible, that has come to be viewed or construed as resources with multiple economic and sociocultural use values. What is crucial about this analytical type is that the concept of heritage resource, points us towards asking about the cultural construction, logic, assumptions and filters that make such and such a tangible or intangible 'thing' *valued* as an exploitable 'resource' that must be conserved, protected, owned, used or commercialized irrespective of the interpretive politics of representation and regardless of legal ownerships. It is this pre-given web of practices and meanings that transforms heritage things into objects of contestation, debate and struggle.

The third ideal type of heritage hinges on the existence of heritage resources construed as an economic use-value. This third type refers to the strategies, practices and protocols that target these heritage values with practical mechanisms that regulate, control, manage and manipulate the actual heritage resources. Heritage is therefore a governmentality, that is, a strategic vision and practice of using various forms of law (or legalities), identity and administrative protocols as the mechanisms for governing heritage. In other words, heritage governmentality refers to strategies and practices for managing and governing cultural-historical values and things (whether or not they are patrimony) *as heritage resources*.

In summary, there are three ideal types of heritage: patrimony (primordial heritage), resources (heritage recourses) and heritage (heritage governmentality). These three substantive forms of heritage have no necessary correlation or causal relationship to each other. It therefore becomes the task of investigation to analyse how exactly they are present or absent and intertwined or implicated in any given situation. The theoretical terms facilitate the study of the socio-political processes that pervade their presence in historically particular contexts.

Chichén Itzá: patrimony or heritage?

I have argued that the politics of the first invasion was not a politics of heritage. Certainly, Chichén was, and still is, heritage in the sense

of patrimony and primordial origins.⁵ Nonetheless, neither patrimony nor resources were the objects or targets of the conflicts triggered by the first and the second invasion—and thus these forms of heritage are not of primary concern in this chapter. The struggles to control space for marketing tourism goods did not in any way involve or implicate conflicts in the meaning and interpretation of Chichén as national patrimony (primordial heritage). These conflicts were not essentially about the management or regulation of heritage—that is, of Chichén Itzá as a heritage resource—but about the management and regulation of tourism activities via the organization and control of spaces in an archaeological site of tourism.

Although the INAH was concerned about the protection of archaeological ruins, the custodios used this mandate as ideological cover for their own commercial activities. The INAH and governmental officials used the banner of ‘the vendor invasion presents a bad image to the tourists’ as a weapon against the vendors. This clearly points to the fact that this was a politics of tourism, not of heritage in any of the three senses of patrimony, governmentality or resources that I have proposed. The history I have charted here illustrates that a defining condition of possibility that enabled the invasion was the absence of both tourism strategies and heritage governmentality—that is, state strategies and practices for managing and governing Chichén *as heritage* (i.e. heritage resource).

First, unlike the federal planning involved in Cancún and other mega-tourism resorts (e.g. Huatulco), the state government of Yucatán did not envision or plan tourism development—let alone archaeological heritage development—in Yucatán.⁶ While the Yucatec private sector struggled to capture a piece of the Mexican Caribbean, the Yucatán state government, for reasons that cannot be elaborated here, apparently did not consider tourism a worthy economic sector to develop. This attitude, however, began to be reversed under Governor Cervera Pacheco (1984–1988) in the triggering context of the first invasion of Chichén (1982–1987).

⁵ In earlier work I analysed the representational politics of patrimony in terms of anthropological discourse, New Age spiritualism, guided tours and tourist art (e.g. Castañeda 1996: 35–67, 97–200, 2000a, 2000b, 2004b, 2005b, 2005c).

⁶ Although Mérida has always been conceived as a colonial attraction (historical tourism), the development of historical heritage is only a recent goal of Yucatec private sector (see Breglia, this volume).

Under Cervera Pacheco there emerged a unique state agency that had two objectives. The long-term goal was to create what would essentially be a state-owned tourism business based on a monopoly control of services as historical-cultural destinations in the state of Yucatán. The short-term goal was to resolve the problem of the invasion of Chichén precisely in order to begin to take control of the income generated at this site. With these objectives in mind, in 1985 an intra-governmental agreement between the federal Secretaria de Educación Pública, the INAH and the state government of Yucatán established CULTUR (Patronato de las Unidades de Servicios Culturales y Turísticos del Estado de Yucatán) under the direct supervision of the governor by ceding the socio-economic prerogatives of the federal stewardship of national patrimony to this unique agency.⁷ CULTUR was designed to programme, supervise, regulate and plan the *touristic* (i.e. consumer and service) dimensions of archaeological, historical and natural heritage (CULTUR 1985).

In a startling example of state capitalism, CULTUR was also charged with operating tourism businesses and investing in the creation of new income-producing tourism projects. Thus, CULTUR was a forceful answer to the invasion. It embodied the beginnings (at the state level) of governmental strategies and practices for regulating *not heritage but tourism*, that is, the interface of consumers visiting historical-cultural sites and the various commercial suppliers of services and commodities. CULTUR was created to monopolize the regulatory control and functions of the services, administration, arbitration and management of the tourism aspects of heritage sites.⁸ This tourism governmentality is not at all equal to or the same as a heritage governmentality. However, nor is it the same as a comprehensive rationality for regulating,

⁷ Part of the experimental novelty of CULTUR was that a space had to be made for yet another state agency that dealt with tourism. These other pre-existent agencies include the federal agencies of Secretaria de Turismo—which also has state-level offices—and FONATUR, which operates like a bank brokerage between international banking, the private sector and the government to finance huge tourism development projects such as Cancún. There is also the institutionally separate Dirección de Turismo, which is part of state governments and is fundamentally a statistics collecting state-level agency. SECTUR at the federal level is of course charged with the strategic development of tourism, but at the level of state offices (at least in Yucatán) SECTUR functions primarily in supervisory, regulatory and credential-giving capacities over diverse business sectors and agents, such as the hotel industry and tour guides. Thus, CULTUR was a unique institution.

⁸ Based on its success, other Mexican states created similar agencies in the 1990s.

managing, arranging and developing archaeological (or historical-cultural) materials as heritage resources.

Heritage governmentality has been largely absent from Chichén and Mexico's other major archaeological sites. Although it is impossible to elaborate on the history of archaeology and museum methods, it suffices to point to the suggestive evidence offered in an August 2006 interview with the recently appointed chief administrator of Chichén Itzá, Eduardo Perez de Heredia, who stated that his primary task as director was to create and implement a comprehensive strategy and protocols for heritage management. In fact, the INAH has only recently developed a comprehensive heritage strategy. Chichén, along with five other key archaeological sites, such as Monte Albán, were model targets for the development and implementation of a new strategic vision and set of practices for managing and regulating heritage, that is, heritage resources. Significantly, this strategic plan is based on US and Australian cultural resource management concepts (Perez de Heredia, personal communication, 14 August 2006). It should be reiterated that this form of heritage governmentality has only recently begun to take shape at Chichén, namely following the initiation of the third invasion, which I argue is what most forcefully and dramatically inaugurated the conversion of Chichén into heritage.

The introduction of heritage governmentality correlates to the emergence of heritage resources. The archaeological past or cultural materials are no longer just patrimonial origins, but also resources whose use value (not representational-symbolic value) triggers conflicts that begin to focus on previously dormant issues of property ownership, cultural entitlements and use rights. Further forms of legalities—laws of nations, international conventions, customary laws, universal rights—and cultural-communitarian identity begin to be used as mechanisms for waging political struggles to assert ownership over the value.

The plurality and legality of ownerships

In the first and second invasions, all those involved in the conflicts tacitly accepted and at times expressly promoted the nation-state as the legitimate steward of archaeological patrimony. The nation as owner and the state as guardian of patrimony was never contested, doubted or even raised as an issue—as occurred in the third invasion. Nonetheless, this ownership by the state and stewardship by the INAH was and continues to be quite fraught.

Mexican heritage laws specify that the historical materials belong to the nation, but not the land on and in which such patrimony exists. As Breglia (2006) lucidly explains, the intricacies of changing Mexican heritage laws (*leyes de patrimonio*), the land in which there is heritage/patrimony, can be owned as private property, communal property by communities (*ejido* land grant) or, more rarely, as state-expropriated land owned by the government. It is only the artefacts—the ruins, objects, temples, pyramids, murals, etc.—that are owned by the federal state. Given that in Yucatán alone there are an estimated 2,000 pre-Columbian Maya settlements, the vast majority of archaeological and historical patrimony are on land that is owned as private property or as community *ejido* land.

Thus, the land on which heritage exists can be and is owned in a variety of different ways. While the state can no doubt own such lands, ruins are primarily on private property or communal *ejido* grant. In the case of Chichén Itzá, the land the archaeological patrimony occupies is unevenly divided into private property owned by the Barbachano family, and *ejido* lands granted by the 1917 Land Reform Laws by the towns of Pisté, Xcalacoop and San Francisco.⁹ While this multiplex ownership of national patrimony may seem odd, it is a legal norm and logic that has infused everyday life in Mexico since the nineteenth century when the ancient ruins of *indios* began to be re-valORIZED as national patrimony and the state began to constitute primordial origins as a way to forge a nation.¹⁰

Just as the legitimacy of the nation-state as steward of patrimony was not contested but consolidated by the conflicting parties of the first invasion, the private ownership of the land of Chichén was not brought into question. Nor indeed were the general use rights of *ejidatarios*

⁹ There are discrepancies and confusions in the printed and online information about when, what and from whom Fernando Barbachano Peon purchased the properties that are now the Hotel Mayaland and the Hacienda Chichén. Breglia (2006: 219, fn. 19) notes that the property was divided into five pieces between 1957 and 1970s. Today, it seems that there are three separate entities: the Mayaland Hotel property, owned by Fernando Barbachano Herrera (grandson); the Hacienda Chichén hotel property, owned by Carmen Barbachano Gómez Rul (daughter of F. Barbachano Peon, aunt to Barbachano Herrera) and managed by Belisa Barbachano Herrera (sister to Fernando and Carmen's niece); and a third property, which apparently consists mostly of archaeological ruins, owned by Hans Thies Barbachano (grandson and cousin to Fernando and Belisa). See Albright 2007, Anonymous 2007a; 2007b.

¹⁰ On the general issue of Mexican patrimony laws see Breglia (2006: 29–95). Her analysis of the land ownership of Chichén from the end of the 19th until the mid twentieth century, especially regarding the *ejido* properties, is illuminating.

questioned; in other words, while their general ideological legitimacy and claim to have access to and be able to benefit from Chichén were never disputed, the state and the private sector did seek to strictly delimit and attenuate these benefits. The private ownership of the land of Chichén by the Barbachanos has been a well-known fact or perhaps forgotten assumption for decades. However, the viable, practical, even symbiotic dynamic that had been established between private ownership and national stewardship was jeopardized only after the second invasion which, in effect, is an event that enabled the third invasion. This ambivalent symbiosis of the private ownership of Chichén with the federal stewardship of national heritage/patrimony was permanently disturbed only by the nomination of Chichén as one of the new Seven Wonders of the World (7 July 2007).¹¹

The second invasion (1994–1997) did not threaten but made this otherwise invisible symbiosis evident for everyone to acknowledge. Beginning in 1994, the resurgence of tourism (following setbacks from Hurricane Gilbert and the first Gulf War) triggered an increase in new vendors at Chichén. Locked out of market venues in the Tianguis, these new vendors organized a new (the second) invasion as a way to petition the government to create a handicrafts market. Surprisingly, the Barbachano family lent their support to the vendor movement and even offered to build a venue for the vendors on Barbachano property *inside the zone* at just about the same location where the INAH custodians once had their houses. Many viewed this support as a lightly veiled attempt by the Barbachanos to gain government approval for a building that they could easily take over after a few years of pretending to be benevolent patrons of the vendors. INAH custodians were horrified at the possibility of the Barbachano being able to establish state-sanctioned commercial businesses inside the zone. The state office of the INAH, however, rejected the request and the state government eventually resolved the second invasion in 1997 by building an extension of the Tianguis—a market that had originally been constructed in 1987 as a means to resolve the first invasion (see Himpele & Castañeda 1997). Noteworthy here is that although the land was private property, the site itself as a whole was under the stewardship of the nation, and its agent (the INAH) had the publicly accepted and legitimate authority to mandate and determine its protection.

¹¹ See Breglia (2006) on this ambivalence.

The second invasion was followed by a brief lull in the politics of Chichén. Then in 1999 a federal initiative by PAN to allow for the 'privatization' of archaeological patrimony provided a new context for the politics of tourism at Chichén. Although private ownership of ruins had been a fact in Mexico since national independence, this neo-liberal manoeuvre was startling and dangerous. Various sectors of society mobilized against this initiative, including the INAH and, in particular, the Chichén custodians. The privatization of patrimony was, however, way too scandalous for Mexico and was eventually eclipsed as an issue in the national arena.

However, the election of a PAN governor in 2001 shifted conditions in the state that allowed for the Barbachanos to begin their own 'privatization initiative'. In hindsight, it seems clear that the Barbachano family devised a concerted strategy of converting their *de jure* private ownership of Chichén into *de facto* control over the site. Note, however, that the target of control was not archaeological patrimony, but archaeological heritage as a resource that could be used to create and control an economic market of tourism products. The strategy and practices that the Barbachano family deployed should be analysed as a continuation of the politics of tourism. The family used techniques of bribery, faked documents, intimidation and cajoling to take over the two palapa venues inside the archaeological zone that had originally been given as concessions to the INAH antiguos (first generation of custodios). Further, they were able to have the secondary Mayaland or eastern entrance closed (see illustration 6) to all tourist traffic except for the clients of the Hotel Mayaland and the other two hotels located inside the archaeological zone of patrimony, that is, the Hacienda Chichén Itzá (owned by Carmen Gomez Rul de Barbachano) and the Villas Arqueológicas (owned by the Club Med chain).

The transformative moment in this 'privatization' effort came on the heels of the death of Víctor Cervera Pacheco and the eclipse of his political dominance in Yucatán (cf. Anonymous 2004). This two-time governor (1984–1988, 1995–2001), mayor of Mérida (1971–1973) and ex-secretary of Agrarian Reform (1988–1994) had been a key architect of CULTUR and state tourism planning. As a populist leader in the PRI-run 'dictatorships' of the governor, he supported vendors with negotiated compromises geared to resolve crises, such as the first invasion. Cervera Pacheco lost a controversial bid to run as governor for a third term, which enabled PAN to elect its candidate. As governor, Patricio Patrón Laviada (2001–2007) oversaw personnel changes in



Illustration 6—T-shirts hang from the gate where the road ends at the Mayaland entrance to Chichén Itzá. The actual thatch roof of the entrance is visible. Primarily wood carvers occupied the north side of the road (to the right of the image). The Barbachano family forced the vendors out of this area in 1995 and forced the closure of this entrance to the general public. Photograph by the author, 1989

government, including the replacement of Alfredo Barrera Rubio as director of the state office of the INAH, a position he had held since the early years of the first invasion. In this context, Barbachano senior returned from retirement in Florida to oversee and direct a new power play. The strategy for taking over Chichén included lawsuits against the state government, the federal government and individual INAH custodians for imposing entrance fees on the guests of the Barbachano-owned Hotel Mayaland and charging visitors to see the ruins on the Barbachano property. We should note that the use of law as a weapon or tactic, as here, is one key aspect of Foucault's definition of governmentality as a new kind of rationality of the state. Foucault argues that:

... with sovereignty the instrument that allowed [the state] to achieve its aim—that is to say, obedience to the laws—was the law itself; law and sovereignty were absolutely inseparable. On the contrary, with government it is a question not of imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of *employing tactics* rather than laws, *and even of using laws themselves as tactics—to arrange things* in such a way that...such

and such ends may be achieved (Foucault 1991: 95; emphasis added; cf. Gordon 1991; Rose 1996, 1999; Hindess 1996).

Foucault's concept allows for the productive extension of governmentality into areas for which the notion was not originally devised. The core idea focuses attention on the logics and strategies of practices used to manage and regulate things as a means of achieving determinate objectives.¹² In the case of the state, the goal is governing and governable subjects. The Barbachano attempt to take over the archaeological zone did not have the goal of creating self-disciplined citizens, as would governmentality put into operation by the state. Their strategy, however, was to use property law, land and rights to create manageable tourists via the regulation of heritage things and the arrangement of consumption practices and commodities.

With allies positioned in the state and federal governments, including the governorship and the INAH, the Barbachanos initiated a takeover of the ownership of the market venues of Chichén. By 2004, the Barbachanos had taken over the palapas and begun to sell handicrafts, among other products, from these locations. In response, the vendors located in the Tianguis and its extension left their stalls to invade the zone for a third time. In the first two months, the political strategy reiterated earlier logics; in other words, this was still a politics of tourism (struggles over space), as previously noted. However, law (specifically private property rights) and identity politics began to be used in new ways in this politics such that the heritage value of Chichén as a resource became increasingly evident. Chichén as heritage resource initially became a tool and tactic used in this economic struggle, but then became the object of control and the target of political struggles that pit plural forms of ownership and use rights against each other.

Within the first month of the invasion, rumours began to spread that the lawyers and even the vendors' leaders had been bought off by the Barbachanos. In an internal struggle that displaced the leadership that had been in place since the mid 1980s, a new *mesa directiva* (board of directors) was appointed, and a new lawyer, Vilvaldo Pech Moo, was hired. This man changed not only the tactics but also the stakes of the political game.

¹² On governmentality, see Foucault 1991, Rose 1996, Hindess 1996, Gordon 1991. See Smith 2004 and Castañeda, in press, for heritage theorized as governmentality.

The politics of heritage: indigeneity

Pech Moo transformed the invasion—an economic struggle over tourism stakes—into an identity politics social movement. The key shift in strategy was the creation of alliances with indigenous support groups and NGOs. Prominent among these alliances was a courtship with Marcos and the EZLN. In July 2005, the vendor leadership travelled to Chiapas to participate in forums and workshops with Marcos. One result was a pledge of support that was prominently announced in the Yucatán newspapers, which is a crucial arena of and for political actions, conflicts and struggles. Throughout the summer and autumn of 2005, the vendors organized various events, protests and proclamations that kept their cause in the media.

These alliances with human rights organizations and the EZLN gave the vendors greater visibility in the regional and national media. In this struggle, the presence of unrest and protest in the media is crucial as a mechanism of pressure. Thus, articles appeared throughout 2005 that asserted, for example, that the vendors were all ‘poor, humble artisans’ or that the crisis of Chichén could happen in Mitla or Monte Albán in Oaxaca.

Significantly, although the ‘enemy’ or ultimate target in the last analysis is Barbachano, vendor politics is oriented towards the state. Petitions for human rights must address the state, not a private citizen, given the fact that matters of human rights are legally the domain of state-citizen relationships not citizen-citizen. Thus, the protest against Barbachano requires the state to act and demands that the state act responsibly for and in the name of its citizens. Thus, the INAH, as the legitimate state authority in questions of heritage and patrimony, became a key interlocutor-target of requests and protests. The national director of the INAH, Cedillo Alvarez, was explicitly petitioned; his media responses comprised statements that he was working with the state government, the secretary of Social Development and the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Pueblos to devise a master plan to remove the vendors from inside the zone (Acuña Lopez 2005). In the autumn of 2006, vendor hostility toward this plan—which only promised the use of the police or military and not the satisfaction of demands—escalated into protest in which an effigy of the director of the INAH was burned at the base of the pyramid of Kukulcan.

Vendor politics cum social movement also had to have a ‘generic target’—that is, the generalized state, the state in general or the government

writ large—in order to attract public support and sympathy, which is ultimately crucial to attain goals. The alliance with the EZLN and Yucatán-based indigenous organizations and human rights NGOs was the means for this generalization of the conflict that otherwise would have remained ‘local’. This strategy of generalizing the conflict via indigeneity is best exemplified in the staging of spectacular events such as Subcommandante Marcos’s ‘surprise’ visit to Chichén Itzá in January 2006 to meet with vendors during his travels as the ‘Zero Candidate’ on the ‘Other Campaign’ of the presidential elections.

Under Pech Moo, the goal of the vendors shifted from the tourism objectives of previous invasions: the goal was no longer to have a new market constructed. Nor were the vendors seeking to force the state government to prohibit the Barbachanos from selling handicrafts in the palapas. Rather, the stakes had changed, as the vendors began to make claims never previously asserted, that is, ownership of Chichén as Maya.

The protest/celebration on 30 July of the 158th Anniversary of the Caste War illustrates the interconnected series of changes in vendor politics. In the *declaración* that was circulated that day and was published in the newspapers, the rhetoric of struggle, resistance and marginalization is combined with a critique of neoliberal government that sides with foreign economic interests. Using expected rhetoric of indigenous identity, the text pits indigenous people marked with ‘tradition’ against the state as it invokes human and indigenous rights as the grounding of demands:

We Maya artisans and vendors, who come from the nearby communities that surround Chichén Itzá, are the legitimate heirs to this commercial centre that was built by the work and blood of our ancestors. Nonetheless, we live threatened by the neoliberal government that discriminates against us, and with authoritarianism abuses us with its laws with the goal of forcing us out of our own home,¹³ (translated by the author).

The geographic place, blood and cultural descendants are construed as primordial origins, that is, an identity that is imbued with the power to claim, if not always attain, rights of entitlement to (inheritance) and cultural ownership of (proper heritage) Chichén. Significantly,

¹³ The news often sought to insinuate the inauthenticity of the vendors as indigenous and thus of their claims by pointing out that they were wealthy and not poor artisans.

the discourse and practice of the assertion itself is transformative; it is what initiates the conversion of archaeological patrimony into heritage resource. Further, the claim distinguishes the Maya *of the nearby communities*—not Maya in general—as the proper heirs. The subtlety of this statement is crucial, for it establishes an invisible equation between the otherwise local concerns with distant national imaginaries of Mexican citizenship and with even more disconnected global ideologies of indigeneity. This slippage between specific Maya and generic Maya creates the image of the singular Indian whose cultural rights and entitlements are infringed.

This invocation of indigeneity is crucial, for it is another element that converts the politics of tourism into a politics of heritage. The conflicts over what was becoming heritage-resource became a matter of governmentality and a conflict to be waged through laws, legalities and legal consciousness of differing scales and types. Thus, the declaration grounds the legitimacy of the vendors' invasion and demands by invoking Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization; UNESCO Convention 2003 for Safeguarding Intangible Heritage; Article 2 of Federal Mexican Law, which allows for a multicultural state and legitimizes the 'uses, customs and traditions' of indigenous communities as customary law; the Sixth Declaration from the Lacandón; and the Maya cultural logic that grants towns and town 'citizens' customary entitlement and collective proprietorship over the Maya archaeological ruins that are located within the town land holdings. These weapons of heritage conflicts are aimed at a new objective that is couched in an interpellation of the state to act as legitimate government, that is, to act as democratic protector of its citizens and arbiter of social problems:

We are not against entrepreneurs, we only want equal conditions in life and in work... The government must act, and in accordance with the law, expropriate the archaeological zone [from the Barbachanos], so that the state can recuperate its true governing role and direct the [income] benefits [of tourism] to everyone. Sticking to the law, the State should indemnify the affected (Translated by the author).

The goal of expropriation and indemnification is sought via indigenous identity, yet the goal itself manifests a centrist versus a radical (anti-capitalism, anti-state) politics. The request is much different than either a NAGPRA-based demand for the repatriation of heritage or the Greek demand for the return of the Elgin Marbles. Nor does the Pisté vendors' demand have anything to do with the cultural re-appropriations of

sites, such as of Utatlan-Gumarcaah by Quiche Maya shamans asserting cultural authority or the intergalactic, ritual reawakening of Mexican archaeological sites by neo-Aztec and New Age spiritualists seeking to cleanse individual, national and galactic karmas. Instead, this interpellation 'in reverse' (of Althusser's original concept) is significant, for it is based on the tacit assumption that the state is the legitimate steward of both national patrimony and of heritage resources that are simultaneously Mayan and Mexican.¹⁴ The demand of expropriation presupposes that the state should legitimately hold this heritage/patrimony in the name of all its citizens—Mexican, Maya, Yucatecan and other ethnic-indigenous groups. This is not a demand for archaeological heritage to be returned to the Maya as the proper heirs and descendants of the pre-Columbian people; rather, the demand for expropriation of Chichén and indemnification of local Maya from specific nearby communities such as Pisté is a political tool, a weapon, to stop the further *de facto* privatization of this heritage site by private capital, the Barbachano family, whose power extends from Mérida to Mexico City, and from Cancún to Florida and beyond.

The vendor goal is not an anti-capitalist, anti-state, indigenous takeover of *their* Maya heritage. Although it may contradict some people's vision of the 'authentic Indian', the Maya of Yucatán use their implicit ethnic and indigenous identity lightly, that is, strategically (see Castillo Cocom 2005, 2007; Castillo Cocom & Castañeda 2004). Further, the Maya vendors and artisans are themselves entrepreneurs in pursuit of economic success in the tourism market. They used indigenous identity for the modest objective of empowering the state as steward of public patrimony and for their own very capitalist interests. In this they have succeeded marvellously, for on the one hand the vendors are still (spring 2008) inside the archaeological zone selling handicrafts to tourists.

On the other hand, the Mexican state and its agent, the INAH, have collapsed under the weight of protests against the private ownership of Chichén by the Barbachanos. As the voting for the New Seven Wonders of the World came to its finale on 7 July 2007, the national

¹⁴ This inversion of Althusser's original concept seems particularly useful in this context of the vendors requesting the government to acknowledge their demands for it to act in particular ways that correspond to an image and ideal of a democratic/populist government in service of its people. Putting interpellation 'in reverse' as it were is clearly a basic process of social movements, but is certainly also a dynamic present in different ways in the interface of the state with its citizens or subjects (Althusser 1971).

campaign by government and businesses (e.g. Coca-Cola) to vote for Chichén spurred a widespread public movement in support of state expropriation (see illustration 7). The amount offered by the state at the headwaters of these movements was nevertheless rejected by the Barbachanos, who asked for millions of pesos more for *their* indemnification. The outcry merely escalated when a Barbachano family member (but not one of those who own any of the Chichén properties) surprisingly stated to the press that the family had long ago donated the Chichén lands to the INAH! Despite the death of family patriarch Fernando Barbachano Gómez Rul (son of Fernando Barbachano Peon, who bought the property from Edward H. Thompson in the 1930s), the plans for expropriation have simultaneously disappeared in the machinery of the state and reappeared in the public news media as an imminent and impending actuality. In the meanwhile, the new conflicts over ownership, including the use of legalities and indigeneity to wage these battles, have inaugurated the transformation of Chichén from (just) archaeological patrimony to (also) heritage resource amenable to governmental strategies of heritage management.

Conclusion

This ethnographic history of socio-political conflicts at Chichén relied upon a set of specific concepts. In contrast to the non-analytical, descriptive sense of the word, I proposed a theory of heritage that differentiates between heritage as patrimony, as resource and as governmentality. I have therefore also differentiated the politics of patrimony from that of heritage, and both from the politics of tourism. These analytical notions, I suggest, can be productively applied to other Latin American and global contexts in order to understand the particular historical configuration of agents, interests, stakes and dynamics.

Using the case of Chichén Itzá, I analysed the shifting politics of tourism to identify the emergence of a politics of heritage at Chichén. From the 1980s to the present, this substance of politics has shifted from conflicts over the organization, control and use of space at Chichén Itzá for commercial purposes to conflicts over who has legal and cultural rights and entitlements of ownership over the patrimony and the land in which the patrimony exists. Heritage conflicts pit diverse forms of legalities, entitlements and ownerships that are based in property rights, sociocultural identity, customary law, international conventions and



Illustration 7—The Coca-Cola can used to promote Mexicans to vote for Chichén Itzá as a new Seventh Wonder of the World. Photograph by the author, 2007

nation-states against each other in a battle to attain rights to own and manage heritage resources. In the politics of tourism, the ownership of Chichén (i.e. of the archaeological site as either land or as assemblages of artefacts) was not an issue. Nor was the value of Chichén as a 'heritage resource' at stake. Thus, I argue that previously Chichén was not heritage, but only patrimony. Further, the tourism politics that I have charted in this chapter did not in any way intersect with the politics of national patrimony, by which I mean conflicts over the interpretation, representation and meanings of patrimony understood as a Geertzian primordial origin. In light of these differences in types of conflicts, I have argued that Chichén, in relation to the events of the third invasion, has 'become' heritage in an additional, analytical sense of heritage resource and heritage governmentality. It should be clear from the analysis of Chichén that the theory of heritage presented here assumes that 'heritage' is less the thing itself than the specific configuration of social forces, agents, conflicts, legalities and interests in which the (tangible or intangible) thing is embedded.

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