

## Contents

*List of Figures*      vii

*Acknowledgments*      ix

1. Introduction

*Fernando Armstrong-Fumero and Ben Fallaw*      3

2. Yucatecan High Society and Stephen Salisbury III: The Origins of Social  
Ties between Elites from Yucatán and Massachusetts

*Julio Cesar Hoil Gutiérrez (Translated by  
Sheila Hernandez)*      35

3. Bad Spanish and Worse Maya: On the Performance of Gringohood during  
the “Carnegie Age”

*Fernando Armstrong-Fumero*      51

4. American Idols: Bartolomé García Correa, US Americans, and the  
Transnational Construction of Mayanism, 1925–1935

*Ben Fallaw*      76

5. Funding Values in Highland Chiapas: How Harvard Anthropology  
Naturalized the Mexican State

*Matthew C. Watson*      99

6. Distilling the Past through the Present: Discussions with Contemporary  
US Rum Makers for Understanding Nineteenth-Century Rum Making in  
the Yucatán Peninsula  
*Jennifer P. Mathews and John R. Gust* 125
7. *Indígenas* and International Influences of Modern Medicine in Twentieth-  
Century Guatemala  
*David Carey Jr. and Lydia Crafts* 145
8. A Cartography of Tourist Imaginaries  
*M. Bianet Castellanos* 179
9. The Production and Archiving of a Design-Driven Mayanness in Hacienda  
Tourism, Yucatán  
*Matilde Córdoba Azcárate* 198
- Index* 223
- About the Authors* 229

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## Introduction

FERNANDO ARMSTRONG-FUMERO AND BEN FALLAW

A full-scale cast of a Mayan stela from Copán, Honduras, stands before the ivied walls of Harvard's Peabody Museum. Works of art like this one, and the institution that brought it "home" to 11 Divinity Avenue, embody the intersections of science and the US global ambitions that are at the heart of this volume. As historian Andrew Bell has observed (2018), this appropriation of Mayan cultural heritage as metonym for Americanness is consistent with an evolving imperial project in which the ideological work of archaeology intersected with an increasingly assertive foreign policy that stressed US dominance over its culturally distinct and diverse southern neighbors. With more than a century of hindsight, this is a particularly poignant moment in a longer history of encounter in which transnational engagements with Maya culture are always shaped by larger geopolitical events and narratives.

This book is an attempt to ground this larger history in a series of specific encounters that have left significant traces in various US-based archives as well as in the local life worlds of different groups of Mayan people. Each of the essays in this book focuses on a particular site and moment of encounter between western, predominantly Anglo-American travelers, and diverse peoples—Mayan and non-Indigenous alike—from Central America and Mexico. The travelers represent a diverse collection of capitalists, scientists, and tourists. Their local interlocutors are equally diverse in terms of ethnic identity, language, and socioeconomic status. But a common thread joining these encounters is how each contributed to a

different series of interpellations of the Mayan peoples of the region, as ethnological research subjects, medicalized bodies, laborers, and a component of cultural tourism. In each case, aspects of this encounter can be documented through various US-based archives that are relatively understudied in ethnographies and histories that focus on primary materials that can be collected “in country” in Mexico and Central America. Thus, the essays in this book offer an invitation for interdisciplinary Mayanist studies that simultaneously explore the transnational histories of Indigenous culture and expand the range of sources that are available for research.

By the 1990s, “transnationalism” was a pervasive component of Mayanist anthropology, from studies of migrants in exile from the Civil War in Guatemala (Burns 1993), to discussions of the place of Indigenous agricultural production in global markets (Fischer and Hendrickson 2001), to analyses of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional’s (Zapatista Army of National Liberation; EZLN’s) global political strategies (Nash 2001). Transnationalism continues to inspire anthropologists such as Rebecca Galemba (2018), who examines the intersection of smuggling, ethnicity, and nationalism on the Guatemala-Mexico frontier. Historians working in the Maya region have been slower to cross national boundaries in their research, though authors like Catherine Nolan-Ferrell have demonstrated the deep links between cross-border populations in Mexico and Guatemala that have been absent from previous historiography (2012, 12; see also Fink 2003). But whether scholars arrived at this conclusion earlier or later, there is a cross-disciplinary consensus that the social, economic, and cultural dynamics that have shaped the lives of generations of Mayan peoples must be traced across national as well as regional boundaries.

As will become clear to the reader, the particular iteration of “transnationalism” that is the focus of the essays in this volume is somewhat narrower and more targeted than larger circuits of migration, trade, and exchange that different authors have explored. In essence, we focus on the kinds of phenomena that take place in what Mary Louise Pratt famously characterized as a “contact zone” (1992). That is, each of the essays in this volume focuses on specific sites and moments of transcultural interaction marked by struggles and negotiations over resources, territory, and prestige. At the heart of these zones of contact is the deep and evolving relationship of US capital, NGOs, state officials, and the diverse societies of Mexico and Central America, a relationship that pervaded the production of knowledge and cultural representations that range from industrial techniques and notions of public health to archaeology and tourism.

As the chapters of this book illustrate, our perspective on this evolving historical dynamic can be greatly enriched by turning to primary sources that are found in the United States. These range from documentary materials in US archives, to ephemeral materials published for US readerships, to the ethnography of different

production techniques that North American investors and travelers developed in tandem with Mayan laborers in Mexico and Central America. These sources are not simply a body of data. They are a material or living embodiment of the complex and often asymmetrical relationship between members of local Indigenous communities and foreign travelers, researchers, and capitalists. Although these different archives record relationships between US residents and Mayan peoples, we turn the historical perspective of Mayanist studies back on the “gringos” who played different roles in shaping, studying, marketing, and consuming Indigenous cultures.

This introduction will consist of four broad sections. First, we will outline discussions of the history of United States interventions in the politics and economies of Mexico and Central America, emphasizing how these interventions shaped the lives of rural Maya-speaking communities. Drawing from some of the classic insights of dependency theory, this discussion will provide a general template for the forms of economic and cultural exchange at the heart of this volume. The second section will explore how parallel and complementary trends in anthropology and different interdisciplinary studies have charted cultural exchanges that flow through channels that were first built with US capital, diplomacy, and military intervention. From there, we will turn to the history of some archives that are housed in the United States, both to highlight the rich documentary and ethnographic legacies that are available for the study of these historical relationships, and to contextualize the essays in this volume. Finally, we turn to how each chapter in this volume builds on these overarching themes and offer some possible avenues for future scholarship.

### DEPENDENCY THEORY AND MAYA STUDIES

In the 1970s and 1980s, scholars in the United States and Latin America were deeply influenced by Andre Gunder-Frank (1967), Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto, and Marjory Urquidí (1979), and Immanuel Wallerstein (1979). These canonical *dependistas* attributed Latin America's poverty, conservative social order, and chronic political problems to its position on the underdeveloped periphery of a world system dominated by the Global North (Salvucci 1996b). Gunder-Frank's notion (1967, esp. 124) that the “problem of the Indian” lay not in social and geographical isolation—as Robert Redfield would have it—but in structural economic position vis-à-vis domestic elites and within the global system resonated with students of Mayan peoples.

We are not adopting dependency theory as our primary theoretical approach but instead use it to historically contextualize and critique scholarly literature on the region. We are aware that many academics have challenged the underlying assumptions of dependency theory that can deny agency to Indigenous people (and other

Latin Americans as well) (Salvucci 1996a). Criticism of Cardoso and Falleto's depiction of Latin American countries as "non-nations" dominated by a comprador bourgeoisie class has been especially fierce since the end of the Cold War. The study of commodity chains common in more recent scholarship allows for the possibility of Latin American countries to escape reliance on a global economy rigged by the Center (Topik, Marichal, and Frank 2006, 6–7, 9).

Read against these critiques, we find the approach of William Roseberry (1993, 334) especially useful. He criticized the reductionist, structuralist approach of classical dependency theorists for relying heavily on sociological categories drawn from Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, and Alexander Chayanov in which "both the ejidos and the Mayans finally disappear into the structural categories of comfortable, middle, and poor peasants." Roseberry reminds us that archival and ethnographic research that developed since the 1990s has allowed us to account for the power of structure while at the same time recognizing the agency exercised by Indigenous people (1993, 334). For example, in the 1980s and 1990s, Anglophone historical scholarship on the Yucatán peninsula's Mayan peoples tended to focus on three events. These are the Caste War of 1847, the creation of an export-oriented henequen economy during the liberal dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1877–1910), and Yucatán's role as a crucial "revolutionary laboratory" under radical reformist governors Salvador Alvarado (1915–18) and Felipe Carrillo Puerto (1922–24). Through all of these processes, the expansion of US capital in the peninsula contended with different forms of local agency that ranged from the interests of local landowning and political elites to the armed resistance of some Indigenous groups that remained essentially autonomous until the 1920s and 1930s.

The power centers of Boston, New York, and Washington, DC, might not be the sole or even primary drivers of economic development in the Maya area, but examining archives in those cities does offer significant insights that are often missed by ethnographic and archival approaches that focus exclusively on primary materials drawn from Latin America. Gilbert Joseph and Allen Wells reshaped our understanding of Yucatán's economic and political history by turning to the archives of the US-based multinational corporation International Harvester (Wells 1985; Joseph 1988). They argued that collusion between this powerful North American fiber corporation and the dominant clique of Yucatán's regional oligarchy created a sort of informal empire in Yucatán and strengthened the hold of the plantocracy at the cost of keeping about 80,000 Yukatek Maya people trapped in debt servitude. What is most significant about their work, at least from the perspective represented in this volume, is that this connection between a US corporation and the quotidian lives of rural Indigenous people in Mexico was only brought into relief through the reading of sources not previously subjected to serious academic research.

Joseph's and Wells's work had theoretical impacts on Mexicanist historiography beyond the rereading of the Yucatecan economy, despite the fact that another US-trained historian, Diane Roazen-Parrillo (Roazen-Parrillo and Carstensen 1983), used the same archives to challenge this interpretation. Mexican and US scholars might have applied dependency theory to Yucatán's monocrop economy in different ways, but they tended to agree that the Porfirian creation of a plantation economy devastated the older subsistence practices of much of the Maya-speaking peasantry, substituting them with different regimes of labor closely tied to foreign capital or markets (Ortiz Yam 2013). For instance, the conclusion to an influential interdisciplinary volume on Yucatán published in the 1980s argued that the Mayan peasantry escaped near-slavery on henequen plantations via revolutionary land reform, only to find themselves earning low wages ultimately supported by federal spending. Put another way, dependency on a henequen industry reliant on US capital and markets was replaced by dependency on Mexico City's developmentalist spending and ersatz social welfare programs delivered through a corruption-ridden bureaucracy (Brannon 1991). The market-driven reforms that removed these federal subsidies in the 1980s resulted in "ejidos without ejidatarios" (Baños Ramírez 1996).

In different regions across what is traditionally referred to as "the Maya Area," the legacies of foreign economic intervention created different political and economic configurations around crops and other natural resources in different ecological niches. Such is the case of the chicle economy that flourished in the forests that straddle the Mexico-Guatemala border and span into the former British colony of Belize. Here, thousands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous chicleros formed the base of an extractive economy whose primary customers were US chewing-gum companies. In a similar vein to Joseph and Wells, Michael Redclift's *Chewing Gum: The Fortunes of Taste* (2004) links the advertising campaigns and social trends that popularized gum chewing in the US to larger circuits of transnational investment and national economic development. These, in turn, shaped political organizations in Mexico that ranged from state-sanctioned cooperatives to the personal fiefdom that was held for decades by the Indigenous strongman General Francisco May Pech (Redclift 2004, see also Mathews and Schultz 2009).

In the Maya highlands that crosscut the border between Mexican Chiapas and Guatemala, the lives of rural people were likewise shaped by export-directed economies in which US markets and investors played a central role. In the eastern and the coastal regions of Guatemala, members of the Hispanic elite and middle classes (referred to variously as Creoles and Ladinos) benefited from growing exports such as coffee and other crops via railroads and Pacific ports. In the Guatemalan highlands, however, most Mayan communities survived pressure from a strengthening liberal state and land-hungry landowners by seeking to limit contact with outsiders

and preserve the authority of the *cofradia*/cargo system. Contrary to Eric Wolf's classic description (1957), these communities were never entirely "closed." Studies of the K'iche' town of Quetzaltenango and Kaqchikel town of Tecpan found widespread collaboration between Indigenous elites and Ladino outsiders; the former gaining access to credit and markets as well as buttressing their own position atop a patriarchal, conservative social order (Grandin 2000; Esquit Choy 2002, 2010). Nevertheless, different strategies of corporate governance allowed these communities to maintain a strong degree of political and cultural autonomy through much of the nineteenth century, even as Guatemala's agrarian economy shifted towards export-oriented production.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, debt, demographic growth, coercive break up of communal lands, vagrancy laws, and tax burdens forced many Mayan Guatemalans into the labor market, particularly into export-oriented agriculture. The expansion of commercial agriculture (especially coffee) during this period had an uneven impact across Guatemala's different regions. While the more arable soil of the central highlands allowed Kacchikel smallholders to effectively control their own land base, communities to the north and west tended to occupy lower-quality lands and thus had fewer opportunities to participate in more lucrative agricultural markets.<sup>1</sup> Some Mayan people resided on plantations as resident *colonos*, others worked daily on nearby *fincas*, and still others migrated to work on commercial estates or in towns for long periods. This last form of employment evolved into annual labor migration described by Rigoberta Menchú in her autobiography (Menchú 2010, 21–27, 33–37, 38–42, 87–90).

The role of US-based trusts in the development of commercial agriculture in Guatemala offers us both commonalities and contrasts to Yucatán. While International Harvester (and smaller competitors) were politically marginalized after the Mexican Revolution, United Fruit Company (UFCO) reached the peak of its power in Central America during the first half of the twentieth century. As Wells points out, International Harvester never sank capital into infrastructure and land to create a true enclave in Yucatán comparable to those the UFCO carved out in a number of Latin American and Caribbean countries (1998, 109). In Guatemala, UFCO capital transformed vast areas of the Atlantic lowlands (specifically, the Motagua Valley in Izabal Province) and then Pacific lowland areas into banana enclaves. These were linked to each other by the International Railways of Central America (or IRSA), whose head, Minor C. Keith, was known as the Green Pope. These foreign-owned conglomerates exercised a strong influence over many heads of nations around the Caribbean, including a string of Guatemala presidents, from Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898–1920) to Jorge Ubico (1931–1944). Although some Mayan people worked for the UFCO, its impact on the Mayan communities



of Guatemala was mainly indirect. United Fruit's two lowland enclaves and railroad corridors largely bypassed lands held by Mayan communities, and attempts to impress Mayan people to build the northern railroad line that would form the backbone of the Motagua Valley estates failed after thousands fled horrific work conditions (Dosal 49–51, 121; C. Cardoso 1991). Ultimately, UFCO had to rely on Afro-descendant immigrant labor from the US South, Belize, and especially Jamaica (see Colby 2011). The company had a long history of pitting Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous labor in Central America against each other to impede class-based organizing (Bourgois 1989, 109, 222–23).

Nevertheless, the UFCO profoundly shaped the histories of Guatemala's Mayan communities through its influence on national policy in Guatemala (Dunkerley 1991, 120–22). Most infamously, UFCO played a key role in prompting the United States government to engineer the 1954 coup that prevented the nationalization of 200,000 acres of land by the Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán administration. Just as in the Delahuertista movement that toppled Felipe Carrillo Puerto's populist regime in Yucatán, rural Mayan people did not rise up en masse to fight in support of the popular reformist regime. In fact, the conservative leaders of the K'iche' community of Quetzaltenango generally supported the counterrevolution of 1954 because Arbenz's agrarian reform opened up rifts within the community, empowering a new, younger generation of leaders (Grandin 2000, 217–18). Unlike the failed 1923–24 coup in Mexico, the overthrow of Arbenz led to a rollback of existing reforms and decades of reactionary terror. It is difficult to imagine a 1954 coup without UFCO, and it was this traumatic event that triggered Guatemala's descent into decades of civil war that claimed the lives of 200,000 people, mostly from diverse Mayan ethnic groups.

The experience of Mayan peoples of Chiapas presents some ecological and social parallels to that of the Mayan peoples of Guatemala. Beginning in the 1880s, the expansion of coffee exports in Chiapas motivated Hispanic elites (also known as Ladinos) that dominated the state government to expand their control over lands and Indigenous labor. Liberal laws backed by the force of the Porfirian state enabled white and mestizo landowners to seize the land owned collectively by Mayan communities, while a combination of taxes, vagrancy laws, labor drafts, and debt forced Indigenous subsistence agriculturalists into the labor market. As in Guatemala, foreign investors—US and German—often played key roles in developing coffee fincas.

As in Guatemala, some highland Chiapanec communities responded to these pressures by minimizing contact with outsiders and strengthening internal governance through a *cofradia*-carga system. This form of internal governance controlled seasonal wage labor by its members on coffee fincas (Washbrook 2012, 160–77). This helps explain why Porfirian landowners complained that Chiapas' state government was lax in enforcing debt peonage compared to other Mexican states and

Guatemala. As a result, coffee planters in the state's Soconusco region had to rely on relatively expensive labor, with some landowners purchasing coffee fincas on both sides of the national border in order to facilitate the drafting of Indigenous laborers from Guatemala to work on Chiapan estates (Washbrook 2012, 338–41). Many landowners also relied on labor brokers to bring Indigenous workers from the highlands (Washbrook 2012, 343).

As it had elsewhere in Mexico, in Chiapas the revolution brought a series of often-contradictory effects to the dynamics between Indigenous communities, local elites, and transnational capital. By the mid-1930s, landowners increasingly had to acknowledge the political gains of rural agriculturalists under the 1917 Constitution, above all the expansion of the national agrarian reform that accelerated under President Lázaro Cárdenas del Río (1934–40). In many ways, the main beneficiaries of Cárdenas' reforms were not Mayan workers but Ladino and bilingual Indigenous mediators (Rus 1994; Lewis 2005). But the post-World War II growth in international demand for coffee and tropical fruit led the Mexican government to shift its priorities and once again support large-scale private agribusiness in Chiapas. Federal policies that depressed the price of basic consumer goods further impoverished the Indigenous peasants that produced them. Having lost opportunities to gain control over their own lands and weakened in their ability to negotiate with large-scale private landowners, thousands of Tzeltal and Tzotzil peasants colonized lands in the lowlands of the Lacandon Forest, where they entered into further conflicts with cattle ranchers and non-Indigenous settlers. All of these social, demographic, and economic factors coalesced into the pressures that ultimately resulted in the neo-Zapatista uprising of 1994 (Collier and Quateriello 2005, 29–36).

With decades of hindsight, it is fair to say that dependency theory and its various latter-day iterations helped to build a consensus on the importance of transnational linkages in the historiography of the Maya area. Whether it was through the formation of direct enclave economies by the US-based corporations, financial control over local landowning elites, pressure on national governments, or simply the formation of large markets for export goods, transnational influences emanating from US capital played a central role in the postcolonial history of rural societies in much of Mexico and Central America. The Indigenous communities that were the focus of twentieth-century Mayanist anthropology were located in some of the regions most affected by these transnational forces. These insights have broader implications within the discipline of history, which we hope to address in this volume. While many historians of the US have trumpeted the need to move past exceptionalism and parochialism, there has been an uneven recognition of how linkages to Latin America—and particularly Mexico—have shaped the social and economic development of the United States (Bayly et al. 2006; Bender 2006; Russo 2006). Jessica Kim's *Imperial*

*Metropolis* (2019) exemplifies some of the most exciting recent work in this direction. Kim applied William Cronon's notion of hinterlands to examine Los Angeles' imbrication in northwest Mexico from the period of accelerated development during the Porfiriato through the revolution's armed and reconstructive phases.

Kim's focus on Los Angeles as a nexus for cultural and economic exchange was an inspiration for this project, which grew out of a series of conversations regarding the many ties binding Massachusetts to the Maya lands. These range from the early economic interventions in the henequen industry by Peabody & Company and Plymouth Cordage to the Bostonian origins of the United Fruit Company. As several chapters in this volume will show, it is impossible to dissociate the intervention of the American Antiquarian Society of Worcester, Harvard, and the Peabody Museum—all foundational institutions for modern Maya studies—from this larger context of global Massachusetts. To better understand the parallel histories of transnational capitalism and cultural production, it is useful to examine how the more cultural dimensions of transnational contacts have been explored by incorporating English-language materials into Mayanist studies by anthropologists and scholars in a number of humanistic interdisciplines.

#### TRACING CULTURE ACROSS BORDERS

Just as the archives of International Harvester helped to ground dependency theory in the history of a specific transnational circuit of commodity and capital, other documentary collections tell the story of evolving cultural connections between the Maya area and the US. Rather than privileging either political economy or cultural factors, we second William Roseberry's (1998) call to put them in dialogue and debate with one another. In this section, we delve into how parallel and complementary trends in anthropology and allied disciplines have probed cultural exchanges that flow through multiple channels. We are especially interested in how interventions of US capital, diplomacy, and military power have created distinct paths where "close encounters" (Joseph, LeGrand, and Salvatore 1998) between Mayan people and US American officials, scientists, businesspeople, and tourists take place. We recognize that research drawing on US-based archives made early, if relatively marginal, contributions to Mayanist studies in the mid-twentieth century. These include biographies of influential figures in the field of anthropology based on their unpublished diaries and archived letters. Here, two figures who stand out are Wolfgang Von Hagen, an amateur naturalist and historian who wrote at length about John Lloyd Stephens and about Frederic Catherwood (Von Hagen 1947), and Robert L. Brunhouse, a trained historian and university professor who penned biographies of Sylvanus Morley (1973) as well as a general work on early Mayanist archaeologists (1971).

While some of these biographical works are widely read and have gone through multiple editions, they have remained peripheral to broader discussions in history and anthropology. This status is due, in no small part, to the decline in the prestige of biography as a genre of academic historiography over the course of the twentieth century. More recent examples, such as Ian Graham's book (2002) on Alfred Maudslay, continue to be written by working archaeologists as a tribute to mentors or particularly revered figures in the discipline. But monographs like this find a limited readership among recent generations of anthropologists, who are often wary of "hagiographic" accounts of figures whose theoretical agendas and personal politics have been problematized within the discipline since at least the 1970s.

Notwithstanding the biographical genre's loss of academic prestige, historians such as Mary Kay Vaughan have recently sought to revive it as a means of exploring historical processes through the frame of an individual's career (see Vaughan 2014). Similar arguments could be made for a number of key figures in Mayanist anthropology who worked to form academic institutions in tandem with the expansion of US power in the early twentieth century. Take Alfred Tozzer, celebrated as a founder of US Mayanist studies, who has not yet been the subject of a major published biography. Tozzer is known for his classic ethnography of the Lacandon Mayan people of Chiapas (1907), for some of the first archaeological field work at Tikal, for linguistic research, and for the publication of a meticulously annotated English translation of Bishop Diego de la Landa's *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*. His publications are only one part of his largely unknown role in shaping Maya Studies during the early twentieth century. Tozzer was a consummate bureaucratic insider—chairing Harvard's Anthropology Department for years, directing Franz Boas's International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology in Mexico in 1914, and helping place his students in key positions in the archaeological projects of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (CIW). A closer examination of Tozzer's career would yield a better understanding of the growth of US presence and influence in Mexico and Central America. As a young scholar, Tozzer helped document US consul Edward H. Thompson's controversial dredging of Chichén Itzá, and he reluctantly smuggled a precious jade out in a specially prepared padded waistcoat (McVicker 2005, 127–28). After military service in World War I, he directed a regional branch of the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA, during World War II. (Lothrop 1955; Phillips 1955). These connections between Maya archaeology, espionage, and the consolidation of US hegemony over the Western Hemisphere in the twentieth-century figure in several chapters in this book.

Although formal biographies are less common today, reflections on the context and legacies of intellectual figures from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries still figured in some significant trends in the Mayanist anthropology of the

last several decades. The diaries, correspondence, and other personal documents of early twentieth-century archaeologists were rediscovered in the 1980s and 1990s amidst a series of disciplinary agendas associated with anthropology's "crisis of representation." Paul Sullivan's discussion of encounters between Sylvanus Morley and descendants of the Cruzo'ob Maya in *Unfinished Conversations* (1991) and Quetzil Castañeda's analysis of CIW archaeologists and the residents of the town of Pisté in *In the Museum of Maya Culture* (1996) are good examples of this trend. Critiques of the theoretical paradigms that were published in the classic texts of early twentieth-century anthropology had been common since the 1960s (see Goldkind 1965). Authors such as Sullivan and Castañeda, however, turned to the same unpublished documentary materials that had been available to Brunhouse and Von Hagen, intending to reconstruct the intercultural dialogue between US academics and various Indigenous interlocutors. In this regard, the revival of interest in the biographies of major intellectual figures is consistent with the broader interest in critical intellectual history that rose in tangent with the "Writing Culture" critiques of anthropology in the late 1980s and 1990s (see Marcus and Clifford 1987).

These hybrids of intellectual and social history created important synergies among Anthropology and American studies, ethnic studies and related interdisciplines since the 1990s. One of the signature achievements of these interdisciplines has been the ability to trace common analytical threads that link the experiences of very different populations through parallel phenomena such as colonial racialization and global circuits of goods and capital. So, for example, authors have drawn parallels between discourses of race in the work of the mid-nineteenth-century Yucatecan intellectual Justo Sierra O'Reilly and his US contemporaries (Brickhouse 2004, see also Silva Gruesz 2002). This comparative theoretical framing has influenced a wave of scholars such as Paul Worsley and Rita Palacios (2019), Gloria Elizabeth Chacón (2018), and Arturo Arias (2018), who have situated contemporary Maya-language literatures in the context of comparative identity politics and international literary production.

Despite examples like these, it is fair to say that research on Mayan peoples has tended to figure more in regionally grounded anthropological and historical scholarship than in the kind of transnational or multisited project that marks much work in the interdisciplinary "studies" model. In many cases, as in the popular field of border studies, this can be seen as a missed opportunity. Following Gloria Anzaldúa's classic work (1987), literary and interdisciplinary scholars have developed powerful theoretical frames that have been adopted by students of border phenomena across the humanities and social sciences. But, perhaps ironically, the transformation of the national boundary defined by the Rio Grande/Río Bravo into a metonym for "the border" tends to overlook complex transnational phenomena that occur

throughout the Maya area. In this regard, works such as a recent collection on the maritime history of the Gulf of Mexico, which documents incidents such as the mid-nineteenth-century collaboration between independent Texas and separatists in the Yucatán peninsula are a notable exception (see Sledge 2019).

Although it is less often cited in interdisciplines such as American Studies, there has been some important historical work on the Guatemala-Mexico border, most of which has focused on its porousness, and its role in state formation in both countries. The separatist movement of the mid-nineteenth-century Cruzo'ob Maya people has been better understood by looking at its international dimensions, from the fluid national identity of settlements along the northern border of Guatemala (see Schwartz 1990) to ties between those same groups and British merchants working out of Belize (Dumond 1997; Rugeley 2009). Still understudied, similar histories exist for interactions between Mayan peoples, national Hispanic elites, and different international agents along the complex series of borders that divide Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras. Further exploration would undoubtedly enrich the substantive empirical base that informs the larger theoretical project of understanding the human experience of "borders." Given the role of the United Fruit Company and other US corporate interests in the economic development of this region, US-based documentary sources have a meaningful role to play in this historiography.

Despite these promising synergies, some earlier academic debates remind us of tensions that have emerged when Mayanist studies engage with broader theoretical currencies from the humanities. Matthew Restall, for example, has observed how theorists who have been influential in interdisciplinary cultural studies, such as Tzvetan Todorov and Walter Dignolo, have often employed essentialist tropes in characterizing pre-Hispanic civilization, leading to analyses that grossly simplify the encounter between Indigenous and European cultures (Restall 2003). In some of his most widely cited works on the nature of writing and conquest, Dignolo makes significant factual errors, including mixing terms from Mayan languages that are as historically distinct from one another as English and Russian to refer to a generalized tradition of writing among ancient and colonial Mayan people.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Todorov (1999) applied post-Structuralist analysis of signs and their interpretations to argue that the sixteenth-century Aztecs were culturally incapable of perceiving the true motives of the Spanish conquerors. These last assertions were pulled into an acrimonious debate between anthropologists about the writing of conquest and the use of popular theories of "the Other" to denigrate the agency and even intellectual ability of non-western peoples (Borofsky 1997).

Academic conflicts like these should not imply that the kind of comparativism used by American studies and related interdisciplines does not have much to contribute to discussions of the Maya area, or that this research should be dominated by



traditionally trained historians and anthropologists. However, they do underscore the potential problem of substituting current theoretical trends for more “disciplined” skill sets such as expertise in Indigenous languages or in-depth knowledge of national historical traditions. Restall’s critique of authors such as Mignolo and Todorov reflects his own intellectual trajectory as a member of the “New Philology,” a school of UCLA-based scholars who trained extensively in the reading of Indigenous language texts that are inaccessible to scholars in more traditional (i.e., western-focused) humanistic traditions. Ironically, projects that sought to incorporate Indigenous texts into global literary history without this grounding included errors that underscore the historical hierarchy between European languages and those of formerly colonized peoples. The need for a rigorous engagement with Indigenous languages has become even more pressing as several generations of native Maya language speakers have played a more prominent role in international scholarship (Montejo 2005; Otzoy 2008; Xinico Batz 2015; Castillo Cocom 2004).

Similar forms of grounding are central to the essays in this volume. Each represents an engagement with contemporary theoretical agendas that stress global capital, intercultural encounters, and other aspects of the transnational relationship between Mexico, Central America, and the United States. In each case, however, these agendas emerge organically from established research projects in Mexico or Central America and situate their transnational connections in substantive ethnographic and documentary materials. We consider this dual grounding, which focuses on both site-specific history or ethnography and transnationally sourced documents, to be essential for a nuanced and rigorous interpretation of the centuries-long interactions and relationships between different groups of Mayan people and US Americans. This foundation is at the heart of the expanded notion of the archive that we touched upon earlier in this introduction. In the following section, we will look more closely at the historical formation of some of the sources for this dual grounding that are available in the United States, how those sources were constituted, and some ways in which they have been used in the past. This description, then, forms a basis for a more targeted discussion of the specific ways that our contributors have incorporated knowledge derived from US archives.

#### ARCHIVES AS TRANSNATIONAL ARTIFACTS

As we discussed in the previous section, a solid grounding in the nuanced knowledge of the languages, ethnography, and history of Mesoamerica is essential for the development of empirically rich and theoretically nuanced interdisciplinary Mayanist studies. In the case of this volume, part of that grounding is to be found in the use of US-based archival sources that have until now often been peripheral

to Mayanist history and ethnography. As we will discuss in the next section, several of the authors in this volume use materials that are more representative of ethnography and cultural studies than traditional historiography. Nevertheless, they play similar function to U.S.-based documentary archives that embody different forms of engagement between U.S. travelers and different Mayan communities in Mexico and Central America. Before turning to these specific studies, however, we will briefly discuss the formation of some of the more standard text-based archives that will figure in these chapters. Stated in broad terms, this process reflects a gradual transition from the writing and collecting activities of amateur archaeologists and diplomats to an increasingly professionalized terrain of academics and Foreign Service personnel. This process of professionalization occurred in tandem with the expansion of US economic and political hegemony that we discussed in the second section.

Several collections associated with what we will refer to as “antiquarian organizations” embody the origins of interest in Mesoamerica among US intellectuals in the early nineteenth century, when studies of antiquities and colonial texts dovetailed with the continental imaginaries of the emergent republic. Institutions including the American Philosophical Society (APS) of Philadelphia and the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) of Worcester, Massachusetts, accumulated colonial-era texts, artifacts ranging from ceramics to sculpture, and contemporaneous descriptions of ancient sites. These antiquarian collections include some of the earliest internationally sourced documents relevant to the study of ancient Mesoamerica. The venerable APS, for instance, harbors correspondence between Anglo-American intellectuals and their Mexican and Central American contemporaries dating back to the late eighteenth century. This includes 1830s correspondence between P. S. Du Ponceau, pioneering French-American linguist and president of the APS, and various Guatemalan and Mexican interlocutors regarding Mayan philology. These exchanges between intellectual societies led to the APS’s early acquisition of what are now extremely rare printed and manuscript materials such as the eighteenth-century *Gaceta de Guatemala* and the original text of Guillermo Dupaix’s description of Maya ruins. Already, the connections between scholarship and political or economic expansion are evident. The Dupaix manuscript was donated to the APS in 1830 by US diplomat Joel Poinsett, a figure whose scholarly forays in Latin America have long been overshadowed by his controversial meddling in Mexican politics (Belohlavek 1985, 20–21, 215–20). In the age of national independence and Manifest Destiny, these collections offered a means of reconstructing the ancient history of civilization in the New World, a project as ideologically crucial to Anglo-American authors as it was to their contemporaries in former Spanish colonies (Keen 1971). It is no accident that Poinsett, pioneer gringo



diplomat in Latin America and an assertive advocate of republican forms of government in the region, was also cofounder of the National Institute for the Promotion of Science and Useful Arts (NIPSUA). An antecedent of the Smithsonian, NIPSUA reflected the Jeffersonian dream of a United States-centric “empire of liberty,” and its branches included “American History and Antiquities” (Rippy 1933, 211).

These close ties between the collection of Mesoamerican antiquities and US commercial and political expansion are reflected in the frequent mingling of scholarly and diplomatic pursuits evident in correspondence by elite US American interlopers in the Maya area. This activity is not at all surprising considering that Mayan peoples (and the material traces of their past) occupied some of the routes coveted by the US entrepreneurs hoping to establish a pathway between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, be this by road, railroad, or canal. The roots of US intervention in the isthmus have a clear connection to earlier diplomatic and commercial endeavors that were closely tied to the history of Mayanist archaeology. Often referred to as the “father” of Maya archaeology in the United States, John Lloyd Stephens represented his country as a diplomat in Central America when he and his illustrator Fredrick Catherwood composed their famous *Incidents of Travel* during 1839–43. By meticulous descriptions and Catherwood’s illustrations, Stephens refuted claims by Europeans like Jean-Frédéric Maximilien de Waldeck that the builders of the abandoned cities in Central America and southern Mexico were connected to the Old World. Stephens advanced the idea that the ancient Maya city-states were part of a “native” tradition of civilization inherited by the United States after independence from Great Britain (Evans 2004, 37, 45). Stephens and his publisher (Harper and Brothers) correctly anticipated the US market for beautifully illustrated accounts of an ancient “American” civilization (Evans 2004, 49).

Stephens’s commercial ambitions for Maya culture were not limited to publishing. He attempted to purchase Palenque and monuments from Copán, in large part to deny them to European buyers. As the Mexican philosopher Juan Ortega y Medina noted, the Monroe Doctrine had an archaeological corollary (Evans 2004, 55; Ortega y Medina [1953] 2015). In 1849, Stephens collaborated in the foundation of the Panama Railway Company, one of the first large-scale attempts to create a transisthmian passage. He was not the only early nineteenth-century antiquarian involved in these efforts. After the Mexican-American War and the Gold Rush made the United States a Pacific power and a transisthmian route a strategic necessity, the United States dispatched Ephraim George Squier to Central America. Squier was already an accomplished scholar, and his career reads like a roadmap of Manifest Destiny. He published on the “Mound People” of the Mississippi Valley before posting to Central America, where he continued his scholarship on the pre-Contact past of Indigenous people in the 1850s before moving on to Peru. Like

many nineteenth-century scholars, he combined belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority with a love for the pre-Contact past of Indigenous peoples (Gobat 2018, 33).

Given the depth and breadth of United States intervention in the politics of Mexico and Central America, state-commissioned travelers such as Poinsett, Stephens, and Squier left relatively light footprints in the official state archives of their native country. The ad hoc nature of US American foreign policy through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Belohlavek 1985) allowed US agents broad leeway in determining the scope of their mission. This is perhaps best exemplified by the pithy communiqué with which Stephens ended his attempt to establish relations with the soon-to-be defunct Central American Union in 1839: “After a diligent search, no government was found.” Stephens then essentially abandoned his diplomatic mission and resumed archaeological studies (Stephens [1841] 1969, 127).

The archival trail left by US agents in Mexico and Central America becomes much easier to follow at the beginning of the twentieth century. At this time the United States began expanding and professionalizing diplomacy and intelligence gathering in the region because of the geopolitics of the Panama Canal Zone, the uncertainties brought about by the Mexican Revolution, and the build-up to World War I. This increased intervention enables scholars of the early twentieth century to draw on materials in the US State Department as well as military agencies like the Office of Naval Intelligence to chronicle the operations of US American spies such as the archaeologist Sylvanus Morley (Harris and Sadler 2003). From the early twentieth century onward, official US archives become an especially rich resource for understanding the larger political and economic dynamics that shaped growing US influence in the region.

As noted in “Dependency Theory and Maya Studies,” historians such as Gilbert Joseph have drawn on the US State Department archives to better understand different techniques of US intervention in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the rationale that guided them. In a highly influential study, Joseph (1988) revealed how the United States sought to control Yucatecan henequen production from 1915 to 1922, when World War I reduced global supply and Mexico’s new revolutionary regime sought to inflate prices and thus increase revenue. A reading of US State Department archives informed by new methodological and theoretical perspectives discloses how henequen policy focused more on commodity prices and US corporate consumers than its impact on poor Mayan workers on henequen plantations. They also reveal the racism of Yankee diplomats that informed US foreign policy toward parts of Mesoamerica with large Indigenous populations.<sup>3</sup>

Just as the closing of the nineteenth century saw a greater bureaucratization of US foreign policy, increasing financial autonomy and institutionalization profoundly changed museums. Although the process was uneven, what are now understood

to be professional archaeological practices replaced the gentlemanly pursuits that had created antiquarian collections a century earlier. Rather than an assemblage of artifacts and texts gleaned through individual members' adventures and personal correspondence with Latin American interlocutors, collections associated with public museums and universities resulted from a longer, institutionally supported investment in research by full-time academics. By extension, the archives associated with these institutions tend to include detailed descriptions of sites as well as administrative documentation of expenses incurred by different projects. They continue to be consulted by archaeologists as a source of the "raw data" about the sites that generated well-known artifact collections and early canonical studies. Just as importantly for historians, these archives include detailed documentation of life, labor, and politics in the times and places where Anglo-American researchers worked. In particular, they can include substantial amounts of previously unpublished quasi-ethnographic data on the Indigenous communities on or near whose lands these scholars worked.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, similar archives were created by philanthropic institutions like the Carnegie Institution and the Rockefeller Foundation. Insofar as they organized large-scale and long-term research and kept detailed records of the process and results, there are intriguing parallels to museum archives. However, these foundations were not built around museums, and their projects did not generally include the kind of collection efforts that characterized the Peabody at Harvard or the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York. How this shift changed the work of Anglo-American anthropologists is evident in a feud between the CIW and several museums in the 1920s. Representatives of the AMNH accused Sylvanus Morley, then directing the CIW project at Chichén Itzá, of using the fact that the institute had no intention of removing artifacts from Mexico to drive a wedge between the postrevolutionary government and the more established museums. Morley's superiors pressured him to avoid creating conflicts with his US American colleagues, but the "new" way of working with the governments of Mexico and Central America would essentially transform the transnational dynamics of archaeological work in the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup>

Besides altering the relationship between US researchers and national governments in ways that would shape modern archaeology, the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations would also come to play the kind of ancillary function to US diplomacy that Cold War-era political scientists generally referred to as "soft power" (see Berman 1983). To the extent that they figure in the exercise of US cultural and political hegemony over Latin America, the context and content of these foundation archives often dovetail with the information that can be gleaned from the archives of early transnational corporations such as the United Fruit

Company or International Harvester. In many cases—and particularly in the case of UFCO—these corporations facilitated the work of North American archaeologists and anthropologists, from providing introductions to key political figures to transport to crucial logistical support. At the same time that these corporations enabled international research on the past of the Maya area, they were profoundly remaking the economies of the region during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This involvement makes documents regarding their in-country operations invaluable for historical researchers.

The UFCO, like Massachusetts-based Peabody cordage brokers, eagerly supported the CIW's work. Even before the start of major projects at Chichén Itzá and other sites, UFCO employees, such as the physician Moise Lafleur, often accompanied archaeologists into the field. As Carnegie established a stronger foothold in the region, UFCO contributions to archaeology involved the expenditure of even more financial and political capital. In 1934, for example, United Fruit intervened to obtain permission for the CIW to transport Anglophone Afro-Caribbean laborers to replace natives of the Guatemalan Petén (whom CIW archaeologist Alfred Kidder considered “drunk and lazy”) at the excavation of Uaxactún. This essentially reproduced the pattern of labor importation that UFCO had used in its commercial agricultural ventures. It also gave the CIW an exemption to strict Guatemalan labor law.<sup>5</sup>

In other cases, United Fruit played a more direct role in defining archaeological research agendas. UFCO's controversial president Sam Zemurray funded self-taught archaeologist and CIA agent John M. Dimick's restoration of the archaeological site of Zaculeu. The accompanying academic study was published by UFCO's Middle American Information Bureau. Dimick praised UFCO's “public service” and saluted Zaculeu as restoring to the Mayan people of Guatemala their past—and making a highland Maya site finally reachable by US tourists (United Fruit Company 1947, 1). The close, continuing relationship between United Fruit and the CIW is evident in Dimick's hiring of Kidder to serve as a consultant on the Zaculeu project (United Fruit Company 1947, 32; Price 2016, 228).

This project seeks to show how such previously hidden ties between UFCO and other powerful US-based corporations allowed Yankee scholars to play such an important role in the first decades of the professional Mayanist studies. We also hope to highlight how the asymmetries in resources that divide US American scholars from our Mexican and Guatemalan colleagues still exist—albeit in different forms. It is worth noting that this volume came together during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, at a time when many of our colleagues and we were asking questions about the long-term resilience of projects that required international travel to in-person research sites. Not only were many of these institutions located in our own

“neighborhood” of the northeastern states, but US institutions are also far more likely to have large numbers of primary documents available in digitized form than their Latin American peers. These differences heightened our awareness of inequalities in access to basic material between scholars in the Global North and South.

Digitalization projects notwithstanding, many of these US archives contain extensive material that can only be utilized in person. While US scholars have privileged access to external grants and in-house funding that allows them to travel abroad, Mexican and Guatemalan researchers often face daunting financial and bureaucratic obstacles in accessing US resources. At the time of writing, Mexican scholars wishing to visit the US must wait a year for an interview to get a visa. Even the scanning of primary sources has not equalized access. For instance, genealogical information from Mexican civil and baptismal registries and US immigration records are behind paywalls. US Americans can access US census information gratis on the US National Archives website and via many public libraries; Mexicans have to pay to access some 220 million Mexican documents—many of which are not accessible otherwise.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the crowning irony involves the out-of-print volumes that were published in very small editions in Central America and Mexico and that are accessible to most scholars in the United States through the interlibrary loan but impossible to obtain in their countries of publication.

Aside from offering reasons for reflecting on the deep and complex relationship between gringo scholars, Mayan peoples, and the Hispanic populations of Mexico and Central America, these US-based archives present an ethical challenge for Mayanists who live and work in this country. Working to make these materials accessible to broader international publics would improve the long and often fraught relationships that have shaped the careers of generations of US-based Mayanists. In telling some of the stories that can be found in those archives, the essays in this volume take the first step in making them accessible. Working toward broader shifts in how research is funded and how global access to primary sources can be more equitable needs to be part of a much longer collective project.

#### EIGHT ESSAYS ON THE TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY OF GRINGOS AND MAYAN PEOPLES

This introduction along with several of the essays in this volume frequently refer to “Mayanness” as a series of discourses and identities that emerged through transcultural encounters that often involve US-based researchers, capitalists, and tourists. This term refers to the fact that different cultural phenomena attributed to peoples in Mexico and Central America are not necessarily the product of centuries-long “Indigenous” development but often reflect the ideologies of national elites

and foreigners who sought to legitimate various economic and political projects in the region. Still, as we observed earlier, it would be wrong to assume that nonelite Maya speakers were simply passive recipients of this process of interpolation. In this regard, the diverse forms of Mayanness that appear in our chapters reflect the different social, political, and economic dynamics that presided over key contact zones at different moments in the history of Mexico and Central America.

It is to this point that we as editors have resisted imposing a strict lexicon of terms for different ethnic or social categories on the contributing authors. Outside of some very broad parameters, the use of terms such as “Mayan,” “Indigenous,” *indígena*, and “gringo” in each chapter will reflect different disciplinary practices as well local and microregional realities that might be distinct to that particular case study. The latter reflects a long-standing reality of Mesoamerican studies, in which the very diversity of regional cultures and social structures belies neat reductions. For example, the dichotomy between “Indigenous” and “Ladino” that holds for much of the highlands of Guatemala and Chiapas, and that has contributed to a vast literature on “ladinoization,” is difficult to reconcile with the ethnic categories of the Yucatán peninsula and other parts of the Maya lowlands. Likewise, the term “gringo,” which tends to be associated with citizens of the United States, often refers to a much broader category of non-Hispanic foreigners, which will become evident in some of the substantive chapters of this study.

A third dimension of this local or microregional diversity involves a category of actors that we can refer to broadly as “Hispanic mediators.” By this term we refer to persons native to Mexico and the Central American countries and are identified as members of the dominant Hispanic culture, that serve as indispensable (and often invisible) intermediaries between foreign scientists, tourists and investors, and local Indigenous communities. This relationship has a long role in the history of Mayanist research, particularly in the Yucatán peninsula. There, regional elites had turned to the archaeological and linguistic heritage of the peninsula as a source of regional identity since at least the 1840s. These native philologists and antiquaries were indispensable for European and North American travelers who had limited knowledge of the region’s geography, to say nothing of the then little-studied languages (see Von Hagen 1947; Armstrong-Fumero 2018; chapters 2 through 5 in this volume).

In contrast to their Yucatecan contemporaries, who had turned to Indigenous heritage as a source of regional identity since at least the 1840s, the white land-owning elite of Chiapas and highland Guatemala showed little early interest in the formal study of Maya culture. The fact that numerous Maya languages are spoken in Chiapas and Guatemala, while only one—Yukatek Maya—is spoken in the Mexican states of Campeche and Quintana Roo as well as Yucatán helps us



understand these regional differences. Mérida's relative size and prosperity compared to San Cristóbal, and the city of Guatemala likely play a role as well. By the beginning of the twentieth century, there were some important exceptions, such as the chiapaneca Rosario Castellanos, whose novels were immersed in Maya folkways and language. A more internationally prominent figure was Adrián Recinos, the Guatemalan diplomat and philologist whose translations of texts in K'iche' and Kaqchikel were the standard reference for US scholars for decades.

Although the role of these Hispanic intermediaries is often downplayed in the writing of "classic" Anglo-American authors, many of the most famous early works in Mayanist anthropology would have been impossible without their "native" expertise in Indigenous languages. One such mediator, Alfonso Villa Rojas, will figure in three chapters of this book. Born in Mérida in 1897, Villa Rojas was working as the federal schoolteacher in the community of Chan Kom when he made the acquaintance of US scholars affiliated with the CIW project at Chichén Itzá. Despite that CIW scholars had conducted some early anthropological studies and tended to christen pre-Hispanic sites with names in highly simplified Yukatek Maya, none had more than a rudimentary knowledge of the language. This turned Villa Rojas, a more-or-less native speaker, into an indispensable resource for Carnegie ethnographers such as Robert Redfield. Villa Rojas built on these collaborations by studying anthropology at the University of Chicago thanks to his CIW patrons before returning to Mexico. After rising to a high rank in the Mexican bureaucratic agency known as the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (National Indigenist Institute), Villa Rojas played a prominent role in anthropological research in the state of Chiapas and in the work of academic institutions in Mexico City. Between the 1940s and 1960s, he continued to be a very valuable contact for US researchers hoping to work in Mexico, even as the agendas of state-sponsored research in Mexico increasingly diverged from that of many international scholars.

Focusing encounters between a gringo patron of early Mayanist studies in Yucatán and elite Hispanic intermediaries in the 1860s and 1870s, chapter 2, by Julio Hoil Gutiérrez, opens this volume with some of the historical precursors of the transnational relationships that brought Villa Rojas into the CIW orbit two generations later. Hoil focuses on the little-studied figure of Stephen Salisbury III, scion of a family of Massachusetts business magnates and longtime director of the Worcester-based AAS. After hiring a stand-in recruit to escape conscription into the Union Army during the Civil War, Salisbury embarked on an extended trip through Yucatán, where he socialized extensively with members of the Hispanic planter elite, particularly the influential Casares family. His letters home and diaries not only document a poorly understood period in the history of Mayanist archaeology but also provide an especially rich and intimate portrait of the affective bonds

between members of two very different elites. As Hoil points out, this challenges the emphasis on armed conflict and nationalistic tensions that marks the historiography of US-Mexico relations in the mid-nineteenth century. It also highlights the early role of interelite friendships and cultural diplomacy in the development of transnational Mayanist studies.

Salisbury's interactions with Casares and other members of the Yucatecan Hispanic elite helped generate a series of social networks that expanded to another stalwart Massachusetts institution, the Peabody Museum of Harvard University. By the 1920s, early graduates of Harvard's program in anthropology contributed to the development of the Carnegie Institution of Washington project at Chichén Itzá, which would be a laboratory and training ground for a generation of Mayanist anthropologists. In chapter 3, Armstrong-Fumero examines the private writings of two key figures of the Carnegie era, Sylvanus Morley and Robert Redfield, emphasizing how each characterized their own role as a gringo researcher in Mexico. Morley was at once jovial and gregarious when interacting with Mexicans and deeply racist. He genuinely enjoyed socializing with and entertaining his elite Yucatecan interlocutors, even as his commentary to fellow Harvard Men betrayed imperialist attitudes inherited from Rooseveltian expansionism. Redfield's writing is rife with expressions of elitism, though his reserve toward many of his Yucatecan interlocutors was matched by constant doubts about his ability to "fit in" with older scholars who were wedded to more traditionally colonial research. His isolation was compounded by a lack of spoken ability in Yukatek Maya, which made him dependent on the aid of Alfonso Villa Rojas and a small group of bilingual Mayan people. As Armstrong-Fumero argues, the attitudes towards "native" research subjects and gringo peers that emerge in the writings of Morley and Redfield embody a series of intellectual and ethical problematics that still occurs in the training and careers of US-based Mayanists.

One of the pervasive concerns of Sylvanus Morley and the early Carnegie archaeologists was to maintain positive professional and social relationships with Mexican intellectuals and politicians who permitted and supported their operations in the field. In chapter 4, "American Idols," Ben Fallaw picks up on the story of the "Carnegie Era" from the perspective of Yucatecan politics, specifically during the gubernatorial term of Bartolomé García Correa (1930–34). An inheritor of Felipe Carrillo Puerto's populist legacy, García Correa contributed to the incorporation of Yucatán's radical socialist party into the predecessors of the long-ruling "official" party known as the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), even as he faced opposition from regional political elites who derided his purported Indigenous and African heritage. At the same time, the governor's association with Mayan heritage often became a point of reference in his interactions with CIW archaeologists and



their collaborators, just as the narrative of Maya civilization that emerged from the US American project at Chichén Itzá suited his propagandistic ends. García Correa's interaction with the industrial and cultural elites of New York and the West Coast offers us a glimpse into the kind of informal diplomacy facilitated by the nexus between the CIW and the state government of Yucatán. These were, in essence, mid-twentieth-century iterations of the kinds of cultural diplomacy practiced by Stephen Salisbury III, and that would continue to evolve in the following decades. After the Mexican Revolution, gringos had to rely more on Mexican political and intellectual elites and less on members of the old Hispanic Yucatecan upper class as mediators.

This dynamic resulted in part from the growth of the modern bureaucratic apparatus that managed archaeology, cultural policy, and Indigenous education in Mexico after the revolution (1910–20). Matthew Watson's contribution to this volume, chapter 5, covers most of the Mexican ruling party's so-called Golden Age (1940–68). This chapter shifts geographic focus from Yucatán to the highlands of Chiapas to examine a crucial turning point in the complex relationship between Anglo-American Mayanists and their Mexican peers. In 1957, Harvard's Evon Z. Vogt Jr. launched the decades-long Harvard Chiapas Project in collaboration with representatives of Mexico's Instituto Nacional Indigenista (National Indigenist Institute; INI), which had founded a series of research and educational projects meant to incorporate Indigenous Chiapanecs into Mexico's "national" Hispanic culture. Watson demonstrates how Vogt sought to reconcile his own research project with the developmentalist ends of the INI. As the Harvard Chiapas Project evolved over its first decade of operation, Vogt's pivot from the explicit study of culture change to "basic research" on cultural and economic life essentially reduced the INI's intervention into a variable in a descriptive study of a living Mayan peoples. As Watson argues, this emphasis essentially naturalizes the modernizing role of the Mexican state while maintaining the image of neutral observation and documentation that Vogt sought for his ethnographic project.

Our next two chapters, by two pairs of contributors, share three important themes: recovering Mayan bodies, analyzing the materiality and physicality of Mayan labor, and "fixing" labor by binding Mayan workers into transnational networks centered on sugar and medical knowledge. In "Distilling the Past through the Present," chapter 6, Jennifer P. Mathews and John R. Gust show how archaeology can shed light on Xuxub and San Eusebio. These were two sugar plantations on Yucatán's north coast during the heyday of nineteenth-century liberalism. Mathews and Gust's innovative approach also draws on an "archive" in the form of the knowledge and practices of twenty-first-century artisanal distillers in the United States that have revived nineteenth-century-distilling technology. Although the two

estates produced sugar for Mexico's domestic market, these agroindustrial centers depended on imported distilling technology and a host of other products from the United States that were sold to Indigenous workers to create debt. US credit, technology, and manufactured goods were an integral part of the plantation society that subordinated Maya workers.

A roughly analogous racialized hierarchy is analyzed in "*Indigenas* and International Influences of Modern Medicine in Twentieth-Century Guatemala," chapter 7. David Carey, Jr., and Lydia Crafts read US-based archives from an anthropologically informed perspective to show how pharmaceutical and biomedical research hinged both on close collaboration with Guatemalan non-Indigenous medical specialists and on control over Indigenous bodies. Both chapters 6 and 7 reveal a variety of forms of resistance by Maya people. In Guatemala, *curanderos*, *comadronas* (midwives), bonesetters, and other practitioners of traditional medicine fought back against attempts to criminalize nonbiomedical practice. On Yucatán's Caribbean littoral, Mathews and Gust suggest, the absence of physical remains of housing might well indicate Mayan workers' preferences to avoid accepting permanent peonage on sugar-producing estates in spite of attempts to ensnare them in debt through the sale of goods—many of them imported—in the *tienda de raya* (see also Gust and Mathews 2020).

Carey and Crafts reveal how Hispanic elites could invoke science from the Global North to legitimize their claims over Indigenous bodies. During the Porfiriato in Yucatán, medical treatises authored by elite Yucatecans on the malnutrition and disease associated with the spread of henequen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century yield insight into how then-contemporary science legitimized the dehumanizing treatment of Mayan peons. Rather than consider how hacendados' restrictions on the right to plant diversified milpas, hunt, and forest-garden caused poverty and illness among the Mayan workers residing on henequen estates, elite Yucatecan biomedical practitioners invoked a concept from scientific racism and social Darwinism to blame "racial decay." Their solution was to construct a modern hospital—ironically the location of the state archives of Yucatán today—to nurse Mayan patients back to physical and mental health to return to the henequen fields (García Quintanilla and Millet Cámara 1992, 56–59, 61–62). Tellingly, the discourse of science reduced the Maya body to just a pair of laboring hands (García Quintanilla and Millet Cámara 55–59).

No discussion of the history of transnational exchanges of capital, resources, and culture between the United States and Maya area would be complete without a discussion of tourism. In Mexico, tourism emerged as a core economic activity in the last third of the twentieth century, displacing increasingly marginal forms of agricultural exports and import-substitution industries. Cultural tourism gained

importance in Guatemala in the decades since the formal end of the Civil War in 1996. Today, this multi-billion-dollar industry accounts for one of the greatest infusions of export dollars into the economies of Mexico and Central America, even as US and native capitalists often compete for control of particularly lucrative sites and routes. As chapters by M. Bianet Castellanos and Matilde Córdoba Azcárate show, this new industry is also contributing to emergent archives that document the latest phases of this centuries-old national exchange.

Focusing on the guidebooks of Cancún and the Mexican Caribbean geared toward foreign tourists, Castellanos, in chapter 8, notes how nonacademic representations of the regional landscape appeal to the expectations of US audiences by representing vast expanses of populated space as if they were “empty” of anything but isolated ruins and beach attractions. Echoing the classic settler colonialist trope of *terra nullius*, these pictorial representations essentially erase the contemporary Indigenous presence and the nineteenth-century legacy of armed Maya resistance to represent a region ripe for “discovery” by white adventurers. Castellanos contrasts these “classic” touristic representations with those associated with more contemporary representations of community-driven, sustainable tourism. As she argues, while hierarchies of power remain in the practice and representation of tourism, changing consumer expectations and local practices can work to transform older paradigms that rely more heavily on classic settler colonial tropes.

In chapter 9, our last contribution, Córdoba Azcárate explores new forms of knowledge production about Mayan peoples in the very recent history of inland tourism. She adopts an innovative methodology that blends ethnography with a close reading of gray literature generated by tourism industries and research into “archives” of information defined in a less conventional manner. This last category embraces the internet and specialized knowledge created and exchanged among a transnational community of cultural promoters, employees of large corporations, and politically connected entrepreneurs. Members of this community represent themselves as experts on Maya history and culture and are attuned to the high-end market for wellness and leisure branded as “Maya.” This chapter reads the “novel popular archives” created by this community, analyzing how they commodify and contribute to the (conventionally defined) archives and other sources of information consulted by scholars of the Maya Area. By examining the selective restoration of two well-known tourist haciendas, Córdoba Azcárate closely examines how Mayanness created for consumption by the affluent tourist is shaped by transnational capital and private-public collaborations that are at once neoliberal and nepotistic. This chapter poses an important question for the future of Mayanist studies: How will we study representations of the idea of “The Maya” when “tourism entrepreneurs and stakeholders, urban planners, designers and architects, and bankers

and global corporations in the hospitality industry” (chapter 9) define Mayanness?

Taken together, our contributors suggest how a range of new methodologies and theoretical approaches can be applied to a variety of public and private archives based in the US, as well as to unconventional para-archives involving actors in the Global North, to productively expand Mayanist studies. Before participating in this volume, most of our authors never would have considered that artisanal distilleries and for-profit online genealogical services can open new vistas on the Maya past. Insofar as the experience of generations of Mayan peoples have been shaped by direct or indirect contacts with US capital, research, and diplomacy, many important facets of the modern history of Maya people are to be found north of the Rio Grande / Río Bravo. Making these sources familiar and accessible to a large international community of scholars is, we believe, one of the most pressing tasks for the future of Maya studies. It is our hope that the various methodological, conceptual, and theoretical explorations in the chapters that follow will offer some productive avenues for this larger project.

#### NOTES

1. We gratefully acknowledge David Carey Jr. for pointing this out.
2. See, e.g., the use of the K'iche' term *vuj* to refer to hieroglyphic manuscripts in colonial Yucatán in Mignolo's *Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1995). Mignolo also seems not to recognize the very significant phonetic content of lowland Maya hieroglyphic traditions as he generalizes the logographic or ideographic nature of Mesoamerican writing systems (70–77).
3. See, for instance, February 15, 1928, Consul Fayette J. Flexer, “Political Summary for the State of Tabasco for the Year 1927,” Records of the Department of State Internal Affairs of Mexico 1910–29, roll 96 as discussed in Fallaw's chapter 4 in this volume. In a similar vein, Kim shows how US-Mexican relations on the border were molded by a dialogue between US and Mexican elites about the assumed inadequacies of people of Indigenous descent by drawing on US-based archives (2019, 49–56).
4. CIW Archives AV Kidder Corr. NB VI and VII, 1928 and 1932. A general description of this approach is detailed in a memo prepared for Merriam, possibly by Kidder on 13 April 1932. A letter, also from Kidder to Merriam, details frustration regarding Morley's “crowing” about the CIW's uniquely philanthropic relationship to the Mexican government, and is dated February 9, 1928.
5. July 10, 34, Kidder to Merriam, AV Kidder Corr, 1934–35 NB VII March 13, 2012.
6. See the census records website: <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/census/#:~:text=Ancestry.com%20is%20available%20free,libraries%2C%20otherwise%20by%20subscription.&text=Visit%20State%20Archives%20or%20State,of%20the%20microfilm>

%20from%20ous; <https://www.ancestry.com/corporate/blog/ancestry-mexico-launches-with-more-than-220-million-searchable-mexican-historical-records>.

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