bankers, farmers-marketplace vendors, telephone solicitation salesmen, grocery shoppers, real estate shoppers—the possibilities are fascinating. Will variations in rhetoric explain, or be explained by, variations in economic behavior or power? This sort of ethnographic research could complement new knowledge from experimental studies of market behavior (e.g., Davis and Holt, Experimental Economics, Princeton University Press, 1993), which unfortunately is ignored in this book.

Carrier offers some intriguing insights into the content of the space between academic model and empirical reality of the “Market.” One idea he mentions is how the Market model can be right (in predicting observed behavior) for the wrong reasons, as when firms are observed to follow economizing practices, not because they actually do the calculations the “Model” assumes, but because “conformity to the standards of good business practice is a sign that the firm is a good business, a sign that makes it more likely that other firms will be willing to do business with it” (p. 13). This implies a hypothesis that begs for more development, that firms act so as to communicate with other firms as well as exchange resources with them. It would be good if the authors in this book overcame their econophobia and read more of the growing literature in economics on the “social learning” model of economic behavior (e.g., George Mailath’s forthcoming paper in the Journal of Economic Literature, “Do People Play Nash Equilibrium? Lessons From Evolutionary Game Theory”). Carrier also suggests that the fetishized market model carries its contradiction in society, because the same people who praise its supposed efficiencies criticize the selfish profiteering individuals who are presumed necessary for its function. This suggests more opportunities for significant research—anthropologists can perform a fine-grained ethnographic analysis into the roots of business choices, to formally compare and assess the ethical content of a null hypothesis of maximizing—economizing behavior against an alternate hypothesis of historically situated, socialized, goal-oriented “satisficing.”

The book implicitly suggests such ethnographic projects (at least to me) while offering a diverse set of academic discussions. Joel Kahn begins with a historical discussion of social science that “demonizes the Market for its tendency to privilege technorationalism, instrumentalism and the atomized economic actor unencumbered by bonds of community, ethics and morality” (p. 95). He discusses the roots of the anti-Enlightenment rejection of rationalism in the “Expressivist” philosophical writing by Herder. Susan Love Brown describes “anarchocapitalism,” a U.S. antigovernment political fringe movement (think of the Libertarian political party) that enshrines an image of a free market substituting for all state functions. The anarchocapitalists are thus the culmination of all the expressivists feared that an extended market model would produce in society. James Carrier describes a U.S. media personage, Paul Hawken, who through a book and television program encouraged business practices which focused on “non-economic” principles, such as self-fulfillment and personal growth. The case of an antimatierialist business in the heart of the great U.S. market exemplifies the subcultural variation anthropologists love to describe. Alan Smart presents a fascinating chapter briefly discussing aspects of the Chinese Communist Party’s selective appropriation of capitalist market institutions, which (so far) allow the party to retain control of government while stimulating economic growth. This brings the expressivist argument up to date as the Chinese road to capitalism is debated. Carol MacLennan criticizes the (according to her, pernicious) rise of the U.S. government Office of Management and Budget’s use of cost benefit analysis in making public policy. Malcolm Chapman and Peter Buckley introduce and critique economist Oliver Williamson’s “new institutional economics.”

The book concludes with William Roseberry’s brief afterword, setting the roots of the antimarxist discourse in nineteenth-century European thought, from Weber through Marx to Polanyi. I agree with Roseberry’s conclusion that “The value of this book is that it does not respect the historical divide between a socially and culturally embedded non-market economy and a non-social, transaction-based market economy. By insisting that we examine the manifold ways in which market transactions are socially, culturally and politically embedded, the essays in this book clear new ground for critical anthropological work” (p. 259).


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Archaeologists working in Mesoamerica have become increasingly concerned about the effects of their projects on the communities within which they work. Despite the realization that archaeology necessitates applied anthropology, few of us have developed coherent plans for managing the interaction among anthropologists, government agencies, and local inhabitants during and after a project. This timely volume presents a postmodern analysis of the development and practice of tourism at the archaeological site of Chichén Itzá and its relationship to changes in the adjacent town of Písté, Yucatán, México. Castañeda argues that Písté is not the result of tourist impact, but the present practices of tourism in “the Museum” at Chichén Itzá result from a long-term process of transculturation among anthropologists, the inhabitants of Písté, and nonlocal government officials. Each of these agents has contributed to the reinvention of Maya culture at Chichén Itzá. In Písté, Castañeda tackles what many believe to be the worst example of the obliteration of Maya culture by tourist development. By the end of the book, however, the reader is led to question, “Who is impacting whom?”—ironically, it is the tourist, not the Maya, who emerges as the victim of development.

The volume is organized as a guidebook of various “tours” of the practices and routines of tourism at Chichén Itzá. The first two chapters of Part 1, “The Scriptural Economy,” address the history of tourism in Chichén Itzá and Písté, beginning with the Carnegie Institution of Washington’s multidisciplinary project at the site and the demographic and political history of Písté. Following chapters describe the evolution of the site as the museum of Maya culture and civilization and the creation of the mysterious Maya by anthropologists, historians, and travel writers. Chapter 5 consists of an analysis of the scriptural economy of Chichén Itzá with reference to the practices of tour guides in the ruins and the daily schedule of visitation at the site. Part 1
concludes with an analysis of the interactions among New Age spiritualists, museum and government officials, and Pisté natives on the vernal equinox of 1989. Part 2, “War and Its Topography,” begins by describing the orchestration of practices among craft vendors, artisans, guides, and the tourist body. Subsequent chapters present a critical reflection of how the author’s ethnographic field methods were constrained by the political strategies pursued by vendors and artisans as they continued to negotiate use of the site with federal, state, and local officials. The final chapter evaluates the reinvention of Maya culture by Pisté’s inhabitants and the author’s perception of this process in the context of the town’s petition to the federal government for status as an independent municipality.

This book will generate a lot of debate within and among subfields in anthropology. Cultural anthropologists who adhere to postmodern theory will likely applaud Castañeda’s analysis. Anthropologists and archaeologists of a more materialist tradition (including this reviewer) will find the constant references to the relativity and “invention” of culture and the excessive use of postmodern analogies (text and scriptural economy, the mystic writing pad, the panopticon) irksome and perhaps not particularly germane to the principal issues of the book. Consequently, it is not a guidebook in the sense that guidebooks are usually intended for more general readership (though many may mistakenly buy it for this reason). Regardless of one’s approach, however, the volume has several positive points. First, Castañeda describes the invention of Maya culture as a dynamic process of transculturation in which anthropologists, Yucatecan regional society, and the Maya themselves are full participants. The notion of the Maya as a folk culture or as victims of development are antithetical to his argument. Ultimately he succeeds in portraying culture in Pisté as real, not imagined, relative, or derived from the tourist development at Chichén Itzá. Second, the author thoroughly considers how his field methods, his presence in Pisté, and even his own personality affect the outcome of his study. This is an unusually honest account of how the ethnographer’s own patterns of interaction contribute to the reinvention of culture. Finally, the book provides a case study that will encourage us to rethink our ideas of applied anthropology, ethnographic method, cultural resource management, and cultural preservation.

This book nevertheless contains some unresolved questions and analytical omissions. In the second chapter, “Progress that Chose a Village,” Castañeda sets the stage for his argument that Pisté’s perceived lack of “Maya Culture.” What he terms zero-degree culture, is not the result of the impact of tourist development. Through an analysis of Redfield’s 1941 *The Folk Culture of Yucatán* (University of Chicago Press), Redfield and Villa Rojas’s 1934 *Chan Kom, A Maya Village* (Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 448, Washington, D.C.), and Steggerda’s 1941 *The Maya Indians of Yucatán* (Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 531, Washington, D.C.), Castañeda suggests that Pisté represented antiprogress and never possessed the archetypical Maya folk culture, exemplified by Chan Kom. Although this suggestion is intriguing, it is based largely on negative evidence: the author’s speculations on why Redfield never mentioned Pisté and a couple of passages where Steggerda mentioned the indifference of Pisté’s inhabitants. The question of the nature and direction of culture change in Pisté from the 1940s to the present is therefore never addressed, but subsumed under the invention of Maya culture at Chichén Itzá.

Castañeda also fails to include the ancient Maya of Chichén Itzá (and archaeologists’ questions about them) as agents of transculturation. The biggest difference between Chichén Itzá and museums is that the “exhibits” or buildings at the site are not simply inventions created for tourists. The layout of the city, the architecture, the restriction or openness of particular spaces were originally designed for different purposes, and the restorations of the buildings complicate rather than simplify our understanding of the ancient Maya. Archaeologists select parts of the site for investigation and restoration either because the building is in danger of destruction or because it may reveal important aspects of past Maya society. The buildings of the ancient city of Chichén Itzá constitute a built environment, but not in the same sense that a museum is a built environment designed for the explicit purpose of simplifying the workings of a culture for visitors. The lack of fit between the built environment of the ancient city and the tasks of the museum to simplify issues and provide services to tourists creates yet another dimension for inventing Maya culture. A consideration of the post-processual archaeological literature about the reflexive effects of the built environment on behavior and practice would have added an important dimension to the author’s analysis.

Finally, this book ends rather abruptly, leaving the reader with many unanswered questions. Perhaps purposefully, Castañeda does not offer any suggestions for how archaeology, applied anthropology, and tourist development might proceed. We know that perceptions and inventions of present Maya culture and the Maya past are actively manipulated at the international, national, regional, and local levels, and as with all instances of transculturation, the outcome is unpredictable. Is the reader to conclude that applied anthropology or attempts to manage tourist development are irrelevant? The Maya of Pisté may be actively involved in the reinvention of Maya culture, but they do not have the upper hand as they negotiate their access to the museum. Perhaps the author will address these issues in future research.


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In 1937 the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI) was established in colonial Northern Rhodesia with the stated purpose of analyzing scientifically the social life of modern people. White and Black, in Central Africa and to disseminate the resulting data as widely as possible to governments and the general public alike. The RLI (later known as the Institute for African Studies at the University of Zambia) remains unique in the annals of social research, having for generations been one of the premier laboratories for generating and testing theoretical frameworks, as well as being the incubator of an unparalleled assemblage of stellar anthropological fieldworkers: Godfrey and Monica Wilson, Max Gluckman, Audrey Richards, Elizabeth Colson, Victor...