

Milpa As an Ideological Weapon: Tourism and Maya Migration to Cancún

Alicia Re Cruz, *Institute of Anthropology,*
University of North Texas

Abstract. The article analyzes the phenomenon of tourism within the current globalizing and postmodern contexts. It is based on the cultural relationship between Chan Kom, a Maya community in the Yucatán Peninsula, and Cancún, the international tourist emporium. The tourist culture of Cancún embeds rules of production and consumption radically different from those encapsulated in the milpa or corn-field ideology that Maya experience in their communities. The study presents a dialogue between Chan Kom's social fragmentation due to out-migration to Cancún and the Mayanization of the socioeconomic and cultural landscape of the international Cancún. The goal is to discover the kaleidoscopic representations of Cancún as a tourist market product through the prism of the Maya ideological and socioeconomic presence.

Changes in the nature of Western societies in the past two or three decades have pushed the notion of *globalization* as the defining term in the analysis of general world trends. The common ground in all these global trends is the notion of "culture," which has come to occupy a more central position in the separate orders of value of present-day societies. "Culture" in this global tapestry has been, very often, qualified by the attributes of the postmodern condition, characterized by the dissolution of boundaries not only between the cultures of first and third world societies, but also between different cultural forms. In this period of postmodernity there is not a clear distinction between reality and representation; signification is increasingly visual and figurative in such a way that, as Jean Baudrillard (1985) argues, what we consume are signs or representations. Certainly, *globalization* has become the closest term encapsulating the un-border-ed, physical, as much

Ethnohistory 50:3 (summer 2003)
Copyright © by the American Society for Ethnohistory.

as conceptual, condition of our world driven by speed, multinational corporations, free marketeers, moving populations, and representations.

This study examines the phenomenon of tourism within the current globalizing and postmodern contexts. The Maya community of Chan Kom and the international tourist emporium of Cancún are the two major cultural landscapes in this study. Though both of them are embroidered in the same current globalizing fabric, they are each products of different cultural histories. Chan Kom is located at the heart of the north-central part of the Yucatán Peninsula. The community is flanked by two impressive archaeological sites. It is located about 14 kilometers south of Chichén Itzá and about 90 kilometers west of Cobá. Chan Kom is 9 kilometers off the Mérida-Cancún highway. Chan Kom is 132 kilometers from Mérida and 290 kilometers from Cancún. Cancún represents a complex tapestry of different ethnic groups, social classes, and nationalities that color the multicultural composition of our international tourist world. Fascinated by the opportunity to experience the cultural and tropical exoticism, thousands of tourists visit Cancún annually. At the same time, attracted by the opportunity “to advance,” “to modernize,” and “to prosper,” Cancún receives hundreds of Maya who become the underlying base of labor for the development of tourism. Both tourists and Mayas have to cross different cultural and socioeconomic borders in order “to experience” and “produce” Cancún. In their travels, they bring their cultural packages with them.

“Traveling cultures” (Said 1983) is a conceptual and experiential product of our un-border-ed postmodern condition (Lyotard 1984; Jameson 1984; Harvey 1991). Given the recent interest of the social sciences in mobility, mobility of peoples, cultures, and objects, most of the analysis of traveling cultures has been contextualized within the phenomenon of tourism (i.e., Rojek and Urry 1997). Inspired by Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), some studies denounce the culture of tourism as a new form of colonialism (Nash 1995). Indeed, many indigenous people have come to view tourism as a “new form of sugar” (Rajotte 1987), that is, a new form of exploitation of the indigenous populations by external forces. Other studies emphasize the detrimental impact of tourism among indigenous communities, particularly in the loss of “authenticity” of culture. However, these critiques render “culture” as static and deny people their history (Greenwood 1989). Contrary to these positions, the present study explores the un-border-ing condition of our global, postmodern, postcapitalist world as it is expressed in Cancún’s tourist mode of production. Cancún is sustained by the infrastructural support of the Maya migrant labor and legitimized by the international tourist ideology, as a search for “the exotic other.” This frame-

work brings Chan Kom's and Cancún's cultural realms into dialogue and negotiation.

The particular aspect of this dialogue, which is emphasized in this analysis, is the Maya response to, and manipulation of, the tourist culture of Cancún: a tourist culture that embeds rules of production and consumption radically different from those encapsulated in the milpa or cornfield ideology that Maya experience in their communities. For this, I utilize the concept of "traveling cultures," applied to the Maya culture lived in Cancún via migrants, or the Cancún culture lived in Chan Kom, via community responses, reactions, and resistance toward Cancún's presence in community life. Thus, the focus of this analysis is on Chan Kom's social fragmentation, provoked by out-migration to Cancún, which cannot be understood without the interconnection between the social realms of Cancún and Chan Kom. The presence of the ancient and contemporary Maya culture in Yucatán is highly marketed to reinforce the multiple representations of Cancún as an exotic paradise. This examination of the effects of Cancún in Chan Kom's life and the Mayanization of Cancún is an attempt to unmask the multiple representations embedded in Cancún, as a tourist market product, in order to reach its social and cultural reality.

Chan Kom: A Historical Background

The Maya of today are the descendants of one of the world's great civilizations. Their accomplishments during the first millennium A.D. include sophisticated architecture, a calendrical system based on long-term observational astronomy and as accurate as the tabulations of those of sixteenth-century Europe, and a hieroglyphic writing system. The pre-Hispanic Maya are characterized by complex religious systems and institutions that have a strong philosophical base; other major factors contributing to the highly complex Maya civilization are: the existence of long-distance economic relations with the people of Middle and Central America and intensive agricultural systems that are being revived today to meet the needs of a hungry twentieth-century population. At the core of these agricultural systems was the milpa production, the same slash-and-burn system that current Maya undertake to obtain the means of survival in the peasant communities: corn, squash, and beans.

Given the limestone geological composition of Yucatán, the rainwater filters through the rock, eroding it and creating caves and cenotes. A cenote is a natural well formed by the collapse of the limestone shelf. Chan Kom is named for its central cenote (*chan* in Yucatec means "little," and *kom* means

“kettle”). Remnants from the pre-Hispanic past are visible on the stones from masonry buildings and in the low mounds dispersed around the cornfields. Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa Rojas (1934) reported that the first inhabitants of Chan Kom were descendants of the Maya who took the side of the Yucatec government during the Caste War of 1848. Chan Kom started as a *milperio*, a type of camp set up at the field site during periods of agricultural labor. These first peasants came from Ebtun, forty-five kilometers away. During the Mexican Revolution (1910–20) many peasants were displaced; the settlement attracted refugees from other communities. After the revolution, Chan Kom received the first legal grant of *ejido*¹ property, and it was also assigned pueblo status, a legal and political entity independent from Ebtun. In 1935 the local area became a *municipio libre* (free township), with Chan Kom as its center or cabecera. A group of peripheral hamlets or *comisarias* were subordinate to the political and administrative offices of the cabecera. Chan Kom started with 251 inhabitants in 1930 (Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934: 13); it reached 530 in 1972 (Elmendorf and Merrill 1977, 1978) and increased to 682 in 1989–90 (Re Cruz 1996a).

Chan Kom is an icon in the anthropological literature. Since 1924, when the Carnegie Institution began a twenty-year investigation in and around Chichén Itzá, Chan Kom has been the focus of ethnographic attention. Redfield and Villa Rojas (1934) initiated the ethnographic gaze, looking at the contemporary Maya of Chan Kom as the model of “peasant” society within the “folk-urban continuum” conceptual model for development (Redfield 1941). Concerned with this process of change, Redfield (1950) returned to Chan Kom to test the conceptual bases of his folk-urban continuum. What he found was acidly criticized by Victor Goldkind (1965, 1966), who, under the conceptual umbrella of homogeneous “peasant” society, discovered social schisms that resulted in the Protestant exodus from Chan Kom to neighboring communities. Mary Elmendorf’s (1970, 1972) focus on women’s productive and reproductive roles opened a different ethnographic window to the study of change in the Maya community. The latest chapter in this Chan Kom ethnographic encyclopedia analyzes the impact of out-migration to Cancún in the socioeconomic, cultural, and political dimensions of community life (Re Cruz 1996a and 1996b), from which the study I present here develops.

Crucial in the analysis of the current impact of Cancún’s economic and cultural system in Chan Kom’s community life is the understanding of the community economic development that parallels a long history of social confrontations. The history of Chan Kom’s social frictions and clashes is as old as the community itself (see Re Cruz 1996a). The Mexican Revolution reached Yucatán in 1915; with it came the agrarian reform program

that drove some peasants to repopulate areas of the peninsula that had been abandoned during the Caste War.² Maya from Ebtun had the need to seek new lands to cultivate milpa. Chan Kom was born in the 1910s as a settlement of a group of Maya that split from Ebtun. By 1935, Chan Kom was a Maya community, independent from Ebtun, with its own political offices. Chan Kom was the political and administrative center for a series of peripheral hamlets or *comisarias*. Milpa was the economic activity that unified everyone in the community because every household, in one way or another, depended upon milpa for survival.

The milpa mode of production was characterized by communal cooperation in working the land, building the houses, and organizing village life. However, as Goldkind indicates (1965, 1966), there was an increasing socioeconomic differentiation in the village by the way people used the terms “rich” and “poor.” “Rich” was the synonym for those engaged in commercial enterprises, the buying and selling of grains, hogs, and cattle, while “poor” was equal to *milpero* or milpa worker. Chan Kom’s founding families—the Tamays, the Pats, the Caamals, and the Cimes—constituted the high-status families in the village. By the decade of the 1940s, after Chan Kom was recognized as head of an independent township, the Cimes’ political and economic control over the village had eclipsed that of the other families. Peasants looked to other high-status families for political leadership to oppose the Cimes’ power.

The Protestant missionaries who came in the 1920s, as a collateral effect of the Carnegie project in the area (Sullivan 1989), contributed to the expansion of the Protestant affiliation in the community, which paralleled the expansion of cattle development. The Pat family members, enemies of the Cimes since the foundation of the village, became the main members of the directive council of the new religion. The old enmity between the Cimes and the Pats was religiously expressed in the confrontation between Catholics and Protestants.

The religious division of the community was also tied to the emerging source of wealth, cattle raising. By 1940, according to a new law, all cattle had to be fenced in. This restricted the economic initiatives of small cattle owners, most of them from the Pat family, because of the expensive cost of fencing. The small cattle owners opposed the fencing of the land; they had the support of the poor *milperos*. The socioeconomic competition between the Cimes and the Pats resulted in an open confrontation between Protestants and Catholics. In people’s memories, it was a religious battle in which Protestantism was defeated. The Pat people followed the well-worn path of those who had contested the *cacique’s* or political boss’s authority—ostracism and migration. The socioreligious clash ended up with the Prot-

estant exodus from Chan Kom in the 1950s. The elite group, the Catholics, believed the defeat of the Protestants was proof that God was on their side, and they used this proof of their righteousness to attempt to mobilize the peasantry in their favor.

A new fissure began to open the structural social schism in the community with the initial migration of young people toward Cancún in the early 1970s. This social confrontation flourished in the 1980s, when those early migrants, most of them members of the Cime family, accumulated enough capital to build their own capitalist enterprises in Cancún. The increasing enrichment of these families did not go unnoticed by the land and cattle owners, who remained in the village and controlled the political offices. In the 1987 political election, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) or Institutional Revolutionary Party candidate, who was appointed by the group of migrants to be the president of the community, won. The PRI candidate elected by the milpero group, those who stayed in the community to cultivate their milpas, lost. The migrants' victory in the political election aggravated the social confrontation. Chan Kom had to face a serious social irony: the political leadership was in the hands of individuals "on the move," migrants not fully settled in the community.

Milpa: A Production System and Ideology

Chan Kom was divided in two social groups, los Antiguos and the migrants, expressing different worldviews, representing different modes of production. Los Antiguos were the community Mayas who cultivated milpa and observed the agricultural ritual cycle in accord with the Maya and Catholic traditions; they represented the milpa mode of production (see Re Cruz 1996a and 1996b). The migrant group was integrated by those who left and abandoned the traditional cultivation and care of the milpa; they represented the capitalist-tourist mode of production. Deposed from their political leadership, los Antiguos' ideological weapon to counteract the new political and economic power in the community was to question the migrants' Maya identity. That is, in los Antiguos' discourse on who is Maya and who is not, the migrants are non-Maya because they do not work the milpa anymore, or if they do (in the case of the temporary migrants), they have to accommodate the agricultural-ritual cycle to their job contracts and demands in Cancún. Indeed, milpa is a concept that binds Maya people to the whole culture. Then, milpa, by itself, contains its relational network and surrounding cultural context. Milpa is the system of Maya relationships wherein the individual who produces corn, the sociocultural Maya order, and corn itself are intimately linked.

Production of corn, the most general endeavor of the Maya community, goes through several stages until it is finally consumed. Production, elaboration, and final consumption of corn are stamped by the characteristics of the place and space where these activities are undertaken and consequently by the male and female labor involved. The Maya peasant creates corn from Nature through cultivation. This is why the milpero, via rituals, has to be granted divine permission to work the lands of Nature. Corn is brought up from Nature by male hands. Once harvested, women's hands transform corn into something "cultural," into tortillas, which for the Maya are *la fuerza* (the strength), the energy that moves people to work and to live. Indeed, the production of corn follows a process that demands male and female collaboration.

For the peasant, milpa is the ideological text in which his or her culture is inscribed. Through milpa, Mayas renew the connection with their ancestors. According to the ancient account of the world creation, narrated in the *Popol Vuh*, the twins Hunahpu and Xbalanque are the cultural heroes who maintain the corn plants' lives through their successes against the lords of the underworld (Tedlock 1985). Corn is the flesh and bone of the Fifth World people, the most perfect humankind in the current world of the Maya. Maya use the term *santo maíz* (holy corn) to refer to corn. With this expression, the Maya peasants encapsulate their understanding of a world that is symbolically as much as economically ruled by the milpa system.

The location of the milpa in the clearings of the forest not only supplies the Maya with their sources of survival—subsistence in an ecological zone apt for hunting and collecting herbs, building materials, and firewood as well as agriculture; it provides for their cultural survival as well. Corn, since it is planted by male hands, is conceived as following the Maya life cycle, from its birth to its maturity and death in the fields, and having an after-life nurturing the human bodies through the tortillas produced by female Maya hands. Corn production encapsulates the gender complementarity. Corn appears to be animated or life endowed precisely because it embodies the social and the ideological milieus.

The intriguing symbolic connections between producer and product, that is, between milpero and corn, encapsulates in the milpa ideology what identifies an individual as a Maya, as a peasant. Los Antiguos legitimize their Maya identity by calling themselves milperos because they continue to be attached, economically and culturally, to milpa work. This Maya identification mark is carried by the Maya migrants to Cancún. Because of this, migrants continue identifying themselves as Maya, explaining that their milpas are not in Chan Kom anymore, but in Cancún.

Cancún: A Historical Background

The archaeological significance of the Yucatán Peninsula was discovered in the nineteenth century by John L. Stephens and Frederick Catherwood. They were followed during the first quarter of the twentieth century by Edward Thompson, vice-consul of the United States to Yucatán, who purchased the hacienda Chichén Itzá. The growth of tourism in Yucatán has been encouraged and supported by the Mexican federal government since the 1960s. In the 1970s, the federal government, through the Bank of Mexico, initiated the infrastructural project to develop Cancún (Cardiel Coronel 1989). Cancún was transformed from a small settlement of two hundred people into a luxurious tourist complex.

Cancún's development as a tourist center followed different stages. It started with a government economic policy favoring the international and national economic investment in the hotel industry. Cheap labor was needed to build the hotel area. The Maya population in the Yucatán Peninsula was targeted as the source for that labor. For the peasants, Cancún represented an alternative to the economic uncertainty of milpa production due to the irregularities of the weather pattern. With the development of Cancún, out-migration and wage labor were added to the repertoire of economic possibilities. This economic alternative allowed the articulation with the agricultural cycle as peasants could now migrate to Cancún when the fields were resting and return to the community during the intense agricultural work. This type of migration was undertaken by mainly unskilled peasant Maya who were recruited for the construction work. Work in Cancún also became an alternative for the younger generation of Maya, given the rigors of milpa production. Most of the young Maya who decided to migrate in the 1970s attained and fulfilled the peasant dream of becoming rich in the city. Some of these are now owners of fruit stands, bakeries, and other types of business enterprises in Cancún. These successful migrant Maya in Cancún are those who now monopolize the political offices in Chan Kom.

How Migrants "Mayanize" Cancún

Maya migrants describe Cancún during the early 1970s as a *milperio*. It resembled the monte or the forest that the peasant is used to exploring to make milpa. Generally the Maya use the term *milperio* to refer to an extension of land with a high concentration of milpas. Most of Maya communities originate as a *milperio*, which later develops into a community. As the peasants have to venture into the monte, sometimes miles away

from the community, to work in the milpas, the migrants have to venture to the unknown terrain of Cancún. Migrants' perceptions of Cancún as milperio responds to a conceptual geographical parallel since both places share the important factor of their long distances from the residential community. Furthermore, both work systems, the milpa in Chan Kom and wage labor in Cancún, represent the productive source of survival for the Maya.

In its early stages of becoming an international tourist emporium, Cancún in the 1970s had to face the problem of housing the avalanche of migrants. Certainly the development of areas for the migrant community was not contemplated in the Cancún hotel development fever. Migrants had to clear the monte, sometimes invade milpa lands to create their own housing. For the peasant Maya this was not an unfamiliar activity since the rural milpas require the clearing of the forest as well. However, these housing areas contrasted with the Cancún residential area of downtown. Lack of social services, such as electricity, drainage, running water, and public transportation, characterized these migrant neighborhoods, called *areas populares*.³

In the migrants' worldview, la milpa continues to be the source of their economic as much as their ideological survival in Cancún, but it is now anchored in a much different economic and cultural system. Instead of the monte, the big avenue, the hotel, the construction building has become the ecological zone for production. The gender complementarity in the production of corn does not exist in the urban milpa, however. In the urban milpa, women and men perform their productive roles as wage workers and actors in the tourist productive system, in which the "exoticism" of the Maya culture is consumed. Therefore, milpa, the heart of Maya peasant economics, embeds an organic unity between the peasants and their product, the corn. This stands in stark contrast to the milpas worked by the migrants in Cancún. Cancún's milpas—restaurants, hotels, construction—and their products—wages and money—are commodities, the result of the split between the producer and the product. Corn, the product of the peasants' work, historically connects the Maya with their ancestors. That is, cultivation of corn links the present with the past in a continuing cyclical motion insofar as anytime the peasant works the milpa, he or she repeats the actions that brought the first creators, according to the Popol Vuh, to build the most perfect humankind, "the Corn People." Corn, then, as product, encapsulates the pure essence of the Maya ethnic identity—the producer. However, this intimate interconnection between product and producer in the Maya ideology does not exist in the urban milpas. In Cancún, the product of migrants' labor—wages and money—is disconnected from

the Maya identity of the worker; product and producer belong to different cultural rationales.

Chan Kom's peasants are aware of the different relationship between worker and product when migration to Cancún occurs. This split between product and producer is clearly conceptualized by the Maya within their cultural rationale as it is expressed through the notion of *uay* in the Maya oral tradition. Uay is a male witch who has the ability and knowledge to transform into an animal. Maya believe that uays enter homes and handle food, poisoning it. The next day, after the food is eaten, the residents become sick and sometimes even die. The uays go to the city to visit, and there they transform themselves into animals that can fly. "When the Uay Kot flies, uyhh!, you have to see how he does it, like a plane, so that when he passes through here, it is as if it was drizzling. Then, when he goes, he looks for merchandize in other places," according to Don Luis of Chan Kom (in Re Cruz 1996a: 69).

The *uay kot* is the individual who can transform into an eagle. Los Antiguos clearly associate this character of the Maya oral tradition with leaders of the migrant group, particularly those who have stores in Chan Kom and in Cancún. These Maya are envisioned as uay kots who bring Chan Kom's products to Cancún in exchange for Cancún's commodities. This is quite a compelling Maya exegetical document on the effects of Cancún's commodification of Chan Kom's tradition and community life.⁴

The Politics of Corn and Cancún

"Tradition" and "culture" are politically contested symbols in Chan Kom, as they have become sources of political competition between los Antiguos and the group of Maya migrants. Peasants conceive *tradition* as a synonym for milpa work, that is, knowledge emanating from the ancestral Maya ideology and Catholicism. The migrants accommodate their tradition, their milpa ideology, to the cosmopolitan Cancún landscape, within which their concept of tradition becomes commodified. They identify other Maya by their physical appearances. At the same time, they are identified in the tourist market as Maya because of their customs as some workers are asked to wear their traditional dress as part of their jobs in restaurants and hotels. When Maya migrants participate in any Maya or Catholic ritual in Chan Kom, they mostly contribute with money, while most of los Antiguos contribute with their labor or any type of ingredient needed for the performance (i.e., flowers, corn, tortillas, etc.).

Migrants are very proud to promote the proletarianization of milpa since they prefer to pay other milperos to work their lands in the com-

munity while they are working in Cancún. *La fagina* is a Maya institution of communal labor wherein every adult Maya has to serve in community projects periodically. Since migrants are not in the community, they are trying to impose a new system to overcome their absenteeism in la fagina work by paying someone anytime they are required to work for the community. Los Antiguos take advantage of what they consider an assault on Maya tradition, that is, not being able to perform fagina work, as another sign of de-Mayanization among the group of migrants. At the same time, the attempt to transform fagina, part of the Maya tradition, into a “thing” that can be paid for, that is, bought, is an example of the different representations of tradition that migrants formulate because of the commodity tourist culture lived in Cancún.

In essence, Cancún opens a new socioeconomic and cultural dimension for the migrant Maya wherein almost all aspects of social life become commodified, transformed into a “thing,” which, in their travels back to Chan Kom, migrants bring within their cultural package. Tradition becomes a “thing,” a commodity that legitimizes migrants as Mayas, while los Antiguos use tradition as “the knowledge” that they exercise to be a Maya. Different conceptualizations of milpa—the corn milpa and the Cancún milpa, contribute to the different political connotations of Maya tradition.

As much as “tradition,” “Cancún” is a significant element present in any political discourse in Chan Kom. Particularly utilized by los Antiguos, Cancún is blamed as the source of crisis and social unrest in the community. Cancún has helped los Antiguos redefine their socioeconomic and ideological bases. An abundant number of stories circulate around Chan Kom in regard to the dangers Cancún hides for the Maya: stolen children, murderers, people being run over by cars, rapes. In this manner, Cancún is re-created in Chan Kom’s popular voice as a monster, a threat to the individual Maya’s survival as much as a threat to the Maya ideology’s survival as embodied in the milpa ideology or in the Catholic religion. The reification of Cancún through these stories parallels its association with the uay kot in the Maya oral tradition and the migrant commodification of the urban milpa.

An important critique that is repeatedly used by los Antiguos in their political discourse, as a way to ratify their own “Mayaness” and their legitimate right to be the political leaders in the community, is the affiliation of migrants with Protestantism. Indeed, the Catholic/Protestant wound in Chan Kom’s history is resuscitated in the los Antiguos/migrants social clash. For los Antiguos, once the Maya cross the rural/urban border, there is a high risk of conversion to Protestantism—a term that, for los Anti-

guos, encompasses evangelicals, Presbyterians, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Mormons. Associating migrants' lives with Protestantism is another significant ideological weapon that los Antiguos utilize to ratify their legitimacy as "pure Maya" and, with it, to point out the migrants' illegitimate access to the community political leadership. According to Don Juanjo de Chan Kom, "It is said that many in Cancún turn into Protestants, that they say that God doesn't exist anymore, because many have money and they worship money." This ratifies los Antiguos' perception of Cancún as a place that de-Mayanizes people. This statement implicitly refers to the community historic pattern in associating scission or migration with economic and political competition and Protestantism.

Conclusion

As seen from Chan Kom, Cancún is a dangerous entity that de-ethnifies Maya people. The urban Maya are thought to be members of another kind of society where they fall prey to the dangers of money, stress, and physical violence. Indeed, for los Antiguos, Cancún is a threat to the traditional order. However, for the migrants, Cancún represents an inexorable transition to a new form of sociocultural order that allows them to be more "modernized," more "civilized" than their peasant counterparts.

Certainly, involvement in tourism has its dangers, of which Maya traditionalists are well aware. Fears of transforming tradition and Maya culture into a "thing," as the tourist mode of production promotes, are represented in the images of Cancún as a dangerous place. This is associated with Protestantism, which, at the same time, is connected to the history of community socioeconomic and political confrontations in Chan Kom. Furthermore, the encroachment of urban-industrial forms of tourism upon traditional Maya society inevitably creates a host of new socioeconomic and cultural processes in both the traditional and the migrant Maya groups. However, as this ethnographic study points out, the multifaceted tourist industry can actually serve as a vehicle by which Maya tradition can be re-created, transformed, and manipulated as a political and ideological weapon.

Notes

- 1 The agrarian reform promulgated by the revolution required the distribution of communal lands or *ejido* to peasant villages throughout Mexico.
- 2 In 1848, the Maya of eastern Yucatán revolted against the dzulo'ob or whites. As their ancestral prophetic vision of the world taught them, the time had arrived to rise up in arms against the oppressors (Reed 1964; Bricker 1977; Burns 1977).

One of the consequences of the revolt was the movement and relocation of populations.

- 3 The development of the human geography of Cancún, particularly focused on the “Mayanization” of the landscape, is further analyzed in Re Cruz 1996b.
- 4 This argument is similar to the one analyzed by Michael Taussig (1980) involving peasants who become mine workers and plantation workers in South America.

References

- Baudrillard, Jean
 1985 The Ecstasy of Communication. *In* Postmodern Culture. Hal Foster, ed. Pp. 126–34. London: Pluto.
- Bricker, Victoria
 1977 The Caste War of Yucatán: The History of a Myth and the Myth of History. *In* Anthropology and History in Yucatán. Grant D. Jones, ed. Pp. 251–8. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Burns, Allan
 1977 The Caste War in the 1970s: Present-Day Accounts from Village Quintana Roo. *In* Anthropology and History in Yucatán. Grant D. Jones, ed. Pp. 259–73. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Cardiel Coronel, Cuautemoc
 1989 Religion y sociedad en el sureste de Mexico. Mexico: Cuadernos de la Casa Chata.
- Elmendorf, Mary L.
 1972 The Maya Women and Change. CIDOC cuaderno no. 81. Cuernavaca, Mexico: Centro Intercultural de Documentación.
 1976 Nine Maya Women: A Village Faces Change. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman.
- Elmendorf, Mary, and Devorah Merrill
 1977 Socioeconomic Impact of Development in Chan Kom, 1971–1976: Rural Women Participate in Change. Unpublished manuscript prepared for the World Bank Population and Human Resources Division, Development Economics Department.
 1978 Socioeconomic Impact of Development in Chan Kom, Yucatán, 1971–1976: A Preliminary Study. Paper presented at the 1978 Society for Applied Anthropology Meetings, Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico.
- Goldkind, Victor
 1965 Social Stratification in the Peasant Community: Redfield’s Chan Kom Reinterpreted. *American Anthropologist* 67: 863–84.
 1966 Class Conflict and Cacique in Chan Kom. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 22: 325–45.
- Greenwood, Davydd J.
 1989 Culture by the Pound: An Anthropological Perspective on Tourism As Cultural Commoditization. *In* Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Valene L. Smith, ed. 2d ed., pp. 171–85. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Harvey, David
 1991 The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

- Jameson, Fredric
 1984 Postmodernism and the Cultural Logic of Capitalism. *New Left Review* 146: 53–92.
- Lyotard, Jean-François
 1984 *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nash, Dennison
 1995 An Exploration of Tourism As Superstructure. *In Change in Tourism: People, Places, Processes*. Richard W. Butler and Douglas G. Pearce, eds. Pp. 30–46. London: Routledge.
- Rajotte, Freda, ed.
 1987 *Tourism: A New Type of Sugar*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Re Cruz, Alicia
 1996a *The Two Milpas of Chan Kom: Scenarios of a Maya Village Life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
 1996b The Thousand and One Faces of Cancún. *Urban Anthropology* 25 (3): 283–310.
- Redfield, Robert
 1941 *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 1950 *A Village That Chose Progress: Chan Kom Revisited*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Redfield, Robert, and Alfonso Villa Rojas
 1934 *Chan Kom: A Maya Village*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution.
- Reed, Nelson A.
 1964 *The Caste War of Yucatan*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Rojek, Chris, and John Urry, eds.
 1997 *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Said, Edward
 1978 *Orientalism*. London: Routledge.
- Sullivan, Paul R.
 1989 *Unfinished Conversations: Mayas and Foreigners between Two Wars*. New York: Knopf.
- Taussig, Michael T.
 1980 *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Tedlock, Dennis
 1985 *Popol Vuh*. New York: Simon and Schuster.