Archaeology and Meccas of Tourism
Exploration, Protection, Exploitation


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Archaeology and tourism share a hidden history of emergence in the mid-19th century that links them together to the figure of the tourist and in the institutional space of the museum. Despite conflicts between the ideological positions and practices of tourism and archaeology, the increasing entanglement, reciprocity, even collaborations, however fraught, between tourism and academic archaeology in the present now allows us to question this shared genealogy and to rethink their contemporary intersection. From the second half of 19th century the two have had an intimate if also somewhat secret and perhaps fraught interdependence based on their relationship to the modern museum. Given the way these interconnections have been forgotten, obscured or hidden, a 1930 statement by Alfred V. Kidder is an especially welcome antidote to our historical myopia even as what he suggests may assault our contemporary sensibilities and historical assumptions.

Upon becoming the chairman of the new Division of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (CIW), Kidder explained how the CIW sponsored Maya archaeological program had pioneered a “new” approach to Mesoamerican and Maya archaeology, specifically at the site of Chichén Itzá, México.¹ He argued that this new approach eschewed the collection of antiquities for metropolitan museums in and for its own sake. His reasoning held that collectionism is politically improper in terms of international relations and ethically problematic for archaeologists who might be viewed as robbing a nation’s patrimony.² He further, asserted that collectionism is unproductive in terms of the scientific agenda of knowledge production. Kidder then unambiguously linked the scientific research agenda of archaeology, even its success as an academic field, with tourism as the means and method by which archaeology could progress.³

In the first place Chichén Itzá, because of its outstanding scientific and artistic importance, deserves our best efforts. Second, it is thought that if the project is handled in a manner so obviously altruistic it can not fail to produce a feeling on the part of the Mexican government and the Mexican people that American agencies can be trusted within their borders. And, third, if Chichén can be kept both interesting and beautiful, it will without question become a Mecca of travel, and incidentally, a most valuable asset for archaeology which, like every other science, needs its “show-windows.” Its more recondite aims the public can not, in the beginning, be expected to grasp; but public interest must be aroused and eventual public understanding must be achieved if archaeology is to go forward: for from the public

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comes, in the last analysis, all support for scientific endeavor (Kidder, 1930: 99, emphasis added).

This statement is both mundane and scandalous. This chapter unpacks the implications of Kidder’s reflections and elaborates the meanings that it has for the contemporary relationships between archaeology and tourism. The statement, on the one hand, is mundane for pointing out an obvious economy of cause and effect: Archaeology, like any science as science, requires public interest to create public support which in turn motivates and translates into the funding of archaeology in general. (This in turn stimulates the emergence of more practitioners who desire to make careers out of this science, which necessitates more venues for public dissemination of results, and, thereby, stimulates increased public audiences for the entire scientific endeavor, including appreciation by the public for the more “recondite aims” and rarified knowledge. When archaeology does its scientific work effectively in terms of knowledge objectives, ethical imperatives, and aesthetic engagement, it creates sites of and for travel that we can call, following Kidder, “tourism meccas.” These restored sites of the past are ideal “show-windows” — marketing and promotional venues for archaeology — in which tourists can have their interest in the specific culture and in archaeology aroused and understanding of this science expanded. Finally, public support can be further stimulated, thereby enabling the progress of archaeology and the advancement of archaeological science.

On the other hand, Kidder scandalously identifies a symbiotic relationship in which archaeology depends in a fundamental way on tourism, that is, the travel industry that creates and propagates tourist publics and consumers out of “travelers” (i.e., tourists). This insight is so understated that its scandalous implications have been overlooked: Kidder does not say, nor does the present chapter argue, that specific types, topics, or culture-areas of research are supported by tourism. Rather that the entire endeavor of archaeology is dependent upon tourism, albeit indirectly for the creation of a public culture of appreciation of and for archaeology, which in turn is what motivates and routinizes the economic, sociological, cultural, and ideological support for archaeology in the world. Archaeology must create tourism meccas as simultaneously its promotional show-windows and its marketable product that public audiences consume. The scandal is that archaeologists, and more generally anthropologists, typically and historically denigrate tourism in multiple ways as something of a rapacious disease that permanently destroys “authentic” cultures, communities, and archaeological heritage; yet, archaeology, according to Kidder, must actually actively participate in the creation and propitiation of tourism in order to survive! The deep logic of this ironic positioning is that anthropology has historically been and continues to be wedded to the Romanticist ideology that opposes intellectual and artistic work from capitalist activities of production, marketing, and consumption.

Closer inspection of the quote enlarges the irony: The tourist, that is, the consumer/producer of tourism, is the generalized and generic public that functions for archaeology as its consuming-producing audience. How is it that archaeology shares with tourism an historical reliance upon an ideologically constructed figure of the tourist as consumer, audience, and thus producer of both tourism and archaeology? In order to make sense of the intertwined histories of archaeology and tourism I introduce the concept of “universal citizen heir” and chart out how this figure is the embodied link between these within the institutional space and ideological functions of the modern museum. The first section of this chapter is an historical account of the birth of these twins within the museum.
The second section explores the contemporary contexts of collaboration between postcolonial archaeology and postmodern tourism.

**Archaeology, Tourism, Museum**

The emergence of the modern museum in the 19th century had many sources, including Worlds Fairs and Expos, which were important catalysts for tourism, and the transformation of private, elite collections of art and cultural exotica into institutionalized public spaces of exhibition open to all classes of the nation. The articulation of these two exhibitionary systems in the emergent modernist museum coalesced in the projection of universal Civilization. This is an imagined community in which all of humanity is located and differentiated in a stratified, totalizing hierarchy along the lines of nations, races, cultures. Thus, within this representational space of the museum, the ideological function is to create both a national imaginary that could interpellate visitors as citizens of specific nations and an imagined universal human civilization in which nations belong as the primary actor or agent (Althusser 1971 on interpellation; cf. Sawyer 2002). Archaeology was significant for the emergence of the modern museum not simply for providing aesthetically, politically and socially worthy specimens from major archaeological sites from the global south, but for providing a logic of visual discourse that presented a totalizing hierarchy of humanity within narratives of evolution and the progress of civilization (Donato 1979). Certainly, the critique of the evolutionary discourse of museum exhibition (most evident in natural history, archaeology, art, and ethnography museums) and the analysis of the interpellation of citizens in the museum are not new (e.g., see Bennett 1996), these two understandings have not yet been conjoined. Thus, what I propose is a simple new idea that has yet to be examined: the modern museum since its historical emergence operates to interpellate individuals in the position of citizen-subjects of the nation who are simultaneously also interpellated in and as universal citizen or citizen of total human civilization that corresponds to the museum’s projection of an imagined community of universal humanity. This projected vision of a totalized humanity is expressed in all variety of social theory and philosophies of the era, from E. B. Tylor’s 1874 notion of Culture (in the singular, not Geertzian plural) and Hegelian philosophy.

The ideological interpellation of the individual visitor-tourist as proper citizen of the nation is therefore simultaneously the creation of a subject-position of citizens of humanity — that is, citizens and heirs of Civilization as portrayed and constructed in the exhibitionary narratives of universal human civilization. The acknowledgement of this ideological constitution and interpellation of a latent universal citizen-subject of humanity within the subject position of national citizenship has profound implications. First, this understanding allows us to see the intimate history of collusion and interconnection between tourism and archaeology that has been otherwise concealed from analytical inspection. Second, it allows us to ask about the changing political economy of archaeology in relationship to both the museum and tourism from the 19th to the 21st century. What becomes evident is that archaeology’s increasing dependence on tourism turns to explicit and overt collaborations with tourism actors and agents by the end of the 20th century.
**Universal Heritage and Universal Citizen-Heir**

Museums within metropolitan centers had two interconnected goals of representation. On the one hand, archeological exploration designed for museum collectionism created national patrimony as one of its imagined “primordial origins” of the nation (Geertz 1973; Anderson 2001). Although this might called heritage, it is not in the contemporary sense of a resource subject to control, or management and ownership by identity claims, rights and ownership. A more accurate term is “patrimony,” precisely because it works to construct and constitute national identity rather than being the target of struggles for control through identity claims, rights, and ownership (see Castañeda 2009b, 2009c). On the other hand, the national patrimony constructed by the archaeology-museum apparatus is not univocal. The national patrimony is also constructed as the social fiction of a universal (archaeological) heritage belonging to humanity and deriving from universal civilization.

The exhibition of these patrimonies has always served the explicit social purpose of education from the initial mid-19th century reformulation of museums through to the present day. This educational imperative has similarly aimed for two objectives. As noted above, the museum works to constitute proper citizens of the imagined nation and encourages the notion that we are citizens of the world. The significance here is that the subject position of “citizen of humanity” is therefore also the proper heir of this patrimony, regardless of whose specific culture, civilization, or society it belongs as that group’s patrimony. In and through the museum exhibitionary complex, therefore all of human cultural, social, and historical past becomes “heritage” for the imagined citizen of universal civilization in a quite explicit expropriation of the past from minority and non-western descendant groups. The museum interpellation, therefore, constituted not only citizen-heirs of the (metropolitan) nation but projected these also as citizens of humanity who would be the proper heirs of universal civilization.

Heritage by definition is something that is passed on to some one, the heir, who inherits that which belongs to the heir; sociologically speaking heritage also interpellates (defines, designates, determines) the heir with this identity of being the proper owner-recipient. Heritage requires an heir, which we tend to assume is defined by descent. However, the substantive nature of different kinds of heritage can restrict or expand who may be legitimately identified and designated as a “proper” inheritor. For example, the inheritance of DNA happens through a different process than that of cultural values and property. This underscores the notion that descent is not at all stable: it can range quite dramatically from blood, racial and other biological diagnostics to abstract modes of ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, identitarian, and social descendency/lineage as well as affiliation. Further, the proper heir can always be designated and ascribed outside of lines of descent, regardless of how “descent” may be legally and culturally defined. Thus, heritage not only requires heirs but also a broker/mediator and custodian/curator who negotiates claims among possible heirs to ensure the passage of patrimony to the proper heir. Thus, the identification of the proper heir is not a passive act, but is rather an active, constitutive process that interpellates the proper heir.

Archaeology has functioned in this role of “inheritance lawyer” of the past that it constructs. This sociopolitical function is ethically formalized in the concept of stewardship in modernist archaeology that in turn is prescribed by and legitimated through the moral values (and ideology) of science. Archaeology produces (knowledge and the materiality of) “the past” in the name of the universal citizen of humanity. This should not be a surprise since all science claims to be in the service of humanity and for the good of humanity. Thus,
archaeological practices of exploration are ultimately legitimated by the scientific rationality of protection — i.e., protecting “the past” and the available material fragments that are imbued with the power to symbolize “the past” as its embodiment. The scientific mandate of “protection of the past” is laid out in ethical codes of archaeology and consciously served to distinguish modernist, academic archaeology from its colonial ancestor. Protection, in this modernist, science mode of archaeology, in turn is constructed in practical terms as preservation or conservation methodologies and in moral terms as stewardship.

In turn, contemporary social archaeologies (see Castañeda 2008, Castañeda and Mathews 2008) also use this stewardship function as a crucial point to distinguish themselves from modernist, science-oriented forms of archaeology. They do so by reformulating stewardship not only by substituting the “universal citizen of humanity” with specific, particular “descendants/stakeholders” in the place of the proper heir, but also by drastically reducing (if not eliminating entirely) the “custodian/curator” function in favor of the “mediator/broker” capacity. In concrete terms, this shift can be expressed in a variety of ways, but one of the most prominent is the drive to do “public archaeology” as a means to “engage descendent stakeholders.” As well, archaeology of some culture-geographic regions, such as US Southwest, Australia, the Maya world, and Latin America, archaeologists are driven by their new social (versus scientific) morality and assumption of responsibility to foment collaborations with nearby stakeholder/descendent communities beyond simple outreach programs (Zimmerman 2008; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008). Pyburn (2008) for example has proposed that archaeology be reformulated as a mode of Action Research or Participatory Action Research. It is among this group of archaeologists, i.e., those involved in one or another form of indigenous, Marxist, postcolonial, feminist, social, public, or engaged/action archaeology that are most likely to be proactive collaborators with tourism development.

México is one world region where these postcolonial initiatives have led to collaborations that aim for the creation of community museums where the heritage content (always a mix of archaeological, historical, and ethnographic) is therefore immediately and unambiguously “passed on” by the research project (in the name of the archaeological stewardship) to the proper heirs for the latter to protect, own, and manage. While this might be fine in contexts where the descendant stakeholders are corporately organized and demanding repatriation, e.g., the US, Canada, and Australia, this moral-scientific agenda runs the risk of imposing an artificial conception of proper ownership if the local stakeholders have not been or are not yet properly interpellated as proper heirs of archaeological stewardship (see Castillo Cocom 2002; Castillo Cocom and Castañeda 2002; Breglia 2006; Ardren 2002; Watkins, Pyburn, Cressey 2000). Nonetheless, as discussed below, expertise based in academic training and institutions remain crucial to the new ways social or social-oriented archaeologists articulate themselves with communities of citizen-heirs that are no longer “universal” but particular heirs localized in and identified by specific geopolitical-cultural regions.

It is as steward of the past for all humanity that archaeology has historically claimed the legitimacy of its existence, its professional expertise, disciplinary practices, and its (attempt at) monopoly control of the archaeological past (Wylie 1999). As scientific steward it reclaims the past from the dead in order to pass it along to the rightful universal citizen-heir of humanity. Thus, archaeology — that is, all archaeologies whether colonial, modernist, or postcolonial — requires a legitimate heir. The question of who counts as
legitimate heir, however, is not and has never been determined by science or a scientific methodology: This is a domain of politics. Archaeology has thus been historically dependent upon the museum (that is, the ideological functioning of the museum to interpellate citizens) for the construction of the proper heir in the discursive and exhibitionary constitution of citizen-subjects of nation, empire, and humanity. Modernist archaeology since its emergence in the late 19th century was dependent upon the ideologically constructed subject position that circulated in the under currents of archaeological discourses expressed in museum narratives and displays. This dependence also provides the ideological legitimization of the museum as the place where archaeology must deposit that which it has collected: For it is here where the universal citizen exists in tangible form and can receive the “inheritance of the past” that is due “him” (it is constructed as male and most often “white”).

The professionalization of archaeology in the university institution in the first decades of the 20th century entailed a shift in the political economy of archaeology, from dependency on the museum to dependency on the university. This economic break from the museum also entailed a shift in its ideological legitimization (from collectionism for museums to science and the scientific accumulation of knowledge of the past for all humanity). This shift also correlates with the rise of the archaeological construction of iconic sites of world civilizations as tourism meccas of travel, such as Chichén Itzá in the 1920s-30s. Although the construction of Knossos was in the 19th century, it perhaps marks the emergence of the modernist era of archaeological meccas (Gere 2009; Duke 2007). As in the case of all sciences, although universities pay for salaries, it does not make massive financial investment in research, except on a low-scale as additional salary benefits. The overwhelming task of the financing of research corresponds non-university governmental, private sector, and non-governmental public sectors. This role has been assumed by the emergent funding apparatus, that is a network of private, corporate, governmental and nonprofit funding agencies operating in the public sphere, which Andrew Carnegie was among the pioneers in establishing through his investment in diverse foundations.

It is important to note that Kidder was not only writing at the moment of this transition in the political economy of archaeology but was precisely located in this public sphere funding at a private, nonprofit, para-governmental research institution (the CIW). His observation — that archaeology needs show-windows to sway public opinion in its favor in order to progress — must have been based on his own awareness that CIW funding of archaeology was entirely in the hands of the Board of Trustees, who had to be maintained convinced of the value of the science for it to continue to receive funding. Indeed nine years later the incoming CIW President determined that archaeology was a pseudo-science and all but eliminated it as a research practice (Castañeda 2005, 2009a). Thus, Kidder astutely recognized that archaeology needs tourists as its audience as the means to create favorable public opinion. This in turn is necessary to motivate, not the funding of this or that research project, but for funding agencies to believe that giving grant monies to archaeological research of any type is an important and valuable contribution to society in the first place. In this economic calculus, tourism is the social mechanism that would bring tourists to archaeology’s restored sites of iconic cultures and, thus, transform these new, open-air museums of the past into meccas of travel. I would argue archaeology has become increasingly connected to tourism in terms of popular imaginaries and representations of the
past, if not also economically dependent upon it for the production of the ideological appreciation of the past.

Tourism, Tourists, and Archaeology’s “Show Windows”

Archaeologically restored sites are science fictions, that is, they are constructed copies of something that never existed as such, in that way. This is not a denial of the past, it is a denial of the constructed site to accurately, empirically portray or represent a reality other than what corresponds to the archaeological imaginary of the past in that place. At a methodological level, there is always a telescoping or collapsing of time and selective elimination or addition of occupation periods, objects, and information in both the process of excavation and then again in the process of restoration of a fictional past. Thus, these restored sites do not become open-air, in-situ museums of themselves that represent and symbolize this particular human settlement (city, village, cemetery, sacred site). On this basis they do the work of representing entire culture and civilization in a complex signifying chain. This is clearly evident with many iconic sites of the new and old world, such as Chichén Itzá, Monte Albán, Tiwanaku, Knossos, the Coliseum and the Forum, the Parthenon, not to mention the landscape of European castles and historical sites related to the colonial period in the global south or the rise of capitalism in Europe. The logic and agenda of this “restoration,” — which is actually and always a construction not a reconstruction — of the past is often explicitly but always implicitly to create tourism meccas of travel. Archaeology, then, is not only dependent upon tourist publics, but also the tourism industry that creates flows of consumer audiences and tourism agents for their broader dissemination of archaeological interpretations via multiple promotional and on-site discourses.

The explicit goal of protection as practiced in and by museum collection and exhibition is to care for the materiality of the past as the means to guard knowledge of the past. But in so doing, the museum, and its ancillary disciplines such as archaeology and art history, do not simply preserve or conserve but create, that is actively produce, this knowledge that is laden with the ideological meanings, messages, narratives, and imaginaries related to the subject position of self and other. In light of this, the key issues do not revolve around the methods, concepts, and practices of protection — for example whether preservation or conservation is the goal, whether these latter two are the same or different things, whether the past is actually selectively destroyed by protection, or what should be the methods of protection (Bernstein 1992, Drennan and Mora 2002, Layton and Thomas 2003, King and Lyneis 1978, Wilk 1999, and Wylie 1999). Instead, the crucial question is for whom is this past protected (see Greene 1999)? What this analysis illustrates is that historically speaking the archaeological objective of protection is not for those subnational minority peoples of the global south to whom the material belongs as cultural tradition and historical pasts. Rather, the tourist, that subject position that is nowhere and yet everywhere, has been increasingly privileged as the concrete representation and embodiment of the imagined citizen-heir of universal humanity.

The metropolitan museum was designed as a representational system. Similarly, archaeological sites constructed by science as restorations of the past that express and communicate, both explicitly and implicitly, specific narrative and meanings. These are ideologically driven discourses and messages of civilizational-cultural hierarchies, whether or not these are explicitly evolutionary narratives of progress (Castañeda 1996, 2002; Cobos
2006; Duke 2007; Handler and Gable 1997; Gere 2009; Jones 1995; Molyneaux and Stone 1994, Stone and Planel 1999). Site restoration functions as the material embodiment of the archaeological imaginary of the society-culture or the civilization in question, as well as a tangible manifestation of universal civilization of humanity in general. The question arises therefore, for whom is the archaeological past exhibited? Archaeological restoration is inherently a practice that has as its goal and purpose the creation of fictional replicas of the past for tourism, that is, for tourists to see, experience, and identity with as descendant-heir.

The Tourist-Citizen and the Rights of the Universal Citizen-Heir

The historical function of the museum is crucial to understand in order to assess the validity of the idea that any person anywhere has the inherent right to visit, see, learn about, consume, and otherwise experience the (archaeological or ethnographic) heritage of other peoples. The museum is a key locus in the historical genesis of the subject position of the tourist as citizen of the world, who is free to visit any place at any time regardless of legal, moral, and cultural ownership and rights of those in the global south. This general and generic citizen of humanity is the subject to whom modernist archaeology has at the same time always appealed as the proper heir of human civilization and as the proper citizen-stakeholder of the archaeological production of knowledge of humanity’s past.

The tourist-citizen then is the proper heir — descendent stakeholder as it were — of all human cultures, societies and civilizations. Archaeology is an apparatus that silently grants and legitimates the tourist’s right to visit, view, consume, and develop for tourism the patrimony and heritage of any human society’s past. As the production of tourism commodities and markets grew in the 20th century, so did the importance of the tourist as the consumer of archaeological monuments, restored sites, and exhibitions.

Tourism Meccas of Travel and the Political Economy of Archaeology

These interconnections between archaeology and tourism have been obscured or expressly hidden throughout the 20th century, in part because of pervasive and still enduring Romanticist ideals, which science borrowed in the 20th century, to oppose science/knowledge from capitalism/commercialism. However, there has been a transformation in the political economy of science and scientific knowledge production that has necessarily revealed the fiction of this opposition and forced its radical reformulation. The ideological illusion that knowledge/science is separate from capitalism (i.e., capitalist production and consumption) was possible only because science fixed its economy to the non-profit, para-governmental, public institution called the university. However, by the end of the 20th century it has become indisputable that the university is now thoroughly market-driven (Bok 2004; Slaughter and Leslie 1999; Washburn 2005; Zemesky, Massy, Wegner. 2005). Under neoliberalism, this university has increasingly had its “nonprofit mode” of production transformed into capitalist relations of production. It is clearly the case for the majority of high profile, hard-science fields, that university based research has shifted from being a para-governmental public nonprofit to a para-corporate factory. This shift is not so clear in the soft sciences and humanities; the infiltration of market production does not happen as in the hard sciences. Archaeologists are not in the business of inventing products, much less “the past” or “heritage,” that require patents for their commercialization; nonetheless, see Holtorf (2005, 2007) who argues that archaeology is a “brand.”
It is necessary to return to Kidder’s insight and modify it: the funding of archaeology via traditional foundations and private funding relies upon a high public desire to consume the past; this drive in turn is promulgated by what we can call an archaeological imaginary that is forged through tourism, edu-tainment and educational TV, and text-based media, which no doubt helps to feed enrollment in archaeology courses and thus create a potential labor market of future archaeologists. It is important to note that tourism can be understood in a narrow sense as a multi-faceted industry that transports and accommodates consumer-travelers and then provides them with various commodity products (experiences, souvenirs, etc.). In this sense, tourism is certainly fundamental to the new economy of archaeology that was initiated as it split off from its dependence on the museum. Historically speaking, tourism is the strategic mechanism by which audiences are created for the iconic show-windows of archaeological science. Tourism as an economic force of archaeology operates however in a different register than does CRM, which is already a part of archaeology and thus has a direct impact on the field as a major source of employment for archaeologists. Tourism can also be understood and theorized in an expanded sense beyond those industry networks of transportation, hotel, restaurant, on-site businesses that give tourists something to do. Tourism in an expanded sense can would also include the production and marketing of travel desires, imaginaries, commodities, and motivations that occurs in “off-locations” of edutainment TV, the internet (blogs, YouTube, etc.), print media, education-based travel (e.g., study abroad, Peace Corps), Hollywood and documentary film, for example. Thus, tourism in this expanded sense operates indirectly from outside of archaeology as an important ideological engine and therefore as an economic foundation of archaeology as a scientific enterprise. In other words, the media and tourism production of the ideological desires for the past generally and of specific pasts that can be marketed, consumed and identified with is what creates the very need in and desire for archaeology in the first place, including the technical management of the past as cultural resource. Archaeology operates, as Holtorf (2005, 2007) notes, as a brand that is supported by tourism.

Neo-Liberal Tourism: Collusion and Sustainability

Within the last two decades there has been a transformation in global economy and culture. Although sociologists of various disciplinary stripes are concerned with globalization, this concept-issue is not the most meaningful in the context of tourism studies. Tourism -- that is modern, mass tourism, has always been a global phenomenon. More significant processes have been underway that could be encompassed by the idea of the neoliberalization of tourism. To my mind this references, first, the proliferation of new forms of alternative and niche tourisms, such as ecotourism, culinary tourism, dark tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism and so on. These new forms clearly correspond to capitalist logic of market diversification of a product. But correlated to this has been, second, an ever-increasing involvement of new tourism agents (i.e., social actors consciously involved in the creation and development of tourism commodities, markets, and experiences) beyond the traditional for-profit industry operators (i.e., in marketing, transportation, hospitality, recreation-leisure, food industries). These now include nonprofits, civil associations, NGOs, INGOs, and para-governmental agencies at all scales, as well as cultural communities that seek to become or that have been targeted for greater inclusion into tourism development projects via the dream of sustainability.
These two tendencies have created a unique situation. Whereas we have argued, from the shoulders of Kidder, that archaeology has always needed and has increasingly depended upon tourism for ideological and economic reasons, tourism has gone about its business with only a haphazard relationship with archaeology. The current market segmentation of tourism has created a few niche forms of travel commodities that require and thus are dependent upon archaeology and anthropology more generally.

An example can be found in Mexico: The federal agency devoted to the educational, social, and cultural welfare of Mexico’s indigenous peoples, the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI), was terminated and replaced by the Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CDI) in 2009, which is now devoted, at least in Yucatán, to giving grants to community associations in order to develop (or even create) local environmental or cultural resources into tourism destinations (the towns of Ek Balam, Yokdzonot, and Xcalacoop are just three examples). In turn, these communities become targets for partnerships and free assistance programs from a multitude of metropolitan actors that are not traditionally involved in tourism.

The Mexican examples can be characterized in general terms to define a common scenario: Metropolitan graduate students in a variety of sciences and fields of study avidly hunt for such sustainable community based development around which to formulate thesis or dissertation projects. Metropolitan professors with international interactive learning, internship, or field training programs also feverishly seek out such community organizations in the global south in order to send their students/participants and create long term research. The latter gain their “global” culture course credits and international study abroad experience. The professor creates an “active research program” that “involves students” and publications while gaining a wide variety of professional benefits, from tenure/promotion and grants to teaching assistants and course reductions; and, of course they accrue extra status, cultural capital, as knowledge expert. Metropolitan I/NGOs partner up and provide additional subsidy support in terms of managerial expertise, infrastructure development, and ongoing training to locals.

This training is crucial as it grounds the transformation of the subject positioning of locals from unruly subjects to proper citizens and heirs of heritage. Meanwhile, the government provides welfare under a neoliberal façade of competitive grants that only pays for a portion of the cost even as it contributes to the legitimization of the political party in power and ultimately of the state itself. Finally, “the community” receives assistance that is sometimes helpful, sometimes harmful; regardless, it is always assistance that community members manipulate at the cost of staging themselves as the proper citizen-subject of the global south that is in need of nonprofit sustainable development. In five or ten years, with luck, the site will become part of the standard network of destinations in the mass tourism region. But, it is certain that within two years, a great majority of the community members that participated in the civil association are run out of the program by a cohort of leaders who convert sustainable community tourism development into their quasi-private business subsidized by both the national government and a series of metropolitan NGOs, nonprofits, research foundations, academics, volunteers. What is significant is that tourism existed there from the beginning in the non-traditional, non-mass form of educational and research tourism (study abroad, Peace Corps, Earth Watch, and “observers” organized by international rights and advocacy groups to be on-site, third-party, civilian peace-keepers. Archaeological field schools, domestic or abroad, are in fact and have always been a niche
mode of tourism; although not quite a direct descendant of the Grand Tour despite certain historical surface similarities, it does belong within that ever expanding category of “educational tourism.” Nonprofits such as Earthwatch and the School of International Training have been pioneers of this educational tourism that has only recently become recognized and thus identified as such, but which nonetheless inherently has always operated to create tourism.

The romanticist ideology of sustainability, to give it a positive spin, is motivated by a neoliberal morality in which self-interested profit-making coincides with and thereby creates an increase in the greater good of others in a manner that can be endlessly maintained into the future. However, the negative characterization is that the latter value is simply a pretense and disguise for business with a softer edge and a more brown face; this is tourism’s version of social entrepreneurship.

In today’s 21st century version of the high modernist development project, there are additional levels of mid-range experts who broker tourism development for communities and thus maintain a social hierarchy of transnational scope. In this dream, not only do traditional tourism agents seek to find the oasis of sustainability, but an increasing number of academics of all types actively participate in, promote, and promulgate tourism. It would be revealing to gauge the extent to which the research projects of academics (from non-industry fields of study) are either overtly or inherently complicit with the grand, global venture of tourism. It is exceptionally clear for the field of applied anthropology in which an ever-increasing number of students and scholars are conducting projects that aim to assist communities or community groups to take greater control of, boost participation in, or augment profits from tourism. In archaeology, an increasing number of professionals reconvert mandates for a publicly engaged discipline committed to the heritage interests of descendent stakeholders into a mandate to foment tourism to stakeholder communities by collaborating with them in the creation of tourism destinations based on in-situ ruins or community heritage museums. This archaeological drive to create heritage tourism for communities is not expressed everywhere in the world. There is an uneven distribution of this type of ethical archaeology and the reasons for this — e.g., why it is strongly expressed in Mayanist archaeology and not in Greece for example — is worth substantial analysis. Nonetheless, it points out that we are a long way, thankfully, from the days when everyone — academics generally and anthropologists especially — not only loathed tourists but disparaged tourism scholars and scholarship.

The collusion and complicity between academics and tourism takes many shapes. Despite its widespread frequency it is still fraught with ideological anxiety over its morality. On the one hand there is the incorporation of science experts into the info-ainment documentaries that proliferate on the travel, history, ecology-nature, food, and archaeology TV programming such as found on the National Geographic, Discovery, History, Food Network, and Travel Channels. While an expert may pursue pure research in the most abstract mode of science, by participating in the media, they have become incestuously involved in the production of tourism, the creation of tourist motives, and the legitimization of tourism consumerism. Their own academic career and funding politics are not only augmented but is increasingly intertwined and dependent upon such media publicity. Despite our commitment to this type of status game, we often hide from an implicit assumption about the inherent immorality of the scientific involvement with tourism — and
in the commodification of scientific expertise by mass media, generally — which is nonetheless contradicted by our practices, goals, and motivations.

This process of shifting the university and the sciences from the idealized context of public, nonprofit, para-governmental economy to an increasingly capitalist market driven economy is now well known. Archaeology, perhaps more obviously than other social sciences and humanities, is also now connected to the commercial sector of markets and consumerism. It is a fair question to ask, to what extent has the political economy of archaeology, although still situated in the university, become based in tourism in the sense that Kidder suggested in 1930? In turn, there is a major sector of the tourism industry that relies on archaeologists, among other expert-knowledge collaborators in and outside the university, to produce the past as heritage attractions and to create ideologies, practices, and projects marked by sustainability.

The Dream of Meccas of Travel in the Age of Sustainability

The “reconstructed” or “restored” sites of archaeology were and are effectively open-air, in-situ archaeology museums “without walls.” At the end of colonial archaeology, these sites of archaeology began to be conceptualized as places that could be visited by commoner or popular classes as well as by elites. Significantly, this follows by some three or four decades the “democratization” or “modernization” of the metropolitan museums of the 19th century. From the middle to the end of the 19th century, museums were increasingly opening themselves up to visitation by the popular, common, and working classes with the idea of both transforming the subject position of these into proper citizens and installing the representational system of nation (Bennett 1995; Horne 1984; Hooper-Greenhill 1992; Genoways and Andrei 2008; Castañeda 1996). Significantly, it is in this historical period of the latter half of the 19th century, that “tourism” also began to take shape and develop based on the expansion of leisured travel for secular purposes (i.e., non-religious/pilgrimage) by the popular, non-elite classes beyond recreational sites (such as Brighton Beach or the Parisian Arcades) to historic sites and landmarks. The intertwining of archaeology and tourism is expressed and made evident in the last two decades of the 19th century by the commercial expansion of Cook Tours. This pioneering force in the development of modern, mass tourism, began to organize travel to the Middle East and Egypt in what can be called (only) anachronistically “heritage tours” (see Campbell 1988; Feifer 1985; Turner and Ash 1976; Walton 2005; Urry 1990; Withey 1998). This no doubt could have inspired Kidder, who way before he wrote in 1930 about the need for archaeology “show-windows” to advance science, had already dreamed of archaeological Meccas of Travel. In 1916 while still working in the American Southwest, he wrote a jot note in a postcard in which he expressed his wish that the archaeological restoration of Pueblo and Hopi sites would stimulate tourism (document in CIW archives, “Kidder, Alfred V.” file). The novelty of Kidder’s dream of a Mecca of Travel is that it consolidated latent and inherent motives, goals, and reasoning in an explicit agenda for archaeology.

Today, in fact, the effort of tourism and archaeology practitioners to create in-situ archaeology museums (i.e., restored archaeological sites) and community-stakeholder museums (in which heritage collections use a variable mix of contemporary ethnographic, historical, and recently excavated archaeological materials from nearby ancient sites) is overtly and irreducibly ideological. These community museums express the ideologies of contemporary, postcolonial ethics! For contemporary postcolonial archaeologists, the
ethics and mandates to engage publics and stakeholders often turn to attempts to develop collaborations with locals that aim to create community museums. Significantly, this ethic in practice functions to have archaeology achieve its role as “inheritance lawyer” by brokering the transfer of the past heritage to ideologically preconceived proper heirs. Trouble may arise for archaeologists, however, when the descendent stakeholders refuse to be contained by the archaeologists’ conception of what is it to be a good citizen-heir of archaeological heritage (see for example Breglia 2006; Ardren 2002; Castillo Cocom 2002).

The specific ideology may vary — as well as design style of the “community museum”— but the meta-trope that governs these ideologies is “sustainability.” Within this framework the goal of what I call “heritage knowledge” is the hegemonic logic and agenda of archaeological restoration in the contemporary postcolonial situation. The ideology of sustainability and the agenda of heritage knowledge also operate to rule over the domain of archaeological exploration of sites where it competes, but ultimately subordinates, the goals and logic of scientific knowledge production. Today, archaeology could not exist except for the transformation of the institutional-economic bases that has made archaeology into a global, transnational industry and neoliberal market. Professional varieties of archaeology (based in the university, museum, government, and private/semiprivate CRM sector) are dependent upon and intertwined with tourism and media-communications. This dependency is based on the latter’s creation of universal citizen-stakeholders (and consumers) of “the archaeological past” via the dissemination of the archaeological imaginary/knowledge produced through archaeological exploration and restoration. This in turn not only generates consumer subjects as the proper heirs of the past in whose name scientific archaeology always claims to be serving; but it also generates, therefore, the driving motivation of private, public, and governmental consumer-stakeholders to invest in and finance archaeological exploration and protection (of all types). This then provides tourism, media-communications, and educational industries a content from which to manufacture “the past” into commodities that feed and satisfy the multiple and diverse consumer markets, styles, and desires.

In his dream of archaeological meccas for tourism, Kidder may not have ever imagined the substantive and reciprocal interdependence of archaeology, tourism, and mass-media, but he had nonetheless already anticipated the need for and motives of how things developed. “[P]ublic interest must be aroused and eventual public understanding must be achieved if archaeology is to go forward: for from the public comes, in the last analysis, all support for scientific endeavor.” Today, however, the in-situ museum-meccas for tourism are not archaeology’s only “show-windows.” The news media, popular literatures, Hollywood film, educational industry, internet and wireless technologies are the driving economic engine and exhibitionary mode of consuming and reproducing archaeology.

Life on the “B List:” Archaeology and Tourism at Sites that Aren’t Postcard Worthy

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As Castañeda argues, the historical interconnections that developed between archaeology and tourism in the 19th century continue to be important today. He therefore examines how academic archaeology is still informed and shaped by the relationship between museums and tourism. This argument is based on his understanding of large archaeological sites that are iconic of major civilizations, which is extrapolated from the case of Chichén Itzá where he has worked for over two decades. However, while these “primary” sites garner the attention of the media, major archaeological projects and the majority of tourists, the reality is that most sites are second or third tier, as defined by their overall size, political power, and influence in antiquity. Thus, as an archaeologist, it is important to raise the issues of what role these smaller sites play in tourism, to critically examine the way in which tourism directly or indirectly impacts our aims to produce knowledge, as well as the costs and benefits of integrating issues related to tourism within the research agendas of contemporary archaeological projects.

In my informal conversations with a number of other archaeologists, most quietly admit that they were originally drawn in to archaeology because of the romance and glamour of these “show-window” sites as portrayed in glossy magazines and television shows. National Geographic was seductive to me as a young girl – the photos alone made me want to search for mummies in Egypt and study giant heads on Easter Island. However, not every archaeologist can focus on these grandiose sites, nor should we want to, as they only represent one very small part of the story. In some cases, archaeologists have intentionally taken research paths as a kind of reaction against these kinds of large-scale projects, to be able to say how the rest of the population lived. For example, beginning in the 1970s many Maya archaeologists explicitly began studying settlement outside of major sites centers and tried to understand agricultural practices and how populations fed themselves. In the last decade especially, household archaeology and the study of commoners has become a central focus in the field. However, there are also practical reasons why project directors may choose to develop smaller, less complicated projects. In Mexico and in other parts of the world, government agencies (like the National Institute of Anthropology and History) dictate research access to archaeological sites. Particularly as a foreigner, attempting to do research at a “primary” site can be complicated, because these governing agencies understandably want their own people to head up the work there. Research at a secondary or tertiary site can also be more modest in terms of costs, as survey, mapping, and small-scale excavation generally require smaller budgets and crews, and less-complicated infrastructure.

As a discipline, we all can directly benefit from the research conducted at primary sites, as it is this high-profile projects that keep the general public interested in archaeology, and gets students excited about taking our classes. However, the majority of us conduct research that focuses on smaller sites never seen on a postcard and that might appeal, at best, to “eco-tourists” who are interested in visiting sites “off the beaten path.” And yet it is important to examine what role the museum and tourism play today in shaping our research agendas at these kinds of sites.

Museums, Tourism and Tourists in Small-Scale Archaeology

As Castañeda notes, despite the historical relationship between archaeology and museums, the museum plays a smaller role in today’s archaeology, particularly as academic institutions distanced themselves from them from the early to the mid-20th century. In
general, the relationship between museums and archaeology as a whole has declined dramatically, and presently in the U.S. fewer than 5% of archaeologists report being employed in museums (SAA Salary Survey 2005). Museums have had even less influence on archaeologists working at smaller or commoner sites as they have encountered few picturesque artifacts, and rarely encounter objects that would make it into a museum collection.\(^6\)

Castañeda goes on to say that the tourist has taken the place of the museum as the “proper heir” of cultural materials. With this rise of tourism, he argues that archaeological projects began to focus on the restoration of architecture, creating an easy to understand image of the past for tourists. However, at smaller and more remote sites, few people, tourists or otherwise, will ever visit because they are difficult to access or simply unknown to outsiders. While archaeologists working at secondary or tertiary sites still “restore” the past through their interpretations, with rare exception, this is not done with tourists in mind. Rather, our research is going to be influenced by the requirements of our academic institutions, funders, and publications, which often has a narrower impact. But is this wise? Kidder’s quote comes to mind, “... public interest must be aroused and eventual public understanding must be achieved if archaeology is to go forward: for from the public comes, in the last analysis, all support for scientific endeavor.” Do we not have the responsibility to engage in outreach to the general public about the research that we produce (Sabloff 1999)? Isn’t small-scale tourism, at least at some level, an extension of public outreach, and would not this contribute to the agenda of public archaeology to educate the general public about the questions that we are asking about the past?

In thinking of future and potential collaborations between tourism and archaeology, it is important to grasp the typical attitude of an archaeologist. Most express concern about the damage that tourism development can cause at archaeological sites, they might also view tourists themselves as disruptive to their research project. In particular visitors, whether tourists in the general sense of the word or curious locals who arrive announced or not, at smaller or more isolated sites, archaeological work is more likely to be interrupted. The arrival of visitors often brings fieldwork to a stop while team members provide tours, giving background on the site and explaining the goals of the project. In some cases, groups may enjoy a meal with the researchers, or even be housed for an overnight visit, and thus disrupt tightly regulated schedules and work regime. Although such visits are likely to be infrequent, they can consume significant amounts of project members’ time in a context where time is essential for the successful completion of each season’s research agenda. Nonetheless, not only are there ways to incorporate these kinds of interactions directly into a project’s research agenda, but there can be great benefits from these face-to-face interactions with an interested public. Project directors can actively recruit students or researchers whose interests focus on ecotourism, community engagement, and/or educational outreach to become project members at archaeological sites. These specialists can then take on the responsibility of organizing these visits, as well as arranging for the creation of educational materials, signage, and other mechanisms of public dissemination of knowledge. Additionally, they might lead discussions and focus groups among the researchers on the project about the inherent value and difficulties of sharing research results beyond academic peers and venues. Archaeologists might also lead tours of tourists or students outside of the regular field season that focus on visits to lesser-known sites, and
lead discussions about research related to the lives of every day peoples, archaeological stakeholders, and descendent communities.

This outreach can also extend to local communities, including meetings with community leaders, educational materials in the local language, and tours. A good example of this is the Kaxil Kiuic Project in Yucatán state. This project, co-directed by George Bey, Tomas Gallareta and Bill Ringle, which is based on a private preserve that employs local peoples, protects the archeological materials of the Maya site, and has created an ecological program of preservation of the surrounding forest. Kaxil Kiuic provides detailed signage at the site, an educational website, and private tours to a limited number of eco-tourists, visiting researchers and local school groups who are allowed to interact directly with archaeological fieldworkers (http://www.kiuic.org). Archaeologists might also be useful for communities that have chosen to develop eco-tourism projects to help communities reach target audiences – e.g., eco-tourists. As individuals who have participated as tourists, we can help local peoples develop materials that would be of use to foreign tourists, such as bilingual brochures or informational posters that explain local history. Archaeologists can also act as an intermediary, providing feedback about “what tourists want” – perhaps helping them to avoid spending money on things that might ultimately detract from a site from the tourist perspective.

Despite these benefits, incorporating small-scale tourism as part of the research agenda at these smaller, more isolated “B-List” archaeological sites is fraught with complications. As to Castañeda’s question about “to whom the past belongs,” even at a smaller scale, tourists are ultimately the focus of our efforts. Increasingly, there are more archaeological scholars who engage in outreach with indigenous communities; this is certainly the case in Mexico where various projects have provided teaching materials about local history, helped to develop small-scale tourism projects, or worked to develop community museums (see for example, Ardren 2002, Camerena and Morales 2007; Glover, Rissolo, and Mathews 2010; McAnany 2010). However, even these small-scale efforts are saturated by politics of different scale that revolve around the control of how projects are to be developed. This may or may not involve the politics between foreign academic archaeologists and governmental archaeology agencies, such as exists in México, but it certainly involves nearby stakeholder communities and groups who must not only negotiate with these distinct types of archaeologists but also amongst themselves. For example, in the case of community museum development, key issues are often deeply meaningful to locals include who determines the content that is be presented, and how the profits are to be distributed. This was certainly the case for the archaeologists working at the site of Chunchucmil who wanted to help the local communities develop a “living museum” (Ardren 2002). Despite the efforts of the archaeologists, this museum never came to fruition in part because of the difficulty of working with five different ejidos with five different agendas (Traci Ardren, personal communication, 2010; see also Breglia 2006).

Similarly, in my own research, I have witnessed the community leaders of a small village located within the boundaries of an ancient Maya site in the Yucatán, debate the development of a community museum and small-scale tourism. Although they had an opportunity to work with a successful local tourism cooperative, the leaders of the community chose not to because of their perception and concern that they would not be able to control the development and profits. This likely stems from a long history of empty promises from both political parties in control of the state and transnational NGOs
dedicated to helping third world communities that this village has a history of receiving, such as: the half-constructed bathrooms that the PRI political party started before an election and never came back to finish; the mailbox that was installed, but that was never followed up with actual postal service; and, the compost bathrooms that an environmental group started, but never finished. Furthermore, there are long and complicated relationships between neighbors and family members within any community that will always have a bearing on how decisions are made. Archaeologists that want to attempt partnering with village leaders in developing small-scale tourism need to understand these complicated histories, and Castañeda’s suggestion (2008a, 2008b, 2010) that archaeological projects would be wise to incorporate an ethnographer on to their staff is an excellent suggestion.

Conclusions

In archaeology shift from a rich man’s leisurely pastime to an academic field, research has become shaped by academic expectations for garnering tenure and promotion, an ever-shrinking grant pool, and the fiercely-competitive process of publishing within academic journals and books. While we might criticize those who “sell their soul” to make the cover of popular archaeological magazines, the reality is that we all have to sell our projects and our research – make them “sexy” to be able to compete for funding and publication space. Particularly for those of us in the tenure-track academic field, we have to prioritize how we spend our time and resources and calculate cost-benefits of how to get the most “bang for our buck.” Too often, we don’t have time to dedicate to working with local communities in the field to help develop small-scale tourism due to our other numerous commitments during the field season, and because this behavior is not rewarded on the academic track. The time that it takes to engage with community members or to help in putting educational materials together can be considerable; and frankly, it takes away from not only field and lab time, but time for writing and publishing. At this point, few academic institutions would reward a faculty member for this behavior, nor acknowledge this work as a product that counts toward tenure or promotion (Glover, Rissolo, Mathews 2010).

With the reality that academic archaeology and tourism are going to continue to intersect, I believe that it would be in our best interest to forge an academic culture that rewards professionals for developing these kinds of community partnerships, and putting time into developing materials with and for small-scale tourism. We need to go beyond Jeremy Sabloff’s (1999) original call for public outreach in archaeology – and recognize that this service can extend to small-scale tourism at secondary and tertiary, or out of the way sites, as well as to the local communities in which we work. This means changing academic culture – arguing to tenure committees that public engagement is a valuable use of time and resources.

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Endnotes

1 The program began in 1915 as archaeological reconnaissance throughout southern México, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua. In 1923 the CIW shifted into a program of excavation based research at various sites, including Chichén Itzá (1923-1938), that lasted until 1956. Although not a focus of this chapter, it is important to note that this research was used with the approval of the CIW as a cloak for covert Naval Intelligence work conducted by the CIW archaeologist Sylvanus G. Morley (see Harris and Sadler 2003; Castañeda 2003, 2005, 2010; Maca 2010).

2 In fact Kidder’s text functions in part as a camouflage for the fact that Morley was an unknowing participant when a colleague smuggled an Aztec artifact out Mexico. Morley later participated in its return, which thereby allowed for the Kidder and the CIW to perform this posture of moral good will.

3 The classic assessments of the Carnegie paradigm of archaeological research are by Kluckhohn (1940) and Taylor (1948). These are significantly expanded by Maca (2010).

4 The literature on museum is extensive. The following works are among those that have informed the present analysis: Anderson 2001; Horne 1984; Hooper-Greenhill 1991; Bennett 1995; Castaneda 1996; Tenorio-Trillo 1996; Rydell 1993; Crosane 2005; Handler and Gable 1997; Genoways and Andrei 2008; Buntinx et al. 2007; Lavine 1991; Karp, Kratz, Szwaja, and Ybarro-Frausto 2006; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998.

5 The editorial need to qualify “civilization” with universal and human or to use to capitalize the word as a way to insist upon the older, inclusive meaning indicates a thick history of concepts that is very pertinent to this discussion and to the politics of heritage.

6 In fact, excavating massive quantities of artifacts can become a major issue for a small project. In a country like Mexico where artifacts cannot be removed from the country, it is the archaeologist’s responsibility to provide a permanent storage facility for their materials. For some archaeologists, this has prompted us in part to excavate more sparingly. Additionally, we increasingly focus research on materials like soil samples and ethnobotanical remains that can be brought back to our home institutions and that will be tossed once analyzed.