

NOTICE WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

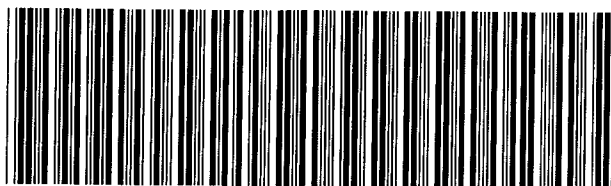
Requested For : Pseudopatron, Resource Sharing



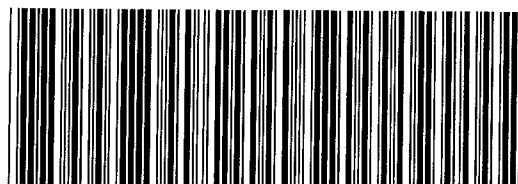
Resource Request Slip Letter

12/18/2023

Please note: A specific item is specified in this request.



Request ID: 22680490670006236



Item Barcode: 31735055758282

Requested For: Pseudopatron, Resource Sharing (2tdrsill0000000)

Nuevas perspectivas sobre la geografía política de los mayas /
By: Okoshi Harada, Tsubasa.

ISBN: 9789703232086

Edition: 1. ed.

Imprint: México : Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México 2006.

Location: stacks

**Call Number:
F1435.3.P7 N84
2006**

Destination: ULS - Thomas Blvd

Request Type: Patron digitization request

Request Note:ILL260410

Vol/Issue: (2006)

Chapter/Article:Origin and Myth: Ethnicity, Class, and Chibal in
Postclassic and Colonial Yucatan by Matthew Restall

Pages:269-289

NUEVAS PERSPECTIVAS SOBRE LA GEOGRAFÍA POLÍTICA DE LOS MAYAS

Tsubasa Okoshi Harada, Ana Luisa Izquierdo
y Lorraine A. Williams-Beck

EDITORES



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CAMPECHE

FOUNDATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF MESOAMERICAN STUDIES, INC.

México, 2006

Primera edición: 2006

Esta publicación contó con el apoyo de FAMSI
Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc.
www.famsi.org

Universidad Autónoma de Campeche
www.uacam.mx

D. R. © 2005. UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO
Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas / Centro de Estudios Mayas
Circuito Mario de la Cueva
Ciudad Universitaria, C. P. 04510, México, D. F.
www.filologicas.unam.mx
iiifl@servidor.unam.mx
Departamento de publicaciones del IIFL
Tel. 5622 7347, fax 5622 7349

ISBN 970-32-3208-6

Impreso en México
Printed in México

CONTENIDO

Introducción	7
<i>Tsubasa Okoshi Harada</i>	
Los Canul y los Canché: una interpretación del "Código de Calkiní"	29
<i>José Manuel A. Chávez Gómez</i>	
La recreación del antiguo espacio político. Un <i>cuchcabal</i> keja-che y el <i>na'al</i> kejach Chan en el siglo xvii	57
<i>María Flores Hernández y Manuel Eduardo Pérez Rivas</i>	
Apuntes para el estudio de la organización sociopolítica de la costa oriental de Quintana Roo	81
<i>Ernesto Vargas Pacheco</i>	
Cabecera, unidad y esfera política: dinámica de la provincia de Acalan	127
<i>Ana Luisa Izquierdo</i>	
Las jurisdicciones en la Chontalpa del siglo xvi	159
<i>Janine Gasco</i>	
The Political Geography of the Province of Soconusco in the Late Postclassic and Early Colonial Periods	183
<i>Susan Kepecs</i>	
The Political Geography of Chikinchel, Yucatán, Mexico: Historical and Cross-Cultural Approaches	209

Rani T. Alexander

- La comunidad posclásica en Isla Cilvituk, Campeche: ¿comprende una frontera interna? 233

Matthew Restall

- Origin and Myth: Ethnicity, Class, and *Chibal* in Postclassic and Colonial Yucatán 269

Lorraine A. Williams-Beck

- Patrones de asentamiento y organización comunitaria previos a la formación de una jurisdicción política: una evaluación arqueológica del *Códice de Calkiní* 291

ORIGIN AND MYTH: ETHNICITY, CLASS, AND *CHIBAL* IN POSTCLASSIC AND COLONIAL YUCATAN

Matthew Restall
History Department
The Pennsylvania State University
Pennsylvania

[E]very society may be said to recognize two ideological centers—one at the heartland of the polity and the other somewhere outside its social or political borders at a temporally/spatially distant locale associated with personalized ancestors or places of cultural origins [...] located geographically ‘out there’[...] [s]uch sacred outside centers, sometimes also places of pilgrimage and/or of other appropriate forms of diplomatic obeisance, are regarded as places of cultural origins and as the homes of original creator-ancestors... (Helms 1994: 361, 363).

In the course of several books (1988; 1993; 1998), the anthropologist Mary Helms has argued that “in human cosmologies geographical distance corresponds with supernatural distance” (1998: xi), that supernatural associations and concomitant status are gained through knowledge of distant places, through owning material objects from distant places, and through having kin —typically ancestors or affines— who originated in distant places.

My purpose here is to briefly explore the applicability of Helms’ ideas to the Maya, in particular to the origin mythology of the Yucatec Maya elite. This exercise has been inspired not only by the persuasive importance of Helms’ work, but also by the fact that she makes mere passing mention of Maya mythology and history (1998: 18, 115). This appears not to be because Helms views Maya culture as a paradigmatic outsider, but simply because for reasons of research manageability she chose to focus on Asian and African sources. Indeed, another anthro-

pologist, using examples from all over the world including Mesoamerica, has argued that “there seem to be few important differences between the styles of origin theories” from thousands of societies, both oral and literate, with external origins proving again and again to be “uncannily attractive [...] perhaps because it often seems desirable to distinguish the ruling classes from the rest of the population” (Henige 1982: 90-96). In other words, if the Maya elite had made no claims at all to (mythological) external origins, we would surely be obliged to investigate why.¹

There is an additional justification for examining the origin mythology of the Maya elite from a Helmsian perspective, and this is the striking contrast that immediately emerges between that perspective and the conventional wisdom on the topic. In other words, students and scholars of the Maya, from Diego de Landa and his 1566 *Relación* up to the present, have tended to assume the historicity of the alleged central Mexican origins of certain Maya dynasties —despite the fact that the only evidence for such historical “facts” are the Maya textual records of the myths themselves. This problem of evidence, combined with the implications of Helm’s ideas, suggests that such origin myths lack historical foundations; that they are metahistorical constructs serving particular cultural purposes.

Mythic origins and the origins of a myth

We can only guess at the [Maya] weaknesses that allowed these conditions to develop and lowered the guard so that the wax moth could enter [Yucatan], the wax moth of Central America being the [...] morally weaker culture which originated in central Mexico (Thompson 1970: 99).

The origin mythology that is the topic of this article, therefore, is deeply rooted both in Maya culture and in the Western culture of Maya studies. Before turning to the latter, a brief review of the Maya-language ethnohistorical sources for this mythology is warranted.

¹ For related examples not cited by Helms or Henige, see Sahlins 1981 and Chatterjee 1998. For a treatment of origin mythology in the context of migration in Mesoamerica, but with some non-Mesoamerican comparative citations, see Christensen Forthcoming.

The principal relevant sources are the Books of Chilam Balam and the *títulos* or primordial titles, which contain a number of examples (see Table 1). Paxbolon's dynasty originated with a founding ancestor named Auxauil, who "in the beginning came from Cozumel to conquer the territories here" along with four of "his principal men" (*u na cabibal auxauil tali cuçumil tali u chuci cabil cabob uij... yithoc u nucalob*; TAT: 69v; Restall 1998a: 58). The myth-histories of both the Canul and Xiu lineages claim origins in a place called "West Zuyua". The principal men of Calkiní state that "we know how we came from the east, we Maya men, and that we come from those people of West Zuyua... Travelling along the road, they [sic] came to rest in the Itzá region, which is where those of the Canul name came from" (*c oheliix hibiciix teil talon ti lakine coon ah maya uinice tiix u talob lae ah chikin suyuaob ... lay u bel beob lubob tal ti peten ytza ulci ah canul ukabaob lae*; TC: 36; Restall 1998a: 101). The Book of Chilam Balam of Maní asserts that "the Tutul Xiu were at West Zuyua for four eras; the land they came from was Tulapan ... the land and home of Nonoual" (*can te anilo tutul xiu ti chikin zuina u lumil u talelob tulapan... ti cab ti yotoch nonoual*; CBM: 134; Restall 1998a: 140). According to Gaspar Antonio Chi (a Xiu on his mother's side), one dimension of the rivalry between the noble lineages of the Cocom and the Xiu was that the Cocom claimed that "they were native lords and the Tutul Xiu foreigners" (RHGY, I: 318; Restall 1998a: 149); accordingly, Chi's Xiu Family Tree features some central Mexican iconographic elements (Cortez 1995; Restall 1998a: 144-48).²

When some of these examples came to the attention of the first generations of Mayanist archaeologists, they were used to bolster their interpretation of pre-Columbian Yucatan as the site of a "momentous meeting between two radically different pre-Columbian people" (Jones 1997:285)— native Mayas and invaders from central Mexico. According to this well-known (and, for decades, hegemonic) paradigm, in the ninth or tenth centuries central Mexican warriors from Tula conquered the Mayas and for three hundred years ruled most of the peninsula from their capital at Chichén Itzá. The bellicose culture of central Mexico militarily and politically overwhelmed the pacifist culture of the Mayas,

² For two new biographical essays on Chi, see Okoshi Harada 2001 and Restall 2001b.

TABLE 1. Origin Myth References in Maya Literature

Source	Places of origin	Ancestors of origin
Title of Acalan-Tixchel (1567/1612)	"Cozumel"	"Auxaual", four other Chontal Maya nobles (Chacbalam, Huncha, Paxmulu, & Paxoc)
Title of Calkini (1595/1821)	"the Itza region", "the east", "West Zuyua"	"those people of West Zuyua", "those of the Canul name"
Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel	"Cartabona", "Viroa Chacunescab"	"the <i>chibal</i> of the Xiu"
Book of Chilam Balam of Mani	"the land and home of Noual", "West Zuyua", "Tulapan"	"the Tutul Xiu"
Probanza of don Juan Kauil (1618)	"the kingdom of Mexico"	"a Cocom", "a relative of Moctezuma named Tumispolchicbul", "Cuhuikakca. . .alcacalpu", "Ixnahuaucupul" and "Kukumcupul"
Gaspar Antonio Chi (1579)		"the Tutul Xiu", as "foreigners"
Landa's <i>Relación</i> (1566)	"the west" "the south" "Chiapas"	"Kukulcan", "the Itzaes"; "the Tutul Xiu"

Spanish-language document.

Sources: Acalan-Tixchel: TAT: 69v (Restall 1998a: 58); Calkini: TC: 36 (Restall 1998a: 101); Chumayel: CBC: 21 (Restall 1998a: 135-136); Maní: CBM: 134 (Restall 1998a: 140); Kauil: Brinton 1882: 114-118 and Quezada 1997: 214-216; Chi: in the *Relaciones de Yucatán* (Restall 1998a: 149); Landa: Landa VI; XIII; IX.

but remained morally inferior. In time, a new Yucatec elite emerged, the Mayanized descendants of central Mexican invaders (Morley 1946: 211-212; Thompson 1956: 99-105; Tozzer 1957: 128-129; Clendinnen 1987: 149; Gillespie 1989: 201-207; Coe 1993: 155). In a variant on

this theme, historians argued that those noble Maya lineages who centuries later capitulated to the Spaniards did so in part because of their central Mexican origins (Roys 1933: 192-199; 1957: 41; Farriss 1984: 245).

One member of the new mayanist generation has persuasively argued that the binary global politics of the Second World and Cold Wars provided a cultural context that nurtured this vision of ancient Yucatan (Jones 1997); I suggest that equally relevant is a broader Western perception —ranging from Colonial-era Spanish commentators to modern scholars— of a cultural dichotomy between central Mexico and the Maya area. The Spanish experience of conquest and colonization in Mesoamerica led the settlers to view central Mexico —with its fallen empire, royal family, spectacular imperial capital, and gold mines— as civilizationally superior to the Maya area, which at time of the Conquest lacked mineral wealth and impressive polities and has remained a relatively poor region for most of the last five centuries. The fact that Yucatan is a subordinate region of the modern Mexican republic, whose capital lies on the site of the ancient Mexican capital, reinforced this perception of an historically-rooted imbalance.

Recent archaeological discoveries and more sophisticated interpretive paradigms have undermined the Toltec-Invasion view. The relationship between central Mexico and Yucatan during Chichén Itzá's heyday is now seen as one of commercial and political influence more than one based on military conflict, with a greater level of reciprocity than previously recognized, and with a significant role being played by Chontal Mayas —possibly the "Itzá" of Yucatec ethnohistorical record (Sabloff and Andrews 1986; Gillespie 1989: 207; Ringle 1990; Sabloff and Henderson 1993; Peniche Rivero 1993; Sharer 1994: 338-408; Jones 1995; Jones 1998: 7-16).

If archaeologists now view with skepticism the idea that Maya elites descended from central Mexican invaders, a close reading of the ethnohistorical sources that once seemed to support the Toltec-Invasion thesis prompts a parallel skepticism. The Colonial-era Maya references to the topic turn out, in fact, to be full of contradictions and ambiguities. These contradictions, both internal and intertextual, concern geography and nomenclature (see Table 1). For example, the Chontal *myt'n* names Auxaual as the founding ancestor of the ruling dynasty; Auxaual is

possibly a name of Nahuatl origins, and there is a similarly-named site to the west of the Chontal region; however, Auxual is described as coming from Cozumel, which is far to the east. The Calkiní text claims that the Canul lineage came from West Zuyua to the Itzá region and then to Calkiní, which has been taken to suggest a migration from central Mexico through the Chontal region and into Yucatan; however, the Calkiní text also states that this place of origin was in the east—again, the opposite direction—while the Itzá region referred to here is probably the area around Chichén Itzá.³

Zuyua is also mentioned in the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, usually in association with rulership. It has been interpreted variously by scholars (Roys 1933: 88-98; Edmonson 1986: 168; Burns 1991: 35; Marcus 1992: 78-79; Sigal 2000: 233-40), but Zuyua itself is almost universally assumed to be a Nahuatl-derived toponym and located in central Mexico, the birthplace even of Kukulcan-Quetzalcoatl (Brinton 1882: 110; Roys 1933: 88; 1943: 59, 151; Thompson 1970: 23; Edmonson 1982: 38; Coe 1993: 171; Sharer 1994: 406). Quiché and Cakchiquel materials from Highland Guatemala, that are comparable in genre to the Yucatec sources, likewise suggest that Zuyua was in central Mexico by citing “Zuyua” along with “Tulan” as though the two toponyms referred to the same place.

One such source is the Popol Vuh, which otherwise gives little clue as to Zuyua’s location (Tedlock 1985: 171-178); indeed, one noted translator of the book states that Zuyua was “probably” in the Tabasco region, and he is not alone in this view (Tedlock 1985: 372; Carmack 1981: 46; Okoshi Harada 1993: 5). A variant on this theme has Zuyua in the Peten Itzá region (Jones 1998: 7). Furthermore, another Guatemalan source, the Cakchiquel-language Xpantzay primordial titles from Tecpan, assert that lineage ancestors came from “Tulan, Zuyua” and that local elites were also descended from Abraham and the ancient Israelites (Recinos 1984: 120-121, 168-169). I suggest that rather than viewing these two claims as categorically different, with one plausible and historically-rooted and the other implausible and entirely mythical, we should evaluate both claims equally as part of same semantic system—that which supported Maya origin mythology.

³ As Okoshi Harada suggests (1993: 14-18). There is similar directional confusion in the Landa version (see Table 1).

Indeed, as one linguist has pointed out, there is “no convincing evidence that *Zuyua* has anything to do with Nahuatl place names, the Nahuatl language, or central Mexico” (Karttunen 1985: 6). In fact, “Zuyua” is a plausible Yucatec toponym. *Suy* (or *zuy*) and *ha* (or *ha'*) are terms used in colonial as in modern Maya, terms that would not seem odd as toponymic elements (especially *ha'*, “water”); there are, for example, towns in Yucatan named Zuytun and Zuytunchen.

The Maní reference gives two other toponyms as Xiu provenances; although one of them, Tulapan, seems central Mexican and could be Tula, the other, Nonoual is no more clearly identifiable than Zuyua —or Cartabona and Viroa Chacunescab, the origin places of the Xiu, according to one Chumayel account. Nonoual might be derived from Nonohual, the name of a mountain adjacent to Tula, although most scholars seem to agree that Nonoual is the Chontal area (for example, Brinton 1882: 109-124; Carmack 1981: 46; Okoshi Harada 1993: 4). Cartabona appears to be an altered Spanish place-name, possibly based on Cartagena (Edmonson 1986: 101 proposes Constantinople). Viroa Chacunescab is also an obscure name; translators of the Chilam Balam have suggested that Viroa is a Maya reduction of Babylonia (Edmonson 1986: 103) and that Chacunescab is the name of a member of the Tutul Xiu *chibal*, or Yucatec patronym-group (Roys 1933: 80).

A notarial source of 1618 records a folk-historical belief that the Cocom and other local nobles were descended from lords “who came from Mexico,” one of whom was related to Moctezuma. The statement was made by a Maya man in Valladolid, written down in Spanish as part of a lawsuit, with local Kauil and Caamal noblemen cited as sources (document reproduced in Brinton 1882: 114-118; Quezada 1997: 214-216; quoted at length in Roys 1962: 66, where it is erroneously dated 1718). Although knowledge of one or both the Moctezumas may have circulated in Postclassic Yucatan, it seems more likely that tales of him arrived with the Spaniards and/or their Nahua auxiliaries. Besides, the Cocom name has been identified in Chichén Itzá hieroglyphs dated long before the Moctezumas ruled in Mexico (Ringle 1990; Stuart 1993: 346-347). Furthermore, another source claims that it was the Xiu who were widely perceived as foreign, usually central Mexican, and the Cocom as locally-rooted (see Chi in Table 1). In fact, the names cited in the Valladolid document as those of ancestral migrants are Maya, not Nahuatl.

Likewise, the patronyms featured in other versions of the origin myth—such as Canul, Caamal, and Cupul—are as Yucatec Maya as is Cocom. The only personal name in Maya origin mythology that could be Nahuatl is Auxauhal, but the four principal men who are named as his co-settlers have distinctly Yucatec and Chontal Maya names (see Table 1). The name Xiu is usually assumed to be Nahuatl-derived, but this too is a dubious assumption. It is possible that a Maya term *xiu*, meaning “plant”, is derived from a Nahuatl word *xihuitl*; which means both “grass” and “year”. But, as one linguist observes, “one would expect the Maya form of such a loan to be *xiuit*, and in fact *xiuit* appears as a common noun in the Chilam Balam of Tizimin apparently meaning ‘year’” (Karttunen 1985: 10). It is therefore just as likely that *xiu* and *xihuitl* are either derived from a common Mesoamerican origin or their resemblance is coincidental. Even if *xiu* were to be viewed as a loanword from Nahuatl, that would hardly prove that the lineage or *chibalob* named Xiu came from central Mexico.⁴

Not only have scholars been quick to take literally and uncritically the vague and contradictory origin mythology of dynastic *chibalob* such as Canul, Caamal, Cocom, Cupul, and Xiu, but they have added Pech to the list. By misreading statements in the Pech primordial titles, one historian argued that the Pech nobles arrived in the region north of Mérida not only after the fifteenth-century fall of Mayapan but “in conquest times” (Roys 1957: 41). In fact, the assertion by Pech nobles that they were “the first noble conquistadors here in this land” (*yax hidalgo concixtador uay ti lum*; TY: 2v; TCH: 1; Restall 1998a: 109) is a reference to the acquisition of prestigious Spanish titles, not the initial arrival of the Pech in the region; it relates to elite Maya reactions to

⁴ The evidence relating to patronyms has both linguistic and ethnic implications; the lack of non-Maya patronyms in Yucatan, especially among the allegedly foreign élite *chibalob*, reflects the fact that Yucatec Maya contains a very modest quantity of words derived from Nahuatl—and some of those are either derived from common Mesoamerican origins or entered the language under post-Conquest Spanish mediation (Karttunen 1985; Restall 1997: Chapter 22). Linguistic evidence, in fact, “strongly supports indirect and mediated contact” between Yucatán and central Mexico before the Spanish invasion, not “direct and sustained contact” (Karttunen 1985: 14). Likewise there is no evidence, either from the colonial or modern periods, of ethnic differences between the Maya *chibalob* of alleged foreign origins and the peninsula’s other *chibalob*—although the issue has yet to be studied using biological methods.

foreign invasion, not to their own putative foreignness (Restall 1998a: 44-45, 104-128). But the erroneous interpretation was used by another historian to characterize the Pech as “parvenu ‘adventurers’” (Farriss 1984: 245), thus grafting onto Maya mythology an historiographical myth.

Dynasty and alterity

“Nous qui sommes d’ici sans être ici
et qui sommes d’ailleurs sans être vraiment là”
(from Yves Préfontaine, “Non-lieu”; Ouellet 1998: 357)

If the myth of Maya elite origins was not rooted in historical fact—that is, none of Yucatan’s ruling dynasties were descended from central Mexicans—what purpose did the myth serve the Mayas who perpetuated it?

Simply put, such mythology made the elite who they were. It enabled ruling dynasties to achieve a state of alterity, to become altered, to be something other than the Yucatec-rooted ethnic Mayas that they—and their commoner subjects—really were. Tales of foreign origins were used by the Maya elite to ideologically underpin socioeconomic differences and help perpetuate the dominance of their *chibalob*. As presented in Tables 2 and 3, Maya social differentiation was marked and maintained in a variety of ways. But in times of political and economic crisis—as in the fifteenth century when the Mayapan arrangement collapsed or in the sixteenth century when the Spaniards invaded—the elite needed a foundation to their status that transcended the material and the mundane. This need was fulfilled by the assertion of a sacred and celestial connection to distant places and ancestors. The exclusivity of this connection was of the utmost importance; its monopoly imbued it with meaning.

In fact, Zuyua and the other places cited in Maya texts precisely fit Helms’ mythological category of the temporally and geographically ambiguous homes of founding ancestors. Even Cozumel, which seems distinct from somewhere like Zuyua because its location is to us unambiguous, was possibly significant to the Chontals because to them

TABLE 2. Foundations and Mechanisms of Maya Class Inequities in the colonial Yucatec *Cah*

	Men	Women
Social membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chibal</i> membership • inter-<i>chibal</i> connections • terminology of social differentiation: <i>hidalgo/almehen/macehual</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chibal</i> • inter-<i>chibal</i> connections • differentiation: <i>hidalgo/colell/macehual</i>
Economic ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>kax</i> and <i>solar</i> ownership • overall wealth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>solar</i> • overall wealth
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>cabildo</i> career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none

Source: Restall 1997: 87-97.

Note on terminology: The *cah* was the Maya municipal community; the *chibal* the patronym-group; *kax* and *solar* loosely designated agrarian and residential land; and the *cabildo* was the community political council. For further explanation and discussion, see Restall 1997; 1998a; 1998b.

TABLE 3. Class Characteristics of a colonial-era maya dynasty or elite *Chibal*

Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>chibal</i> has own mythology, including both remote origins and ancient political and territorial rights in the <i>cah</i> • connected by marriage to other elite <i>chibalob</i> • connected to Spanish authority as (<i>indios</i>) <i>hidalgos</i>, conquistadors, and Spanish-sanctioned <i>cah</i> rulers • recognition in the <i>cah</i> as <i>almehen</i>, <i>don</i>, etc.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dominant landowners in the <i>cah</i> (of <i>kax</i> and <i>solar</i>) • distinguishing overall wealth
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monopoly or shared monopoly over <i>batab</i>-ship and senior <i>cabildo</i> positions in the <i>cah</i>

Source: Restall 1997:87-97; 1998a.

it was so remote as to defy precise location. Attempts by scholars to find places such as Zuyua may thus be misguided, being based on a faulty understanding of the meaning of these toponyms to the Mayas, for whom they represented remoteness and otherness —a form of exoticism, if you like. Of course Zuyua is hard to find; such places were not *supposed* to be readily identifiable, geographically, or temporally. Sibling toponyms like Cartabona and Viroa have the added virtue of being linguistically distant or not easily identifiable. In other words, the symbolic and metaphorical power of such places lies in their status as non-places —or *non-lieux*, in the sense of Pierre Ouellet's (1998) interpretation of the term, taken from the Préfontaine poem quoted above, as representing a spatial and cultural other, a place that does not exist in the mundane, local world.

The sacred element commonly found in origin mythology elsewhere (and included in Helms' model) is also present in the Maya case. Cozumel was probably significant to the Chontals in part because it had in the past and for many centuries been a pilgrimage site, usually associated with the Itzás. Indeed "Itzá" or the Itzás —possibly the name that Yucatec Mayas gave to Chontals during Chichén Itzá's heyday— are frequently cited in Maya texts in connection with elite origin mythology and usually with sacred associations. The Pech texts refer to local pagan priests as "the Itzá priests" (*ytza u yah kinob*; TY: 6r; Restall 1998a: 121), while the Books of Chilam Balam make various references to Itzá priests and Itzá migration mythology (for example, CBC: 20; Restall 1998a: 134).

Similarly the Canul ancestors of the Calkiní myth were imbued with sacredness by having passed through Itzá territory; in the original Calkiní text a Maya/Christian cross (all four arms of equal length) is drawn in beside the word *ytza* (TC: 36). Although the Itzás are also called foreigners in the Chilam Balam literature, there are no specific references to their place of origin; if anything, the Itzás are associated with places within Yucatan rather than outside it (CBC: 20, 22; CBM: 135-136; Restall 1998a: 134, 136, 141). Itzá "otherness" is therefore primarily achieved through associations of sacredness.⁵

⁵ Although note that in other Chilam Balam passages there is an apparent equation made between the Itzás and the Spaniards as the bringers of warfare and related disasters (Restall 1998a: 41-43). For a discussion of the Itzás and religion in the context of Maya political and economic organization, see Peniche Rivero 1993. For a

Thus what mattered to Maya elite (and their subjects) was the symbolic value of these origin stories, their toponyms, and their protagonists. One anthropologist has called origin tales “the major metaphors” (Henige 1982: 90). The otherness of names and places allowed them to function as spatial metaphors for the sacred and the exotic, allowing rulers—in accordance with deep-rooted Maya tradition (see Houston and Stuart 1996)—to transcend their earthly roles and assert connections to the supernatural.

At the same time it was important to maintain the deeply rooted local connections that served to legitimate the material basis of social and political status—to nourish the other “ideological center” (in Helms’ phrase) that was “at the heartland of the polity.” Of great relevance here are the ways in which Mayas conceived of land, its uses and meanings—ranging from land tenure to notions of territoriality, from the house plots of the *chibal* to the ties of the *cah*. This is a vast topic, or a cluster of vast topics, but there are some unifying cultural concepts, in particular the Maya tendency to view land within a bifurcated framework of center and satellite. The *cah*, for example, consisted both of its residential core (the physical village or town that Spaniards called a *pueblo*) and all its satellite lands (the cultivated and forested properties held by the community and its members). The microcosmic version of this was the territorial world of a Maya family (Restall 1998b), with its house plots in the residential *cah* and its plots of farm and forest in the surrounding region. The macrocosmic version was the territorial world of a regional Maya polity, with its central *noh cah* (“great *cah*” or capital) and its subject communities or *cahob* (Restall 1997: 20-40, 87-97, 169-216).

This Maya conception of land and territoriality is relevant to elite origin mythology and class ideology for two reasons: First, it represents a parallel dualism, comparable to the dynastic elite’s claim to be both at the center and (from) outside it. Second, regional polities in Postclassic and Conquest-era Yucatan were created and maintained through the mechanisms of dynastic dominance, which were themselves profoundly *cah*-based.⁶ For example, the Xiu forged a regional polity by acquiring

discussion of the etymological connection of the term “Itzá” to sacredness and shamanism, see Jones 1998: 428-29.

⁶ See Restall 1998a:47 and accompanying notes and citations on the debate among scholars over the nature of regional polities in Postclassic and sixteenth-century Yucatan.

gubernatorial (*batabil*) control over the *cahob* of the Maní region, making their core *cah* of Maní a *nob cah* and the surrounding communities satellite *cahob*. The Pech did the same in the northwest, as did the Canul in the region centered on Calkiní. Regional polity and dynasty were thus existentially interrelated; neither the Xiu as a dynasty nor Maní as a regional polity or province could have existed without each other. Fundamental to the dynastic ideology of regional domination was the idea that such families were both rooted in their capitals and legitimate rulers of the satellite communities and territories. Claims to a semi-sacred origin and connection with more distant and ambiguous places metaphorically reiterated the potent and legitimate capacity of the elite to exist and dominate on two levels.

The Maya dynastic elite thus laid claim to what one historian of Yucatan has called “the logically awkward but not unfamiliar claim to a double legitimacy” (Clendinnen 1987: 150). Long into the colonial period Maya elites asserted this paradoxical dual legitimacy deriving both from their mythical external origins and their long-term occupation and rule of the region they dominated. Maya rulers were, like the “we” in Préfontaine’s poem, neither here nor there, neither from here nor from there—while at the same time being all of these things. These metaphysical gymnastics allowed the elite to distinguish themselves, and so be distinguished, from their subjects.

For elite *chibalob*, “home” thus had double connotations, one sacred, ambiguous, and metahistorical, one material, historical, and locally-centered. Origin mythology enabled Maya dynasties to appropriate the vestiges of prestige and power resulting from encounters with the peoples and/or cultures of central and southern Mexico in pre-Conquest times—all with a view to reinforcing a nativist, autochthonous claim to local rule. This ideological principle was reinforced by the Spanish Conquest and the attempt by some elite *chibalob* to assert status as “noble Maya conquistadors”—Xiu, Pech, and other elites attempted to distance themselves from the Maya masses and to appropriate the Conquest as a way of inverting defeat and maintaining status.

Elite origin mythology and the Yucatec historical experience therefore fed off each other, with the perpetuation of the origin myth being one legacy of centuries of multiple contacts and exchanges between Yucatan and the outside world. Colonial-era Maya references to the foreign

origin of certain elite lineages do not reflect an historical migration or invasion; rather, they reflect the complexity of the Maya social structure, the tenacity of Maya elite culture, and the sophistication of the Maya reaction to the Spanish invasion.

Acknowledgements. Versions of this article were presented as papers at the Fourth International Congress of Mayanists, Antigua, Guatemala, August 1998, and at the American Anthropological Association meeting, Philadelphia, December 1998; a version of it also constitutes a small part of Restall 2001a. I am grateful to all those whose comments have contributed to the article —panel audience members, discussants, volume editors, press reviewers, and colleagues— especially Alexander Christensen, Stephen Houston, Patricia McAnany, John Monaghan, Tsubasa Okoshi Harada, and Lorraine Williams-Beck.

References Cited

- CBC Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel [cited numbers are page numbers in Roys' 1933 edition; also cited with each reference, where applicable, is the translation in Restall 1998a]
- CBM Book of Chilam Balam of Maní [cited numbers are page numbers in the Codex Pérez manuscript, photostat in Tozzer Library, Harvard University; also cited with each reference, where applicable, is the translation in Restall 1998a]
- RHGY Relaciones histórico-geográficas de la gobernación de Yucatán [cited numbers are page numbers in Garza 1983]
- TAT Title of Acalan-Tixchel [cited numbers are folios of original manuscript in the Archivo General de las Indias, Seville; facsimiles are in Scholes and Roys 1948; also cited with each reference is the translation in Restall 1998a]
- TC Title of Calkiní, also Códice, Codex, or Chronicle of Calkiní [cited numbers are pages of original manuscript, photostat in

Tozzer Library, Harvard University; also cited with each reference is the translation in Restall 1998a]

TCH Title of Chicxulub, Chronicle of Chicxulub, Crónica de Chacxulub-Chen, also Códice de Nakuk-Pech [cited page numbers are photostat pages of nineteenth-century Regil manuscript in Tozzer Library, Harvard University and in Latin American Library, Tulane University; also cited with each reference is the translation in Restall 1998a]

TY Title of Yaxkukul, also Crónica de Yaxkukul [cited numbers are folios of 1769 manuscript, Latin American Library, Tulane University; also cited with each reference is the translation in Restall 1998a]

Brinton, D. G.

1982 *The Maya Chronicles*. The Library of Aboriginal Research, Philadelphia.

Burns, A. F.

1991 The Language of Zuyua: Yucatec Maya Riddles and Their Interpretation. In *Past, Present, and Future: Selected Papers on Latin American Indian Literatures*, edited by M. H. Preuss, pp. 35-40. Labyrinthos, Lancaster California.

Carmack, R.

1981 *The Quiché Mayas of Utatlán: The Evolution of a Highland Guatemalan Kingdom*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Chatterjee, K.

1998 History as Self-Representation: The Recasting of a Political Tradition in Late Eighteenth-Century Eastern India. *Modern Asian Studies* 32: 913-48.

Christensen, A. F.

2000 History, Myth, and Migration in Mesoamerica. *Ethnohistory*, forthcoming.

Clendinnen, I.

1987 *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Coe, M. D.

1993 *The Maya*, 5th ed. Thames and Hudson, New York.

Coggins, C. C.

1987 New Fire at Chichén Itzá, in *Memorias del Primer Coloquio Internacional de Mayistas*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.

Cortez, C.

1995 Gaspar Antonio Chi and the Xiu Family Tree. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Edmonson, M. S.

1982 *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

1986 *Heaven Born Merida and its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Farriss, N. M.

1984 *Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Garza, M. de la, A. L. Izquierdo, Ma. del C. León, and T. Figueroa (editors).

1983 *Relaciones histórico-geográficas de la gobernación de Yucatán*, 2 vols. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.

Gillespie, S. D.

1989 *The Aztec Kings: The Construction of Rulership in Mexica History*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Helms, M. W.

1988 *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge, and Geographical Distance*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

1993 *Craft and the Kingly Ideal: Art, Trade, and Power*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

1994 Essays on Objects: Interpretations of Distance Made Tangible, in *Implicit Understandings*, edited by S. B. Schwartz, pp. 355-77. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

1998 *Access to Origins: Affines, Ancestors, and Aristocrats*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Henige, D.

1982 *Oral Historiography*. Longman, London.

Houston, S. and D. Stuart

1996 Of Gods, Glyphs, and Kings: Divinity and Rulership Among the Classic Maya. *Antiquity* 70: 289-312.

Jones, G.

1998 *The Conquest of the Last Maya Kingdom*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Jones, L.

1995 *Twin City Tales: A Hermeneutical Reassessment of Tula and Chichén Itzá*. University Press of Colorado, Niwot.

1997 Conquests of the Imagination: Maya-Mexican Polarity and the Story of Chichén Itzá. *American Anthropologist* 99: 275-90.

Karttunen, F.

1985 *Nahuatl and Maya in Contact with Spanish*. University of Texas Department of Linguistics and Center for Cognitive Science, Austin.

Kubler, G.

1961 Chichén Itzá y Tula. *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 1: 47-59.

Landa, fray D. de

1959 *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán* (1566). Editorial Porrúa, México. [Citations of Landa are by chapter, to facilitate the reader finding passages in any edition.]

Marcus, J.

1992 *Mesoamerican Writing Systems: Propaganda, Myth, and History in Four Ancient Civilizations*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Morley, S.

1946 *The Ancient Maya*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Okoshi Harada, T.

1993 Los Canules: analisis etnohistorico del *Códice de Calkiní*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.

2001 Gaspar Antonio Chi Xiu: El que "perpetuó" la imagen de los Xiu, in *Maya Survivalism*, edited by U. Hostettler and M. Restall, pp. 59-72. Verlag Saurwein, Markt Schwaben, Germany.

Ouellet, P.

1998 Le lieu et le non-lieu: La structuration spatiale des images de soi et de l'autre dans les contextes interculturels, in *Les Entre-Lieux de la Culture*, edited by Laurier Turgeon, pp. 357-71. Les Presses de L'Université Laval, Quebec.

Peniche Rivero, P.

1993 *Sacerdotes y comerciantes: el poder de los mayas e itzaes de Yucatán*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México.

Quezada, S.

1997 *Los pies de la república: Los indios peninsulares, 1550-1750*. Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social. Series on the *Historia de los pueblos indígenas de México*, México.

Recinos, A.

1984 *Cronicas indígenas de Guatemala* (1957). Academia de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala, Guatemala C.A.

Restall, M.

1997 *The Maya World: Yucatec Culture and Society, 1550-1850*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

1998a *Maya Conquistador*. Beacon Press, Boston.

1998b The Ties That Bind: Social Cohesion and the Yucatec Maya Family, in *Journal of Family History* 23 (4): 355-81.

2001a People of the Patio: Ethnohistorical Evidence of Yucatec Maya Royal Courts, in *Royal Courts of the Ancient Maya, Volume 2*, edited by T. Inomata and S. Houston. Westview Press, Boulder.

2001b Gaspar Antonio Chi: Bridging the Conquest of Yucatan, in *The Human Tradition: Social Order and Disorder in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Kenneth Andrien. Scholarly Resources, Wilmington.

Ringle, W. M.

1990 Who Was Who in Ninth-Century Chichén Itzá? *Ancient Mesoamerica* 1: 233-43.

Roys, R. L.

1933 *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington D. C.

1943 *The Indian Background to Colonial Yucatan*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington D. C.

1957 *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington D. C.

1962 Literary Sources for the History of Mayapan, in *Mayapan, Yucatan, Mexico*, edited by H. E. D. Pollock, R. L. Roys, T. Proskouriakoff, and A. Ledyard Smith, pp. 25-86. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington D. C.

Sabloff, J. A. and E. W. Andrews V (editors)

1986 *Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Sabloff, J. A. and J. S. Henderson (editors)

1993 *Lowland Maya Civilization in the Eighth Century A. D.* Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D. C.

Sahlins, M. D.

1981 *Historical Metaphors and Mythic Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Scholes, F. V. and R. L. Roys

1948 *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington D. C. (Reprinted by University of Oklahoma Press, 1968).

Sharer, R. J.

1994 *The Ancient Maya*, 5th ed. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Sigal, P.

2000 *From Moon Goddesses to Virgins: The Colonization of Yucatecan Maya Sexual Desire*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Stuart, D.

1993 Historical Inscriptions and the Maya Collapse, in *Lowland Maya Civilization in the Eighth Century A. D.*, edited by J. A. Sabloff and J. S. Henderson. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D. C.

Tedlock, D.

1985 *Popol Vuh: The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life*. Touchstone, New York.

Thompson, J. E. S.

1956 *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization*. Gollancz and University of Oklahoma Press, London and Norman.

1970 *Maya History and Religion*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Tozzer, A. M.

1957 *Chichén Itzá and Its Cenote of Sacrifice: A Comparative Study of Contemporaneous Maya and Toltec*. Harvard University Press Memoirs of the Peabody Museum (Nos. 11-12), Cambridge.