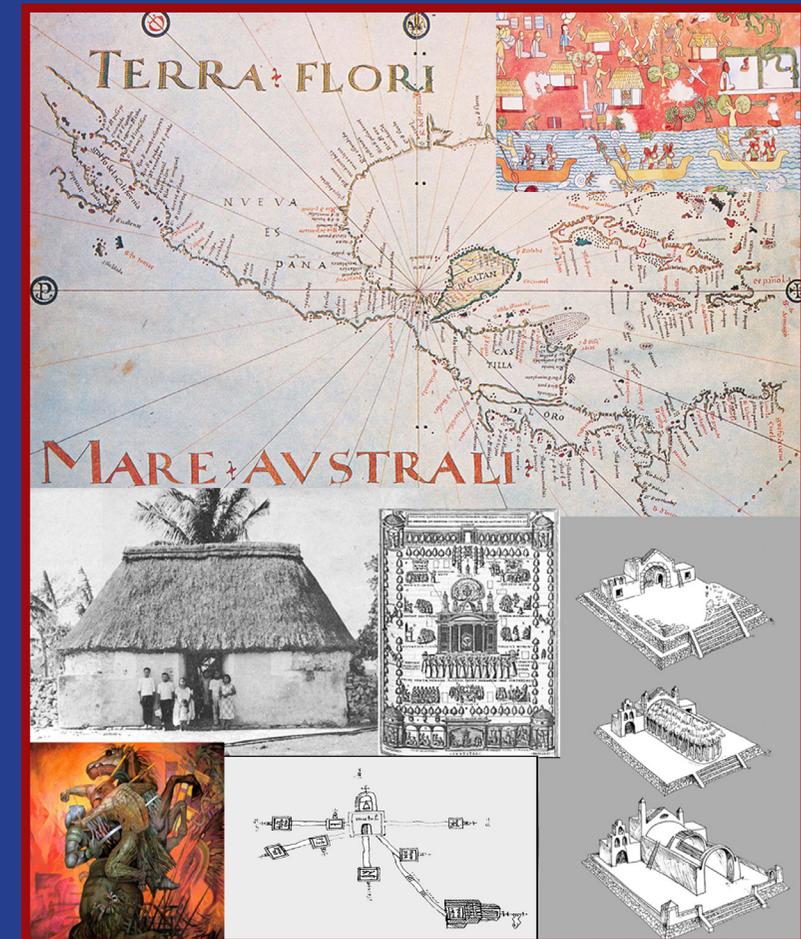


CHURCHES, CHAPELS, AND MAYA DWELLINGS OF COLONIAL YUCATÁN AND BELIZE.

A postcolonial Approach.



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Teobaldo Ramirez Barbosa



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

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*For Salma and Xavi
mis dos pequeños ángeles*

ABSTRACT

This thesis was conceived as an attempt to use the terms hybridity and third space in historical archaeology with a comparative analysis of early colonial churches and Maya dwellings on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize. This analysis was aimed for reconsider the influence of the indigenous societies in colonial encounters represented as hybrid material culture. The first part of this study analyzes colonialism and archaeology from a postcolonial perspective. The idea is to break with binary models and Eurocentric approaches of the type colonizer-donor vs colonized-receptor in colonial encounters presenting instead, an ambivalence relationship in which the colonizer and the colonized identity and materiality is negotiated and recreated.

The second part presents a brief overview to the Maya chronological framework, to continue with the colonial period. Colonialism in Mexico is examined showing how colonial institutions of power established the basis for a new urbanism and religious architecture. Three explorations were done in the Espiritu Santo bay aimed to identify colonial hamlets or *rancherías* caused by the *congregaciones*. Special attention was the site Kachambay and its church *Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción* founded in 1621 and mentioned in the *legajo* Mexico 906. Two sites were located in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay, proving the presence of human activities in a region commonly considered as uninhabited or *despoblado*.

The third part discusses in general the thesis and compares Maya dwellings plans and building materials reused in the construction of Spanish churches such as masonry, stucco, thatched roofs or *ramadas*, and apsidal, circular, and squared plans possible to observe in some types of churches. It is argued in this thesis that archaeological works about colonial churches are poor and more studies are required in order to understand the cultural changes in the early colonial life on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize.

Keywords: colonialism, hybridity, third space, postcolonial theories, Spanish churches, Maya dwellings, religious architecture, building materials, Yucatán Peninsula, material culture, surveys, Kachambay, Espiritu Santo Bay

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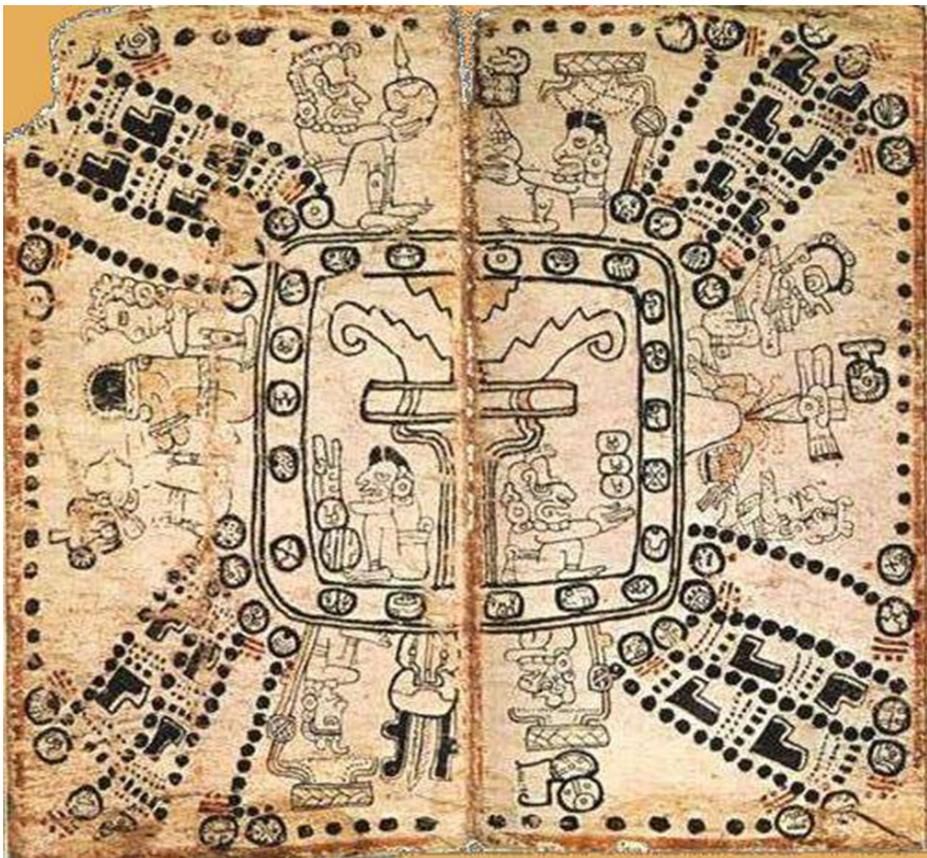
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PART ONE
THEORY, METHOD, AND RESEARCH
PERSPECTIVES



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Early colonial historical sources and archaeological investigations are important components in the study of the Colonial period of the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico. These investigations are particularly important as they document continuities and changes in the prehispanic Maya life which provide a wide range of data that is not entirely clear when only analyzing historical records. Composed of the states of Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo, the Yucatán Peninsula has many archaeological sites that need to be analyzed for a better understanding of the Colonial period (1546-1821). The development of methods of excavation in colonial churches and chapels, new techniques of analysis and interpretation, and the emergence of new theoretical perspectives applicable in colonial encounters, can allow a rethinking of the historical archaeology of the Maya area. The increase of these types of studies entails leaving behind Eurocentric descriptive models, in which *when* and *who* (in singular) have been the focus of the analysis that has characterized historical archaeology. These analyses have been important in providing information to work with, but they are only useful at a descriptive level, based on the western perspective of history created by unilateral interactions (e.g. Noël Hume 1969; 1978). For this reason, historical archaeology needs to be reformulated with questions like *who* (in plural) and *why* events happened to give a different vision of the dynamics of cultural interactions (see Graham 2011:3).

Among the new perspectives in historical archaeology and postcolonial theories, it is worth mentioning studies on colonial encounters as specific cases of interaction between human groups (e.g. Lyons and Papadopoulos, 2002b, Stein, 2005). It is clear that colonial encounters always represent an unequal power relationship between groups, and that a dominant group is going to establish control over the other. We cannot deny the impact of the

official brutality within colonialism, nor the forced labor or the public and regular humiliation of everyday colonized life. However, as Given argues: “there are always stories and parodies, little acts of resistance, the creation of alternative meanings and symbols, and the ability to find space for new social power” (Given, 2004:10). When these unequal social and cultural traits make contact, they exchange and adopt ideas and objects in order to mix them. This cultural amalgamation may or may not create conflict, as well as acceptance or rejection; that is, an ambivalent dynamic created in exchange of ideas and negotiations. After the encounter, the groups involved will not be the same again, but “new social forms are established, something new and substantially unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (Bhabha, 1990:211). Thus, it is possible to question the role of different groups in the colonial situation and the creation of hybridity. When considering the reciprocal cultural traits involved in cultural contacts, one might ask if they are recognizable in all social fields, and whether this happens on the same level as interactions.

Study framework

The core of this study is to analyze and discuss these questions from a postcolonial approach. In the colonial situation the arrival of foreign groups entailed a new social framework of relationships and a transformation of the landscape and material culture, which gave rise to possibilities for analyzing the groups involved and the cultural systems articulated when this occurred. There are two main ideas about cultural interactions and their dynamics. Firstly, when talking about cultural interactions it is important to establish what we understand by culture. In recent years the concept has been reviewed by certain theoretical trends, designating culture not as a shared symbolic body, consistent and uniform (e.g. Kroeber, 1952, Taylor, 1948), but as a means of dialectical relationships made through acceptances and rejections. In other words, it relates to cultural negotiations based on cultural differences, not cultural diversity (Bhabha, 1994:49). To Bhabha, cultural diversity is a category of ethnic variety, an object of empirical knowledge, whereas cultural difference is the enunciation of culture as knowledgeable, with a sense of power which gives rise to a complex system of cultural identification (ibid:50). He argues: “The articulation of cultures is

possible not because of the familiarity or similarity of contents, but because all cultures are symbol-forming and subject-constituting, interpellative practices” (Bhabha, 1990:210). From a general perspective, culture is mainly a social practice defined by actions and therefore changeable, contradictory and dynamic. It is important to understand how and why new cultural forms arise; although in some cases culture can determine actions, it is subject to negotiation and redefinition. In all cultural systems, identity is clearly the result of the dynamic generated within it. It is not possible to separate them in singular entities for their analysis, as Jonathan Rutherford argues, “cultures and identities can never be wholly separate, homogeneous entities; instead the interrelationships of differences are marked by translation and negotiation” (Rutherford, 1990:26).

Secondly, it is accepted that cultural contacts are neither unidirectional nor singular, but rather multidirectional and extremely variable (e.g. Bhabha, 1994, Cusick, 1998, Deagan, 1991, Stein, 2005:17). Stein has argued an approach of colonial encounters from a global perspective, i.e. not just analyzing the colony as an isolated unity in a binary colonizer-colonized relationship, but also the colony origin or metropole, and the active role of the indigenous societies can offer a better understanding of the colonial process (ibid:25). The analysis of the circumstances generated in the metropole by the dynamic in the colony can provide information about reciprocal affectations in colonial encounters. David Scott argues that, “After all, Europe, too, was transformed by the colonial project; it was not a merely the agent of changes in its colonies but also an object of changes coming from them”. Therefore -he continues- “Europe ought not in turn to be treated as if it were a space of essences. If it has been demonstrated that the colony constituted a space of socially constructed discourses and identity, a space of “invention”, the same sort of anti-essentialist gaze should be directed at Europe” (2005:395). Thus, colonialism in this study will be addressed in terms of the colony, the metropole, and the indigenous society. These three dimensions lead to the creation of new cultural diversities that require new approaches for a better understanding of them. A postcolonial perspective of the situation that occurred when the indigenous Mayas met the Spanish can provide information about the way they created new material culture in order to face the colonial situation. The study of colonial contacts represents a manifestation of this variety, which leads to a consideration

of which groups made contact and what happened when they did, which strategies and negotiations - maybe contradicting - emerged to defend their own interests. In short, how are they categorized by each other? Because of their complexity, colonial encounters offer an interesting field in the study of identity. Similarly, the construction of a new hybrid identity is important in this work since the dynamics of societies create the necessity to negotiate an individual or collective identity (see Hall, 1996, Alcoff and Mendieta, 2003). This phenomenon is even more evident in circumstances when two completely different cultures meet, as the dynamic of cultural change is even more complex and variable. Thus, colonialism is not a matter of power relationships between different groups, but also a complex exchange of beliefs, materiality, and even natural factors such as diseases and genetics. Lawrence and Shepard argue that, "Colonialism is not simply a matter for the colonists and the colonized: it precipitate the creation of whole new groups and social categories, including the offspring of unions between settlers and indigenous people, and also the slaves and indentured labourers for whom migration was less than voluntary" (2006:73), or in postcolonial terms, the creation of new hybrid forms.

The *etic* categories, which are perceived externally, and the *emic* categories, which are internal, are a topic that have been heavily debated in archaeology (Jones, 1997:106). That is, to what extent are cultural distinctions defined by the archaeologist and based on differences in material culture (*our* differences), similar to the perceptions of the involved groups in the past. This aspect is crucial in the role of the archaeology and the interpretative way of the information recorded. It depends on us, archaeologists who have the possibilities to decide who has a "voice" in the history, to distinguish whether they are colonizers or colonized. In combination with postcolonial theories, archaeologists have the possibility to include all the actors and external elements in the arena of cultural interactions, as Liebmann notes:

"One of the main challenges to archaeology posed by postcolonial theories is a reconsideration of how archaeologists represent the past - to whom we can or cannot give a voice through material culture and for whom we can or cannot speak. Archaeologists have long stressed the ability of our discipline to allow those silenced by time to be heard again in the present" (2008:9).

This thesis is an interdisciplinary analysis in which anthropology, ethnohistory, history, architecture, and of course, archaeology seeks to interpret colonial encounters in an encompassed way. Because the core of the study focuses on colonialism, postcolonialism, and cultural contacts, the analysis of colonial discourse in archaeology requires attention and discussion; that is, to point out the level of “Westernization” that it is possible to find in the discipline. Thus, one of the points sought in this work is the possibility of decolonizing the archaeology as a dialectic instrument in order to reinterpret the Eurocentric discourse in colonial encounters. As a science, archaeology has had different ways of approaching the past represented by theoretical frameworks such as, evolutionism, the new archaeology, system theories, cognitive archaeology, historical particularism, historical archaeology, and so on. However, archeological trends may have some Eurocentric burden in their explanatory models. Liebmann states: “in formulating any discourse regarding the past, archaeologist need to consider the way in which their research shapes and is shaped by colonialist representation” (2008:8). In this sense, I argue that any archaeological study that deals with colonial encounters using postcolonial theories should require: 1) a reconsideration of the level of Eurocentrism that might be implicit in the methodology used, and 2) recognition of the role of host societies that have historically been omitted in colonial discourse. In so doing, the decolonization of archaeological discourse will be possible and allow an analysis of colonial encounters in material and ideological contexts.

Any archaeological and historical interpretation is a cultural construction and therefore questionable, revisable, and updatable (see Davidson et al., 1995, Atalay, 2006, Smith and Jackson, 2006, Wobst, 2005). Rooted in the development of European colonialism, historical archaeology continues to give importance to the colonizer in the interpretation of the past; this is why the ground principles of American historical archaeology need to be rethought. To the extent that we can break away from the Eurocentric burden, a postcolonial approach to material culture such as Spanish churches and Maya dwellings will be more productive, showing all the constitutive parts in the colonial situation and their mutual interactions as creators of hybrid material culture.

The postcolonial approach in this study has been influenced by the works of Homi Bhabha, Peter van Dommelen, Matthew Liebmann, and others.

The postcolonial concepts of hybridity and third space proposed by Bhabha are the basis of my work and represent the creation of new cultural forms in colonial situations, deforming and displacing the colonial authority and creating a third space “in between” where the colonized interact in a reversal process with the colonizer (Bhabha, 1994:159). The aftermath of this third space is possible to observe in the form of a hybrid material culture and identity. One of the main colonialist and religious strategies was to establish control over Maya communities through dismantling native Maya buildings and incorporating them into colonial settlements. This superposition of settlements can be interpreted as hybridization, where two different cultural groups interacted to create something new. Even though the concepts of third space and hybridity were criticized for being mere metaphors (e.g. Parry, 2004, Gosden, 2004), this does not mean that they are inappropriate to use from an archaeological perspective. In contrast, the contextualization of these metaphors into material culture is an element that is continually present as the result of cultural interactions. Hybridity in this sense “should not be misunderstood as a simple fusion of new and old elements into a crossbreed of ideology or practice (creolization or cultural blending). Such a simplification neglects the knowledgeability of the involved agents” (Fahlander, 2008:19). It is here that archaeology can contribute to filling the third space with studies of hybrid material culture, in this particular case Early Spanish churches and Maya dwellings.

A brief overview of current theoretical trends used in cultural contacts is analyzed, proposing an archaeological use of the concepts of hybridity and third space. With concepts like acculturation, the history has never questioned the way the colonizer was affected and transformed in colonial encounters, focusing only on the colonized as a receptor of external influences, and/or the colonizer as an unchangeable donator of culture (Streiffert, 2006:73, Stein, 2005:16, Cusick, 1998:135-6). This perspective represents a problem in the analysis of encounters because it takes for granted a one-way form of power-assimilation. Stephen Silliman argues about this tendency of historical analysis: “We are still haunted by the ghosts of colonialism and acculturation studies with the notion that only “the natives” can change. Admitting colonizer hybridity is tantamount to disassembling realities and questioning authority; it is dangerous for many who guard the scientific tenets of the field” (Silliman, 2009:19).

The Mesoamerican chronology can be divided into five major periods; the Paleo-indian, the Archaic, the Preclassic, Classic and Postclassic. A “contact phase” was created on the Yucatán peninsula between two important periods, namely the late Postclassic (1100-1544 AC) and the Colonial period (1544-1821). This phase can be described as “in-between”, as it the result of late Postclassic Maya traditions being transformed by the Spanish rule. In combination “it must have created locations – hybrid places in the landscape – where established categories of knowledge were challenged and new perceptions of society and cultural identity were formed” (Varberg, 2008:58). Spanish colonialism was always accompanied by religion, in this case Catholicism, which together with the Spanish Crown had a considerable influence on the decision-making as it was one of the most important institutions of power in Mexico. A quick evangelization was the priority to gain control over indigenous communities and to introduce them into the new colonial order: churches were the material expression required to carry it out. During the contact phase, a new amalgamation of religious ideas were manifested not only in beliefs, but also in material culture recognizable in archaeological data; for example the economic and religious factors that caused an unequal spatial distribution of churches on the Yucatán Peninsula.

When analyzing a map of the Yucatán Peninsula, it is possible to observe a different settlement pattern on the east coast of the state of Quintana Roo compared to the center and north of the peninsula, where most of these buildings were located and even still in use. “The process of missionization was most successful in the north and west of the peninsula...The region to far east and south were more difficult to secure” (Andrews, 1991:357). *Congregaciones* or congregations were a crucial Spanish strategy to set power and control an indigenous population, which together with churches and chapels facilitated the process of evangelization. This colonial system involved forced relocation of small, often scattered, native communities into large permanent settlements, thereby changing the landscape and creating new hybrid social dynamics described by Farriss as; flight, drift, and dispersal (1978). A postcolonial archaeological approach can shed light on questions about the variability of the distributions of churches and chapels in terms of mobility in order to understand the prevalent social interactions at that time.

Churches and chapels are one of the most prominent features of early colonial settlements and represent an important setting for the study of early colonial life and the process of cultural transformations. “As many of the surviving chapels and churches lie on the frontiers of the Spanish domain, they also provide a context for examining the tensions that accompanied the syncretism process, the dynamic of cultural interaction on the frontiers, and the nature of tenuous European control over the native Maya” (Andrews, 1991:356). They represent the European idea of closed spaces in which religious ceremonies took place. On the other hand, Maya dwellings are a clear example of the architectural influence that determined the construction of churches. Their plans and building materials have not changed since prehispanic times, making them possible to identify in Spanish churches. In addition, the indigenous conception of open spaces for rituals and ceremonies, and the European closed spaces were determinant in the emergence of the Mexican *atrio* and open-air churches. There is, however, a lack of information about early colonial churches on the Yucatán Peninsula, and Mexico in general. The archaeological interest in prehispanic sites has been the main concern for the Mexican government, which has overshadowed the archaeological works of the Colonial period.

Written sources and colonial maps provide direct evidence of social dynamics created by the Spanish policies. Such sources, however, are sometimes characterized by certain subjective information. They can represent problems not only in their elaboration –mentioning some aspects and ignoring others– but also in their subsequent interpretations. This is why “most archaeologists retain the expectation that sufficient winnowing of the documents will yield more precise references to site location than are usually forthcoming” (Pendergast et al., 1993:60). The use of postcolonial theories in historical archaeology allows us to not only question the role of archaeology and its relation to material remains of human activities, but also as an analytical mode of written sources. Their analysis shows that any historic narrative is by itself an unclear matter that needs to be read in counter flow, showing what texts are hiding or altering. Kathleen Deagan argues: “For archaeologists, the meaning of hybrid material culture relies on context: the social contexts of production and use as they are revealed in the archaeological contexts of deposit (and in historical archaeology, in the historical context of documentation)” (Deagan, 2013:264). This is

important to consider when working with written sources as it makes it easier to interpret the information, in this case about colonial chapels and churches. It is also important for the correct understanding of settlements and churches not yet located, for example the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church in Espiritu Santo Bay on the coast of Quintana Roo, mentioned by Andrews (2001:26) and Jones (1989:195-96).

From the theoretical perspective of hybridity, identity is an inevitable part of colonial encounters as a process of change and negotiation. Thus, the result of colonialism in Mexico is not only visible in material culture like religious architecture, but also as a hybrid identity. During the colonial encounter in Mexico, the “invention” of the social category *Indio* established cultural differences in terms of race in the new social order (see Bonfil 2008, Mignolo 2005, O’Gorman 1958). This word-concept placed the indigenous people at the lowest level in society, becoming a justified reason to colonize them. At the same time, colonial contact produced a genetic mixture between them and the Europeans, giving rise to the emergence of a *castas* system with four major hierarchical categories: Spanish, *criollo*, *mestizo*, *indio*, and one additional category which has been forgotten and ignored by history: the black people (Burkholder & Johnson, 2010:209-223).

For over 300 years, Mexico experienced a colonial process which is today possible to observe manifested in its material culture and identity. Thus, Mexico provides a good opportunity to use postcolonial theories to expand these fields of study in historical archaeology. Mexico is made of cultural encounters and material creativity allowing it to be reinterpreted in a multidirectional approach, leaving behind acculturative and Eurocentric models. From the postcolonial perspective, Western history is incomplete and unfair. Incomplete because it has shown only one version of the historical events; the version of those who have the power; the version of the winners. Unfair because historically the defeated (indigenous, subaltern, marginalized, and so on) have been omitted from colonial discourse denying them their right to talk and to tell their version of the history (e.g. Spivak, 1994). Bonfil Batalla argues that the indigenous history has been ignored, misplaced, or even deformed in order to fit the dominant group necessities (1992:166). If we pay attention to the contents of the Western history, we will see that it is made up of wars, revolutions and social changes that imply fights, conflict and dominant power between groups resulting in winners and the defeated.

Mexico is a clear example of this yet-to-be-made-history in which the indigenous people have not had a voice for more than five hundred years. History is not just wars, revolutions, independences and social crisis: this is just a one-way form of understanding. Instead, it is an interlinked *continuum* of events that creates social transformation and adaptations resulting in hybridity. The history of Mexico (and all history) has to be understood from the history of cultural diversities, about the complexity of social interactions considering the “invisibles” or “silenced” agents around them, not a history of wars with winners and the defeated. This thesis is an attempt to stop focusing on the Aztec or the Maya conquest, independencies, revolutions, or wars as the core of the historical development of Mexico, as the only thing we will obtain is a fragmented and incomplete view of the history.

Aim of study

I will analyze and discuss colonialism and how it has affected the way archaeology interprets the analysis of colonial encounters. I will address material culture and identity in a multidirectional way, recognizing the active influence of the colonized, instead of unilineal and Eurocentric approaches. I will criticize binary and acculturation models used in archaeology to explain colonial encounters proposing the use of the terms hybridization and third space instead. In so doing, I aim to give an interpretation of the religious architecture in Spanish churches and their hybrid relation with Maya dwellings on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize. Finally, and to complement the issue of colonial churches, explorations in Espiritu Santo Bay are aimed at understanding the impact of religion and the establishment of *congregaciones*, which generated the creation of small settlements of runaways in the region, such as the site Kachambay and its church founded in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

My core formulations will focus on:

- The analysis of the colonial burden in the archaeological discourse from a postcolonial perspective, proposing an alternative model in order to address colonial encounters.

- Reasons and advantages in using the terms hybridity and third space when analyzing material culture in colonial contexts.
- The hybrid material culture observable in the colonial landscape.
- Colonial churches and Maya dwellings as examples of hybrid practices in colonial encounters

Method

The postcolonial concepts of hybridity and third space will be the theoretical framework for analyzing material changes and cultural interactions between the indigenous Maya and Spanish. I will start from the general to the particular. From a postcolonial perspective, I will start analyzing colonialism, and how it has influenced the development of disciplines such as anthropology and archaeology. I will show some examples of the way the archaeology still carries colonial baggage, instead proposing a postcolonial alternative which breaks away from Eurocentric and unilateral explanatory models. I aim to present how archaeology can integrate a more encompassed approach to colonial encounters in its methodology. In so doing, the analysis of churches on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize will be an attempt to present all the constitutive parts in the colonial encounter; the colony, the metropole, and the host society; in this case the indigenous Mayas and their dwellings. In the discussion of the colonial baggage in archaeology, I will focus on the colonial discourse that is found in it; that is, how colonial encounters have been created by ignoring the impact of the “Other” in the colonizer culture. My argument is that any archaeological work that deals with colonial encounters using postcolonial concepts like hybridization or third space, should consider the host society as an integral and complementary part in the creation of material cultural.

This thesis seeks to encompass three major aspects proposed by Matthew Liebmann (2008) to articulate postcolonial theories and archaeology: 1) interpretative, in the investigation of the past episodes of colonization and colonialism through the archaeological record; 2) historically, in the study of archaeology’s role in the construction and deconstruction of colonial discourses; and 3) methodologically, as an aid to the decolonization of the

discipline and a guide for the ethical practice of contemporary archaeology (2008:4). An analysis of colonial encounters from this perspective can shed light on a more encompassed interpretation of the history allowing the use of the term hybridity to rethink colonial discourse.

Without denying the dominant power of the colonizer over the colonized, the concepts of hybridity and third space allow us to analyze both colonized and colonizer in an ambivalent relationship in which the colonizer's culture changed and adopted traits of the colonized. The colonizer is no longer an omnipotent and immutable being, but mutable and susceptible to external influences. In order to address this fact, I will use the comparative method to analyze and criticize three theoretical models used in archaeology and anthropology like acculturation, transculturation and sincretism. I will discuss why they are ambiguous and short-ranged models showing only one side of colonial discourse. In this work, colonial discourse should be seen as a complex cultural process of social, reciprocal, and symbolic relationships rather than a unilineal relationship between domination and resistance, in which the colonized turns into a simple receptor of cultural influences. After the colonial contact on the Yucatán Peninsula, new social categories and interactions were created which cannot be reduced to groups of colonizer or colonized separately. Because of its ambivalent nature, all the features in colonial discourse can hybridize. A postcolonial approach in this thesis will be to consider the general view of the colonizer, the colonized, and the metropole in terms of the practical engagement and interrelationship between them, instead of a monolithic view. The term hybridity has been the cause of criticism by scholars, not least because its biological origins seem contradictory with the postcolonial assumption of the creation of something "new", and the lack of clarity behind what archaeologists mean with the term (Silliman, 2013:493). Despite this and many others critiques, when the term hybridity is clearly defined for its purpose of use, it can be an alternative to the Eurocentric and binary models when representing a colonial situation.

Mexico's history can be understood as the result of a military and spiritual conquest. If religion was one of the most important ideological institutions of conversion, then the construction of churches and chapels was the ultimate form of exercising control and power over the host society. In order to address the mixture between the prehispanic and European elements, the

concepts of hybridity and third space are used in the analysis of early churches and their variants, such as the open-air churches and their symbolic relation to the *atrios*. In addition, and based on previous studies, eight churches on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize will be used in a comparative analysis between prehispanic and contemporary Maya dwellings, and the religious architectural styles in terms of hybridization. This method will describe similarity and difference in order to obtain information about the possible hybrid changes that churches may contain in relation to their architectural attributes, and the information about Maya dwellings in archaeological and ethnohistorical contexts.

Because colonial churches and chapels are scattered all over the peninsula, it is important to make a distinction between them for a better understanding of the aim. Because there are thousands of them, I have divided these buildings in two groups: those that are still in use, such as cathedrals, for example in Mérida, Valladolid, Izamal, and many other churches that, due their continued use became convents. The second group is composed by churches that were abandoned at a specific time and following different circumstances such as migrations, or warfare like the War of Castas in Quintana Roo (Escalona Ramos, 1943:17), and which are today in ruins and require archaeological explorations and excavations to identify them. The latter are the aim of this study. Based on the limited but well documented archaeological works, the churches and chapels chosen are: Pocboc in Campeche; Dzibilchaltún and Tecoh in Yucatán; Tancah, Xcaret and Ecab in Quintana Roo, and Tipú and Lamanai (hereafter YDL¹ I) in Belize. As a part of the fieldwork, three explorations in Espiritu Santo Bay were completed to shed light on material evidence resulting from the *congregaciones* policy in this region. Because there is no previous information about the area of exploration, the methodology was based on surveys without any kind of intensive or extensive excavation with the exception of some test pits. The aim was to record any material evidence such as architecture or artifacts on the surface that could give information about new sites. At the same time, the aim was the possible location of the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church, or Kanchabay. Because the area of study is

1. Yglesia de Lamanai I. There is another colonial church in Lamanai called YDL II

located in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, permission to explore the area was requested from the Director of the Reserve (CONANP). At the same time, the Regional Center INAH in the state of Quintana Roo was also contacted for permission.

Previous research

Studies of colonial encounters have been debated in archaeology with different methodological frameworks. Scholars have analyzed the interrelationships between groups in the colonial situation (e.g. van Dommelen, 2011, Rowlands, 1998a, Gosden, 2004). As mentioned earlier, the archaeological works based on postcolonial theories have mostly been focused in the Mediterranean analyzing colonial settlements in Antiquity (e.g. Lyons and Papadopoulos, 2002b, van Dommelen, 2002, van Dommelen, 1997, Webster, 2001, Webster, 1997, Dominguez, 2002). In the Americas, there are works of scholars that have focused on Western colonization and its impact on the indigenous societies (e.g. Deagan, 2013, Deagan, 1983b, Liebmann, 2013, Klaus, 2013), and in a more current situation postcolonial theories have been used in relation with indigenous rights and decolonization (e.g. Atalay, 2006, McGuire, 2004, Pagán and Rodriguez, 2008, Zimmerman, 2005). Postcolonial archaeology has taken place in many other parts of the world such as India (e.g. Rizvi, 2006, Chattopadhyay, 2000) or in Australia and Asia (Smith and Jackson, 2006, Davidson et al., 1995, Kato, 2009) just to mention a few examples. There is a long list of books and articles about colonial contact and decolonization of archaeology in which it is possible to observe the importance in breaking Eurocentric approaches to colonialism and the importance of acknowledging the role of indigenous societies in archaeological analysis.

The first studies of colonial churches and chapels on the Yucatán Peninsula were focused on architecture and, to some extent art. The first of these was carried out in the thirties with Justino Fernandez's *Catálogo de Construcciones Religiosas del Estado de Yucatán* published in 1945. The work of Miguel Bretos *Arquitectura y Arte Sacro en Yucatán* (1987) is one of the most complete studies in this topic, as well Juan Artigas' (1983) *Capillas abiertas aisladas de México*. The archaeological studies of this issue started with John L. Stephens in 1843. In 1902 F. de P. Castell reported a church

in Lamanai, Belize- the same one that David Pendergast excavated in 1991. In 1926, the English Thomas Gann reported a church at Oxtankah² and one year later in Dzibanché in southern Quintana Roo. In 1952 Ralph Roy reported and worked with several abandoned sixteenth century churches in Yucatán. In 1955, E. Wyllys Andrews IV located a small early chapel at Xcaret in the state of Quintana Roo. In 1962, William Folan reconstructed the ruins of the colonial church at Dzibilchaltún, Yucatán. In 1979, Antonio Benavides and Anthony P. Andrews excavated the church at Ecab, Quintana Roo, one of the most remarkable early churches on the peninsula. The site of Tancah was excavated by Nancy Farriss and Arthur Miller in the mid-seventies; and between 1988 and 1990, Fernando Cortés headed the restoration at Tamalcab and Oxtankah. At the beginning of the nineties two major projects were done: Maria José Con and Craig Hanson excavated the church at Xcaret and Luis Millet conducted the survey of the site at Tecoh.

Another archaeological work that is important to mention, and which is related to early colonial churches in the Maya area, was made by the New World Archaeological Foundation in Chiapas with the “Coxoh Colonial Project” in the mid-seventies (Lee and Markman, 1979, Lee and Hayden, 1988, Lee, 1996). Although the aim of this project was never based on postcolonial approaches nor on hybrid terms, its aim was to observe cultural changes in material culture within Coxoh societies during the Early Colonial period. As Lee comments, “The immediate objective of the Coxoh Ethnoarchaeological Project was to provide a data base for interpreting the functions, activities, and social contexts of early Colonial Coxoh Maya archaeological remains, using the direct historical approach” (Lee and Hayden, 1988:1). The aim of the project was to analyze household units and the material and feature variations with a focus on the possible social and economic repercussions. Six towns were chosen for this project: Aquespala, Escuintenango, Coneta, Coapa, Comitán, and Zapaluta (ibid: 6). The results of the project show the way the Coxoh communities adapted Spanish influence in their way of life, analyzing aspects like community patterns, artifacts, architecture and burial patterns.

2. The former iglesia “San Miguel” described by Raymond E. Merwin in 1912, which was later renamed “La Iglesia” by Alberto Escalona Ramos in 1937.

Belize was also the place of two important Early Colonial period works. The first was the “Lamanai archaeological project” directed by David Pendergast from 1974 to 1986, during this period the site’s occupation history was dated from about 1,500 B.C. through to the Spanish conquest, and on to the British colonial and modern period (Pendergast, 1981, Pendergast et al., 1993, Pendergast, 1993). In the beginning, Lamanai was an *encomienda* town in which two churches were constructed: -YDL I and YDL II. The second work is the “Macal-Tipú project” in western Belize, which was an opportunity to combine ethnohistorical and archaeological perspectives to give a better approach to the interactions between Spanish and indigenous Maya in a colonial frontier context (Graham et al., 1985, Graham, 1991). Nowadays the site Negroman-Tipú has a Spanish church, established as early as 1544, which revealed a total of 180 burials found beneath the church floor and outside the nave when it was excavated (Graham, 1985:211).

The comparative analysis of colonial churches and the explorative works carried out were based on these main works with the intent of contributing to the poor knowledge of them. As mentioned earlier, the archaeological works of the first hundred years (and in general the Colonial period) after the conquest of Mexico are still in their infancy due to the few studies done to date. Graham comments that:

“Historic-sites archaeology in Yucatan remains sadly underdeveloped. This is partly because archaeological resources are limited and focused on pre-Columbian remains, and partly because archaeologists have traditionally left historical research to ethnohistorians and historians. Where projects have been carried out, they have been concerned with colonial architecture and its restoration, and reporting is generally descriptive and superficial” (Graham, 1998:49).

The lack of information about cultural interactions during the contact period is evident and more archaeological works need to be done to shed light on the social transformations of the early colonial way of life on the Yucatán Peninsula. Currently over 30 churches and chapels³ have been located and identified, but only a handful have been excavated (see Andrews 1991).

3. Of the type of churches that were abandoned.

CHAPTER TWO

COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Commonly, colonialism has been seen as a monolithic process that works with equal circumstances in any time and space (see Liebmann, 2008, Gasco, 2005, Gosden, 2001, Stoler and Copper, 1997). This wrong and limited conception is the reason behind the poor understanding of colonial encounters. As Comaroff suggests, “colonialism, as an object of historical anthropology, has reached a moment of new reckoning” (Comaroff, 1997:662). In this chapter, colonialism will be addressed in order to analyze its differences and the impact that it has had in archaeology. The aim is to present an approach that I hope contributes to a rethinking of colonialism and archaeology when addressing social encounters from a postcolonial perspective. A comparative study of colonies, colonization, and colonialism are presented in order to understand its influence in the development of archaeology as a discipline of Western knowledge. In order to propose a postcolonial archaeological study of architectural features such as the early churches and open-air religious architecture in Mexico, it is important to start with an analysis of colonial discourse sometimes inherent in archaeology, criticizing and proposing an alternative model. This is a problem that in an unconscious way, the archaeologist does not question very often. This is why a discussion is dedicated in this chapter about colonialism in archaeology and its decolonization without pretending that it is the main aim of this work, merely the first step towards a further analysis of material culture taking into account the indigenous societies in the colonial discourse.

White Power, White Desire, and the invention of the Other

The legitimacy of colonialism has been a longstanding concern for political and cultural philosophers in the Western tradition. Since the Crusades and the conquest of the Americas, political theorists have struggled with the difficulty of reconciling ideas about justice and natural law with the practice of European sovereignty over non-Western societies. In the nineteenth century, the tension between liberal thought and colonial practice became particularly serious. Paradoxically, while the Enlightenment's universalism and espousal of sameness had brought with it a doctrine of human equality, the nineteenth century, apparently with less Eurocentric relativism and recognition of human differences, engendered a theory and practice of human inequality (Eriksson 2002:67). The emergence of Social Darwinism in the nineteenth century contributed to one of the most devastating concepts: "race". This word-concept was used to differentiate cultures in terms of superiority and inferiority, as Mignolo states, "race is not a question of color or pure blood but of categorizing individuals according to their level of similarity/proximity to an assumed model of ideal humanity" (2005a:16). In many ways, this concept was the beginning of the notion of "otherness", a cornerstone in colonial studies which shows the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Hence, race became one of the best reasons to colonize. One way to justify the colonial presence in the rest of the world was the "civilizing mission" argument (van Dommelen, 2005:110, Ahmed, 1973:261, Gibson, 1964:98, Mignolo, 2005a:xviii), which suggested that a temporary period of political dependence or tutelage was necessary for "uncivilized" societies to advance to the point where they were capable of sustaining liberal institutions and self-government. Although the goal was to make the "uncivilized" into disciplined, productive, and obedient subjects of a bureaucratic state, it raised the question of how civilized these humans would be, and what consequences it would bring. The colonizer became a "protective father" in order to give a supposed welfare to the colonized.⁴

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4. One clear example of this concept is the comments of Karl Marx in "The Future Result of the British Rule in India" (1853): "Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history [...] England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating- the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia". (Quoted in Young, Robert J.C. *White Mythologies. Writing History and the West*. Routledge, London. p.176. Note 4.

Racial theory cannot be separated from its own historical moment; it was developed in a particular era of British and European colonial expansionism in the nineteenth century, which ended in the Western occupation of large part of the planet. From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, the cultural ideology of race became so dominant that racial superiority even took over from economic gain or Christian missionary work in justifying the idea of an empire. Marvin Harris points out that during this period most areas of culture were, implicitly or explicitly, defined academically in racial categories that themselves echoed and mimicked the methods according to which academics divided up and classified the world (1968:80).

Racial theories, validated and “proven” by various forms of science such as historical philology, anatomy, anthropometry, became endemic not just to other forms of science, such as biology and natural history - to say nothing of paleontology, psychology, zoology, but it was also used as a general category of understanding, which extended to theories of anthropology, archaeology, ethnology, geography, geology and many others (Young, 1995:93). In short, race became the base of human culture and history: indeed, it is arguable that race became the common principle of academic knowledge in the nineteenth century (ibid). However, the concept of race in terms of “otherness” it’s not just a social phenomenon related exclusively to European colonial expansionism in the nineteenth century. It is a phenomenon related to expansionism and colonialism, regardless of time and space.

In their colonizing campaigns, the Romans differed themselves from the “barbarians” of the north (Germania) considering them to be socially and culturally primitive and irrational; “two legged animals” (Wolfram, 1997:6). It is important to notice how the concept of barbarian and the successive foundation of racism were developed, using the Greeks and their model of “civilization” as the starting point to judge and sentence the rest of the inhabitants of Europe. It was based first on the idea of the *Ecumene* or *oikuméne* (O’Gorman, 1958:68, Pagden, 1982:16), that is, the Greek concept of the world as a closed world, “access to which was, in reality only by accident of birth; but for the Greeks, for whom birth could never be a matter of accident, it was also a superior world, the only world, indeed, in which it was possible to be truly human” (Pagden: 1982:16). From this perspective, everything that could not be possible to include in the *Ecumene* was barbarian or uncivilized. In this sense, the barbarian was merely a “babbler”, someone who could

not speak Greek. This factor, and the ability to make civil societies (*polis*) represented by cities, were elements that distinguished mankind from animals. To be civilized –Young argues - meant to be a citizen of the city, as opposed to the savage (wild man) outside, or the more distant barbarian roaming in the lands beyond (1995:31). The term savage has had different connotations throughout time, in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. the word meant “foreigner”, whereas, as Pagden argues, in the fourth century the world had become, and was forever to remain, used only to distinguish cultural or mental inferiors (1982:16). It was during the Middle Ages and Early Modern Europe when Christianity controlled the entire society that the foundations were laid for classifying races based on religious differences. In this way, Christian identity was constructed in opposition to Islam, Judaism or heathenism and was reinforced with the concept of *lavado de sangre* or “purity of blood” (see Martinez, 2004, Proctor III, 2010, Burkholder and Johnson, 2010).

Even though the idea of race is a superseded concept, racist assumptions remained fundamental to the knowledge of the Western sense of the “self.” Western culture has always been defined against the limits of others, and culture has always been thought of as a form of cultural difference. “Orientalism” (1978) is an example of the dynamic of these binary cultural differences. In his book, Edward Said explains how the West and the East are discursively constructed as each other’s opposites, while the East is represented as primitive, infantile, weak and dirty, the West is represented as developed, clean, masculine, strong and democratic. This gives the West a reason to justify its presence in the East for purposes of “social improvement”. This social act largely represents colonialism, and depending on the circumstances imperialism. From this point of view, the East is judged and justified by a comparison with the West. In colonial discourse the existence of the “other” is essential to place the “self”, which leads to the creation of a binary system through a dialectical process between “self-colonizer” and the “other-colonized”, in which the identity of the former is linked to the otherness of the latter. We can address the term colonial discourse as an ‘apparatus of power,’ as argued by Homi Bhabha:

“The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerative type on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (1996:92).

Colonial key concepts:

Colonies and colonialism have emerged as an important focus for converging lines of research by social anthropologists, ethnohistorians, and archaeologists. This is entirely appropriate, since colonialism has played a crucial role in shaping the complex societies and enduring structures of political economies in both the ancient and modern worlds (e.g. Asad, 1973, Balandier, 1970, Fanon, 1963, Gosden, 2004, Lyons and Papadopoulos, 2002b, Given, 2004, Memmi, 1974). However, defining these terms can be difficult and entangled, drawing similar explanations with different words, or using the terms arbitrarily in any kind of temporality.

Some definitions of colony are:

Colony:

- an area that is controlled by or belongs to a country and is usually far away from it; a group of people sent by a country to live in such a colony; a group of plants or animals living or growing in one place (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).
- Any nonself-governing territory subject to the jurisdiction of a usually distant country. The term is also applied to a group of nationals who settle in a foreign country or territory but retain political or cultural connections with their parent state (Columbia Encyclopedia).
- Country or area under the full or partial political control of another country and occupied by settlers from that country (Oxford Dictionary).
- A group of emigrants or their descendants who settle in a distant territory but remain subject to or closely associated with the parent country. A territory thus settled (American Heritage Dictionary).

In analyzing the origin of the word, some differences in terms of meaning stand out: colony in Greek is *apoikia* and means “away from home”, but in Latin *Colonus* means farmer. These original meanings of colony do not carry

the overtones of conquest and/or political domination associated with the current meaning of colony (van Dommelen, 2005:110). This means that a colony does not necessarily represent some kind of economic or political hegemony over a host society. Even more, a colony can be located in a place without a host society inhabiting the region. Thus, colonization can be the act of foreigners settling and creating colonies either with previous societies or without them. The term colonization has been used in archaeology instead of colonialism as an attempt to describe more clearly the movements and settlements of people. However, the term lacks accuracy when defining basic aspects in any colonial situation, as Rowlands explains, “Colonisation has been used to refer to both territorial and commercial incentives but has proved vague and elusive in detailing the relationship homeland and diasporic communities and between colonizers and colonized” (Rowlands, 1998:327). Micheal Dietler argues that colonies “encompasses the Greek term *apoikia* and the Latin *Colonia* (both originally implied the founding of a settlement in foreign territory, but with quite different relations of dependency within different structurations of the political economy” (Dietler, 2005:54). van Dommelen points this out as well: “While the Latin term *colonia* denotes a settlement deliberately established elsewhere, which is admittedly akin to modern usage, its Greek equivalent *apoikia* literally means “away from home”. Neither of these terms implies violent occupation or exploitation of the region involved –although they do not exclude it either” (van Dommelen, 2002:121).

On the other hand, the term colonialism in archaeology has been identified as a practice of domination which involves the subjugation of one people to another, or “the establishment and maintenance, for an extended time, of rule over an alien people that is separate from and subordinate to the ruling power” (Stain 2202:28). van Dommelen defines it as: “the presence of one or more groups of foreign people in a region at some distance from their place of origin (the “colonizers”) and the existence of asymmetrical socio-economic relationships of domination or exploitation between the colonizing groups and the inhabitants of the colonized region” (1997:306). One of the difficulties in defining colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism. Frequently the two concepts are treated as synonyms. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory. The etymology of the two

terms, however, provides some clues about how they differ. Thus, the root of colony reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of a population into a new territory, where the new arrivals lived as permanent settlers maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin. In contrast, imperialism (from the Latin term *imperium -emporium* in Greek) means an “ideology or discourse that motivates and legitimizes practices of expansionary domination by one society over another” (Dietler 2005:53). Thus, the term imperialism draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control. One characteristic associated to colonialism is the phenomenon of migration; in imperialism there is no place for migration, but a clear and defined target which is to be invaded in order to exert dominant control over another group, most of the times with violence. Some definitions of colonialism are:

Colonialism:

- Colonialism is the establishment and maintenance, for an extended time, of rule over an alien people that are separate from and subordinate to the ruling power (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences).
- A political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world (Britannica Encyclopedia).
- The policy and practice of a strong power extending its control territorially over a weaker nation or people (Oxford Dictionary).
- The state or quality of, or the relationship involved in, being colonial. A custom, idea, feature of government, or the like, characteristic of a colony. The colonial system or policy in political government or extension of territory (Webster’s Dictionary).

A distinction between colonialism and *Western* colonialism is important in order to better understand the terms. The latter is characterized by a

political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world. This kind of colonialism is commonly associated with the Age of Discovery in 1492, and the rise of the capitalism driven by major European powers and their colonial policies in America, Africa, and Asia (Lightfoot, 2005:208). It is more often assumed to have been an attribute of late nineteenth century imperialism with a main purpose of economic exploitation of the colony's natural resources, the creation of new markets for the colonizer, and the extension of the colonizer's way of life beyond its national borders. In the sixteenth century, colonialism changed decisively due to the technological developments in navigation for example, which allowed more remote parts of the world to be reached. Fast sailing ships made it possible to reach distant ports and to sustain close ties between the center and the colonies. Hence, the modern European colonial project emerged when it became possible to move large numbers of people across the ocean and maintain political sovereignty in spite of geographical dispersion. On the other hand, colonialism by itself is not a 500 year old phenomenon. As Gosden has argued, prior to modern colonialism, shared cultural values provided the social space for people to expand into and move around in, on those occasions when material culture takes on shared aesthetics or commensal values (2004:4).

In general, it is possible to observe that the establishment of colonies is a process uniquely representative of complex societies –almost exclusively in states and empires where:

1. States function at a large scale and have a higher demand for goods.
2. States have the degree of economic specialization and “organizational technology” to carry out the large-scale movements of people and materials involved in the process of colonization.
3. Only states would have the large standing armies necessary to establish and maintain long-term garrisons (warfare).

4. It is necessary to have the corporate structure of a colony when dealing with host communities that are in themselves complex societies (Stein, 2005:12).

Colonialism in this way is a far-reaching concept, emphasizing the systematic relationship between colonizer and colonized and extending, therefore, the core of the analysis by not just focusing on the colonized groups, but by opening up to a more inclusive reality called the “colonial situation” (Balandier, 1970). The concept of colonialism is difficult to define and is sometimes an entangled way to explain social relationships mostly based on power relations, economic development and brutal human exploitation. A problem lies in the fact that colonialism is considered in terms of a binary system: colonizer-colonized, center-periphery. As Stein argues:

“connection of colonialism with the experience of the last four centuries of capitalist expansion makes it virtually impossible to apply this concept to the integral interaction system of ancient, non-Western, or precapitalist societies without incorporating a whole set of a priori assumptions about inherently unequal power relationships derived from European domination over Asia, Africa, and the Americas” (2002:28-29).

The tendency in explaining colonial encounters with binary models is based on unidirectional power relationships between the two actors as in the case of world-system theory, and/or with acculturative models. Colonialism has many definitions, most of the time focusing only on the impact of the colonizer in the host society in terms of power relationships. To some extent this idea is right, considering the inhumane treatment exercised by the Western societies over the colonized societies.

World history is full of examples of societies that gradually expanded by incorporating adjacent territory and settling their people in the newly conquered areas. Colonialism, then, is not restricted to a specific time or place. An unfortunate aspect of much of the recent literature on colonialism, however, is the reinforcement of the notion that colonialism is a uniquely European phenomenon (Gasco, 2005:70). In the Mediterranean the ancient Greeks set up colonies, just as the Romans or Phoenicians did (van

Dommelen, 1997, Dominguez, 2002, Webster, 2001). Although they settled in host societies, the determinant factor was the absence of an economic and exploitative development, just like after 1492. An example of pre-capitalist or non-Western colonial networks is the Aztec model of colonialism in Mesoamerica. The Aztecs had dominant control over the Basin of Mexico, part of the south pacific coast and the south coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Their control over other indigenous groups is unquestionable and despite sometimes being called the Aztec Empire, the nature of the Aztec colonialism, particularly the term “empire” has been debated (Smith and Berdan, 1992:354, Gosden, 2004:72). Whether an empire or not, it is interesting to analyze the dominant system of this group in relation with the dominated groups. The Aztec expansionist model was based on a complex system of warfare and tribute, both economically justified. The state operated through demanding and receiving tribute and service from the dominated and conquered (Evans, 2004:470, Smith and Berdan, 1992:355). This tribute system or taxation was developed with the creation of small numbers of garrisons and depositories for tribute and seldom relocation of a conquered population. These garrisons demanded the mobility of people (Aztecs) to places located far away from their home (Mexico-Tenochtitlán). This movement of people gave rise to Aztec settlements or colonies, which in accordance with the definitions presented above were in perpetual contact with the main city or metropolis. The military organization led to the Basin of Mexico falling under their control between 1428 and 1438. There were subsequent campaigns to subdue a large area of Veracruz in the Gulf of Mexico, and a second wave of conquest after 1486 took them further into Oaxaca and the southern Maya area conquering the Soconusco, in the state of Chiapas; one of the richest and productive regions, especially as a producer of cacao (Gasco, 2003:50).

Each cultural region, however, has its particular historical circumstances. We must remember that the European expansion into the Americas certainly differed from other colonial situations because unique factors such as: 1) the tremendous development of Western economy and the technological differences between the Europeans and indigenous people; 2) the huge vulnerability of the indigenous people to new European diseases; and 3) the vast difference in cultural traditions and religious ideologies between the European and the indigenous people. These factors, especially the emergence of capitalism, make it practically impossible to equate European

colonialism from the sixteenth-century with pre-capitalist or non-Western societies as stated by Stein (2002:28).

The Mesoamerican model of colonialism represented by the Aztecs differs considerably from the Western model. Some of the features that lack the economic connotations inherent in the common definition of the term are that Aztec colonialism did not have the intention of imposing its language (Nahuatl) on the subjugated groups, as the Spanish did in order to convert and control the society. The Aztec concept of “otherness” lacked the sense of inferiority found in the European version with the word “*Indio*”, a concept invented by the Europeans - an “imagined” category (Bonfil, 1992:30, Mignolo, 2005a:6). By contrast, the Mesoamerican colonialism allowed a continuation of the ways of life of the dominated groups, as well as the religious beliefs, governments, and language, without it being necessary to impose new rules. As Bonfil Batalla argues, it was not necessary to eliminate or exclude these factors, everything was compatible with the system and purpose of the Aztec domination (Bonfil, 2008:30). This is an important characteristic between non-Western and Western colonialism where, as Rowland states, in the former there are no “overtones of racial contempt toward the “other” (1998a:329).

Colonialism and postcolonialism in the Americas

The colonial process in the Americas, particularly in Mexico, was determined largely by the historical context in which Europe, and Spain in this case, was immersed, such as the philosophical principles that ruled the society and religion. The term “modernity” as a synonym of colonialism brings a wide perspective of the European trade development, which in turn triggered the emergence of the capitalist system in the world. Latin American scholars such as Eduardo Mendieta, Néstor García Canclini, Walter Mignolo and some decades ago, Leopoldo Zea, Edmundo O’Gorman and Darcy Ribeiro, among others, have already established Latin America’s postcolonial principles.

The Latin American culture seems to appear and disappear, it is a clash and reconstruction of cultures, its expression is at the same time a hybrid re-creation of cultural values. Although the common idea of the “discovery” of America was in 1492 by Christopher Columbus, America was created or



Figure 1. America. A personification, source: <http://publicdomainreview.org/collections/america-a-personification-ca-1590/>

invented more than discovered. This was analyzed 50 years ago by Edmundo O’Gorman in his book *La invención de América* (1958).

The new continent was born of an “image” projected from Europe which sought to give rise to modernity. A modernity based on economic development, which in turn laid the foundation for the development of Western colonialism in the sixteenth century. In this projection and error, a utopia was developed along with the “civilizing process” that articulated a different and complex cultural synthesis with a contradictory system of exploitation and domination. For the Europeans, this cultural encounter motivated the materialization of one of the signs of modernity, whereas for the new Latin American reality, a painful fusion occurred which is still visible after five centuries of history. The discovery and conquest created colonial hierarchical societies like *indios*, *mestizos*, *criollos*, which served the Spanish king and the Church for over three centuries, creating and keeping

5. The Invention of America

a structure of dominion. With independence from the colonies, its essence somehow remained in the continent. (Fig. 1)

Darcy Ribeiro (1977) divided the historic development of Latin America into four moments over five hundred years, that is; a) the extermination and deculturation during the conquest; b) the colonial period with three hundred years of hegemony of the dominant culture with the presence of “survivals” of those defeated cultures; c) the period of modernization started with the independence of the colonies and was characterized by emancipationist projects in the creation of the new nations with a big nationalist burden of identity, which in turn, was a process of liberation. After the Second World War and with the global hegemony of the United States, Latin America started a fourth period of expectation and doubt which is still present today. This has been a period of economic impositions and dependence on global economies and the movement of people (Ribeiro, 1977:175).

The historical context in Europe during the sixteenth century is fundamental to understanding how America was not discovered but “invented” or created. O’Gorman’s *La Invención de América* is a book with a high de-colonialist baggage in which he questions the myth of the “discovery” with an analysis of the Eurocentric frame that characterizes the historical narrative. His book is an attempt to rebuild the history; not the “discovery” but the “idea” that America was discovered. The book is a turning point that questions the European narrative and its way of creating history. As we already know, the world image before 1492 was completely different from today. To the ancient Greeks, the *Ecumene* was the concept of the world; the known and habitable world, the adobe of men, their address in the universe whose geographical boundaries were conceived in spiritual terms (O’Gorman; 1958:68). During the Middle Ages the concept of *Ecumene* was not superseded at all, and Christianity incorporated some elements of the Old Testament to adapt it to the world. In the beginning –Mignolo argues– the world was divided into three parts, Europe, Asia, and Africa. It was not just a simple partition of land (*orbis terrarum*), but an internal conception of the whole universe and the laws of God in Earth (Mignolo (2005:27).

This tripartite notion was strongly related to the Western Christian idea of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost), in which, according to the Genesis I-IX, Jehovah gave land to Noah in order to share it with his three sons: Asia to Shem, Africa to Ham and Europe to Japheth (Lafaye, 2006:80; Mignolo, 2005a:24; O’Gorman, 1958:22). This view was represented by the map called T-in-O map, described in Isidore of Sevilla’ *Etymologiae* and drawn by the Spanish monk Beatus of Liébana (Mignolo, 2005a:23). This map is a representation of the Christian geopolitical conception of the world, a Christian “invention” in which Europe was represented as a symbol of royalty, dominance, religion, and arts, while Asia and Africa were in a lower stadium. In this way Asia represented the exotic with its long ancient history and Africa was conceived with a servile destiny. Thus, America had to be conceptualized to fit into the new world, and because it was considered as something new and uncontaminated, Europe saw the possibility to reflect itself in it. In contrast with Asia and

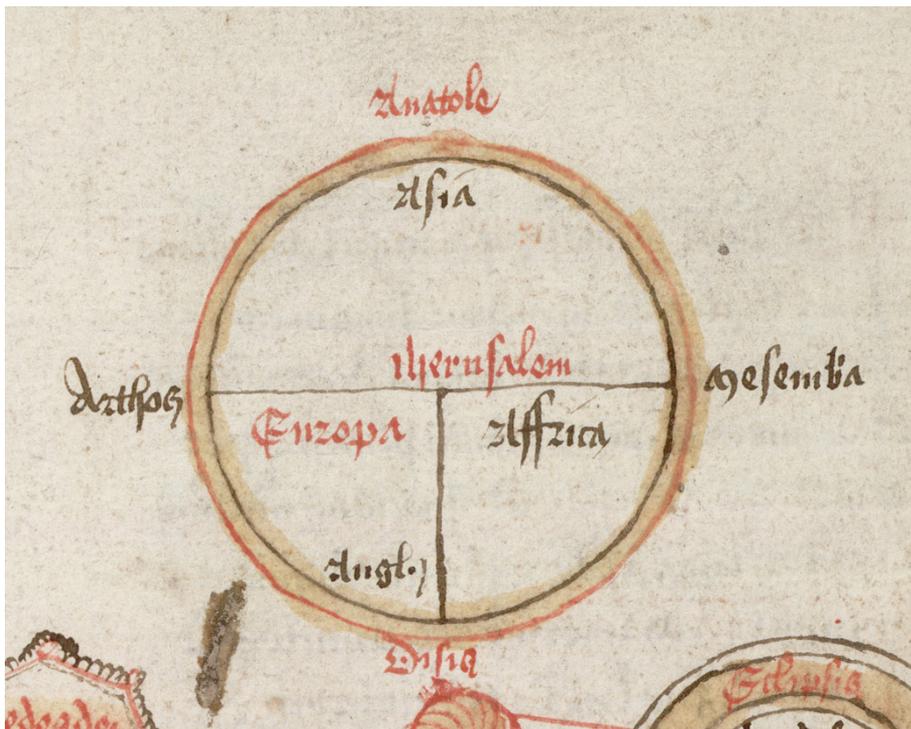


Figure 2. T-in-O map. Source: <https://voynichattacks.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/tomap.png>.

Africa for which a historic conception already existed, America appears as an unknown and pure continent (Fig. 2). Because Europe assumed the role of “world-history-maker”, and because it is considered by itself as representative of the higher stadium in the social evolution of the world, America was conceived as an empty historical world with potentialities to be created in the image and likeness of Europe. In the words of Enrique Dussel: “modernity appears when Europe affirms itself as the center of a World History that it inaugurates; the periphery that surrounds this center is consequently part of its self-definition” (Dussel, 1993:65).

The problem now was the inhabitants of the new world. Any judgment on the “nature” of indigenous people – and this was actually one of the main justifications of conquest – had its origins in an explicative and coherent plan to clarify the structure of the natural world and the behavior of each thing, animate or inanimate. Any poorly conceived attempt to introduce a new element in the plan might have endangered it. Therefore, the problem of the scholastics was not just the necessity to solve a geographical and political paradox -which would have meant responding to the questions raised in terms of the human law (*lex humana*); but since the only solution was a question about the divine law (*lex divina*), the scholastics had to solve ontological problems as well: who or what were those *Indios*, and what was their link with Europe? How could a “new” continent be incorporated into the *orbis terrarum*? Even more problematic was how a fourth element could be included in the Holy Trinity? The solution for the Catholic Church was again the Holy Scriptures, arguing that the fate of Japheth, the son located at the West, was to expand (Mignolo 2005a:34). But where would it expand to? America, of course. This fact allowed the possibility to integrate the new continent in a geographical and religious context without conflict. It was in the minds of the Europeans and creoles or *criollos* that the idea of “America” emerged and took form. When the first generations of European descendants came into power, the creoles appropriated the name of the continent for themselves, calling themselves “Americans” (Mignolo 2005a:21). Ontologically, this suggests that America was a continent inhabited by people of European descent. This conception had a negative side because the indigenous people and the descendants of Africans were left out of the cultural map, which leads us to ask once again. Who are they?

The Spanish and Portuguese claimed a continent for themselves and renamed it at the same time as they began a process of territorial organization and distribution akin to that of their own countries. In 1494 the political tension obligated the creation of a treaty called *Tratado de Tordesillas* (Mignolo, 2005a:30, O’Gorman, 1958:89). The king of Spain, Fernando of Aragón asked for the intervention of Pope Alexander VI to make this treaty in order to share out the conquered territories of the New World between the two countries. The idea was to make a demarcation line from the Arctic to the Antarctic. This line was established at a distance of 370 leagues from the Cape Verde Islands giving the regions that were discovered, or that were going to be discovered by the west, to Spain from the king or the queen of Castile and their heirs. All the lands east of this line were going to be part of Portugal, ruled by the king of Portugal and his successors (Piñeiro, 2006:58). The concepts of “discovery” and “invention” denote different interpretations of the same event. In the former, it shows a Eurocentric perspective of world history described as modernity, while the latter reflects a critical perspective of those who have been placed at the back, trying to create a history in which they have the feeling they do not belong. America is a synonym of modernity and invention being both the self-representation of imperial projects and global designs implemented by Europeans. According to Anibal Quijano: “America se constituyó como el primer espacio/tiempo de un nuevo patrón de poder de vocación mundial y, de ese modo, como la primera identidad de la modernidad”⁶ (Quijano, 2000:202). Scholars like Quijano and Mignolo use the word “coloniality” instead of colonialism and consider it synonymous with “modernity”, creating a dual concept: modernity/coloniality. To these scholars, modernity represents an illusory prosperity and happiness with an idea of a positive present and a promising future (Quijano, 2000, Mignolo, 2005a, Mignolo, 2005b).

When considering the difference between colonialism and coloniality, Mignolo argues that coloniality is a synonym of modernity that “points toward and intent to unveil an embedded logic that forces control, domination, and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation,

6. “America was constituted as the first space/time of a new model of power of global vocation, and in this way it became the first identity of modernity” (Translation by author).

progress, modernization, and being good for everyone” (Mignolo 2005a:6). According to him, the United States is an example of coloniality. Even though the United States does not have the same colonial background as Mexico, it is a consequence of the European expansionism and colonialism. Because of the development of the United States as a country and its economic and political hegemony, especially after the Second World War, the postmodern condition seems to be more directly connected with the United States than the postcolonial situation. Mignolo points out that the colonial legacy found in countries like the United States are more adaptable to the postmodern theories as a result of the capitalist legacy more than the colonialist (Mignolo 1996:4). On the other hand, these scholars consider colonialism to refer to a specific period in time of imperial domination like the Spanish, French, or English.

The thesis of the “invention” leads to the concept of “Occidentalism” (Mignolo 2005a:34), an accurate concept since the Europeans not only named the continent of America, but also *Indias Occidentales* or the West Indies. Occidentalism cannot be compared with Said’s Orientalism at all. Although these two concepts deal with “creation” and “invention”, they differ in meaning and discourse from each other. America and the Orient could not have been conceived without a previous idea of Occidentalism, which according to Said, Europe justified through a comparison and creation of the “other”, that is, the Orient. The term Orientalism somehow refers to a “corporate institution” (Europe) which prevails over an established geography (Orient) that is epistemology and ontologically constituted (Said, 1978:3). This “institution” allows, predicts, demands, and largely forbids and defines literary, aesthetics, legal and geographical statements, which in turn make the Orient available, manageable, and assumable. Orientalism in this sense can be conceived as a mutual representation between the Orient and the Occident. It is difficult to conceive the Occident without the imagined and rejected Orient, in the same way that the Orient cannot be conceived without the presence of the Occident.

When America was “discovered” there was nothing to compare or criticize with because to the Europeans, America was “empty”. If we analyze the T-in-O map, the Orient and Africa have always existed and were already known to the Europeans; in contrast, America emerged as something new. In this sense, and following Mignolo, “Occidentalism

is not a field of study (the enunciated) but a locus of enunciation from which Orientalism becomes a field of study” (2005a:42). It is clear that the “discovery” of America was one of the consequences of modernity in Europe, understanding this as an economic development and capitalism. Occidentalism denotes a locational difference dividing the world into regions and putting Europe at the center of the map. From this location, the rest of world and its history is narrated, created, and invented. This notion established the basis for Eurocentric models based on the notion that there are no civilizations outside of Europe or -Mignolo continues- if there are, like those of Islam, China or Japan, they remain in the past and have had to be brought into the present of Western civilization (ibid: xxiii).

If power was the main and last resource to ensure domination by the Spanish, then religion was its inseparable partner with the role of the clergy and the ecclesiastic hierarchy in controlling the indigenous population. Religion in Spanish Latin America had a colonizing performance sometimes more significant than the military influence, at least until the late eighteenth century. The Spanish conquest of the Americas sparked a theological, political, and ethical debate about the “colonial right” in using indigenous people as slaves as a way to control foreign lands. This debate took place within the framework of a religious discourse that legitimized Europe through the theory that the indigenous people might be slaves *by nature* (Pagden 1982:27). Debates between the jurist and philosopher Juan Gines de Sepulveda and Fray Bartolome de las Casas about the “natural law” of slavery based on Aristotle’s theory took place in Salamanca in 1550. With arguments by Gines de Sepulveda suggesting that the indigenous people were “barbarians” who practiced cannibalism and human sacrifices, and that their enslavement through a conquest process would be necessary to facilitate their conversion and successive “salvation”. The Spanish Crown and the Church explicitly justified their colonial agendas in the Americas in terms of a religious mission, bringing Christianity to the native peoples (see Todorov, 1999:154).

The missions provided the initial impetus for developing a legal doctrine that rationalized the conquest and possession of infidel lands. Whereas the re-conquest of the Iberian Peninsula was initially framed as defensive wars to reclaim Christian lands that had been conquered by non-Christians. “Spiritual conquest” in Mexico played an important role in subsequent attempts to justify the conquest. The conversion of native peoples, however,

did not provide an unproblematic justification for the project of conquest. One of the main philosophical problems of the Crown was the question about what right it had to conquer and enslave the inhabitants of the territories over which they could not provide any prior claims based on history (Pagden 1982:27). The “discovery” and the Spanish conquest of the Americas took place during the Renaissance; this was a period of reforms within politicians, theologians and humanist scholars in order to answer questions like “what is ‘Man’ (Trouillot, 1995:75), which in turn led to the ontological question: what is Indio. The prevalent identity between the different indigenous groups before the arrival of the Spanish was completely erased by the general category of *Indio*. Bonfil Batalla argued that:

“La categoría de indio es supraétnica, es decir, no hace referencia ni da cuenta de la diversidad de pueblos que quedan englobados bajo el rubro de indios, porque la definición misma parte del contraste con el no indio y esa distinción es lo que importa, lo que da sentido al ser indio. Los pueblos concretos, las etnias, son todos indios en tanto se les asigna la posición de colonizados; pero en el nivel étnico se distinguen y particularizan: son nahuas, tojolabales, quechuas o shuar” (Bonfil 1992:59)⁷

Due to this fact, Spaniards like Ginés de Sepúlveda quickly concluded that the habits of indigenous people, from nakedness, to unwillingness to labor, to alleged cannibalism, clearly demonstrated their inability to recognize natural laws (Pagden 1982:119). This account of native customs was used to legitimize the enslavement of indigenous communities, by which the Spanish insisted that this was the only way to teach them civilizing rules, or *policia*, and to introduce them to Christianity (Burkholder and Johnson 2004:73). In this condition, the notion of “otherness” was associated with indigenous people as inferior beings, to the point of questioning their human condition; thus, the main aim of the Spanish was to “take care of

7. “The category of Indio is supraethnic, that is, it does not refer nor give accounts of the diversity of peoples that are included under the category of Indians, because the very definition started from the contrast with the non-Indians and only that definition is valid; it is what gives meaning to be Indian. The indigenous people, the ethnic groups are all Indians so far they are categorized as colonized; but they differ at an ethnic level: they are nahuas, tojolabales, quechuas or shuar” (Translation by author).

the human beings without souls". The ideology that sought to justify the colonization as a crusade of redemption revealed precisely the conviction that the only way to salvation was that created by Western civilization, as Bonfil argues, "La categoría del indio implica desde sus orígenes una definición infamante: denota una condición de inferioridad natural, inapelable, porque en aquel clima ideológico lo "natural" solo podía ser entendido como designio inescrutable de la providencia divina"⁸ (2008:122). The situation in Spain after the re-conquest by the Moors and Jews, and the desire to spread Christianity on the Iberian Peninsula, brought consequences in the Americas and in the colonial policies. The *limpieza de sangre* or "purity of blood" was a social system originally created in Spain with the intention to "make distinctions between Old Christian, marked by their purity of blood, and Jews, Moors, and New Christians (converted Jews and Moors) whose blood was impure on account of the religious infidelity of their ancestors" (Proctor III 2010:41). This system was introduced in Mexico to differentiate "races" in the new colonial social order and to include lineage unconnected to African or indigenous blood lines. Burkholder and Johnson comment that terms such as "infected blood" or "defect of blood" were used in Brazil to identify someone with Jewish or African antecedents and served as the basis for exclusion from elite organizations or marriages into elite families (2004:185).

From the beginning, the New Spain was conceived as a society composed by two social groups: *república de indios* and *repúblicas de españoles* (Cope, 1994:3, Proctor III, 2010:40). Each one was subject to different legal systems that established and codified what their internal life should be and how they should relate to each other. This relationship was not equal, but characterized by a society who considered itself as superior (*república de españoles*) over the "other" (*república de indios*). A culturally intermixed product of the colonial encounter created the *sistema de castas* to catalog the large diversity of social categories, as Proctor III argues "as many as thirty-two different racial categories based on the various mixtures of Spanish, African, and indigenous blood" (Proctor III 2010:40) (Fig. 3). Even though

8. "Since its origins, the category of Indian implies a degrading definition: it denotes a natural condition of inferiority. Inevitable because in the realm of inferiority, the 'natural' can only be understood as an inscrutable plan of the divine providence" (Translation by author).



Figure 3. The emergence of castas in New Spain. Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/2013/images/academy_of_san_carlos/Cabrera-Casta_paintings-1763.jpg

the idea that the color of skin could be the main reference to address the concept of race, in Mexico, this concept - as argued by Burkholder and Johnson- was determined by wealth, lineage, and power or, by poverty and tributary status, rather than biology (2004:183).

Stoler and Cooper argued that, "Racism has never been based on somatics alone, nor is a concern with physiology and biology its "pure" and originary form. It has long depended on hierarchies of civility, on cultural distinctions of breeding, character, and psychological disposition, on the relationship between the hidden essence of race and what we were claimed to be its visual markers"(Stoler and Copper, 1997:34). Undoubtedly, the colonial encounter in Mexico created a new social order based on military actions that began with the conquest. Lafaye suggests, however, that this factor was not unknown to the indigenous people and somehow they were "prepared" to support these actions because of their warlike background (2006:51). The real trauma -he continues- was the collapse of the traditional social organization and the eradication of religious beliefs that were their basis (ibid). The Mesoamerican states, chiefdoms, nobilities and ethnic unities were abolished, and the leaders of the groups eliminated (physically in many cases), that is, priests, military and political leaders (Bonfil 2008:123).

Colonial baggage in archaeology, a matter to rethink

"American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing," wrote Willey and Phillips in *Method and Theory in American Archaeology* in 1952. This affirmation leads us to think about two major aspects; on the one hand, that archaeology cannot be considered as a simple technical tool to excavate, catalogue and to date cultures. On the other hand, and because anthropology emerged within colonialism as a tool to justify the European presence and activities in the colonized world, this statement links archaeology with a colonial past (see Gosden, 1999:16, Given, 2004:165, Rowlands, 1998a:327). As mentioned earlier, the first step in any archaeological work dealing with colonial encounters using postcolonial theories, should be to think about who is going to have a voice in the history and who will not. We should also think whether we are going to focus on unilineal and/or binary systems falling into a Eurocentric approach. The analysis of the

methodology of British and American early anthropology and its relation with colonialism is crucial to understanding the repercussions in the archaeological discourse. "Archaeology is enmeshed with colonialism, not only in the subject of its investigations and methods of practice but also in the visual, cultural, and national representation that it engenders" (Lyons and Papadopoulus, 2002:2).

One of the main problems lies in the methodological framework of the discipline and the positional perspective of *them* and *us*; that is, the classificatory distinction between Western and the non-Western societies studied. Because of its origin, colonialism has rarely been criticized as an object of study by anthropology (e.g. Asad, 1973, Balandier, 1970, Pels, 2008, Smith, 1994, Wolf, 1982). To criticize and analyze colonialism from an anthropological perspective would be a "disloyal" fact since historically, colonialism is the one who maintained and gave support to the development of anthropology. In the case of the British anthropology, Asad argues that colonialism made use of anthropology as an academic profession in order that the Europeans could study non-Western societies for the European audience, and was supported by the emergence of a bourgeois Europe (1973:14-15). Thus, European anthropology might be considered as the "academic" discipline of power that makes sense of the "Otherness", an imaginary being created and *recreated* in the global expansion since 1492. Despite its "academic status", Diane Lewis points out: "he [the anthropologist] provided the information either directly or indirectly and became, thereby, implicated in the process of colonization. He rarely questioned or studied the process of confrontation itself or considered the way this milieu affected his "laboratory conditions" (Lewis, 1973:582). This action would represent a confrontation of anthropology with itself. Peter Pels suggests that.

"the anthropology of colonialism has studied method not so much in terms of "what to do" when doing research, but in terms of the ways in which the invocation of certain methodological principles has contributed to the essentialisation of certain subjects positions and the obscuring of certain historical relationships" (2008:287).

This statement may represent a Eurocentric attitude concerning to the colonial situation leaving behind many aspects in the historical construction based on the Western “self”. Anthropology is a Western history-maker and because it has the power to give or silence the “voice” of the actors in the history, it falls onto the problem of exclusion and subjective determinism. Mignolo states that: “History is an institution that legitimizes the telling of stories of *happenings* simultaneously silencing other stories, as well as stories of the silence in histories” (2005a:29). Pels suggests: “if the ontological tendencies of colonial discourse were mostly meant to define “them”, the epistemological work of “methods” in colonial circumstances was mostly directed at defining “us”- as rational, controlled, “objective” observers” (ibid). In a way, this point of view includes the Saidian dichotomy between the West and the Orient and the Eurocentric approach to the un-colonized world.

In Europe, one of the main methods used in colonialism and in the anthropological discourse was to classify, simply because through classifications it is possible to establish similarities and differences; savage-civilized, literate-illiterate, “Self”-“Other”, prehistory-history, and so on. In the colonial order, the colonizer is the one who set classificatory parameters in order to control and manipulate the colonized. Before the emergence of Darwinian evolution and its biological applications in the social field known as “social Darwinist” (Stocking, 1968:47), the formation of a European identity was crucial to the understanding of the way anthropology was used. In the late eighteenth century, the European society turned its gaze to the rediscovery of the Classic world represented by the Greek as synonymous with a perfect civilization. This ideological shift was supported by the German concept of *Alttertumswissenschaft*, which influenced the European educative system promoting the implementation of Latin and Greek in universities. The Napoleonic campaigns in Egypt came to “represent the awakening for interests in an exotic high civilization which lacked of the vitality of the Greeks” (Gosden 1999:25). It is through this fusion of cultural values, that the European vision of superiority was reinforced by colonialism motivating the location of the “Other” in an inferior position that was the product of classificatory models. This concept is clearly explained by Abdel Ahmed: “Since Europe is the home of civilization it is the mission of the European –who makes this assumption

himself – to lead ‘barbarians’ and ‘savages’ in the rest of the world towards ‘civilization’” (1973:261). Thus, the gap between civilized white, savage, black men, indigenous people, and the need to justify the white man’s imperial dominion, became bigger than ever before.

In relation to the “Other”, European anthropology became a “scientific” way of domination and control with the use of “science and reason” over the forces of the “irrational and primitive”. These principles were based on the intellectual ideas that characterized the Enlightenment, such as the growing idea of a civilization’s progress being linked with a heightened self-consciousness of European identity and cultural superiority. Loomba suggests that: “Many nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers equated the advanced of European colonization with the triumph of science and reason over the forces of superstition, and indeed many colonized peoples took the same view” (Loomba, 1998:21). The development of natural sciences and the use of classificatory models fitted into the European concept of racial determinism, which supported the development and diffusion of the industrial capitalism, in turn having a colonial past. In terms of power, the act of classification by anthropology and archaeology was not used exclusively in the colonies around the world, but it was a phenomenon that was possible to observe in Europe.

In England for example, the works of Matthew Arnold represent this racial tendency of classifying English people in physiological categories such as in his book *Culture and Anarchy* (1896); or the works of Joseph E. Renan; *The Poetry of the Celtic Races, and Other Studies* (1854), and W.F. Edwards; *Des caractères physiologiques des races humaines*, (1829) (Young 1995). These works were formed from the idea that England was a nation fundamentally constituted by a mixture of races based in most cases, on the physical appearance of individuals. This tendency gave the possibility to discriminate individuals with a “scientific justification” causing social fragmentation. Linda Smith states that:

“Imperialism provided the means through which concepts of what counts as human could be applied systematically as form of classification, for example through hierarchies of race and typologies of different societies. In conjunction with imperial power and with ‘science’, these classification systems came to shape relations between imperial power and indigenous societies” (Smith, 1999:25).

A cultural dichotomy arose not only between the West and the rest of the world, but also in Europe where it was not just the indigenous people who were contemplated as “children” and “infantile”, but several social classes were also marginalized. Maria Eriksson points out, “the colonized were not only discursively linked and compared with women and child but also mental patients, criminals, and the working class in Europe” (2002:59). Even though anthropology emerged as the outcome of the colonial situation, and that it has contributed to the maintenance of the colonial system by providing it patronage, we cannot condemn it. Rather, to understand the historical circumstances characterized by power and control in which it emerged, we must acknowledge that it has contributed to the maintenance and protection of the societies studied by the ethnographic works done, as they would otherwise be lost to posterity.

The colonial expansion of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was intertwined with the notion of researching far-flung lands and their societies. Archaeology emerged to some extent, from an idea of collecting, articulated with a colonial desire to acquire knowledge about unknown cultures. Linda Smith argues that artefacts and objects were the material proof of conquest, thus, “knowledge was also there to be discovered, extracted, appropriated, and distributed” (Smith 1999:58). Colonial encounters with the creation of the “Other” were theorized as “exotic” and, as such, worthy of scientific attention. Because both anthropology and archaeology are two aftermaths of colonialism, the ultimate way in which these two disciplines interacted and consolidated power and control was through the emergence of museums in the capital cities of colonial countries, such as the British Museum, the Louvre or the Altes Museum in Berlin. Archaeological –and of course anthropological– collections represented a paradox of unknowable worlds. When placed in museums, objects and artifacts were transformed into a symbol of European ability to know and control uncharted worlds of the colonial exotic. Integral to this process was the appropriation of indigenous cultures achieved through research and their subsequent re-presentation.

Due to the development of classificatory systems and the consolidation of anthropology as a discipline, the philosophical and biological frameworks in the eighteenth century reached high popularity. In the process of taxonomic categorizations, collecting emerged as a dynamic part of the selective method of comparing, classifying, and valuating different

objects. Associated with the Romantic age, the concept of “primitive” was not considered as art, but as an “exotic” in relation to its region of origin. Rarities, exotic, and curious were common words in that time. Susan Pearce argues that: “Throughout the eighteenth century, where the rest of the “artificial curiosities” were concerned, that is with those artifacts which were not judged to be high art, the accent was more firmly on their curiosity value than on anything else” (1992:103). At the beginning of the twentieth century, artifacts collected from non-Western cultures were mainly classified into two groups; “cultural artifact” (in which science was an important element in the interpretative process) and as “work of art” (in which aesthetic values were significant). Jan Jamin points out that: “With the consolidation of the twentieth-century, artifacts contextualized ethnographically were valued because they served as objective “witnesses” to the total multidimensional life of a culture” (1982 quoted in Clifford 1988:228). Even with the change of assessment in the concept “exotic”, the evolutionist burden was still present in many taxonomical inquiries. This tendency to recognize objects as antiquities and as synonymous of mankind’s development, reinforced the notion of European superiority. “The value of exotic objects was their ability to testify to the concrete reality of an earlier stage of human culture, a common past confirming Europe’s triumphant present” (Clifford, 1988:228).

An important shift occurred in the mid-twentieth century between the concept of *culture* and *art*, both of which have ended up in a relationship which has been used in the discourse of modern museums all over the world. The emergence of categories such as “cultural artifact” and “work of art” led to the today’s “primitive art” and “folk art”, creating new ambiguities and possibilities in the taxonomic system. The artifacts once considered grotesque or worthless turned into the category of art which was placed in museums with the concept of “masterpieces”. In her book, *Museum, Objects and Collections*, Susan Pearce (1992) points out that museums are synonymous with knowledge, and somehow with modernity, stating that; “Museums and their collections are part of the history and philosophy of knowledge in both the humanities and the sciences, and this history and philosophy is in part also created by them” (Pearce 1992:89). This point of view seems to leave behind the colonial side of museums as the ultimate material culture-depository of the archaeologists, and the essence of

modernity within them. As Pearce points out there is much more than a modernist view (using Mignolo's approach of modernity) in the origin of the museums. In contrast, Clifford states that;

"It is inadequate to portray museums as collections of universal cultures, repositories of uncontested value, sites of progress, discovery; and the accumulation of human, scientific, or national patrimonies. A contact perspective views all culture-collecting strategies as responses to particular histories of dominance, hierarchy, resistance, and mobilization" (1997:213).

Although collecting retains what deserves to be kept, remembered, and treasured, it represents a rescue of material culture from inevitable historical decay or loss. Museums as a Western symbol and from a postcolonial perspective might be synonymous with collecting and a representation of Western power. Smith and Jackson argues "When placed in museums, each new display was transformed by its context into a symbol of the European ability to know and control the uncharted worlds of the colonial exotic. Integral to this process was the appropriation of Indigenous cultures, achieved through research and representation" (2006:312). Museums located in countries with a colonialist past are the result of a desire to collect combined with the ambition to show the exotic and rare of non-Western cultures. Even though James Clifford does not use the word "imperialism" in his book *Routes*, he states that museums are the result of capitalist development, "As an institution that emerged with the national, bourgeois state and with industrial and commercial capitalism, the museum's destiny is linked to their global diffusion and local adaptations" (Clifford 1997:215). In the introduction of *Making Representation*, Moira Simpson (2001) suggests that:

"In Europe, the tradition of museums as institutions both reflecting and serving a cultural élite has been established and, in many, is still maintained. The museum, the "cabinet of curiosities", is the storeroom of a nation's treasures, providing a mirror in which are reflected the views and attitudes of the European cultures in which museums are rooted" (2001:1).

These perceptions of museums have created, new trends in modern museums worldwide in order to “erase” the idea of museums as centers of power filled with rarities from the mind of the visitors, but instead, presenting objects from an “art” perspective. This discussion leads to questioning the role played by museums through the last two centuries in relation to collecting, and the way archaeologists have contributed to the creation of this view. Simpson suggests that, “In recent decades, ethnographic collections have continued to grow, but much more slowly than in the colonial era. The emphasis in recent years has been upon the need to preserve cultural heritage and revitalize or re-establish artistic skills and traditions which suffered serious decline as a result of the impact of colonialism and acculturation” (ibid:248). Following Mignolo’s concept, modernity might be seen as one outcome of colonialism, but a modernity that does not necessarily be considered positive. Colonialism represents the cradle of collecting and capitalism, which in turn gave rise (as many other outcomes) to museums; repositories of those exotic things and rarities collected by archaeologists under colonial rule, as well as the emergence of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, all of which can be understood as modernity.

Evolutionary theories were the prevailing trends between anthropologists and archaeologists during the nineteenth and twentieth-century. They worked under colonial circumstances, which in turn required the implementation of collecting by considering material culture of non-Western cultures as exotics items and curiosities. Yet, anthropologists and archaeologists did not collect in an untidy and fortuitous way; on the contrary, they followed a methodology based on a systematic taxonomic classification when selecting artifacts to create collections which ended up in museums in Europe and in the United States. Pearce makes an important assessment about questioning the social character and the consequential bias against museums and their collections. Depending on the way we formulate our questions, she advocates a possible reformulation of the way knowledge is generated. In this sense, she states: “take any collection or group of associated museums objects and ask, not ‘What are they?’ and ‘What can this tell us?’ which are the usual museum question, but rather, ‘When and how was the collection formed?’ ‘Who formed it?’ and ‘Why did this person/these people choose to assemble these objects?’” (Pearce 1992:116). These reformulated questions are significant in understanding

the historical context of governments, institutions and scientific societies which lie behind the museums and their collections, as well as the motivations of the people who classified and selected the artifacts in a collection. These kinds of questions help us to understand what collecting procedures were considered intellectually proper at that time, in order to give insight into the nature of the archaeological explorations. She continues: "These people did what they did because their activities seemed to them to reflect, in a satisfactory and prestigious way, the intellectual climate of their times, and so as we can see, helped to underwrite and stabilize the intellectual tradition to which they had committed an important part of themselves" (ibid:116). Colonialism was not just about the collection of rarities, but it was a complex system of re-arrangement, negotiation, and redistribution of cultural values. In short, anthropology and archaeology were the scientific way to control the "Other" in a knowledgeable way.

During the nineteenth century in the United States, anthropology and archaeology had a clear distance between them in relation to their object of study and methodology. In the beginning, historical archaeology focused on material culture, such as that in colonies, more than power relations among and within cultures, being history and therefore narrative, as its main framework. Anthropology had an influence in historical archaeology with scholars such as Franz Boas who, with his historical particularism, broke away from the old unidirectional social evolutionism and used the concept of cultural relativism to point out that societies were the result of their own unique histories. In this sense, there could be no universal criterion to judge them as their traits were a result of historical and environmental circumstances which could only be understood within that context. Consequently, terms such as, primitive, inferior, and superior were inappropriate to classify culture. Lewis R. Binford and his *New Archaeology* integrated anthropological perspectives in the interpretation of cultures. His method was to use cultural analogies from contemporary situations as a hypothesis to be tested against remains from the past: "Analogy serves to provoke certain types of questions which can, on investigation, lead to the recognition of more comprehensive ranges of order in the archaeological data" (Binford, 1967:10). Despite these attempts to integrate anthropological perspectives, American historical archaeology maintained a clear historical position in its methodology putting a gap between both. This attitude made the sub-discipline fall into colonialist and

Eurocentric approaches when interpreting the past, Trigger argues, “The oldest and most complex example of colonialist archaeology was that which developed in the United States. Long before the beginnings of significant antiquarian research in the late eighteenth century, native people were regarded as being inherently unprogressive and incapable of adopting a civilised pattern of life” (1984: 360-61).

However, with the creation of the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA)⁹ in 1967, American historical archaeology has had anthropological perspectives, even though they are still based on written sources. In order to get a wider overview of the relationship between colonialism and archaeology in the United States, I will focus on American historical archaeology and its theoretical framework.

A postcolonial view to American historical archaeology.

Continuing with the analysis of colonial baggage in archaeology, some aspects of American historical archaeology are worth mentioning. Due to its object of study, methodology, chronology, and issue, this thesis fits in the sub-discipline of historical archaeology. Because this work is an attempt to integrate the indigenous societies and their role in colonial contacts, a critical reformulation of the sub-discipline is suggested in order to understand the colonial encounter in Mexico and the material culture of the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize.

Defining historical archaeology is not an easy matter as its name varies: Historical Archaeology, Historic Archaeology, Historic Site Archaeology and so on (Schuler 1978:27). Two kinds of historical archaeology are possible to distinguish; the European and the American. Although both versions generally study cultures with written records, there are some clear differences in their application and methodology. Johnson suggests that the former is referred to as archaeology of the period after the fall of the Western Roman Empire around A.D. 400 (2006:314). In Europe different terms are used because of particular historical developments like Paleolithic archaeology (Jennings, 1979, Trigger, 1968), classical, medieval, post medieval archaeology (Thompson, 1967, Wilson, 1976) and

9. <http://www.sha.org/>

so on. A distinctive difference between European and American historical archaeology is, to some extent, the phenomenon of Western colonialism and the invention of the “Other”. In the American continent, the process of Western colonialism was crucial in the consolidation of a new identity, something that did not happen in Europe, at least not at the same level considering, for example, that the category “*Indio*” with its derogatory and racist connotations never existed in the historical development of Europe.

The origin of historical archaeology in the New World has its roots in the development of archaeology itself. Archaeology as discipline began in the mid-nineteenth century in the United States with the first systematic explorations in prehistoric sites. Over time, historical archaeology turned into a huge interest in preserving historical monuments. Hence, it was used to record architectural and landscape details for the management of public lands and for public interpretations at monuments and parks headed by state or private historical societies (Orser, 2004:6). This obsession with including buildings such as houses of important American people like Washington, Lincoln or Franklin, in the National Register of Historical Places is a clear example of this way of using historical archaeology. Little argues that it is no less important than the record of forts and missions across the country (2007:24-28). During the nineteenth century, this interest placed archaeology as a simple technique in service to history and conservation. Although the interest in the links between history and archaeology goes back to the beginning of the century with Carl R. Fish and his article “Relation of Archaeology and History” (1978), it was during the thirties and forties that American historical archaeology was discussed in literature (e.g. Setzler, 1943, Woodward, 1937). However, it took a further twenty years before it gained a formal definition of its methodology and aims, largely because the sub-discipline was under the threshold of the history. In the mid-sixties, the sub-discipline experienced a methodological rethinking with the incorporation of archaeologists with an anthropological formation. On the one hand, the historians insisted that the aim of the sub-discipline was just to complement the historical investigations, while archaeologists put forward arguments in favor of a sub-discipline that addressed the problems of social and cultural processes. The outcome of this debate was the creation of the Society for Historical Archaeology in 1967, the main internal structure of which focused on history more than

prehistory. The magazine *Historical Archaeology* appeared one year after the creation of the SHA, and Ivor Noël Hume published the first text of the discipline with the same name in 1969.

There are some methodological problems observable in historical archaeology that are possible to address from a postcolonial perspective. In the United States, it has had different implications based on European colonialism and the outcomes of cultural encounters. The main trait is the division of archaeology into two subfields; “prehistorical” and “historical” archaeology. The latter is understood as the archaeological study of cultures by the presence of writing (Deetz, 1977:5, Schuyler, 1978:27). The former is understood as the study of indigenous populations in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans and subsequent contact between these peoples (Little, 2007:43). The division leads to one question; is this division necessary and positive for the development of knowledge in archaeology? (e.g. Deagan 1988; Lightfoot 1995; Wilky 2007). Is this not a typical binary model in order to explain colonial encounters in a unidirectional way?

In the United States, historical archaeology differs from prehistoric in that it works with archaeological data and written sources in the study of colonialism, Western expansion, and the rise of capitalism (Deagan, 1988:9, Schuyler, 1988:37). As argued by Lawrence and Shepard, the sub-discipline began in the United States with the first European colonies, in which the lack of interest for the indigenous population and slaves is evidently of secondary importance (2006:70). If we accept the fact that historical archaeology is based on written evidence, then colonialism represents a key element in the sub-discipline because it is the colonizer who uses writing as a form of power to colonize. Thus, the sub-discipline focuses on the history of Western colonialism and its economic development and expansionism represented by Europeans and their descendants in the United States.

Lightfoot pointed out that “the term prehistoric archaeology is applied in methods and theories for the study of non-literate societies, whereas the historical archaeology focus on the study of colonial Europeans and the remains of their material culture” (1995:202). In addition, the term prehistoric presents some problems when we change the cultural area of study, like in Australia, and/or the language, as in Mexico. In Mexican archaeology and anthropology the term prehistoric means a time period from about 10.000 B.C. backwards, consisting of two different cultural

horizons; the archeolithic (ca 35000-14000 B. C) and the cenolithic (ca 14000-7000B.C). It would be confusing to state that societies such as Teotihuacán, the Aztecs, or even the Olmec belonged to “prehistory”, because at least in Mexico the term evokes the idea of dinosaurs or cavemen. The chronological scale used in Mexico to define the indigenous peoples before Spanish contact is the Prehispanic period, which is never understood as “prehistoric”. In contrast, the term prehistory in Australia has been the motive of discussions in archaeology since it has been considered as “Eurocentric and tends to deny the validity of Aboriginal experience and knowledge” (Craven, 1996 quoted in Wobst 2005:27). Linda Burney states that in Australia “we find the term offensive, most particularly because of the related meaning of prehistoric, such as “primitive” and “subhuman” - two of the most offensive stereotypes imposed on Aboriginal people since colonization” (Burney, 1999 quoted in Wobst *ibid*, Smith and Jackson, 2006:316). This chronological disruption between “historic” and “prehistoric” creates a conflictive gap across a period of continuous transition giving place to binary classifications. Thus, we notice that American historical archaeology has focused on the European expansionism in the rest of the world categorizing the “others” as *prehistorical*. This binary opposition causes problems of interpretation leading to the placement of a dominant group (Western) over another (non-Western) in terms of power and preference, creating an essentialist insight of history and culture. Hodder suggests that,

“in a global context the term, taken for granted for so long in Europe, becomes politically incorrect....This is because ‘history’ in the word ‘prehistory’ means written history. But of course, non-western and non-literate people did have a vibrant history, even without written records of it. There is no such thing as a time before history unless we privilege the written over the unwritten, the western over the non-western, which is clearly unacceptable” (Hodder, 1999:8)

Hodder’s statement precisely breaks down the binary tendency when dividing the “Self” and the “Other” in colonial encounters. One major problem with American historical archaeology is this division of entities in a binary opposition model. Cultural dichotomies like prehistory-history, literate -non-literate, indigenous-European, and so on, can lead archaeology to cultural prejudices based on a Western model of power. One example of

binary systems is Said's *Orientalism*, as mentioned earlier, his book is a basic premise that the West has created and maintained a simplified and essentialized view of the East, presenting the East as inferior, female, and despotic, while the West as masculine, democratic, progressive. These kinds of binary models are based on the perspective of the colonizer or those who have written the history of *themselves*. The risk when classifying cultural attributes in a binary way is that discriminatory and racial prejudices may arise because the role of indigenous people in the historical formation is annulled. Lightfoot argues, "most colonial accounts were written from the perspective of affluent European men who documented little about the lifeways of lower class laborers and their relations with local native men, women, and children" (1995:201).

This same reasoning is exposed by Funari who argues that historical archaeology focuses on the archaeology of *us*, more than the archaeology of the *other*, that is, the indigenous inhabitants in colonial situations (1999a:38). This perspective gives rise to questions about the way we should approach colonial encounters since the word *us* in this case, refers to the history created by the colonizer, or the European descendants in the Americas. In my view, this represents one of the main problems and critiques of American historical archaeology (and the relationship between archaeology and colonialism mentioned above); a Euro-American approach to cultural encounters. James Deetz has been one of the main influences in the development of American historical archaeology. One of the most accepted definitions of the term comes from him in which he describes it as "the archaeology of the spread of European cultures throughout the world since the fifteenth century, and their impact on and interaction with the cultures of indigenous people" (1977:5). Lawrence and Shepard point out that the content in Deetz's definition is characterized as a certain Eurocentric burden emphasizing the Europeans as the core of the colonial situation (2006:70). In addition, the word "impact" lacks any explanatory clarity making it possible to interpret it as an acculturation process. In spite of the effort in Deetz's work to include the indigenous societies in American historical discourse in a global way (e.g. 1975:5; 1991:6), it is clear how the Europeans and their descendants are the main actors in the historical research.

If we assume that the descendants of Europeans in the Americas imposed a colonialist regimen on the host societies, then we have to point

out that together, they interacted in a dialogue of negotiations in order to re-create a social order. Thus, the name historical archaeology might be re-formulated to encompass the non-literate and the literate societies in order to leave behind binary and comparative models. A postcolonial proposal to the sub-discipline could be to rename it as “Colonial archaeology” as Targa has suggested (1995:42). However, the word ‘Colonial’ might directly assume a Western predominance over the rest of the colonized world, with the analysis of cultural encounters from the Western perspective of colonizers. It would also be a contradiction if one of the possible uses of postcolonial theories in archaeology is precisely the decolonization of the discipline. One option could be “archaeology of cultural encounters”, including the presence of indigenous societies in the arena of interactions and their outcomes. Some scholars have proposed a reconsideration of the methodological framework of historical archaeology breaking with Eurocentric models, as Lawrence and Shepard have argued:

“one of the markers of settler societies that has been explored by historical archaeology is the range of ethnic groups represented, and the emergence of new forms of interactions. Colonialism is not simply a matter for the colonist and the colonized: it precipitates the creation of whole new groups and social categories, including the offspring of union between settlers and indigenous people” (2006:73).

This kind of statement is what Homi Bhabha means with the term hybridity and the notion that colonialism is not just about the monolithic idea of power from the colonized, but it is also about the creation of hybrid cultures resulting from dynamic and changeable cultural interactions. The importance of addressing historical archaeology from the postcolonial critique is pointed out by Croucher and Weiss: “While the Portuguese, Spanish, French, British, and Dutch were being the subjects of historical archaeology, therefore, a multitude of Others became temporally segregated into *pre*historical archaeology” (2011:29).

Not everything is negative in American historical archaeology and considerable methodological changes have been made within the sub-discipline. This is the case with Deetz who wrote in an article: “If only the written records, rich and detailed as they are, are studied, then the conclusions will reflect only the story of a small minority of deviant, wealthy,

white males, and little else... we need archaeologists to find what was left behind by everybody, for every conceivable reason" (1991:6). Kathleen Deagan argues the importance of considering the role of the non-elites and minority groups in the construction of the history, denouncing the lack of interests by archaeologists in the American blacks (1991:108). In another example in St. Augustine, Florida, she uses the term "creole" to state that this site was not just Spanish, but a combination of blacks, Indians, and even several Swiss, Germans and Canary Islanders addressing the relationships between the creoles without focusing on the role of the Europeans (Deagan, 1983a:29-32). In her work, the notion of the creation of new identities in colonial encounters reaches similar levels to the term hybridity. To some extent she provides a place and voice to the minority classes in the construction of a hybrid society, in this case the Caribbean region. Orser defines the sub-discipline as: "a multi- and interdisciplinary field that shares a special relationship with the formal disciplines of anthropology and history and seek to understand the global nature of modern life" (Orser, 1996:27).

Postcolonial approaches to the decolonization of archaeology

The concept of decolonization in postcolonial terms represents a break from the colonial reality based on the main idea of modernity and the egalitarian progress. Walter Mignolo argues that: "The decolonial shift is of the essence if we would stop seeing "modernity" as goal rather than seeing it as a European construction of history in Europe's own interests" (Mignolo, 2005a:xix). No less significant is the emergence of the concept of decolonization as the continuity of modernity-coloniality. In other words, decolonization is the counterpart of modernity/coloniality, which neither allows colonialist "justification" of dominance, nor the lies and promises of modernity. This perspective of decolonizing has several points in common with the theoretical framework of postcolonial theories, such as the proposal of deconstructing the colonial discourse showing contradictions contained in it, instead of proclaiming a non-productive critique and leaving beside old ideas of progress and social welfare that lie in colonial discourse (Spivak, 1988:197-221, Loomba, 1998:231-245, Young, 1990:157-175). In order to break with Eurocentric models used in archaeology about colonial

encounters, critical approaches to colonial discourse and its object of study needs to be considered because, “debates about who own the past, human remains, and material culture and who has the power to speak for and write the story of the past have all played a prominent role in archaeology” (Atalay 2006:289).

As part of the postcolonial approach to decolonization, archaeology is now not analyzed in a condemnatory manner, but by pointing out some inconsistencies in its methodology with the possibility of changing them. Liebmann points out “Archaeology is not inevitably or inherently colonialist, however. Ours is a discipline that can aid in the deconstruction of colonial discourses as well” (2008:7). An aspect to consider in archaeology is the colonial discourse and its tendency to explain cultural contact from a Western perspective. As we have seen, when addressing colonial encounters in a global perspective of the indigenous population, the colony, and the metropole, the possibility for a better understanding of cultural interactions becomes more complete. Two aspects are important to notice when addressing this polemic issue: on the one hand, the decolonization of colonial discourse in archaeology and colonial encounters before and after 1492. The aim in this aspect is to analyze the way in which the West has created a particular view of world history highlighting its values at the center of attention of colonial studies. At the same time, neglecting the colonized world, considering the colonized as a mere receptor of influences, in which the Western remains free from any kind of influence. For Bhabha, colonial discourse is an apparatus of power that needs reformulating because: “It is the most theoretically underdeveloped form of discourse, but crucial to the binding of a range of differences and discriminations that inform the discursive and political practices of racial and cultural hierarchization” (1996:89). On the other hand, I will mention briefly the decolonization of archaeological practices focusing on the active participation of indigenous communities in contemporary situations. As it will be presented along this chapter, the postcolonial term hybridity can be used for the decolonization of both aspects. The focus is now on contemporary situations and the central role that archaeology has had. From the postcolonial perspective, the archaeological practice could be decolonized by allowing the “subaltern speak”. That is, to break with Eurocentric models of colonialism based on the colony, recognizing the active participation of the indigenous

population in the history and the creation of social identities, as well as recognizing that they have also affected Western culture. In a broader meaning, the decolonization of archaeology is aimed at allowing the indigenous communities to participate in archaeological works and even in making decisions about the result of these works. In order to break with the traditional Western interpretation of the history by the archaeology (see Atalay, 2006, Trigger, 1989), the active participation, physically and intellectually, of both indigenous and non-indigenous people is required.

In spite of social-political barriers, many scholars in different countries have begun to reconsider the active participation of indigenous populations in archaeological works aimed at increasing archaeological knowledge, and breaking down the traditional Western representation of history (e.g. Kato, 2009, Davidson et al., 1995, Nicholas and Andrews, 1997, Watkins, 2000, Smith and Jackson, 2006, Politis and Perez Gollán, 2004). This interest offers the possibility to give a voice to the indigenous populations in issues deeply related to their own history, since they have owned their past and are directly affected by the historical interpretation generated by archaeology. Changes in higher education and archaeology have been made in the United States in spite of the few archaeologists with an indigenous origin, as Atalay suggests:

“As a result, there are a growing number of Indigenous people who have careers, in one form or another, in archaeology, and the influence of these Native leaders, who often view themselves as Indigenous activists working to change the discipline of archaeology from within, is now capable of having a profound effect on the direction of archaeological methods theories, practice, and ethics” (2006: 290).

Similar efforts have been made in Australia, where indigenous communities have the right to give permission to excavate sites or conduct research on human remains. At the same time, the indigenous people have control over research through funding bodies from governmental institutions (Smith and Jackson, 2006: 324).

To conclude this section, the political repercussion in archaeology is probably the most difficult barrier in the process of decolonization. In this sense, archaeology has been used in many countries in a nationalistic way as creator of identity (e.g. Lucas 2004:118; Trigger1984:358). Mexico is an

example of this tendency as it is strongly rooted in the social and economic development of the country in the beginning of the twentieth century. The development of archaeological research during the rule of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910) took a normative shift creating a state monopoly on the administration of the patrimony and the control of archaeological explorations (Trigger 1984:359). Archaeological works in Mitla, Xochicalco and Teotihuacán are examples of this interest. Despite the interest of the government in archaeological works, the idea of the “glorious prehispanic past” was accompanied all the time by a clear rejection of the current indigenous cultures. The growing bourgeois classes of the Mexican society – including anthropologists – considered those current cultures as a big obstacle for the modernity of the country, as noted by Nalda (1998:8).

As a knowledge-maker, historical archaeology can contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between indigenous populations and Western culture in the past and present. It has the possibility to give a voice to one fundamental part of any history that has been silenced and omitted. “We need to revisit the history of colonial encounters from a critical perspective that reinserts Indigenous agency into the historical discourse. Furthermore, Indigenous circumstances, motivations, and links with other cultural groups need to be considered” (Mathias & Weik 2005:283)

Different ways to explain cultural interactions in colonial situations

The concepts of acculturation, transculturation, and syncretism are commonly used in anthropology and archaeology. They are briefly presented in this part in order to compare them against the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and third space. Archaeology needs to develop new models to explain colonial encounters in the long-term. In so doing, the monolithic view of the colonial situation can be rethought allowing archaeology to explain it in a multidirectional way instead of purely centralized. The aim is not, however, to review the extensive discussion of the theoretical premises and biases of the terms mentioned, nor to propose a revolutionary alternative to conceptualize cultural contacts. The purpose of this analytical comparison is to justify the reason for using the concepts of hybridity and third space in the decolonization of archaeology (in past and present practice), as a second step in the analysis of religious architecture on the Yucatán Peninsula.

Archaeology has used these terms interchangeably to give answers to the cultural variation products of social interactions in time and space. Some of them explain more widely than others the complexity of the social dynamics generated during colonial encounters. However, some others, like acculturation, reinforce the colonized-core or colonizer-core model analysis, limiting their objective fields. Because these concepts are aimed at explaining resistance, assimilation, and different levels of cultural interactions between groups, the chronological factor is missed in some of them analyzing non-capitalist societies with capitalist theoretical models. Schortman and Urban suggest “theoretical formulations created with present concerns in mind are not well suited to elucidating culture contact situations occurring under circumstances very different from those pertaining to the modern era” (Schortman and Urban, 1998:103).

Acculturation

One of the most common concepts is acculturation. It has been used for a long time in social anthropology and archaeology as an effort to describe processes of cultural melding. As a social model, we can trace its origins to the nineteenth century when acculturation was associated with diffusionism and evolutionism, as in the work of E. B. Taylor and L. H. Morgan (McGee and Warms, 2008:47). At the beginning of the twentieth century, the term became synonymous with “diffusion”, “cultural loan”, or even “cultural assimilation” motivating the delimitation of the concept. Thus, in 1935, after years of investigation and debate, the American Anthropologist Association published a *Memorandum* in order to clarify the term. Acculturation was defined as the model that, “comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield et al., 1936:149). In this document, the authors tried to define an interpretative framework and use of the concept by trying to establish a distinction with diffusion and assimilation which would explain the different levels of interactions between societies.

Another important contribution to the development of acculturation was in 1953 when the Social Science Research Council wrote a vast and

developed article making the meaning of the term clear mentioning that, “acculturation may be defined as culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems...it may derived from non-cultural causes...Its dynamic can be seen as the selective adaptation of value systems...” (Barnett et al., 1953:975). However, this definition, and the document in general, would only be valid to groups that interact at economic, political and culturally independent levels, and in contexts of cultural dimensions comparatively equivalent. The approaches proposed in the *Memorandum* and by the Council manifest short-range definitions, which as Cusick mentions; “Change was viewed as something that could not be thwarted but only screened and channeled” (1998:132). Kathleen Deagan mentioned that: “Most of this work tended to describe and classify acculturation rather than explain its consequences, and most of it tended to treat the process as unidirectional, imposed by a “dominant” or “conquest” culture onto a somewhat choiceless recipient culture” (Deagan, 1998:26).

Generally speaking, the term acculturation represents a unidirectional transfer of cultural influences from the dominant group, or a one-way learning process in which the dominated absorb the influences of the other. This concept focuses on explaining the dynamics created between two groups and their successive results with emphasis on the impact of Western on non-Western groups (Cusick, 1998:126). Using the concept in colonial encounters, we notice that the colonizer becomes in the core of actions with a dominance and a donator status, while the colonized or host societies absorb the influence of the latter as mere subordinated receptors. However, the receptors do not necessarily absorb ideologies, values, and life style from Western influences in a simple passive attitude. In contrast, in a colonial encounter a bidirectional or multidirectional process arises in which “diasporic cultures can form entirely new, composite identities through what has been termed transculturation, ethnogenesis, creolization, or hybridization” (Stein, 2005:17).

One of the main problems in acculturation is when the model inverts its object of study, focusing on the receptor group leaving behind the donator or dominant, as Leonard Mason has pointed out: “a survey of the literature reveals that most students of culture contact have neglected to examine critically the character of the more familiar, dominant group, with a consequent incompleteness of analysis and conclusions about the

acculturation of the exotic group” (Mason, 1955:1264). In the beginning of the acculturative studies, anthropologists put emphasis on the indigenous component being motivated by the exotic nature of their cultures and by the colonialist policy. Despite the disparity of cultural variation and hegemony, the dominant group changes its ways of life to some degree. However, the biggest change is found in the recipient group. This fact being that the acculturation theories focused on the question of what happens to the dominated group, motivating that “many studies are made of acculturated peoples but few studies are made of their acculturation” (Steward, 1943:201). That is, one should describe –rather than analyze the result of social contacts, not the process and dynamic of change within them. The concept falls in a Eurocentric tendency to represent the history and its protagonists, considering the dominate group (colonizer, donator, oppressor) as an immutable being; a social “outsider” in the colonial situation.

James G. Cusick makes a correct assessment of the concept that is worth analyzing to highlight the usable points of it, and at the same time to point out its weaknesses. Because of its origins, acculturation has been associated with an imperialist context considering the anthropology to the service of power. “Theories of acculturation have often been mere tools in the service of enforced policies for social change” (1998:135). Another shortcoming used in archaeology mentioned by this author is the systematic idea of Western people as active agents and non-Western people as passive recipients. The term may confuse changes in behavior with changes in identity, and it tends to associate cultural traits with material culture. There is a mistake in equating quantifiable changes in material culture over time with acculturation; and not providing any predictive capability about the aftermaths in cultural interactions, or disregarding power relations in contact situations (ibid:135; see Streiffert 2006:321-322).

The implications of acculturation in archaeology are determinant because it does not make a clear disjunction between systematic and idiosyncratic traits in colonial situations. When analyzing contact situations and cultural change, the power relations play a strategic role in order to understand the interactions between individuals and their subsequent manifestations expressed in ideology and materiality. These cultural situations have to be considered from the perspective of power relations, as Cusick states that the

acculturation model was: “developed to explain cross-cultural exchange, is not an appropriate model for studies of conquest or colonialism” (ibid: 138).

Because culture is recognized today as a complex system of multilateral interactions, the use of acculturation may overcome the connotations of an imperialist process of evolution (having in mind the colonial origin of anthropology), to instead explain, the interaction between cultures created by individuals. From this perspective, cultural contacts are universal since we all are interconnected, these connections are not made between cultures, but among individuals who act, live, think and decide. Sometimes acculturation is a complex term which is difficult to define, Cusick points out that: “critiques of acculturation must take into account that some formulations deal with power structures while others do not, that some seeks causal explanations for culture change in psychology and want fulfillment, whereas others focus on social structure and defense of cultural identity” (Cusick 1998:127). This subjective use of the term lends itself to a certain explanatory relativism, since it pretends to explain psychological cultural changes or power structures in a unidirectional way. Despite the shortcomings in acculturation, like the emphasis on the study of the dominated groups, scholars like Manson pointed out in 1955 the importance of addressing the studies of cultural contact including the dominant group arguing that:

“Since acculturation is a process of culture change which involves more than a native people and its culture, future studies aimed at understanding the nature of this process should include more detailed analyses of the culture of the donor group and the significance of the latter within the total contact situation. It is not enough for observers to characterize the donor as “Americans” and simple leave the matter there” (Mason, 1955:1275).

Mason’s argument is important from a postcolonial perspective since this is what concepts such as hybridity and third space seek to explain in colonial encounters. The Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran considered the term to be conflictive because in the beginning, a wrong etymological analysis of the word acculturation was *without-culture*, understanding acculturation as the process of providing an external culture to individuals who supposedly lacked one. That is, the contribution that

the superior Western cultures made to primitive cultures, coining the term 'ethnocentric model'.¹⁰ The etymological origin of the word is the Latin preposition *ad*, which by assimilation turns to *ac*, and the nominal form *culturatio*. If the word had existed in Latin it would have been *acculturatio*, just like in English where acculturation means "union" or "contact" (Beltran 1957:10). In short, the term acculturation does not allow reverse cultural flows such as dialogue or negotiation, but focuses on the loss of traditions and the adoption of others.

Transculturation

Fernando Ortiz coined the term transculturation in his 1940 book *Contrapunteo Cubano del azúcar y el Tabaco*. Since then, the term has not had much impact in social sciences, perhaps because of the lack of clear explanatory models and theoretical originality when dealing with cultural interactions. The term is more related to modern situations such as globalization, modernity, the increasing dominance of transnational capitalism, or postmodernity (see Kraidy, 2002, Lull, 2000, Hernández et al., 2005).

In his book, Ortiz presents the concept as a Latin American alternative against acculturation, which could be considered as an imperialist model (see Cusick above) since acculturation was dominant in Anglo-American anthropology at the time. Ortiz sought to fix the unidirectional process of acculturation in Anglophone anthropology with the support of Bronislaw Malinowski who, in the "Introduction" of the book, agrees with the idea that acculturation was inadequate since it was imperialist (Ortiz 1963: xii).

In general, and in contrast with acculturation, transculturation can be conceived as a set of rational and appropriative relationships, and as an ongoing process of absorption and transformation rather than static assimilation of practices. This approach allows a bilateral understanding between two groups and not a unidirectional process, such as in acculturation. Ortiz's work is based on the cultural diversity in Cuba before and after the Colonial period. An important theme in his work is the way he emphasizes cultural diversities as the bearer of different traditions and

10. As Malinowski wrote in the "Introduction" of *Contrapunteo Cubano del azúcar y tabaco*

ideologies. He presents the Spanish and the Africans as having “uprooted and tore humans beings” from their original culture and transplanted them into an unknown situation demanding an adjustment to a new syncretism of culture (Ortiz 1963:99).¹¹

Transculturation is sometimes linked with the term *hybrid* as James Lull (Lull, 2000:243) states: “transculturation produces cultural hybrids as the fusing of cultural forms” (Lull, 2000:243). This way of comparing transculturation and hybridity is in part what Bhabha means in his work. Lull continues: “transculturation processes synthesize new cultural genres while they break down traditional cultural categories” (ibid: 242), and “imported cultural elements take on local features as the cultural hybrids develop” (ibid: 244). Despite these statements, Lull uses these concepts based on modern communications technology and media, which gives another perspective of the terms transculturation and hybridization. What is true is the fact that in 1940 Ortiz began with the notion of a genetic metaphor allowing for the first concept of hybridization, which in turn has helped scholars such as Lull to equate both terms alike. We can read in Ortiz: “en todo abrazo de culturas sucede lo que en la copula genética de los individuos: la criatura siempre tiene algo de ambos progenitores, pero también siempre es distinta de cada uno de los dos (Ortiz 1940:103).¹²

Transculturation denotes to some extent, a cultural and historic process of reciprocal influences, that is, the view of dominant and dominated is transformed allowing a combination of cultural values, rather than focusing on one donator and/or one receptor. This approach does not mean that social contact between these two groups was symmetrical and homogeneous. It is clear that the dominant control from the Spanish over the host societies was total, and slavery and violence was a characteristic of this relationship. However, what is valid in Ortiz’s work -from a postcolonial theory perspective, is the fact that he gives rise to the notion that colonial encounters produced something new, or as Young argues: “involves fusion,

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11. “Españoles, pero de distintas culturas y ya ellos mismos desgarrados...de las sociedades ibéricas peninsulares y trasplantados a un Nuevo Mundo, que para ellos fue todo nuevo de naturaleza y humanidad, donde tenían a su vez que reajustarse a un nuevo sincretismo de culturas”.
 12. “In any cultural embrace, there occurs the same as in an individual’s genetic reproduction: the offspring always has something from both progenitors, but is also always distinct from each of them” (Translation by author).

the creation of a new form, which can then be set against the old form, of which is partly made up” (Young, 1995:25). This represents the possibility to address the colonized and colonizer in a more multidirectional dynamic. In this context, transculturation highlights the hybridity of cultural forms in ways that acculturation does not and, following Bhabha, the lack of “purity” or “originality” (1994:55)

In his book, Ortiz explains the different stages of transculturation. Its first step is the loss or uprooting of culture, that is, a partial *deculturation*. The second step is the creation of new cultural forms and the emergence of something that he calls *neoculturation*; which in turn produces a mixed cultural offspring understood as *transculturation* (ibid:103). In spite of the important classification made by Ortiz, he does not delve deeper into explaining each step which makes the term vague and lacking theoretical accuracy.

Since its origins, transculturation has been a polemic concept which has been difficult to validate in social domains. On the one hand, and when reading Ortiz’s book, the ambiguity in the theoretical explanation of the term is contained in only 4 ½ pages of 536¹³ (Millington, 2005:215). The rest of the book is a vast historical description of Cuba with special attention paid to tobacco and sugar. It is also a long description of cultural fluidity and a mix of “races” turning Cuba in a huge cultural kaleidoscope, but nothing else. Another problem is the novelty of the term which has also been questioned. Herskovits, for example, defends acculturation and states that: “Where not the term acculturation so firmly fixed in the literature of anthropology, “transculturation” might equally well be used to express the same concept”(Herskovits, 1949:529).

To avoid this confusion, the use of transculturation was more popular in Spanish literature with the assumption that the preposition *trans* reflected better the “transit” or “pass” of one culture to another and its repercussions, instead of the preposition *ad* in acculturation. To Aguirre Beltran (1957), the term transculturation is also unnecessary and even imposed, since its first appeared in Spanish with the translation of Robert Redfield’s *The Folk Culture of Yucatán* in which the publisher preferred to use the neologism used by Ortiz instead of acculturation without a justified reason (1957:206).

13. In the 1963 edition.

Despite its critiques, the term can be seen as a potential alternative to acculturative models in cultural contacts. However, it can be conflictive, as shown by the definition of the term by de Blij and Murphy:

“Occasionally there is contact between culture complexes that are more nearly equal in numbers, strength, and complexity. In such cases, a genuine exchange follows, in which both cultures function as sources and adopters. This process is referred to as *transculturation*” (de Blij and Murphy, 2003:29).

This explanation, however, would be useless in colonial encounters like in Mexico, since cultural differences (technology, economy, and religion) between indigenous societies and the Spanish were obvious, turning the colonial situation into an unequal relationship. The keyword in the explanation above is “occasionally”, which gives a vague and unreliable description allowing the use of the term in modern societies with more equal cultures. In addition, this explanation lacks - as acculturation does to some extent- the power dimension, focusing predominantly on the mixing of cultural influences in a homogenized way.

Thus, and after 70 years since the term was coined, transculturation has been marginalized from the literature. Just to illustrate the lack of interest of *Contrapunteo Cubano* and in general the term transculturation, Millington investigated the book in the London University Library and found that:

“Examination of the borrowing pattern indicates that the book was on loan just seven times in the twenty-six years between 1969 and 1995 (with one gap of sixteen years between 1973 and 1989). In the five years since 1998 the book has already been borrowed ten times” (2005:204 note 1).

It would be bold to state that transculturation is the same as the term hybridity used by Bhabha. However, and as we have seen, the term has key characteristics that evoke some theoretical approaches proposed by Bhabha.

Syncretism

Since its origins, syncretism has mainly been used within the comparative study of religions (see Ferreti, 2001, Gustafsson, 1995, Maroney, 2006). Historically, the term has been used in two different connotations; positively when Plutarch coined it to refer to the hostile inhabitants of Crete who, in a brotherly way, sank their differences and conflicts by joining forces to face an enemy from beyond Crete (Stewart, 1995:12), and negatively when developed to explain the religious assimilation in some parts of Africa, which was a distorted imposition of Christianity by the missionaries in the first decades of the twentieth century (Stewart, 1995:13-14, Droogers, 1995:46). However, the term gained a positive meaning in the United States and was inherited and popularized by the succeeding generation of American anthropologists. The Oxford English Dictionary defines syncretism as, “attempted union or reconciliation of diverse and opposite tenets or practices, esp. in philosophy and religion”. This definition considers syncretism as the result and not as a process omitting the changes that happen as a result of the social interactions.

Charles Stewart states that in terms of its range and religious connotation “syncretism is a momentary state of mixture between two or more different religions, but this is a temporary balance in a process which can lead in any direction – whether toward further accretive mixture or toward the unraveling of past syntheses” (Stewart, 1995:30). Herskovits was the anthropologist who used the concept in the study of black people in the Americas (with a special focus on the United States), whom combined with European influences, created syncretism. The interesting point in Herskovits approach to the term is that it entails a more developed interaction than acculturation, denoting and allowing a combination of cultural traits with a consequential result. He states, “The conclusion that we reach is that in Africa, as in the New World, the cultural process that will be operative will be those of addition and synthesis to achieve congruence with older forms, rather than of subtraction and substitution, with their resulting fragmentation” (Herskovits, 1941:xxvii). Even though Herskovits considered transculturation to be like acculturation to some extent, this statement made by him connotes certain transcultural and even hybrid elements. It is possible to distinguish in his explanation of syncretism the notion of a combination of old elements with new ones creating a synthesis

of cultural forms. It seems that in an effort to discredit transculturation, Herskovits, without realizing, used some key elements of transculturation in hybridity.

Even though syncretism in Herskovits terms explain a religious mixing, to address them as a simple fusion of new and old elements producing new ideologies can be misunderstood. Such an approach ignores the inequalities of the aforementioned element in cultural contacts: power (Young, 1995:23, Stewart and Shaw, 1994:7). This way of addressing cultural interactions by Herskovits as a simple “fusion” of old and new forms leaves behind the constitutive elements in human interactions and the notion of culture as “knowledgeable”. In contrast, the term hybridity used in postcolonial theories represents, as Bhabha has argued: “the sign of the productivity of colonial power, it’s shifting forces and fixities; it’s the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal” (1994:159).

André Droogers was right when he pointed out that power is decisive to understanding syncretism, something that in most cases is missing in acculturation and transculturation. About this, he argues: “for the study of religion and syncretism it might make sense to think of religious resources, represented by God, gods, spirits, saints etc. Within religions, human power may be exercised through the management and control of these resources” (Droogers, 1995:42). The term syncretism fitted well in explaining the religious cultural mixing during the colonial encounter in Mesoamerica. In this sense, the role of religion as an institution of power was crucial when analyzing cultural encounters. Nancy Farriss considers religious syncretism as having a “chameleon nature” in the Mayas against the Catholic religion mentioning that:

“Rather than simply addressing their community gods through Christian standards, the Maya had given them a dual identity, smuggling idols into churches and also giving saint’s names to the idols that they were at the same time worshipping in the caves, where they had no need for pretense. Indeed, the Catholic clergy found these syncretic mutations, whenever they learned of them, even more offensive than unadulterated paganism” (Farriss, 1984:313).

Analyzing this statement with the different terms mentioned earlier, the term acculturation would not be valid to use since there is a clear mutual

interactional between Maya idolatry and Christian elements. There is a “response” by the Mayas to the external influence of the Catholicism through the “hidden” practice of worshipping. Transculturation would be risky to use since the element *power* is present making the unequal interaction between indigenous Mayas and the Spanish evident. Droogers and Greenfield question the aim of syncretism with two questions; “whether syncretism should refer to the end result of mixing or to a continuing process? Should the focus of investigation be only on the eventual outcome or on the process with the assumption that it always will be continuing to produce new syntheses?” (Droogers and Greenfield, 2001:31). These questions may be valid for any explanatory model like acculturation, transculturation, hybridization, and so on. The cultures are not static, but they are in continual change and movement, an ongoing process that needs to be re-thought constantly. Syncretism is a practical term with many possibilities in explaining cultural encounters. However, social sciences have limited its use to explain only religious interactions.

Hybridity and Third Space

The term hybrid (*ity*) has its origins in biology and botany domains. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines hybrid as follows:

< Latin *hybrid*, more correctly *hibrida* (*ibrida*), offspring of a tame sow and wild boar; hence, of human parents of different races, half-breed.

A. n.

I. The offspring of two animals or plants of different species, or (less strictly) varieties; a half-breed, cross-breed, or mongrel.¹⁴

The definition in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary includes: a person whose background is a blend of two diverse cultures or traditions.¹⁵ These definitions give different forms from which to address the term, not just within biology, but also in social contexts. Considering that societies are mobile and dynamic, all cultures and identities are intermixtures linked

14. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/89809?redirectedFrom=hybrid#eid>

15. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hybridity>

to historical circumstances turning them into hybrids. This idea entails the notion that there are no “pure” cultures, as Bhabha has argued, but an intermixture of elements that arise in an ambivalent space of enunciation, (1994:55). Thus, and as Fahlander has mentioned: “This hybrid nature of social collectives makes any claim of hierarchical “purity” of cultures as well as concepts such as syncretism, cultural synergy and transculturation untenable” (2007:22). Lewellen points out an issue when it is related to the biological model of hybridity: “biological hybridity of plant offers, at best, an imperfect metaphor for human identity. In biological terms, “hybridity usually denotes only two parents, often with sterile offspring, whereas the human variation is much more complex” (Lewellen, 2003:162). In social domains, Fernando Ortiz began with this “natural analogy” and to some extent laid the foundation of his model of transculturation. A racial overtone characterized hybridity during the nineteenth century which was related to a clear negative implication applied to all kinds of interracial subjects. “Race and hybridity was treated as being the equivalent of biologically different species whose intermingling was problematic, dangerous and scandalizing” (Fludernik, 1998:20).

The huge expansion of imperial capitalist power during the nineteenth century was decisive in the development of race theories, which in the beginning were related to hybridity and organic metaphors used by naturalists and biologists. An effect of this was the increased interests in racial differences and racial mixture that was the product of colonialism and enforced migration. Historically, the word hybridity took importance during the nineteenth century in British scientific circles to refer to a physiological phenomenon, while in the twentieth century it described a cultural one, as Young has argued (1995:6). The term was used in topics that explained hybridity as the result of the mixture of two species, or in contexts of the question of human fertility. Because of the increased debates about the different varieties of human species, the term shifted from a biological to a social context to strengthen such ideas.

Using this term in social contexts, Bhabha defines hybridity as “the sign of the productivity of colonial power, it’s shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal... [Hybridity] is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects” (Bhabha 1994:159).

Thus, hybridity discloses the “weak point” in the colonial situation showing that the colonial dominant discourse lacks a “taken-for-granted” historical authority. In other words, the notion that despite there being a preponderant power, the colonial policy was not at all as unidirectional as the acculturation models presented. In contrast with the terms exposed earlier, hybridity has the capability to question the colonial power of hegemony, allowing the colonized to represent a conscience of “self,” and at the same time creating a mock-up of the colonial authority. Bhabha argues that,

“for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the “third space” which enables other positions to emerge. The third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and set up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom” (1990: 211).

Hence, the third space has the possibility to question the history, the *Western* history, breaking with the colonial discourse of the colonizer. Bhabha uses the keyword “displace” to question the role of the people “without history”; the indigenous people, the subalterns, the poor, the “wretched of the earth” paraphrasing Fanon, those who history has silenced. In the words of Bhabha; “hybridization is the result of the colonial power in term of production, rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions” (1994:160). This is one of the main differences between the terms mentioned earlier and hybridity and third space. The colonial situation is in constant change and it is neither passive nor unidirectional. Thus, in postcolonial discourse, the colonizer’s culture, far from being a simple oppressive force upon the colonized, is open to ambivalence and is changeable. Hybridization can also be understood, as the result of deviations and subversion of the dominant culture with a colonial reproduction of indigenous features. This combination is neither self nor other, Bhabha explains: “the transformational value of change lies in the rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are *neither the One, nor the Other but something else besides*, which contests the terms and territories of both” (ibid: 41).

A core element in the postcolonial thought is the emphasis on culture. Whereas old critical models of colonialism focus on economic and political

aspects, postcolonial theories emphasize culture: “architecture, habits of dress and forms of ritual associated with domination and resistance” (Gosden, 2001:234). This third space of emancipation is, according to Bhabha, a “productive space” in the spirit of alterity and otherness, which set the basis for the construction of culture as cultural *difference*, not cultural *diversity*. He understands the later as “an epistemological object – culture as an object of empirical knowledge – whereas cultural difference is the process of the enunciation of culture as “knowledgeable”, authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification” (1994:50).

With the notion of hybridity Bhabha proposes the creation of a non-centralized third space located beyond the normative binary categories between “Self” and “Other”. This *passage*, must be located in the cultural boundaries of any society that interacts with others, since “it is here where meanings and values are (mis)read or signs are misappropriated” (ibid). The third space offers the colonial subject an alternative situation of enunciation; it allows it to leave the traditional bipolarity between colonized-colonizer, donator-receptor and instead of inverting the colonial categories, the postcolonial subject defines and represents itself out of this bipolarity. Bhabha comments: “The intervention of the Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroy this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code” (Bhabha 1994:54). What is important in Bhabha’s hybridity is the representation of the colonial situation not as a dichotomous struggle between center-periphery or colonizer-colonized (as in Said’s *Orientalism*), he propose a model in which this division is ambivalent, showing that the periphery is part of the center; fused, inseparable from each other, in other worlds *hybrid*. In the colonial situation a destabilization of authority arises giving place to a hybrid place that Matthew Liebmann argues: “provides a foreground for the issues of power and inequality inherent in colonial societies, stressing the empowering nature of transcultural forms that often make space for anticolonial resistance through the challenging of binary categories” (2008:5).

Bhabha’s work is based on psychological analysis of the colonial situation, which in turn is based on Fanon and Lacan psychology. Two important terms are used by him to examine how cultures are re-presented, re-produced, and

authorized when they meet in colonial contacts; ambivalence and mimicry. The former represents a struggle between desire and hate, the dichotomy between attraction and repulsion (Fludernik 1998:38; Young 1995:161). Bhabha's mimicry is based on Lacan's natural model in which some organisms have it as a defensive strategy. To him, mimicry is not just about adaptation to the environment, but rather a complex system in which camouflage gains importance. He argues "The effect of mimicry is camouflage, in the strictly technical sense. It is not a question of harmonizing with the background but, against a mottled background, of becoming mottled- exactly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare" (Lacan, 1991:99). As result of this struggle of opposites, mimicry emerges as a stereotype of an "incomplete" or "virtual" colonial subject, "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha 1994:123). Thus, the establishment of a hybrid identity corresponds with the notion of mimicry. This ambivalence of mimicry (almost the same, but not quite) relies on the psychoanalytic ambivalence of opposite projections, but is determined politically by the power relationships within the colonial arena:

"The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which "appropriates" the Other as it visualizes power" (ibid:122).

Thus, the colonized should become like the colonizer, but in an ambivalent way remain different. At the same time, with the destabilization of the colonial discourse product of mimicry, the colonizer sees traits of himself in the colonized but in an uncompleted and grotesque way. Moore-Gilbert argues that "In this sense mimicry express the "epic" project of the civilizing mission to transform the colonized culture by making it copy or "repeat" the colonizer's culture" (1997:120), but in a failed way. Mimicry can be seen as a subversive strategy that menaces and disarticulates colonial discourse, "The menace of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupt its authority" (Bhabha 1994:126). Mimicry created between the colonizer and the colonized can be seen as an outcome of acceptance and rejection between them, and as the

establishment of new modes of self-representation and social management. Something similar is explained by the Resilience theory as “the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks.”(Walker et al., 2004:2). Jacob Sauer (2015) uses this model in *The Archaeology and Ethnohistory of Araucanian Resilience*, putting emphasis on the flexibility of a system, as well as its adaptability and transformability as directed by goal-oriented actors and their ideology (2015:34).

Transporting the idea of hybridity and mimicry in one example on the Yucatán Peninsula, Nancy Farriss exposed the case of hybrid outcomes of Christianity and paganism between indigenous Mayas in Yucatán. In her article *Sacred Power in Mexico: the case of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Yucatán* (1993), she explain the way the Maya and the Spanish friars created an ambivalent environment characterized by mockery. Through sacrifices, the Mayas had fulfilled a social necessity in terms of cosmological and political significance. Rituals between many cultures have had the function of keeping order, and the way to achieve this is through symbolic and phsyical sacrifices. As mentioned by many scholars, the religious conversion process in Mexico was an imposition to eradicate the prehispanic religion (e.g. Miller and Farriss, 1979:236, Restall, 2003:74-75, Gibson, 1964:98). The Yucatán Peninsula was not the exception and the reaction of the Maya against this form of power was through the continuity of their ritual in a secreted way; with the performances of some of their rituals and sacrifices done in caves. In 1562, the friars discovered sacrificial remains associated with pagan rituals in a cave at the south of the city of Mérida, including dogs, wild pigs, turkeys, and even human beings offered to pagan images made of stone, clay, or wood (Farris 1993:149-150). This event produced dismay between the friars since the main participants of the sacrifices belonged to the Maya elite, the most distressing fact being that many Christian elements were included in these sacrifices. She explains:

“The Maya conducted many of their sacrifices and feast at night in the churches themselves or sometimes in the church yards in front of the crosses erected there. They sometimes used the sacred vessels of the mass. Most horrifying of all, they added crucifixion to their repertoire of sacrificial rites” (ibid:150)

This attitude was the reply from the Maya to Christianity in terms of ambivalence, accepting the new God without renouncing their old gods. The Maya –she continues- adopted Christian values and mixed them with their pagan idolatry, resulting in what the friars considered as a mockery of the Christian liturgy. The “vulgar” use of sacred Western objects by the Maya in their rituals is what Bhabha describes as “almost the same, but not quite”, the colonized made a grotesque copy of the colonizer, represented in this way by friars. This created a conflict in colonial discourse presenting an image of the colonizer *to* the colonizer, breaking with argued colonial authority. Farriss explains the way ambivalence arises in this case:

“Idol were brought into the churches and lined up on benches before the altar to witness and receive the sacrifice. ...Nor it was coincidence that the interlopers should sometimes use the Christians holy vessels, experiment with Spanish wine instead of *balche*¹⁶ for their ceremonial drink, and introduce the decidedly non-Maya gesture of genuflection while the priest offered up the sacrificed hearts to the idols, in imitation of the Christian mass (ibid:154).

In his definition of hybridity and third space, Bhabha introduced the notion of cultural translation in the light of Walter Benjamin’s previous exploration of the task of translation, to exemplify the cultural “conversion” in which colonizer-colonized interacts. Bhabha relates this term to postcolonial theories as a manner in which to manifest an intangible but constant process between conflicting historical experiences that enable the transformation of cultures. He applies this term stating that, “By translation I first of all mean a process by which, in order to objectify cultural meaning, there always has to be a process of alienation and of secondariness *in relation to itself*. In that sense there is no “in itself” and “for itself” within cultures because they are always subject to intrinsic forms of translation” (Bhabha, 1990:210). In broad terms, translation explains the conflictive relation between content and languages that experience a new representation. This process, however, is not only lingual, but is a complex cultural matter that expresses the unequal relation of power in the dialogue between colonizer-colonized resulting in elaborated cultural

16. Maya’s ceremonial drink made from fermented honey and the bark of some trees.

representations and enunciations. Benjamin suggests that translation is not a passive one-way process that tends to inoffensively reproduce the original in another language. Rather, translation is an active and aggressive process that challenges the purity and unity of the original.

“even when all the surface content has been extracted and transmitted, the primary concern of the genuine translator remains elusive. Unlike the words of the original, it is not translatable, because the relationship between content and language is quite different in the original and the translation” (Benjamin, 1992:76).

In his work, Benjamin breaks down with the traditional concept of hierarchical structures giving to the original certain priority and leaving the translation in a lower position; however, they remain interdependent. The transfer of content can never be complete, and the process itself will always remain unfinished. Translation stops purely being the transfer or transmission of form and content, and can also be understood as a transformation. This is how the process of translation, which Eriksson suggests alters and challenges the meaning of symbols and narratives, is the “unreflective and unconscious part of the mimicry appropriations, which facilitates the upholding of the “illusions of boundedness” (2002:65).

Translation and hybridization are conceptualized as a fundamental processes in developing the very idea of colonialism. This process is also crucial to current efforts at reshaping the colonizer-colonized discourse. The violent introduction of Christian values in the Mesoamerican civilizations brought translation/hybridization into contact situations, establishing them as part of the consolidation of a mercantile economy, slavery, and conversion to Christianity. The Christian mission proclaimed from Rome, implemented by Spain and Portugal in the New World and elsewhere, was translated to a useful and necessary tool for the spiritual conversion of the indigenous people. This conversion necessarily relied on, and was inseparable from, translation and hybridization of cultural values. Further, translation in the service of conversion was marked by a value system and a structure of power of the “right religion” and of the “true word”. Structured by the colonialism of power, translation became unidirectional and hierarchical and, consequently, a pillar for the foundation

and reproduction of hierarchical dichotomies imposed in certain rules and directionalities in the colonial discourse.

An important feature to consider when analyzing these terms is the concept of space. In analysis related to cultural interactions space becomes a core feature as both a cause and an effect of social life. The geographical context shapes the ways the people formulate knowledge, relate to nature, undertake production, organize governance, construct identities, and form societies. These features are far from metaphors and imagination.

Space and place has played a significant role in archaeology, having different definitions. Preucel and Meskell (2008) point out that space is commonly defined as a natural and physical science concept in which everything occurs. While place can be considered to be the outcome of the social process of valuing space, being the product of the imaginary, of desire, and the primary means by which we articulate with space and transform it into a humanized landscape (Preucel and Meskell, 2008:215). This binary point of view is questioned by scholars like Lefebvre and Foucault who manage to break this opposing view. Henri Lefebvre argues about space:

“It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. At the same time there is nothing imagined, unreal or “ideal” about it as compared, for example, with science, representations, ideas or dreams” (Lefebvre 1991:73).

The hypothesis formulated in the mid-seventies by Lefebvre in his book *The production of Space* raises the possibility for a knowledgeable space, which does not have the space itself as an object of study –doubting its existence as an object, in terms of human perception–, but a productive process whereby the space reaches its location simultaneously at different levels: *perceived*, *conceived* and *lived space* (Lefebvre, 1991:38-40). According to Lefebvre: “the knowledge sought here is not directed at space itself, nor does it construct models, typologies, or prototypes of spaces; rather, it offers an exposition of the *production of space* (ibid: 404). Lefebvre’s approach –and his different levels of space– is important because the notion of the Bhabhalian ambivalence arises in combination with representation of space (*conceived*) and in the representational space

(*lived*), creating a dialectic relation of dominant and dominated space in any society (ibid:38-9). Despite that this model seems to fail in binary categories (self-other, local-global), Lefebvre manages to include a third element in his ambivalent space with the presence of the Other that breaks down the binary opposition, something comparable to Bhabha's third space. Lefebvre argues:

“Les rapports à trois termes ne seraient-ils pas inépuisables? Partout où l'infini se joint à la finitude il y a trois dimensions... Y a-t-il jamais un rapport à deux termes, sinon dans la représentation? On est toujours trois. Il y a toujours l'autre”¹⁷ (Lefebvre, 1980:143).

Soja argues that: “Whenever faced with such binarized categories.... Lefebvre persistently sought to crack them open by introducing an -Other term, a third possibility or “moment” that partakes of the original pairing but is not just a simple combination or an “in between” position along some all-inclusive continuum” (Soja, 1996:60). To some extents, this third element is possible to equate, with the hybridity created in Bhabha's third space and the emergence of ambivalence. It is in the conceived space where materiality arises from an ambivalent colonized-colonizer relationship that is possible to observe in a hybrid way, affected and transformed by societies and their cultures. In his article, *Of other spaces* (1984), Foucault introduces the concept of heterotopias in contrast to utopia, recognizing the binary tendency of addressing space, and proposing that there is another place where temporality and spatiality joins and gives sense to daily life, where the geographical location of things and the spatial imagination of them converge meaning. Utopias to Foucault are places with an inverted analogy of the real space of society; in contrast, he argues that,

17. “The relation of three words would not be inexhaustible? Wherever the infinity joins the finitude there are three dimensions... Will there ever be a relationship between two terms, other than in the representation? It is always three. There is always the Other” (Translation by author).

“There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias heterotopias” (Foucault, 1984:48).

What is important in Foucault’s idea of space is that the heterotopia manages to break with the binary model conceiving a third space of analysis; the spatial dimension in accordance to its importance with the historical and the social dimension. In his idea of space, Foucault also explores the history of architecture associated with power and space, in terms of discipline. However, Foucault’s discipline does not necessarily mean power, rather it is one way to practice power. In his book *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison* (1979), he looks into how the particular architectural features of buildings maintain the power of one group over another, with special attention paid to the body-dynamic between the individuals within such buildings and their surveillance, “Thus discipline produced subjected and practiced bodies, ‘docile’ bodies” (1979:138). Thus, architecture to him is a kind of political technology related with knowledge and power.

Sevil Tirpan (2013) retakes part of Lefebvre’s argument, pointing out that architecture is an important element in the production of space which is possible to address on the basis that, “conceived (organization of space), built (construction of space), and lived (use of space) simultaneously communicates larger sociocosmic common conventions within the society” (Tirpan, 2013:472). The dynamic created in the colonial situation modifies the space, giving place to what is called “deterritorialization” of the culture. Formulated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), and in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), the term is used to refer to the general weakening of the ties between culture and place, to the displacement of cultural subjects and objects from particular or permanent locations in space and time. In terms of postcolonial theories, the new and hybrid culture is defined and designed in a process that readily transcends specific territorial boundaries. The concept of deterritorialization points out the moment of

re-placement of culture in a new time-space context. At the same time, another space appears in a parallel way, that is, the re-territorialization. The term refers to the process of re-inscribing culture in new time-space context, or as Deleuze and Guattari states: “Deterritorialization must be thought of as a perfectly positive power that has degrees and thresholds (epistrata), is always relative, and has reterritorialization as its flipside or complement” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:54). From the postcolonial perspective, the third space is never simply *deterritorialization* but also *reterritorialization*, understanding this as a single phenomenon; one is included in the other. Although Néstor Garcia Canclini uses the terms hybrid, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization to explain social changes in contemporary Latin America, his terms are valid to use in colonial contexts. He mentions both deterritorialization and reterritorialization processes as: “the loss of the natural relation of culture to geographical and social territories and, at the same, certain relative, partial territorial relocalization of old and new symbolic productions” (1995:229).

As with any other explanatory social model, the terms third space and hybridity, and postcolonial theories in general, have weaknesses possible to criticize from different points of view. Some critiques have been raised which reiterate the fact that they, among other things, are inaccurate in explaining the result of the colonial experience for using “fantasy” and metaphors through the division between theory from political realities (e.g. Gosden 2001:249; Parry 2004:14-5; Young 1990:146), as in the case of Bhabha.

Mrinalini Greedharry suggests:

“As a result, his postcolonial strategies seem to depend too heavily on the critic’s role as a deconstructive reader and appear to best effect in the realm of texts, psyches and fantasy state rather than the ‘real’ world of colonial or postcolonial brutality (Greedharry, 2008:74).

Another critique is the use of an “unpolished” psychology based on Fanon’s work, which in turn lacks of clarity in his politicization of psychoanalytic theory and psychiatric practice (ibid:11). Based on biology, hybridity is a key term within mixed race debates, where it may appear as assuming

that “races” which become mixed are themselves constituted as essential and non-hybrid. The confusion and even contradiction lies in the fact that hybridity retains a cultural discourse of racial purity as has been pointed out by Young (1996). While the new use of the term in postcolonial terms implicitly rejects the idea of pre-existing pure categories. In order to avoid terminological confusions, van Dommelen (2005) proposes the use of the term hybridization as an alternative. The difference between hybridity and hybridization is to consider the latter as an “active form” of reproduction based on the social actors in the colonial situation, allowing them the notion of mixture. He explains: “Because it is through the social interactions of the inhabitants of colonial situations that the new traditions are invented and that the colonial situation is eventually shaped, “hybridization” can be used to describe such process of interaction and negotiation between various groups” (2005:117-118) That is, hybridization is the process in colonial interactions, and hybridity is the outcome of them.

Despite Bhabha’s third space being conceived as a “metaphoric space” where hybridity is located, it is possible to contextualize it in colonial contexts in form of material culture. This is possible to do in archaeology because the material culture with which the archaeologist works may be understood as the process and result of cultural negotiation and recreation. van Dommelen argues about this: “Taking material culture into account not only provides an alternative source of evidence, demonstrating why colonial discourse analysis can be problematic in historical and anthropological terms, but also allows us to consider representations of the colonial situation in another light and effectively to contextualize them” (2009:113).

Postcolonial theories and archaeology

In addressing colonial encounters from a perspective of postcolonial theories, it is important to point out some key aspects. Firstly, we have to remember that they are not theories, not in the scientific meaning of the word, but a series of philosophical proposals that attempt to decolonize the interactions and outcomes of colonialism. The works of postcolonial scholars such as Spivak, Fanon, Bhabha, Memmi, Said and many others, are based on the analysis of a vast array of literary and historical representation, ranging from novels, magazines, and films to political speeches, which

together have contributed to criticize the colonial legacy in contemporary societies. Michael Given for example, argues that Postcolonial theories are aimed to re-empower the colonized, at least in the analytical literature (2004:13). Thus, at a basic level, these proposals are aimed at challenging traditional colonialist epistemologies, questioning the knowledge and the representation of the colonized “Others” that has been produced in colonial and imperial contexts (Liebmann 2008:2). They can be conceived as a critique to modernity from the social edges or margins of the history. Despite this general view of postcolonial theories in contemporary situations, they can be used in different temporalities with the possibility to explain the colonial process in terms of materiality.

As we have seen, one of the main critiques of postcolonial theories is the alleged lack of materialization and contextualization (Fahlander, 2008:24, Gosden, 2004:7). Christopher Gosden explains this point about postcolonial theories, “Culture is approached through some of the tools of literary theory and cultural forms are often seen as text to be deconstructed. This has given the cultures of colonialism a very immaterial look, where materiality of culture forms has not been at the center of the analysis” (2001:243). This is a proper critique to postcolonial theories; however, the correct link between colonial representation and material world, can give archaeology elements to rethink the colonial situation. Katarina Streiffert argues that: “post-colonial thinking does not need to be based on texts, but can as well, if not rather – at least from an archaeological point of view – primarily be anchored to the material culture” (Streiffert 2006:321). Material culture in a colonial situation is a clue to understanding the different agents involved in it and the process of hybridization. Postcolonial theories and archaeology, offer the possibility to give materiality to the metaphorical conceptions of them. van Dommelen argues that:

“Despite the recognition that postcolonial theory suggests radically new ways of looking at colonial situations, there have been relatively few archaeological or anthropological studies that have placed them at the heart of their approach... As a consequence, the literary bias of postcolonial study has imposed itself on the social and human sciences, instead of being redressed by an emphasis on social practice, human agency and, of course, material culture” (2006:110).

In this thesis, Bhabha's concepts are not conceived as a panacea or as the best option in archaeology. The use of the terms hybridity and third space are far away from being the perfect model, and as we have seen they present inconsistencies. It is important to keep in mind that these concepts were created neither with the aim of being used in archaeology, nor were they created by archaeologists. Postcolonial theories and these particular terms are used in this study as an attempt to criticize the common models to describe the colonial situation (with its modern aftermaths), proposing a disruption in the Western colonial discourse. The aim is to rethink the way that different cultures and individuals meet, interact, and re-create new and hybrid identities giving meaning to the social and physical world around them, in this case the religious architecture on the Yucatán Peninsula. Archaeologists are the ones who decide to apply (to the extent possible) postcolonial theories in archaeology in order to explain cultural contacts in a particular time and space. Hence, we have to remember that modern situations can be difficult to compare with social interactions in a distant historical period, as Fredrik Fahlander points out:

“we need to recognize that most prehistorical social structures are much less institutionalized than the historical and modern day societies that Bhabha discusses. It would be ridiculous to expect a similar kind of colonial machinery at work in prehistory as in Bhabha's examples. Nonetheless, his notions of the varied results of third space encounters (misunderstandings, mimicry etc...) may still be valid” (2007:29).

Much of the existing concepts about colonialism tend to oversimplify European colonialism into a single homogenous and monolithic model with a dualist perspective of colonized-colonizer. This kind of analysis involves only a partial understanding of the dynamic created in colonial encounters as Said has demonstrated through an opposite and binary system. This model, however, leaves behind the premise that people living and interacting in colonial situations recurrently need to re-define their social positions, contributing at the same time to the re-articulation of the host indigenous situation, having repercussions on the colonizer. The process of blending subordinate and dominant cultures are characterized merely by the acculturation or assimilation of cultural features of the colonized,

rather than the full reworking of various external and internal constituent elements in colonial discourse. We cannot consider the colonial situation as a simplistic binary process of colonizer-colonized in a single and static place –the colony – but must reconsider colonialism within their regional and interregional context –the metropole. The postcolonial terms hybridity and third space used by Bhabha (1994) disrupt binary models allowing the analysis of ambivalent features in material culture in the colonial encounter. Since one of the aims of this work is a critique of colonialism in archaeology, Gil Stein’s model (2005) is as an attempt to break the binary and Eurocentric perspective that can be found in archaeology. He uses three key points in order to approach the colonial encounter: The colony, the metropole, and the host society.

1) *The colony*

The colony represents the arena of cultural interactions. Historically, colonies have been seen as the point of departure where negotiation, rejection, acceptance, and re-creation of cultural values take form to create something new and hybrid. When generalizing the concept of colonialism, we fall into the trap of considering colonial programs as a homogenous process with similar ideologies, agendas, political strategies, and dominance structures. Lightfoot points out:

“We need to keep in mind that each European homeland (for example, France, Britain, Russia, and Spain) had its own distinctive economic and political agenda for establishing colonies in the Americas, and that the colonial policies and practices of individual homelands varied greatly across time and space” (2005:210).

Westernism has presented a general view of the colonies as the *axis mundi* of the historical development. Daniel Rogers argues that they represent points of economic, political, religious and even technological innovation, being among the most effective, yet difficult to control tools of power hierarchies (Rogers, 2005:353). Economically, colonialism found raw material for the development of capitalism in the indigenous population and in the introduction of black slaves, as Stoler and Cooper state: “What Europeans encountered in the colonies was not open terrain for economic

domination, but people capable of circumventing and undermining the principles and practices on which extraction or capitalism development was based” (1997:5). To analyze colonial encounters in a monolithic way in which the colony is the core of social changes, untouchable, and as generator of influences to the periphery, we must assume the view of the colonizer as the main actor. Such approaches to colonies lead to addressing them in terms of center-periphery. This model was developed and conceived as the world-system theory, in which European expansionism over the past five hundred years created unequal distributions of wealth represented in a relationship of center-periphery and semi-periphery (Wallerstain, 1974, 1980). As many scholars have argued, this model presents some inconsistencies when it is applied to pre-capitalist societies and even during the Colonial period, minimizing the role of the periphery as passive agents of influences from the center, and excluding cultural variability in the colonial process (e.g. Wolf, 1982, Gosden, 2004, Stein, 1998, Rowlands, 1998b). We cannot forget that in colonial encounters, the colonizer and the colonized interact between objects, landscapes, material culture which gains value, and specific interests from both parts, “Not only the people are involved in cultural encounters, but plants, animal, bacteria, and other material elements” (Fahlander 2008:16). This approach gives the possibility of considering external factors in the development of the colonies more than binary models.

Lightfoot (2005) extends this idea by describing five parameters to be used when analyzing the colonies: *a) enculturation programs*, the colonizer commonly employed programs to transform the social, economic, political and religious practices of indigenous peoples. A cross-cultural approach may provide important insight into why some colonial strategies modified indigenous lifeways and others do not. According to Lightfoot, the use of brutal violence in missions in North America was used to alter the basic cultural value of the indigenous population. In so doing, the colonizer was able to “create a reliable, subservient labor class who would imitate, to some degree, the cultural practices (language, clothing, diet, work ethics) of the dominant order” (ibid: 213). This type of interrelationship connects us with Bhabha’s mimicry. As we have seen earlier, mimicry is the ambivalent response of the colonized against the colonial domination that destabilizes the colonial discourse, *almost the same, but not quite*, or

“the difference between being English and being Anglicized” (Bhabha, 1994:128). *b) Native relocation programs*, they worked to control the indigenous population by resettling them in new areas. In North America the Indian reservations, plantations, and missions are examples of relocation. *Congregaciones* or *reducciones* are examples of these relocations in Mexico. As I shall present further on, this colonial policy modified the landscape in the form of urbanism and architecture, generating different types of population movements such as flight, drift, and dispersal (Farriss 1978). Religion was an important element in native relocation programs supported by the Spanish Crown, and for economic purposes. *c) Interethnic unions*, it is practically omitted in colonial discourse – and the history in general – the role of women as a generator of cultural changes in social and genetic terms. This reinforces the idea of history as a sexist-man-based process, or as Kathleen Deagan argues “Nearly all historical and anthropological considerations of these inter-gender interactions have been in terms of choice and decision-making by European men in the colonial arena” (2001:192). A postcolonial approach of this point is formulated by Spivak who states that the male dominant tendency is present both as an object of colonialist historiography and as the subject of insurgency, “if, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even deeply in shadow” (Spivak, 1994:83). Marriages and interethnic unions played a decisive role in the development of the colonial process in any period promoting political alliances, creating trade relations, and more importantly, the hybrid offspring produced by the indigenous population and Europeans. Deagan shows the effects of these cultural interrelations in Spanish America:

“Non-European women were, in fact, a potent force for social integration in Spanish-American towns. Whether as wives, concubines, or servants, non-European women were brokers for European, Indian, and African exchanges within Spanish-American households and communities” (2001:192)

d) Demographic parameters of colonial and native populations. This point has to do with depopulation generated by the introduction of pathogens to the host population. The analysis of the outcomes of depopulation affected the colonial process in terms of numbers, sex ratios, and ratios

of individuals/families. This is important since according to Lightfoot the alteration in population ratios of colonizers to native can present obvious modifications for the kind of encounters that took place (2005: 217), and finally *e) Chronology of colonial encounters*. An important aspect to consider is the analysis of the transformation over time in the colonizer-colonized relationship, where the temporal dimension of the encounters is considered.

2) The colonial homeland or metropole.

The situation in the colonial homeland or metropole is crucial to understanding the dynamic created in the colony. In this case, fifteenth century Spain was a “multiethnic society that over the previous several centuries, had been the focus of invasions and colonization efforts by Romans, Visigoths, and Arabs who had significantly influenced Spanish society” (Gasco 2005:75). Historical circumstances such as genocide, dispossessions, and internal and external colonialism that have comprised so much of European history produced alterations in social dynamics in the homeland, possible to observe reflected in the colonies like the emergence of nation-states and the subsequent migrations. As Smith has argued “the numbers who rushed to these “new” worlds were not necessarily ready-made “dominators” but were often themselves victimized by rapidly changing economies or political institutions back home” (Smith, 1994:387). It is clear that the Western colonial policy determined the development of the capitalist system, which in turn produced a social reordering in Europe leading to social class divisions with the impoverishment of some groups and the enrichment of others. Sidney Mintz illustrates this situation by mentioning that the demand of sugar produced in the colonies was crucial to European working-class formation. Since its introduction in the American continent by Christopher Columbus in 1493, the fast expansion of sugar cane growing displaced the production in North Africa and the Atlantic islands of São Tomé and the Canary islands, affecting the European consumption. From the beginning of the Colonial period in Latin America, the production of sugar became one of the most lucrative activities, leading to the Caribbean cane-sugar industry being absorbed into expanding overseas European capitalism (Mintz, 1985:69).

Stoler and Cooper point out the tendency to separate the colonizer and the colonized into two different entities, excluding Europe from all critical analysis, of being the only way to address colonial situations in one direction: from the metropole to colony. The Manichaeic idea used commonly in the analysis of colonial studies is incorrectly used because: “Colonial regimes were neither monolithic nor omnipotent” (1979:6). It is also misconceived because in the colonial analysis, scholars tend to draw Manichean dichotomies between colonizer-colonized, falling in a repetitive circle. They argue that this is why “we need to think through not only a colonial history that appears as Manichaeic but a historiography that has invested in that myth as well” (ibid:9). Hence, it is possible to recognize that the dynamic in the colony affected the metropole, maybe not directly but in an indirect way representing a “continuous relationship of inclusions and exclusions” (ibid:3).

The relationship metropole and colony is an important factor that needs to be reconsidered in order to comprehend the complex dynamic between them, more than a monolithic view of the historical development of “colony-center”. One possible option for analyzing the metropole is to approach the changes in the host societies and their labor resources combined with the establishment and incursion of foreign colonies. In so doing, the understanding of the multiple agendas of the metropole and their variations through time can be possible (Schreiber, 2005:241).

3) The indigenous host societies in whose midst the colonies are established.

In this point the host societies must be considered as crucial and as having an active role in colonial encounters in the past. Which indigenous ideologies and influences existed alongside colonial agendas interacting together? This aspect might be difficult to apply because we cannot talk with dead societies in order to “know” their perspective. However, the use of interdisciplinary studies combining anthropology, ethnohistory, and the analysis of written sources is one possible way to address this point. One of the major attributes of archaeology is how the past is represented, and who is represented. In a postcolonial approach, historical archaeology has the possibility to allow the “subaltern speak”, that is, the indigenous societies.

Liebmann points out that, “historical archaeology has stressed the ability of material culture to “speak” for the marginalized and subordinated peoples often unrepresented in historical texts: enslaved persons, ethnic minorities, disenfranchised people, and illiterate members of society, known as subalterns in postcolonial jargon” (2008:9).

The analysis of written sources demands consideration of some degree of subjectivity in the information that requires reinterpreting. Liebmann continues mentioning the problem in historical archaeology when dealing with written sources, since these texts, “do not speak for itself; it must be given a voice by the archaeologist” (ibid). The deconstruction of historical documents shows the weak points of colonial discourse allowing new ways of negotiation and critique with the possibility for new interpretations. By its methodology based on written sources, American historical archaeology is one example of the subjectivity possible to find in the analysis of historical documents. Hall questions the mundanities of the “Small things forgotten” in Deetz’s discourse, arguing that, “the collections where with which we work were left by slave owners, masters, bourgeois householders and farmers. The underclass, often so difficult to find in the documentary record, are equally elusive in the material traces as well” (Hall, 1999:193). The colonized view is also important in the analysis giving another perspective of the same event, as van Dommelen points out, “the writing of alternative histories from the colonized point of view” (2009:108). The combination of these elements can shed light on a wider perspective in the archaeological work to understand the indigenous host societies and their worldview. Frederik Fahlander resumes this point mentioning that “the principal aim of such studies is generally to re-valuate the agency of colonized groups...but also to correct biased prehistory of neglected “subaltern” groups of today” (Fahlander 2008:17).

If we assume that the host society is not a passive recipient, but an active actor who has some degree of influence on the colonizer, then it will be possible to observe how it faces up to the colonial situation. Thus in a postcolonial approach, the colonizer’s culture, far from being the simple oppressive force upon the colonized culture, is open to ambivalence and is changeable. The resulting deviations and subversions of the dominant culture as well as the colonial reproductions of indigenous traditions are reflected in hybridization as “the effect of an ambivalence produced within

the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the sign of cultural difference” (Bhabha 1994:159). The ambivalence created by cultural interactions requires mobilization in the passage to a third space. According to Bhabha, all the elements in colonial discourse are ambivalent, and the meanings and symbols that shape it are neither static nor unitary making them possible to be changed, “translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (ibid:55). Thus, in analyzing the indigenous host society we notice that they affect the colony and the metropole since all the participants in the colonial encounter bring something from their own culture, all have influence and power (at different levels) that shape the colonial world. Maria Eriksson suggests that: “If read in terms of hybridity, colonization entailed – at the same time –both the creation and the subversion of cultural boundaries. Both the cultures of the colonized and the colonizers were refigured in the colonial process” (Eriksson, 2002:63). The colonizer and the colonized have inputs in a relation of power and dominance reflecting a relationship of displacement and resistance; therefore, power is inherent in all kind of relationships. Foucault states, “hence one should not assume a massive and primal condition of domination, a binary structure with “dominators” on one side and “dominated” on the other, but rather a multiform production of relations of domination which are partially susceptible of integration into overall strategies” (Foucault, 1980:142).

If we analyze the colonies not as the *axis mundi* of colonial studies, but as the location of cultural interactions of indigenous groups as active agents in social networks, our understanding of those interactions in colonial encounters will be wide-ranging and productive. Stoler and Cooper point out that: “The point is that colonial historiography has been so nationally bound that it has blinded us to those circuits of knowledge and communication that took other routes than those shaped by the metropole-colony axis alone” (Stoler and Copper, 1997:28). It is important in Stein’s model to consider the colonial situation in a broader context, rather than focusing solely on the colonizer as the core element in the colony. van Dommelen argues that the postcolonial approach mostly takes regional sociopolitical organization as its main object of study, instead of the simply acculturative binary relationship between colonized-colonizer, and finally he considers the importance of the “locally and chronologically situated nature of cultural identities and the meaning of material culture” (van Dommelen 2005:140).

Gosden states that most anthropologists and archaeologists have long recognized the importance of the colonizer-colonized relationship, but many have analyzed this relationship with the use of unidirectional, center-dominant models like acculturation or world-system theory (2004:13). We can start decolonizing the archaeology of colonial encounters by developing non-Western and pre-capitalist colonial networks into our comparative analyses in a way that does not assume a priori colonial dominance of the European kind. As Lightfoot states, “the inappropriate use the world-system model to analyze ancient states and their colonies exemplifies some of the problem of using a European-based model to interpret colonial practices in non-Western, non-capitalistic setting”(2005: 209).

Summary

In this chapter, the historical development of colonialism is addressed to analyze the different contexts in which the concept is used. Colonialism in the Americas represents a collision between two worlds in which global changes in economics, ideology, and materiality, formed a social restructuration in the Americas and in Europe. America was not discovered but rather invented, or more properly, re-invented under European canons; it was conceived as an “empty” territory with the possibilities to recreate an idealist land for the sake of modernity. The creation of the concept of *indio* was one of first actions made by the Europeans to differentiate in a racist way the inhabitants of the new world, justifying the conquest.

Due to its colonial origin, archaeology emerged as a Western academic tool based on the “knowledge” of the colonized world. A general view of colonialism is a key point in this chapter in the analysis and rethinking of the possible colonial baggage in archaeology, and how it may affect our perception of colonial encounters. At the same time, it is necessary to break away from Eurocentric approaches in the colonizer-colonized relationship and binary systems. A possible way to decolonize archaeology is through the analysis of colonial discourse and the deconstruction of history. As a proposal in decolonizing archaeology of colonial encounters, a postcolonial analysis including the colony, the metropole, and the indigenous host societies allows the possibility of addressing the colonial situation in a multidirectional way. In doing so, the common idea of the colony and the

colonizer as a core of the historical development is broken, allowing the “Other” to speak and recognizing the active participation of the indigenous societies, as well as the creation of hybrid material culture. Thus, changes in the colonizer’s culture by social interactions with the host society are evident and observable in the colony and in the metropole.

In colonialism, power relationships are unequal based on the colonizer’s authority. However, the term hybridity and third space shed light on new reinterpretations of the dynamic and changeable relationship between colonizer-colonized. Archaeological evidence in the form of material culture continues to be a key component in demonstrating the multidimensional contributions of conquered people to the recreation of colonial society, breaking away from binary models. Colonialism is neither a uniquely European phenomenon, nor a monolithic representation of Western hegemony and control over the colonized world. In postcolonial studies about colonial encounters, the simplistic directionality of an acculturative process is rejected, favoring instead a hybrid perspective in which the colonizer culture is affected by the host society. The methodology of historical archaeology distinguishes two objects of study: *prehistory* and *history*. This division may represent the negative effect of pigeonholing societies without writing as primitives and inferiors, denying in some cases their right as cultures to be recognized and treated with respect. American historical archaeology is linked with colonialism since its object of study has been the history of the Europeans and their descendants in the Americas, ignoring the relationship with the host societies. The combination of postcolonial theories, colonial encounters, and historical archaeology brings the possibility to question and rethink the history made by the Western about “itself” and about the “Other”. The use of postcolonial theories in historical archaeology and the terms hybridity and third space can be only useful in the study of colonial encounters if we can distinguish their impact and use them as a tool in the deconstruction of colonial discourse of past societies.

Resumen

El desarrollo de la teoría Darwinista del siglo XIX en Europa dió como resultado el surgimiento del concepto de “raza”, la cual vino a marcar de manera sistemática las diferencias culturales de las sociedades. Dicho concepto dio lugar a la creación del “otro” como objeto de estudio, esto es, la cultura occidental sobre la no-occidental. A su vez, vino a justificar el colonialismo Europeo como proceso constructivo de auto-conocimiento y reconocimiento basado en el “otro”, dándole atributos negativos como primitivo, inferior, débil, o femenino para así poder comparar, enjuiciar y colonizar. El término colonialismo no puede ser abordado desde una perspectiva monolítica basada en el expansionismo Europeo de los últimos quinientos años, sino en un proceso mucho más dinámico y con diferentes variantes. Esta visión Eurocéntrica solo nos guiaría a considerar la situación colonial en un modo unidireccional basado en la hegemonía de un grupo (colonizador) sobre otro (colonizado), como simple receptor de elementos culturales. Al mismo tiempo, el análisis de sociedades no-occidentales con modelos colonialistas Europeos presenta problemas de objetividad, ya que pretenden estudiar sociedades con modelos productivos inferiores a los desarrollados por el expansionismo Europeo después de 1492, dando lugar al capitalismo.

La arqueología derivada de la antropología ha desarrollado marcos teóricos para explicar las interrelaciones y sus consecuencias en los contactos culturales. Aculturación, transculturación y sincretismo cultural son solo algunos términos usados comúnmente con estos fines. Dichos modelos explican cambios culturales basados en modelos unidireccionales como la aculturación, o centrados únicamente en la religión como el sincretismo, siendo en general de poco alcance explicativo. Los términos postcoloniales tercer espacio e hibridación son una propuesta contra este tipo de modelos, ya que explican los procesos coloniales de una manera multidireccional y basada en cómo la autoridad colonial es desplazada y replanteada. El uso de las teorías postcoloniales en arqueología se enfoca igualmente en la descolonización del discurso colonial y en cómo el occidente ha sido el creador de la historia, escribiendo la historia de occidente, para el occidente y sobre el occidente. En muchos casos es posible observar cómo la arqueología continua cargando con un bagaje colonial en su metodología. Un ejemplo es la arqueología histórica norteamericana la cual desde sus

orígenes, se centró en el estudio de los descendientes de europeos en norte América, sin tomar en cuenta la participación de las sociedades indígenas. Un problema que encontramos en la arqueología histórica norteamericana es la división entre prehistoria e historia, basada esta última, en el estudio de sociedades con escritura. Dicha separación ha ocasionado en algunos casos que la palabra prehistoria conlleve matices discriminatorios contra grupos culturales contemporáneos como los aborígenes en Australia, degradándolos a niveles de primitivos. En el caso de México, la traducción de la palabra al español resulta confusa y difícil de incorporar en el modelo prehispánico establecido, ya que prehistoria se puede asociar con cronologías de varios cientos de miles de años en el pasado.

Uno de los objetivos de la descolonización de la arqueología ha sido entre otras cosas, la participación activa en el quehacer arqueológico de comunidades indígenas contemporáneas en ámbitos legales así como la repatriación de restos humanos. Hay que reconocer que se han hecho avances importantes en este campo por ejemplo en los Estados Unidos y Australia, sin embargo, la cultura occidental continua presentando a la arqueología como la única administradora y con derecho sobre la custodia del pasado. Tal es el caso de la Society for American Archaeology (SAA) en cuyos “principios éticos” se adjudica al arqueólogo como el “administrador” del registro arqueológico ya que, gracias a su “especializado conocimiento” puede interpretar dicho registro. Esta política obstaculiza en gran medida el objetivo de la descolonización de la arqueología cuestionado; quién es el dueño del pasado? Es el occidente el único capaz de entender al “otro” y de dar una explicación de su pasado? En una forma inconsciente (o consciente?) la arqueología parece mantener una posición paternalista y sobreprotectora sobre los grupos indígenas como seres incapaces de valerse por sí mismos, infantiles, y hasta débiles. Esta actitud la vemos de igual manera en el discurso colonial del pasado justificando la conquista y hegemonía occidental sobre los grupos indígenas, y negando la participación de éstos en la creación de identidad y materialidad implícita en los encuentros coloniales.

Uno de los argumentos principales de ésta tesis se basa en que al abordar cualquier estudio arqueológico sobre encuentros coloniales usando teorías postcoloniales, es necesario replantear cuánto de Eurocentrista pueden tener los marcos teóricos usados. El dejar de lado modelos unilineales y monolíticos en arqueología, es un paso primordial para poder aplicar

las teorías postcoloniales y así romper con la carga Eurocéntrica que en ocasiones ha predominado en la disciplina. Mi propuesta postcolonial ante esta situación es el uso de los términos hibridación y tercer espacio, así como un modelo basado en el análisis de: la colonia como tal, la nación de origen de la colonia o metrópolis y la sociedad indígena en la que la colonia está fundada. Al analizar esta trilogía rompemos con el modelo binario tradicional occidental, y debido a la compleja interacción entre colonizado y colonizador, la hibridación y al tercer espacio surgen para romper con el discurso colonial.

CHAPTER THREE

MAKING HISTORY

The term Mesoamerica is generally used to define a cultural area covering much of Mexico and northern Central America. The term was coined by Paul Kirchhoff (1943) with the aim of distinguishing different areas defined by cultural similarities and differences, and resulted in complex and heterogeneous social environments (Fig. 4). These cultural attributes are undeniably important in shaping local cultural adaptations and regional ethnic identities. After the passage from Asia to America ca. 11,000 years ago, human beings needed to adapt to the weather and environment to survive. The domestication of animals, crops, and the evolution of complex societies characterized by cities and a centralized state government, became one of the most important cultural transitions (Masson and Smith, 2000:1). Mesoamerica can be divided in two areas: the Highlands and Lowlands. The former encompassing Central Mexico and the latter the southern areas to Honduras and the Yucatán Peninsula (*ibid*:4). As Rosemary Joyce suggests, there is no single archaeological chronology that is employed by all archaeologists for all of Mesoamerica (2004:14). The archaeologists have divided up the Maya timeframe into five major different periods, which are then divided into sub-periods (Coe, 1971, Sharer and Traxler, 2006, Thompson, 2010). However, not everyone agrees with the same exact years for the different periods, since the detailed Maya chronology is constantly being refined at local and regional scales. Hence, the chronology here is an approximate rather than an absolute proposal.

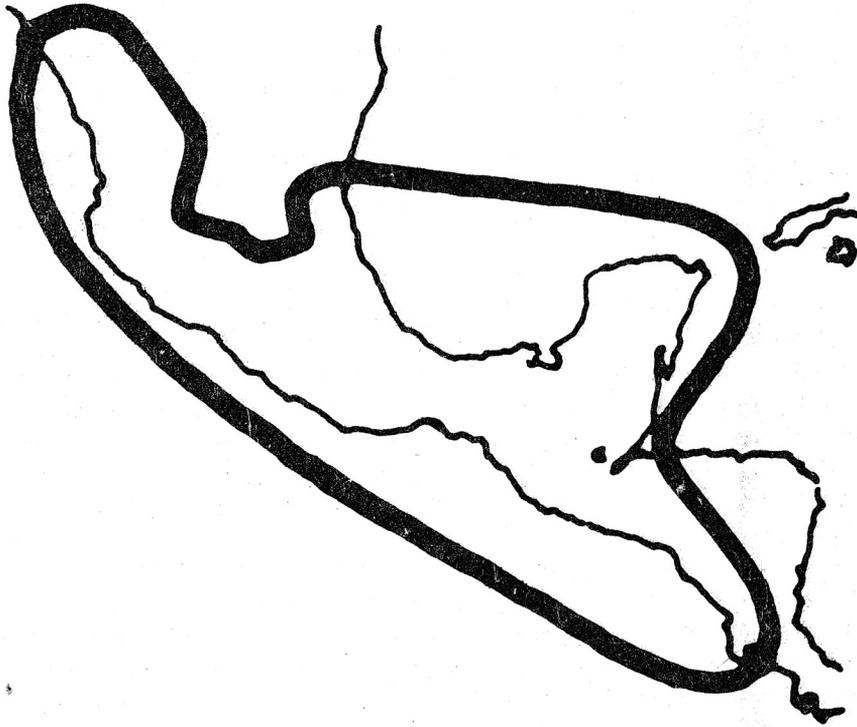


Figure 4. Mesoamerica. After Kirchhoff 1943.

Brief overview of Maya chronological framework

PALAEO-INDIAN (ca. 11 000-5000 BC)

There is a tiny amount of material evidence of the activity of groups of hunter-gatherers during the Pleistocene. This initial period began with the earliest migrations of peoples across land and sea from Asia into North America during the Ice Age. The land routes went through the Beringia land bridge while the sea routes may have followed the Pacific coast of Beringia and North America (Sharer and Traxler 2006:153). One of the most distinctive traits of this period is the presence of the fluted Clovis spear point culture. Judging from dated sites in Western North America, most sites were occupied for three centuries after 11.000 BC with a subsequent expansion towards the south with a well-established Paleo-Indian occupation in Mesoamerica and South America (Fiedel,

1992, Hoffman, 1998). We only have a little information about the original process of population in what would subsequently become the Maya area. However, data from Belize has shown evidence of a projectile points, excavated at the site BAAR 199 and termed the Ladyville Clovis Point, with an estimated date of about 10,000 BC, and the Lowe Point type, with dates of around 2500-1900 BC (Kelly, 1993:224).

ARCHAIC (ca. 5000-2500 BC)

The hunter-gatherer system was a transitional phase at the beginning of this period. The most important innovation was the introduction of pottery, used for storing, cooking, and serving food. After the end of the Pleistocene, people began to collect and eat a variety of plants like peppers, squash, avocado and early forms of corn. Agriculture emerged in the Maya lowlands of Guatemala between 4000 and 3000 B.P. with the presence of forest species and *Zea* pollen (Dunning, 1992:256). Despite the few archaeological works in the Maya area at this period, recent finds of a chipped-stone adze and tools in Cobweb Swamp and Colha, Belize (3000BC), indicate considerable human activity and permanent settlements.

PRECLASSIC (2500 BC-AD 250)

- Early (2500-1200 BC)
- Late Preclassic (300 BC-AD 250)

Agricultural villages were well established in many areas of Mesoamerica by 2000 BC, setting the stage for population growth and complex societies. Population growth only intensified competition and warfare. Population increases accelerated in some coastal settlements once maize cultivation was added to an abundant wild-food inventory. The growth of economic organization also spurred the development of complex societies (Sharer and Traxler 2006:160). The particular pattern of settlements close to rivers and coasts was accompanied by similar subsistence practices based

on a mixed economy of hunter-gatherers, and the use of domesticated plants such as maize and beans. Society became more complex as status and class divisions became more varied, defined by economic, political, and ideological changes, signaled by the emergence of large-scale public works, carved monuments, and distinctive evidence of warfare. The Late Preclassic period in the Maya area represented the downfall of a number of hegemonic sites, being abandoned, or having a considerable population decrease (Dunning, 1992). At the same time, the first signs emerged of a new power in the lowlands that would dominate the Classic period.

CLASSIC (250-1000)

- Early (AD 250-600)
- Late (AD 600-800)
- Terminal (AD 800-1000)

This period is characterized by social development and the emergence of big city-states such as Teotihuacán in the center of Mexico, Monte Alban in Oaxaca, or Tikal, and for the Late Classic and Early Postclassic period, Chichén Itzá in the Maya area. For many years, the Mesoamerican archaeology has seen Maya Classic as the intellectual and artistic highpoint of the Maya culture, highlighting styles in architecture, astronomy, and pottery. The development in hieroglyphic inscriptions, mythology and religion were important factors that were characteristic of this period. Architectonical features were characterized by a complex elaboration of the temple-pyramids model together with the dazzling development of a refined monumental architecture style. Political and economic centralization evident through the rise of cities like Tikal, Palenque, Copán or Calakmul.

During this period Maya towns were growing in population and, due to religious and political intensification, the large sites extended their political and economic influence over increasing distances with lineage-based power structures (Reents-Budet, 1994:2). Towards the end of 800 AD, following an intense process characterized by the flowering of the Maya society,

many of the main centers in the southern lowlands experienced a decline of population and political power. Historically, this period is known by the alleged “Maya Collaps.” There are many theories to explain this social phenomenon, but the reasons, which may have included plagues (Spindel, 1922), demographic pressure and overshooting of its resource base (Culbert, 1974), droughts (Shimkin, 1973), foreign interventions (Cowgill, 1964, Sabloff and Willey, 1967), the interruption of long distance trade (Rathje, 1973), and so on are not entirely known. Until recently, the abandonment of the most important cities in the region was thought to have led to a total collapse of the Classic civilization. There are, however, different approaches that suggest more about the “collapse” as a local process, rather than a generalized view (e.g. Andrews IV, 1973, Aimers, 2007).

The Late Classic was a transitional period to the Early Postclassic which was characterized by social changes exacerbated by foreign influences, invasion, and warfare (Andrews, 1990a:258). In addition, the Late Classic saw the rise of Chichén Itzá, one of the most important cities in the Maya area (Coe, 1971, Culbert, 1977).

POSTCLASSIC (AD 1000-1521)

- Early (AD 1000-1250)
- Late (AD 1250-1521)

All over Mesoamerica a significant constellation of changes were underway that distinguished this period from earlier ones. These changes included an unprecedented population growth, a proliferation of small polities, and an increased volume of long-distance exchange with an increase in the diversity of trade goods. The new forms of writing and iconography that started in the previous period are evident in murals like that in the Temple of the Jaguars and in the Temple of the Warriors at Chichén Itzá (Sharer and Traxler 2006:568-572). The fall of Tula and Chichén Itzá by 1100 AC marked the beginning of another major cycle of social changes. Migrations were another characteristic of the Early Postclassic by 1200 BC with a cultural expansion to the north of Mesoamerica that favored the

development of new trade routes (Evans 2004:422). During this period, the Maya civilization was characterized by a strong emphasis on trade and exchange, changes in the urban design of the cities, a considerable reduction of the labor used in the construction of public buildings to glorify the ruling class, and the introduction of new forms of political organization. The latter is demonstrated by the creation of a confederation of cities led by the city of Mayapán in north Yucatán after the fall of Chichén Itzá (Robles and Andrews, 1986, Roys, 1972, Roys, 1957). The Late Postclassic was a period of population growth across the peninsula and several central lowland settlements were reoccupied (Dunning 1992:71). Unlike the religion and centralism characteristic during the Classic period, trade conditioned the bases of a new social model, settlement patterns, maritime ports, architecture, and many other features emerged as an outcome of this activity. On the east coast of the peninsula, a consolidation of maritime ports witnessed the development of trade networks. Sites such as Tixchel and Champotón in Campeche, Isla Cerritos, and Chiquilá in the north of Yucatán, and Ecab, Cozumel, Xcaret, Xelhá and Tulum-Tancah on the coast of Quintana Roo are examples of these settlements and ports.

Despite the general view of the Classic periods as the “golden age” of Mesoamerica, especially in the Maya area, the negative view of the Postclassic period as “anarchical” and “decadent” by many scholars (e.g. Andrews IV and Andrews V, 1980, Freidel and Sabloff, 1984, Pollock, 1962, Thompson, 2010), has been superseded and is currently recognized as a complex and interactive period.

Historical situation before the colonial encounter

In order to address the Colonial period and the social changes that it generated, a brief view of the political organization on the Yucatán Peninsula at the arrival of the Spanish will be presented. The fall of Chichén Itzá motivated a transition of political organization on the peninsula. This fact led to several fragmented provinces joining together to create a confederation of prominent lineages called the “League of Mayapán.” The rise of Mayapán represented an attempt to forge a new state, which would rekindle the power and grandeur of Chichén Itzá. This is clear through its architecture, which retains some similar patterns to Chichén Itzá

(Proskouriakoff 1962; Smith 1962). Internal lineage conflicts motivated the fall and total abandon of Mayapán to Kʼatun 8 Ajaw (AD 1441-61) according to chronicles from the Book of the Chilam Balam of Chumayel (Sharer 2006:603). The dissolution of the “League” was an outcome of the fall, which in turn broke apart the confederacy in independent polities that started to develop local economies located on or near the coast such as Cozumel and Chikinchel. The fact that they were located by fluvial sources was important in the development of trade through a complex net of commercial routes. Several sites were occupied during the Late Postclassic on the coast of Quintana Roo which increased in size and number of locations (Willey, 1986:39). Although it is possible to trace back the Maya navigation to the Late Preclassic (300 BC- AD 250), it is during the Late Postclassic (ca. AD 1250-1519) that there was significant development of trade in the peninsula (Andrews, 1998:17).

Meanwhile, in the Guatemala highlands, various sites that had emerged in the Classic period gained greater political and commercial importance. Utatlán, the capital of the Quiche Maya, and Iximché, the capital of the Cakchiquels, functioned as important centers in the region until the Spanish Conquest in the sixteenth century (Coe 1971:157-8), following the decline of Mayapán in the mid-fifteenth century. The Spanish Conquest of the Maya area began with the first contact between natives and members of the expeditionary force of Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba, Juan de Grijalva and Hernan Cortes between 1517 and 1519, ending with the fall of the last independent Maya polity in Guatemala and its capital Tayasal in 1697 (Andrews 1993:41; Thompson 2010:367). Unlike the regions dominated by the Aztecs, the Maya area on the Yucatán Peninsula was politically fragmented and divided. At the arrival at the coast of Yucatán in 1519, the Spaniards found a political landscape formed by 16 independent and rival provinces or *kuchkabal*. The work created by Ralph L. Roys (1957) is core in any historical study of the region during the contact phase. He found that the provinces had three forms of political organization: a) a province governed by one *halach winic* with the title of *Abau* who also was the local chef or *batab*, b) an organization formed by several *batab'ob* who belonged to a single lineage, c) independent and loosely termed towns which resisted incorporation by being better organized than their neighbors (Roys 1957:6; 1965:669).

Nowadays there are new reinterpretations of the “Roysian” model such as that proposed by Sergio Quesada and Tsubasa Okoshi Harada. In essence they differ from the Thiessen polygon model used by Roys by assuming that native political units are not-box-shaped states; instead they resemble amoebas that fluctuated in shape as lands between towns were contested (Kepecs, 2006:212). The work done by Roys is undoubtedly valuable as it highlights the northern and western provinces, where colonial documentation exists. However, as Andrew points out, there is considerably less information about the provinces to the east and south, and little is known about their internal organization or the extent of their provinces (Andrew 1993:45).

The Colonial period; a “black box” in the Mexican history

Social and cultural traits during this period (1521-1810) make it possible to address the hybridity of the material culture, genetics, and identity. The main social categories that emerged during the Colonial period such as *Indio*, *mestizo*, *criollos*, or *mulato* created identity conflicts which are still possible to observe today. These conflicts have been reinforced by the Mexican archaeology as a state instrument to create a national identity based on the prehispanic cultures, but at the same time ignore the presence of contemporary indigenous groups, which are linked directly with those prehispanic cultures. The topics *encomienda* and *congregaciones* will be addressed deeply in the next chapter, but for now they will be mentioned broadly.

In the early sixteenth century, Cuba was the base of all the military expeditions made by the Spanish to the mainland. In 1519, Hernán Cortés led the first major military expedition to Mexico, landing on the island of Cozumel and advancing around the Yucatán Peninsula to Tabasco toward the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán (Clendinnen, 1987:16), eventually concluding the conquest in 1521. The Spanish subsequently settled their administrative and religious institutions on the remnants of the Aztec empire. During the colonialist process, the Spanish enforced the creation of an economic system called *encomiendas* and Indian labor allotments or *repartimientos* (Clendinnen, 1987; Gibson, 1964; Prem, 1992; Zavala, 1935). The early colonial economic system was largely based on the skill of the *encomenderos* (encomienda holders) in increasing indigenous labor for the mining of precious metals instead of agriculture. Legally, the *encomienda* was

an official assignment of indigenous societies to a privileged colonizer. It was considered a juridical institution which had an economic meaning over the productive land relationship characterized by the transformations that occurred until its abolition in the eighteenth century. Created in the Antilles and introduced in the New Spain, the law that gave validity to the *encomienda* was the *Ordenanzas de Burgos* in 1512 (Burkholder & Johnson 2010:136). The *encomienda* system operated not just as a destructive factor in indigenous communal property, but it also led to the emergence of the *haciendas*.

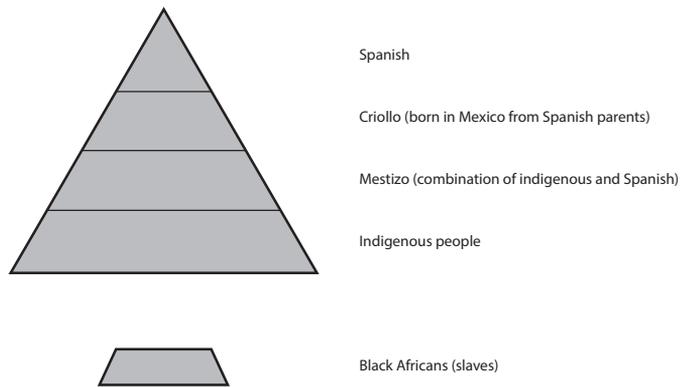
It was during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that Mexico experienced dramatic changes in demographic, cultural, and political spheres. A considerable decrease in the indigenous population as the result of diseases (Lovell, 1992), combined with the defragmented society product of the *congregaciones* complicated the ethnic situation between the indigenous people (Farriss, 1984; Gerhard, 1977; Gibson, 1964; Prem, 1984). New cities and towns were founded throughout central Mexico, served as commercial, administrative, and religious centers that attracted an increasingly Hispanicized and Christianized mestizo population from the countryside. The current Mexico City was built on the ruins of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and became the capital of the New Spain. The colonial society was stratified under the idea of race and wealth and became defined by four main groups: whites or Spanish, *criollos* (Mexican-born), *mestizos*, indigenous people, and a minority category forgotten by history; the African black slaves. Each of these social categories had specific rights or privileges and obligations in colonial society. Thus, the intermixture of these groups gave rise to the *castas*, who in turn were defined as inferiors by law and discriminated against in practice.

The Mexican identity. Entangled hybridity

This subchapter continues with the topic of hybridity, but now in terms of genetic mixture and ideology as an outcome of the colonial encounter. Despite the heterogeneity of indigenous groups in Mexico, the process of colonialism categorized all these groups into one single class: the colonized. The social and cultural diversity in non-indigenous groups during the Colonial period had many differences as well. These obvious differences are characterized by a history of power relations, and a struggle to accomplish a social place in the new and hybrid colonial order. Bonfil states that:

“no existe una cultura nacional unificada sino un conjunto heterogéneo de formas de vida social disímiles y aún contradictorias, que tienen como una de sus causas principales la manera diferente en que cada grupo se ha relacionado históricamente con la civilización mesoamericana”¹⁸ (Bonfil 2008:74).

The new colonial social order created after the arrival of the Spanish was divided into social categories that intermixed and created the *castas* system¹⁹:



As we see, there is a directional line pointing to the Spanish at the top. The distance varies depending on the social categories. Each of these colonial categories is different in terms of identity even when they are part of the same dynamic. This social *differenciation* is exposed by Bhabha:

“It is precisely in that ambivalent use of “different” that the Unconscious speaks of the form of otherness, the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement. It is not the colonialist Self or the colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness...It is in relation to this impossible object

18. “There is no a unified national culture but a heterogeneous group of lifestyles, unequal and even contradictory, one of its main causes being the difference in how each group has historically related to the Mesoamerican civilization” (Translation by author).
19. Of course, there are very complex subdivisions in the miscegenation in Mexico with the biological combination of these five groups. The idea is to present the main categories without going into further details.

that the liminal problem of colonial identity and its vicissitudes emerges" (1994:64). A cornerstone in terms of hybrid identity in Mexico is the concept of *Indio* or Indian. The *Indio* was a creation in the same way as the idea of America, as presented earlier. Its definition varies from biological aspects like race to linguistic terms. However, anthropology and the concept of culture has been the most used criteria to define *Indio*. Some examples from Mexican intellectuals in defining the concept of *indio* are: "Son indigenas quienes poseen predominio de características de cultura material y espiritual peculiares y distintas de las que hemos de llamar cultura occidental"²⁰ (Comas, 1953 quoted in Bonfil 1992:27). The Mexican anthropologist and archaeologist Manuel Gamio referred to *indios* as "Probablemente un indio es aquel que además de hablar exclusivamente su lengua nativa, conserva en su naturaleza, en su forma de vida y de pensar, numerosos rasgos culturales de sus antecesores precolombinos y muy pocos rasgos culturales occidentales"²¹ (Gamio, 1957 quoted in Bonfil 1992:27). The category *Indio* denotes the condition of the colonized making reference to the colonial situation. The *Indio* was born – Bonfil argues- when Colón took position on the island La Hispaniola. Before this event there was no idea of *Indio* between the local inhabitants of America who had their own identity. There was no *Indios* or any other adjective to categorize the population of the continent (Bonfil 1992:30). In this sense, the Europeans "invented" the *Indio* since the colonial situation required a general definition of the colonized as different and inferior. Even the Aztec colonialism and its relationship to the oppressed groups lacks the pejorative concept of *Indio*. Bonfil continues by arguing that there were some generic denominations like *chichimeca* used in a contemptuous fashion by the Aztecs to refer to the groups of the north. It is important to notice here is that the names used by different indigenous groups are associated many times with terms such as "the men" or "the real men" (ibid: 47, note 17), lacking the inferior or pejorative position that Western colonialism had.

20. "The indigenous are those who have a predominance of material and spiritual traits differing from what we call western culture" (Translation by author).

21. "An Indian is probably one that, besides speaking only their native language, preserves in their nature, in their way of life and thinking, with many cultural features from their prehispanic antecessors, and very few western cultural features" (Translation by author).

The mixture of the indigenous people and Spanish created the social category of *mestizo*. This new category is, to some extent, what Bhabha terms as hybrid. This new social category in the colonial situation is neither the European nor the indigenous people, but something ambivalent in genetic and identity terms. *Mestizo* is the disavowal of being *Indio* and the desire to be European. This conflictive colonial reality of *mestizo* differs from the reality of *Indio* and even more from the *Criollo*. In *Indio*, there is a conscience of *self*; to be *Indio*, meant having a very strong ethnic conscience. The *mestizo* fights with his “in-betweeness” in order to obtain a place in the new colonial order since he is seen as being rejected by both the indigenous world and the colonizer. Nature and culture plays an important factor in understanding this conflict in the colonial world; biologically the indigenous people could keep their genes by producing offspring with other indigenous people, they remain indigenous biologically. However, psychological and culturally they can hybridize too, transforming their ways of life. When we see the colonized- colonizer relationship in colonial Mexico, the *mestizo* presents a conflictive hybridity, being the intermixture of two cultures, indigenous and Spanish.

It was during the late nineteenth century that the concept of *Mestizo* emerged to define the racial and cultural identity of the nation with modernity as the main motto of the state. This combination of ideas affected the indigenous people drastically. The new ideology proposed by the state and the intellectual spheres was based on the idea that the Mexicans were the biological mixture of the indigenous people and the Hispanic races. This fact would lead to the homogenization of society with the progressive disappearance of indigenous groups and Europeans, as Knight has suggested. However, during the colonial period the *Mestizo* culture was defined as occidental without the acceptance of the indigenous part (1990). The problem arose when the *Mestizo* society recognized the archaeological monuments as a glorious act of their antecessors. Because Mexico had to be a fully modern nation, the *Mestizo* society was the group best qualified to study, reconstruct, and appreciate those monuments, not the contemporary indigenous groups who were not worthy heirs of the “glorious legacy.”

After a century of independence, Mexico desperately needed a new, coherent, and cohesive discourse that would effectively consolidate its

populace as citizens of a modern nation. Chorba argued that after the Revolution, the state and its supporting intellectuals proudly declared Mexico a *Mestizo* nation in their attempt to unify the multilayered society. This period of identity coercion has been contradictory in its postulations, since the reliance on cultural and racial identity based on *Mestizo* origins conflicts with the assertion that the Mexican nation began with historical events such as independence or the Revolution (Chorba, 2007:7).

The development of the colonial policy was obligated to solve social necessities such as administrative matters that the Spanish and *Criollos* were unable to resolve. The use of the indigenous society in these activities would have been risky because it would have represented giving them authority and power: the solution was the *Mestizo* social class. Even though they enjoyed a distinctively socially alienated position from the indigenous communities, in the beginning they had a subordinated function in the colonial society being “almost the same but not quite” as *Criollos* or the Spanish. This “advantage” however, motivated the discrimination and attacks on the indigenous groups by the *Mestizos*. As Lafaye point out: “Desde los primeros decenios de Nueva España, el indio fue la victima del mestizo. El clima de violencia que aún en nuestros días sigue siendo uno de los aspectos más llamativos de la vida hispanoamericana, tiene aquí su origen”²² (Lafaye, 2006:49).

The *Criollo* cannot be considered as hybrid at all, since they are biologically European or Spanish. However, they represent the first ideological hybrid sign of an identity purely “Mexican” even before the *mestizo*. Despite their social position in the New Spain, the *criollo* never aspired to occupy as high administrative positions as the Spanish. An example is the fact that there was never a *criollo* viceroy (Bonfil 2008:145); this position was exclusively Spanish. The largest concentrations of Spanish and *criollos* were found in Mexico and Peru, and it is estimated that by the mid-seventeenth century, there were 200,000 Spaniards and *criollos* in Mexico and another 350,000 in the rest of the colonies (Burkholder and Johnson 2004:120). The role of the *criollos* came to represent the emergence of the concept of *Mexicanity*

22. “From the first decades of the New Spain, the Indian was the victim of the mestizo. The climate of violence which even today remains as one of the most striking aspects of the Hispanic life, has its origin here” (Translation by author).

represented by the development of literature and history. Authors like Sor Juan Ines de La Cruz, Carlos de Singuenza y Góngora and Francisco Javier Clavijero are examples of the idea of what it meant *to-be-Mexican*. The Franciscan Clavijero wrote *Historia Antiqua de Mexico*, one of the most representative works of this kind using the words *Nation* and *Homeland* for the first time to distinguish between Spain; the place of the ancestors, or the Nation, and the land or place where one was born; the Homeland (Lafaye 1974:514). It was therefore the knowledge of the country (*homeland*) and especially the adherence to the colonial ethic of the *criollo* society that defined the *criollo* more than the nation (*of the ancestors*) (ibid: 41 my emphasis). The combination of *criollos* and *mestizos* consolidated the foundations of a national identity as “Mexican,” which together were the detonator of the Independence War in 1810, but without indigenous communities. These elements were important in the consolidation and beginning of the independence of the Latin American countries.

Riots and revolts by the *castas* existed in colonial times in Mexico, including the black slave Yanga in the state of Veracruz in the early seventeenth century (Aguirre Beltran, 1988), or the conflict in 1769 with some runaway slaves or *cimarrones* in the town of Amapa in the region of Cordoba, again in Veracruz (Proctor III 2010:125). Despite its name; *Guerra de Castas* (1847–1901), this uprising was not made by *criollos*, but it was a Maya reaction against the oppression of the elite classes on the peninsula headed by *criollos* (Earle 2007:85). Despite the existence of different *castas* and their places in the colonial social order; in some cases within the extreme oppression of slavery and misery in which they lived, they did not have (at least not documented) any kind of longing for a categorical identity independent of Spain, as the *criollos* did. More and more the *criollos* acted with a social class conscience unfairly treated by the Spanish Crown. To enhance this idea, they retook the national tradition, represented in some way by the prehispanic cultures like the Aztecs. At the same time the indigenous communities were more and more integrated to the “Mexican nation” sought after by the *criollos* (Lafaye, 1974:520).

The location of the Africans in the new colonial order in Mexico has been practically ignored by history. The cultural history of Mexico has largely been understood as the intermixture of Spanish and Indigenous culture traits resulting in the mixed population and hybrid culture. However, the

presence of the Africans is important as a constitutive class in the colonial order. According to Proctor III, around 1640, nearly fifty to sixty thousand slaves of African descent were brought to New Spain, making it the second largest slave holding society in the New World, second only to Brazil (2010:4). The development of the trade of Africans slaves at the beginning of the fifteenth century started not with the Spanish, but with the Portuguese and the establishment of slave markets in Seville and Valencia. Despite the conditions established by the Spanish who considered them as “animals,” “beings without soul” or “irrational primitives,” and the slavery they suffered, the indigenous people in the Americas had a “relative” advantage over the Africans. That is, through the right of conquest the indigenous people were automatically “vassals” of the Crown of Castile (Pagden 1982:33). It is well known that people like Fray Bartolome de las Casas, whom defended the indigenous rights several times by confronting Ginés de Sepulveda’s racist arguments, supported the idea of importing black slaves from Africa to reduce the pressure and abuses on the indigenous people (Pagden 1982:32). This example shows the racist conception about the African slaves in the middle of the sixteenth century by the same Church. Mexican and Latin America’s history in general has done its part ignoring the African slaves and their participation as active actors in the colonial encounter. Before addressing the material part of this work, the intention of this chapter was to briefly present identity as an example of hybridity in colonial encounters in Mexico. I will continue now with the colonial process and its impact in the society in terms of material culture.

Summary

Traditionally, archaeologists have divided the cultural region of Mesoamerica into five periods: Palaeo-Indian, Archaic, Preclassic, Classic, and Postclassic, with their respective sub-divisions. Historically the Classic period in the Maya area has been considered as the “Golden age” of the culture. Material evidence supports this idea based on the monumentality of cities, the development of the arts, sculpture, religion, and science. In contrast, the Postclassic period is viewed as the opposite; undeveloped and “decadent.” This idea is superseded nowadays with the recognition of the Postclassic as a complex period with a developed a complex trade

network and a high development of navigation, especially during the Late Postclassic. The Colonial period is important because it represents the cultural mixture between indigenous societies and Europeans. Despite its relevance, the archaeological works about this period are overshadowed by the Prehispanic period.

With the arrival of the Spanish to Yucatán in 1519, the peninsula was composed of 16 independent provinces or *kuchkabal*. The rivalry between them and the lack of political cohesion was determinant in the colonialist process with the introduction of economic systems such as *encomiendas* and *congregaciones*. The colonial encounter in Mexico gave rise to the social system of *castas* divided in four major groups: Spanish, *criollos*, *mestizos*, and indigenous people. Each category had a role in the society where the Spanish were the most privileged and the indigenous people were the most affected. In a pyramidal model the Spanish were at the top of the social hierarchy ruling the main colonial institutions. The *Criollos* were below and they were the ones who began with the notion of “Mexicanity” or to-be-Mexican, rejecting any influence from Spain. Underneath lay the *mestizo* as hybrid individuals, both genetically and ideologically, who lay “in-between” the colonial social order. *Criollos* and *mestizos* laid the foundation of a nationalist feeling that culminated with the Independence War in 1810. The indigenous society, or *indios*, were the lowest and broadest social category and have been discriminated against and racially categorized since the beginning of colonialism. In addition, and at the bottom of the pyramid, the black people in Mexico are an ethnic minority group who have been completely ignored by history.

Resumen

Cronológicamente la historia de México se ve como una línea heterogénea de desarrollo cultural. Desde la época prehispánica, los grupos culturales Mesoamericanos estuvieron caracterizados por una organización social particular representada en arquitectura, economía, religión y política. Iniciando como cazadores-recolectores, los primeros habitantes de América se asentaron convirtiéndose en sedentarios para así, desarrollar sociedades más complejas fundando pueblos y ciudades. Hasta hace algunas décadas la división cronológica del periodo prehispánico en el área maya se

caracterizaba por una tendencia clasista y hasta elitista valorando el Clásico como el periodo de mayor desarrollo social y cultural. Caracterizado por su monumentalidad, tamaño de las ciudades, y el desarrollo de la escritura y artes, el periodo Clásico atrajo la atención de muchos arqueólogos que se centraron en la exploración y consolidación de pirámides y templos de los grandes sitios con la finalidad de mostrarlos al público. Ejemplos son Palenque o Tikal los cuales son únicos por su desarrollado urbanismo y compleja arquitectura monumental. En el área maya, esta tendencia fue apoyada por arqueólogos que veían el periodo Postclásico – en particular en tardío- como el periodo decadente de la cultura maya. Estos prejuicios ahora superados, brindan la oportunidad de entender el Postclásico como un complejo periodo de desarrollo comercial en el que la navegación tuvo un papel determinante en la sociedad, abarcando no solo la península de Yucatán, sino el caribe y la costa centroamericana.

El periodo colonial en México se encuentra entre dos periodos que han mantenido mayor importancia histórica para México; el prehispánico y el periodo independiente. Comparado con el prehispánico, los trabajos arqueológicos de la época colonial son pocos y de poca relevancia para el Estado mexicano. La información que falta por estudiar sobre este periodo es vasta y más trabajos arqueológicos son necesarios para entender la hibridación en términos de material cultural. Sin embargo existe una razón de esto. A partir de la época independiente el Estado mexicano ha usado a la arqueología como herramienta creadora de identidad, sacando a la luz las culturas prehispánicas. Por el contrario, el periodo colonial de alguna forma no interesa ya que México era una colonia y los españoles estaban presentes. La independencia de México en 1810 es el otro periodo de importancia para la nación ya que muestra a un país libre y con una identidad propia. Sin embargo, cómo podemos entender el desarrollo cultural del México independiente sin entender primero el periodo colonial y el implícito proceso de hibridación material e ideológico que se generó?

El proceso de hibridación producto del contacto colonial se hizo latente material e ideológicamente. En lo material, la arquitectura religiosa es un ejemplo claro con la creación de elementos únicos como son los espacios abiertos con iglesias y capillas, sus atrios y la modalidad de iglesias abiertas. Estos últimos, ejemplo de la ambivalencia material entre lo prehispánico y lo español. En lo ideológico, el periodo colonial en México motivo la

creación de clases jerárquicas denominadas castas dividiéndose en cinco categorías: españoles, criollos, mestizos, indígenas y población negra. Cada categoría experimento su propio “ser” colonial como sucedió con los criollos y su deseo de controlar a la sociedad causando -como en el caso de la península de Yucatán- la Guerra de Castas. La categoría de mestizo es la más ambivalente y volátil ya que es un ser que busca un lugar en el mundo occidental sin separarse de su parte indígena. Su conflicto es que el occidente rechaza su parte indígena por lo que queda en un espacio in-between. Desde los primeros contactos con los europeos, la sociedad indígena ha sido la más discriminada y explotada. El término “indio” creado por los españoles vino a representar una categoría socialmente inferior que hasta la fecha no ha sido superada. Para poder controlar y dominar, el español categorizó al “otro” con el adjetivo peyorativo “indio”, y así diferenció racista y clasistamente las jerarquías sociales en el proceso colonizador. Por último, la población negra en el periodo colonial de México es un tema, más que desconocido, ignorado por la historia nacional. Resulta difícil imaginar a un conquistador negro a lado de españoles, sin embargo y a pesar de que fueron y son, una minoría étnica, merece ser reconocido el papel que jugó la población negra en el proceso colonial de México.

Con la conquista española, un parteaguas cultural motivo el desarrollo de una cultura híbrida manifestada material e ideológicamente. Sin embargo, la historia ha dejado al periodo colonial en un segundo plano de importancia, poniendo a las culturas prehispánicas como la fuente de identidad nacional. Como ha sido presentado antes, el mestizo y su condición social busca rescatar lo más valioso de su mitad indígena localizada en las culturas prehispánicas, la cual, combinada con su otra mitad que busca ser reconocida por la sociedad occidental, crean un sentimiento nacionalista. Junto con los criollos, el mestizo manifestó dicho nacionalismo reflejado en diferentes esferas de la sociedad como en el arte, música, literatura, etcétera. Muchos autores han señalado esta tendencia creacionista de nacionalismo en sociedades postcoloniales. En su libro “Los Condenados de la Tierra” Fanon comenta que el buscar identidad en el pasado es una forma común de crear nacionalismo. El menciona que:

“Pero, ya lo hemos dicho varias veces, esta búsqueda apasionada de una cultura nacional más allá de la etapa colonial se legitima por la preocupación que comparten los intelectuales colonizados de fijar distancias en relación con la cultura occidental en la que corren el peligro de sumergirse. Porque comprenden que están a punto de perderse, de perderse para su pueblo, esos hombres, con rabia en el corazón y el cerebro enloquecido, se afanan por restablecer el contacto con la más antigua y anticolonial fuente de vida de sus pueblos” (Fanon 1963:209-210).

CHAPTER FOUR

COLONIAL POLICIES AND THEIR OUTCOMES; THE RISE OF HYBRID MATERIAL CULTURE

Colonialism embodies power and control. Because of the dynamic of colonialism representing the practice of power extending its control territorially over a weaker nation or people, the colonizer requires institutions to control the colony and to consolidate its power: “one of the ways in which European colonization operated was through the spread of its institutions...military and religious institutions were critical to this success” (Laurence and Shepard 2006:75). Two types of institutions are observable in colonial Mexico: ideological and physical. The former represents the combination of external beliefs, philosophies or ideas brought by the colonizer to introduce them into the native way of life in order to transform and thus control the population. In contrast, physical institutions are the material structures like plazas or buildings that house the political, economic and religious body of the colonial policies; that is, the ideological.

Ideological institutions.

Undoubtedly, religion was one of the main ideological institutions in Mexico that was crucial to the colonization process. After the Aztec's demise in 1521, religion participated shoulder to shoulder with the Spanish colonial agenda, not just as an important part of society, but practically the core of the society itself (see Farriss, 1984, Gerhard, 1979). Through the clergies, the conversion of indigenous people to Catholicism was the goal of the Spanish Crown and the Church. The ecclesiastic organization in Mexico was composed of two clergies; the secular and the regular. The former was composed of the Catholic Church -parish priest, bishops, archbishops, and so on; while the latter was composed by three Mendicant Orders: the

Franciscans who were the first to arrive in Mexico in 1523, Dominicans in 1526, and the Augustinians in 1534, that is, friars or monks, abbots, provincials, generals, and so on.

In the center of Mexico, urban settlements arose in crops and mining areas during the first years after the conquest under the direction and control of friars who had a broad power when it came to dealing with indigenous communities, due to which most of the towns were occupied by missionaries or *doctrineros*. The administrative control of the regular clergy was dominant in Mexico. In the particular case of the Yucatán Peninsula, the Franciscans had control over almost all of the region. Upon arrival, the Franciscans divided the territory into four main administrative centers or *cabeceras*: Mexico City with approximately 80,000 inhabitants, Tlaxcala with 20,000, Texcoco with 30,000 and Huexotzingo with 20,000 (Piho, 1991:14). Since they arrived first, they had a considerable advantage over the other two orders in that they had the possibility to expand their influence freely. They started in the Basin of Mexico, continuing to the occident with Michoacán and Nueva Galicia and then advancing into the north and south. The Augustinians were the last to arrive, having to settle down in the gaps left by the Franciscans and Dominicans (ibid: 15). In Yucatán, the arrival of the Franciscans took place during 1544 and 1545 with two groups of friars, the first came from Mexico City and the second from Guatemala. With the arrival of these two groups to Mérida, the definitive establishment of the Franciscan province in Yucatán was consolidated by Mérida, Campeche, Valladolid, and Bacalar (Hanson 1995:17). As Lockhart and Schwartz point out: “Franciscans were the senior order and set the tone; the flower of mendicant manpower, fervor, and humanistic training poured into this first of the central areas to be occupied” (Lockhart and Schwartz 1983:110). By 1580 the Franciscans established themselves across the peninsula and as far south as Belize and Guatemala, controlling almost all of the regions.

Eventually the common goal of the “spiritual conquest” turned the religion into an important part of colony rule. Colonial features like education and architecture were essentially religious, characterized by the control of the main clergies. Almost every elite family dedicated a son or daughter to religious practice, and many social aspects fell under its rule: education, social health, public morality, urbanism, and economy, to name a few examples. The main goal was the rapid conversion of indigenous people to

Catholicism in order to integrate them into the growing society. This required discipline in terms of power that regulated the behavior of individuals in the social body (Foucault, 1977:215). This was possible through controlling the organization of space (like urbanism and architecture), time (schedules, programs) and people's activities and behavior (attitudes, drills, work). All this was carried out by a well-established surveillance system controlled by the Church and the Crown. After the conquest, the main task of the Spanish was the urbanization of towns and cities. The Church owned nearly all of the charitable institutions, such as hospitals, schools, and orphanages, meaning that they also ruled social welfare (Kubler 2012:275-288). Almost every aspect of society was ruled by the Church, and this benefited it to the point that in some ways it had more authority than the Crown.

Physical institutions.

The physical institutions created in colonial Mexico can be understood as the social forces and cultural context that exist within the built form. "Theories of the social production of built form focus on the social, economic, political and forces that produce the built environment, and conversely, the impact of the socially produced built environment on social action" (Lawrence and Low, 1990:482). Following a Foucauldian baseline, power and space represent an integral part in all relationships between individuals, that is, the social body. Space is fundamental to any form of communal life, and in any exercise of power (Rabinow, 1984:252). Every society (depending on its cultural and environmental circumstances) has a shaped distinctive social space that meets its entangled requirements for economic production and social reproduction. As mentioned earlier, Lefebvre suggests that social relations are decisive for the creation of space by stating that: "Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it is also producing and produced by social relation (Lefebvre 1991: 286). Space needs to be addressed on the aesthetics of experiencing places, that is, on works dealing with the sense of place from the realm of the humanities, architecture, landscape traditions, and the politics of experiencing places as hierarchical and dynamic territories.

Buildings are the result of social needs. They accommodate a variety of functions such as economic, social, political, religious, and cultural. Their

size, appearance, location, and form are determined not only by physical factors (climate, materials or topography), but also by society's ideologies, its forms of economic and social organization, its distribution of resources and authority (political and religious), its activities and the beliefs and values which prevail at any one period of time (King, 1980:1). In analyzing physical institutions of power in Mexico, we observe not only isolated buildings but also the combination of them, which in turn sets the basis for a complex urban system related to a colonial discourse of power. The new colonial urban plan –with its distinctive religious architecture– was the product of the combination of prehispanic elements and European influences. The Spanish took advantage of the existing native villages to define the new urban plan. This fact represents deliberate modifications in the landscape not only through the construction of Spanish churches on prehispanic structures, but also new settlements and the re-planning of villages and towns, as with the *congregaciones* system.

As I will present further on, the colonial urban model in Mexico started with a gridiron plan including public squares in towns, and long and straight main streets leading out at more or less right angles from a plaza fronted by the main religious building (Kubler, 2012:121, McAndrew, 1969:94-96). A main church built next to a central plaza with a government building on the other side was the main feature of urban space in towns and cities in the new colonial plan. The introduction of the gridiron plan or “*damerao*” with a rectangular plaza in the center represented the best way to control the population and introduce it into the Spanish cultural forms. At the same time, it was used to organize the new society as it placed the Spanish society at the center of the towns and left the indigenous population in the periphery. We cannot state that the gridiron plan existed in Mesoamerican urbanism in the same way as in Europe where it is easier to track. Rather it was the hybridization of these two influences together with the colonial necessities of the Crown and the Church to organize the colonial society.

In the analysis of spaces and the gridiron plan, plazas played an important role in terms of power and social dominance. In addition to their prehispanic use, plazas –together with the religious architecture– represented, and in many places still are, a symbolic trait of social control and power (see Low, 1996). Plazas were not exclusive to the Spanish authority during the colonial domain, but it is possible to find them in

cities such as Teotihuacán, Mexico-Tenochtitlán (Evans, 2004), or in the Maya area where the constructions of temple-pyramid complexes were linked to the plazas. Although Cuzco in South America lacks the straight streets of villages in Mexico, it is an example of a colonial plan with an enormous central plaza as the focus of Inka social life (Crouch, 2001:196).

As already mentioned, religion was significant enough to satisfy the social necessities of urbanism. We can observe that in colonial discourse, cathedrals, churches, chapels, and other religious constructions represented the main structures of ideological and physical control; however, these are not the only structures possible to observe. Communal hostels, cisterns, aqueducts, schools and hospitals are examples of the structures built by the Church. After churches, hospitals were probably the most important religious center of conversion (McAndrew 1960:622). For the indigenous people, being in a hospital was something similar to that of joining a religious order, since the healing process was surrounded by a religious environment. These structures played the same role as that of a church being an easy way to convert the indigenous people into Catholicism. We can see that the maintenance of power of one group over another can be represented spatially in terms of space, location and architecture.

Colonial policies of power; encomiendas, tributarios, congregaciones, and doctrinas

Through the institutionalization of power, the reciprocal relationships of individuals turned into a continuous negotiation of interest, reaching a level that included the relocation of individuals and transformations of the landscape as the outcome of the maintenance of control. The colonial power reflected in urban and religious architecture motivated the emergence of new colonial dynamics of control in towns and cities. *Encomiendas, tributarios, congregaciones, and doctrinas* are examples of these systems of control exercised by the Crown and supported by the Church in many parts of Spanish Latin America (Lockhart, 1983, Gibson, 1956, Clendinnen, 1987, Farriss, 1978, Cline, 1949). In Mexico, these policies were modes of production that promoted the development of a world economy from the fifteenth century onwards, affecting the contemporary European economy in turn.

The *encomienda* model was formally established in Mexico around 1523 by order of the Spanish king. Initially, the *encomienda* was a grant of indigenous people to a grantee or *encomendero*; he had the duty to “protect” the indigenous people and instruct them in the Catholic faith. In return, the *encomendero* could demand tribute from them in the form of goods, money, or labor. One distinctive trait in this system was the right of the conqueror to become an *encomendero*. The first *encomendero* was Hernán Cortés, owner of the largest and richest *encomienda* region; the Soconusco in Chiapas, the same tributary region was that controlled by the Aztecs before the arrival of the Spanish. Burkholder and Lyman estimate that Cortes had more than 115 000 indigenous people or tributaries in his charge, while Pizarro assigned himself 20 000 in Peru. In contrast with the high number of tributaries, the number of *encomenderos* reported in New Spain from 1521 to 1555 was only 506. “Peru never had more than about 500 and in 1555 only 5% of an estimated Spanish population of 8000 held Indians in *encomienda*” (Burkholder and Lyman 2004:124). The first *encomendero* on the Yucatán Peninsula was Francisco de Montejo who had also led the conquest of the indigenous Maya. Another way to become *encomendero* was the acquisition of *encomiendas* through inheritance by the son and grandson of the first *encomendero*. As Gerhard states, *encomiendas*: “were also given in dowry to son-in-law, passed on to widows, and occasionally sold outright” (1979:11). Due to the many abuses and extortions of the *encomenderos*, this system was followed by the *repartimiento*, which was an attempt to reduce abuses through forced labor. This system is usually referred to as the forced advance of cash for the delivery of goods within a stipulated period (Farriss 1983:8). That is, under the *encomienda* there was no pay at all for labor; for labor under *repartimiento*, at least some pittance for self-maintenance was enough to motivate the working individual to participate.

In the mid-sixteenth century, the mistreatments and abuses of the *encomenderos* led to the Crown administrator or *corregidores de indios*, and the secular clergy taking over the *encomenderos*' custodial duties. Hence, the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* were considered appropriate targets to control and exploit for several reasons; the indigenous societies during the prehispanic epoch participated in tributary economic systems, so although the Spanish altered the social order with the *encomiendas*, the indigenous societies, did not find this system entirely foreign, it was actually the

Spanish who seized this characteristic in order to control the indigenous population. Because of the hierarchical structure of indigenous societies, the Spanish managed to control a large number of the population through a relatively small number of native leaders (Newson, 1985:50).

Whereas the *encomienda* competed and progressively replaced the prehispanic social organization in Mexico, the dynamic was different on the Yucatán Peninsula. The indigenous Maya kept much of their original political system, which combined with the Spanish model of political office gave them some power over the rest of the indigenous population. As mentioned earlier, the Maya social organization was composed of three major forms by the time the Spanish arrived at the peninsula: the *halach winik*²³ was a centralized power of a governor called *batab*²⁴. This was a hereditary system with specific functions such as, head of war activities, judge, justice provider, religious activities, and the governance of the main and submitted towns by the *batab'ob*.²⁵ The second social organization was the settlements ruled by their *batab'ob* which in most cases belonged to a single lineage. The third organization was the most elemental and was similar to the second, differing in the fact that the *batab'ob* lacked the lineage and that the towns in war situations made alliances (Quezada, 1985:663, Roys, 1957:6).

The distribution of the *encomienda* changed this social order without changing the Maya social organization, mixing for example the *batab'ob* with a single lineage with those without lineage. It was after the middle of the sixteenth century when the Spanish started a new colonial policy to reorganize the Maya society based on the image and likeness of themselves. Thus, the words *halach winik'ob* and *batab'ob* were replaced with *caciques* and *gobernadores*, as in the case of the *kuchkabal* of Tutul Xiu; don Francisco Montejo Xiu, who was denominated as gubernator of his town and several *batab'ob* in 1557 (1985: 669). Subsequently the town council was replaced by *cabildo* and other Spanish official titles appeared such as *alcalde*, *regidores*, *mayordomo*, or *alguaciles* (Farriss 1984:232). In 1566 the towns of Tacul and Homun, which were dependent of the towns of Maní and Hocaba, already

23. *Halach*: real man, *winik*: man

24. Local head

25. Plural of *batab*

had *gobernadores*, *alcaldes* and *alguaciles* (Quezada 1985:674). This modality of names fitted into the religion where the Franciscans adopted words such as *alguaciles* to their religious organization. In general, the *encomienda* may be seen as the colonial policy aimed at civilizing and Christianizing the indigenous population by exploiting them as sources of profit and labor. The *encomienda* and other kinds of labor services remained in force in Central America, Paraguay, Chile and north Argentina until the late eighteenth century, being abolished in Yucatán in 1786.

In a general view, the tributary model describes a situation in which the primary producer has access to the means of production, but the power authority that controls the producer has the right to exact tribute from him (Wolf, 1982:79-80). Upon the arrival of the Spanish, the Aztecs had a social stratification of power and economic systems based on tribute which they used to dominate other ethnic groups. This production model is documented by the colonial documents *Matricula de Tributos* and *Codex Mendoza*. The Aztecs had 38 provinces under their control: “They provided predictable, sustained supplies of goods to burgeoning urban centers: foodstuffs that aided in subsistence, luxuries that underwrote the elite’s high standard of living, and warrior costumes that rewarded and highlighted daring deeds on the battlefield” (Smith and Berdan, 1992:356). The social situation, however, was different on the Yucatán Peninsula. The indigenous Maya were never part of the Aztec tributary system, allowing them to have a different means of production. In spite of a stratified Maya society during the Late Postclassic, the tributary system was known and practiced before the arrival of the Spanish. However, the Yucatán Peninsula lacked the material wealth found in the center of Mexico such as crops and agriculture; thus, the economy was based on honey, cotton and probably one of the main Maya goods: salt. This product was available locally and was one of the region’s major exports, Farriss argues: “the Maya gathered salt as a community enterprise and, aside from whatever tax they may have to pay to the lords who claimed ownership of the salt deposits; they paid some portion in tribute to their lords” (1984:124).

At the arrival of the Spanish on the peninsula, the tributary system continued to be dominated by social hierarchy of *halach uinic*, which in turn controlled several *batab* or *batab’ob* (Okoshi, 1995:22). The *batab* was provided with food and other necessities by his subjects, and one of his

principal duties was to ensure that his town or village paid its required tribute promptly to the *halach winik*. (Sharer and Traxler, 2006:709). Because of the labor exploitation characteristic of the *encomienda*, it is common to associate the tributary system with it, because the *encomienda* gave the Spanish the right to collect tribute from indigenous societies based on a fixed rate. Farriss explains: “There was, first of all, the ordinary tribute that Indians paid to individual Spaniards under the *encomienda* system or to the Crown when *encomienda* were transferred to direct royal control” (1984:39). The already known tributary system in Mesoamerica was a crucial aspect that the Spanish took advantage of to introduce different productive modes.

The second system, known as *congregaciones* or *reducciones*, were introduced in Mexico in the mid-sixteenth century reaching their peak between 1590 and 1605 (Burkholder & Lyman 2004:116; Gerhard 1977; Prem 1992:451). In the early sixteenth century, the Yucatán Peninsula experienced a massive congregation program (Farriss 1984:63). This colonial policy involved the forced relocation of small, often scattered, native communities into large permanent settlements. This program worked at three levels, as Farriss explains:

- Scattered satellite hamlets were gathered into central towns,
- Two or more towns, with any attendant hamlets, were often consolidated into one large town, and
- The internal layouts of the towns were rearranged into the familiar Spanish colonial gridiron pattern, in which the house sites were more uniformly and densely packed around a Christian church facing a central square (Farriss 1978:196).

Religion had an important influence in the creation of *Congregaciones* which were largely supported by the missionaries, as Prem points out, since “they repeatedly complained that the wide dispersal of the Indian population amid complex topography made it very difficult for them to administer and oversee the numerous small communities” (Prem, 1992:451-52). Jerónimo de Mendieta describes the big mistake made by the Spanish at

the beginning of the conquest, accusing them of avaricious and carelessness of the good "*policia*." This behavior made them forget two important things: to gather the indigenous people in towns, villages with straight streets and *solares*, and to found towns for the Spanish without them having to mix with indigenous people (1980:496-497). In 1546 King Carlos V ordered that, with the help of the clergies, the indigenous people would be reduced into towns or *reducciones*. This is stipulated by 29 laws in the *Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias*, which explained the way of life in towns in the new social system (Indias, 1681 Tomo II, :198-202). The aim of *congregaciones* was not just to create new towns, but also to nucleate the existing ones. The Yucatán Peninsula had a strong religious tendency to control in contrast with other settled regions of the Spanish colonies, where economic factors such as mining and agriculture attracted enough colonists to challenge the hegemony of the clergy as an agent of social and political control over the indigenous population. Although the goal was to facilitate the conversion in the region and the relocation of indigenous Maya, the bad organization of the *congregaciones* created a negative reaction from the Maya society. The pressure exerted by the *congregaciones* programs together with a lack of corresponding cultural and sociopolitical cohesion between indigenous people and the Spanish could not be maintained, and the slow process of dispersal began (Farriss 1978:199).

The implementation of the *encomiendas* and *congregaciones* by the Crown, and the establishment of missions by friars created a new urban dynamic on the Yucatán Peninsula, transforming the landscape and community life with the creation of *Doctrinas* or *Guardianías* by the Franciscans. They promoted this strategy to facilitate the conversion of the Maya population. In this system, several small towns called *visitas* were grouped around a larger town called a *cabeceras* (Clendinnen, 1987:50, Farriss, 1978:198, Orellana, 1973:129). The *visitas* town had its own church which had certain obligations to the *cabeceras* towns, such as the maintenance and preservation of the *cabeceras* church with materials and a labor force (Farriss, 1984:151). Lockhart and Schwartz suggests that "the *doctrina*, was erected directly on the Indian provincial unit, from which, like the *encomienda*, it took its size, shape, and structure; its local headquarters too was in the chief Indian settlement, or *cabecera* town, and it used the cacique's authority to help build churches and assure attendance" (1983:108). We can see two

institutions of power aimed at controlling the indigenous population, the Crown with the establishment of *congregaciones*, and the Church with the friars and the program of *doctrinas*. Indeed, both had a mutual relationship and cannot be understood as isolated. These colonial policies motivated the reaction of the Maya population against the Spanish oppression in the form of what Nancy Farriss calls flight, drift, and dispersal:

- Flight: is the escape of indigenous people from colonial rule across the frontier to unpacified territory
- Drift: the indigenous movement to other towns within the Spanish colonial system, and
- Dispersal, families and individuals move from congregated towns to rural hamlets. These hamlets eventually grew into new towns, beginning the process all over again. (1978; 1984).

The term flight and the *congregaciones* system are important to the understanding of the foundation of the colonial site Kachambay and the creation of many other *rancherías* or hamlets inhabited by indigenous Maya whom escaped from the Spanish rule into the rain forest, as I will present in chapter 5. This is the case for Espiritu Santo and Ascensión Bays, in which groups of runaways settled and created a scattered micro-population.

Hybrid urbanism; an ambivalent process in the colonial encounter

Having shown a general view of colonialism, postcolonial theories, and the colonial process in Mexico and on the Yucatán Peninsula, attention will now be paid to hybrid urbanism and material culture. Using the postcolonial terms of hybridity and third space, the aim is to outstrip the threshold of the “metaphoric” representation of colonial situations. In this subchapter, the hybrid consequences of the colonial contact are analyzed from the general to the particular; that is, the whole arena of social interactions with their causes, and the way the Spanish colonial policies used new forms of order and control. In so doing, we will understand how new social spaces were created as a consequence of colonial encounters. These spaces were

significant in the new colonial urban landscape, which in turn determined the settlement pattern of the new towns creating new hybrid religious architecture. The early colonial churches and chapels and their hybrid architectural variants, such as the “open-air” churches were addressed as the outcome of the religious necessity to evangelize the Maya population. The idea was to contextualize the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and third space for archaeological purposes with the analysis of material culture. The analysis of the colonial baggage in archaeology is one important aspect in this thesis, made possible by acknowledging the indigenous societies as an integral part in the colonial discourse. Thus, the analysis of material culture in this chapter and further on, is addressed not as the mere importation of European traditions imposed on a host society, but rather as the result of indigenous participation in the creation of something new and hybrid.

Architecture is one of the most relevant cultural manifestations which therefore provides a source of study in order to understand the societies that projected and created building forms. Aspects such as technology, ideology, material resources, power, and the conceptualization of space are significant traits when analyzing architecture. In a more classical way, it is defined as the art in which buildings are projected and constructed in all types and all uses. It is considered one of the *Fine Arts* as it also involves a constant search for aesthetics. We notice that the concept of architectural harmony and beauty suggested by Plato and Aristotle are present in the classic *corpus* of architecture. Concepts that seem vague and only relate to beauty in terms of goodness and soul. In turn, Plotinos considered that immaterial beauty had superiority over the material (Plotin, 1936). From the beginning, architectonical theory dealt exclusively with aesthetic theories that have been produced by it. As aesthetics are the realm of pure appearances, all that mattered was the impression that architecture produced, an impression in terms of humanism. There was no rational notion of materiality in architecture; instead, everything was related to the field of senses. In this case the sense of the view and the sensation (of beauty or ugliness) that was produced by the soul.

It was Marcus Vitruvius Pollio who first made architecture a more theoretical matter with the first treatise of architecture; *De Architectura*. Three cornerstones are significant in his work; the concepts of *Firmitas* (durability), *Utilitas* (utility) and *Venustas* (beauty) (Routio, 2007). Based on

these concepts, architecture should follow certain rules which implies that it might be possible to complete works based on their intended use, which also will denote a certain aesthetic value. To Vitruvius “the term *architectura* (a Hellenized Latin term) suggests a discipline of master craftsmanship, describing not only the art of the master artificer of buildings, but also the very concept of an authoritative master art that dictates to the persons and processes that serve it” (Senseney, 2011:8). Another significant aspect of Vitruvius’ work is the relationship between architecture and nature. “Vitruvius positioned nature as the model for architecture; in particular, the proportion and symmetry of the human body inspired architectural design” (Sykes, 2007:33). Because architecture is a cultural construction, and culture in turn is never static but dynamic, architecture has experienced a constant transformation of styles over a long history. The cultural and natural contexts of each historical period have demonstrated a level of development and transformation of the concepts proposed by Vitruvius.

In Mexico, the architecture of early colonial settlements is strongly linked with the revival of the Classic tradition during the Renaissance in Italy and its dissemination through other European countries. Spain was one of those countries that assimilated the Italian influence in their architecture and urbanism, which in turn was translated to New Spain during the colonial process. Renaissance means “rebirth,” and what the Italians had re-created was the values of Antiquity characterized by Greeks and Romans in terms of arts and architecture which was considered as a kind of “golden age.” It was, to some extent, a reaction against the Gothic style characteristic of cities and towns of the center and north of Europe during the Middle Ages (Artigas 2010:228). The discovery and the conquest of America happened at a period of significant changes in Europe, especially in Spain. Whereas the discovery can be considered as a Renaissance outcome, the conquest is linked to a medieval tradition, being the extension of a large struggle of re-conquest headed by the Spanish against the Moorish. The combination of both circumstances led to the necessary conditions for the establishment of colonies in New Spain. I have argued that America was metaphorically empty; the Spanish considered the new land to be a place where they could create something completely new from the European model in terms of urbanism and architecture. Thus, the gridiron plan was a solution against the Arabic urban tradition of irregular and narrow streets characteristic in

Spain, especially in Andalusia. Plazas were developed in Italy as part of the Renaissance and were motivated by Leon Battista Alberti in his classic *De re aedificatoria*. Inspired by Plato, Alberti points out the importance of squares in towns and cities for the recreation and entertainment of the children in sight of their parents in his book, XVIII, Cap. VII. He highlights these places as open areas where people could meet and socialize, surrounded by architecture made from porticos and columns. This Renaissance tendency to recover values from Antiquity arrived in Mexico in different ways. The city of Mérida in Yucatán is one example of this tendency. The Spanish found the remains of monumental pyramids at the Maya site of T'ihó, which reminded them of the rest of the Roman monuments such as the amphitheater and theater of colossal dimensions located at Mérida in Extremadura, Spain. This association with Roman architecture was part of the *conquistadores* and their Renaissance mentality. Together with Purism and Mannerism, the first architectural styles introduced in Mexico were the Plateresque.²⁶ Two of the main architectural examples of the Spanish Renaissance in Mérida, Yucatán are the Montejo's house and the Cathedral of Mérida (Fig. 5). In urbanism terms, the use of plazas (with a prehispanic precedent) and the transformation of the gridiron plan to the colonial agenda were two of the characteristics of the Renaissance legacy, as I will present further on.

In this way, the colonial encounter radically changed the mentality of both indigenous people and the Spanish in order to adapt them to a new social order. These two groups had the ability to understand, accept, and create new ideas. Hence, the crossbreeding of thoughts, traditions and of course genetic material emerged, which in turn became in the main element of a mutual and creative development. This process of change, negotiation, and recreation was not easy, neither to the indigenous Maya nor to the Spanish, because such processes represent a break from ideologies, traditions, and a loss of identity. It is possible to start tracking these architectural and urban changes beginning with the Aztec conquest in 1521 and the subsequent destruction and reconstruction of Mexico-Tenochtitlán to continue its expansion to the rest of the country. As McAndrew states:

26. Plateresco, Purista, Manierista.



Figure 5. Top: Montejo's house. Source: Mérida. 20° 58' 00.02" N 89° 37' 26.21" W. Google Earth. Maj 2009. September 28 2015. Bottom: Mérida cathedral in Putz et al. 2009

“The first to realize a reticulated plan was Mexico-Tenochtitlán, and closest there to the European ideal of ordered buildings on a ordered plan were three ensembles salvaged in part from the Aztec city: the main square, the main streets of palaces, and the market plaza of Tlatelolco” (McAndrew 1969:11).

After the conquest, the main task of the Spanish was the urbanization of towns and cities. As we have seen, it was not the Spanish Crown, but the Church who had more influence as decision-makers. One of the traits that followed the new urbanization related to architecture was the absence of fortifications. In Europe, the fortification of cities and towns reached its peak during the Middle Ages as a result of constant wars and invasions of rival groups. The aim of walling cities and fortresses was for defensive reasons and to protect the inhabitants against attacks. It would be possible to assume that the same model would be present after the conquest of the Aztecs and Mayas, particularly because of the Spanish fears of being ambushed by the indigenous people, even when Manuel Toussaint states in his book *Arte Colonial de México* that the main priority of the Spanish in terms of architecture was to construct fortifications (1983:1). A characteristic trait in the urbanization and architecture of colonial Mexico was the absence of these military constructions in contrast with the European model, which were fortified, but lacking a central plaza typical of the cities and towns in the New World (Kubler 2012:124; McAndrew 1969:255). A curious fact is that even with the constant fears of the Spanish, and despite the projects to militarize the city by order of the Viceroy de Mendoza in 1537, Mexico-Tenochtitlán was never fortified. In fact, neither of the cities were attacked, nor were the Spanish ambushed (ibid, 2012:127; ibid, 1969:259).²⁷ However, despite cities and towns not following the same medieval Spanish model, for some scholars it is possible to notice a particular “fortified-like” architecture. According to Kubler the churches became a fortresses destined to protect the Spanish. The location of the main church was strategically placed at the center of the city in the main plaza to protect the center:

27. In June 1520 Pedro de Alvarado (in absence of Cortez) was in charge of the Spanish in Mexico-Tenochtitlán, he attacked and killed many Aztec in the ceremony of *Tóxcatl*. In response, the Aztecs counterattacked and when Cortez arrived they were obligated to leave the city in an act of defeat. Despite the fact that this was a defensive war I do not consider it as an attack or ambush from the Aztec, but a defensive reaction.

“Todas las calles conducían a la iglesia, que estaba rodeada por un atrio con muros almenados. Ocasionalmente los templos eran usados como refugios fortificados desde los cuales se podía mantener una defensa estratégica contra las rebeliones del mismo pueblo o los enemigos extranjeros”(Kubler 2012:144).²⁸

Beside the construction of “fortress-churches,” many conquistadores’ houses were built following the same pattern of fortification, Hernán Cortez being the first one to have this kind of house (ibid:255). In addressing the question of fortifications of both houses and churches, it is important to notice that the affirmations of Toussaint and Kubler were proposed many decades ago, and many scholars consider them to be ambiguous. Toussaint, for example, says that: “Las casas de los conquistadores presentaban aspecto de Fortaleza”²⁹ (Toussaint 1983:1). Whereas Kubler states the following about the church-fortifications: “En los pueblos de tierra firme, la arquitectura militar encontró su expresión en las iglesias que eventualmente podían funcionar como fortalezas”³⁰ (2012:128-129). In their time, such statements were valuable proposals, but now the architectural theory and its theoretical approaches distinguish a different thesis of investigation, in which social circumstances determine a given phenomenon that do not necessarily apply to another. Juan Artigas suggests that: “Una cosa es la arquitectura conventual y otra una fortaleza; los edificios militares para la defensa tienen sus postulados, elementos y situaciones geográficas muy diferentes de las casas de los frailes” (Artigas 2010:xix).³¹ In spite of the threat of an ambush by the indigenous people, there is no material evidence that the monasteries represented fortresses. McAndrew points out that: “It seems safe to say that none of the sixteenth-century monastery churches in Mexico are, properly, practically, and functionally fortified” (McAndrew 1969:258).

28. “All streets led to the church, surrounded by an atrium and crenellated walls. The churches were occasionally used as fortified shelters from which a strategic defense, whether against outside enemies or a rebellious town, could be maintained” (Translation by author).

29. “The houses of the conquerors seemed like fortresses” (Translation by author).

30. “Where inland towns were concerned, military architecture found its expression in the churches capable of serving as forts” (Translation by author).

31. “One thing is the monastic architecture and another is a fortress; military buildings for defence have very different principles, elements and geographical situations from the houses of the friars” (Translation by author).

Some of the characteristics of an architectural program are; the function or utility; and the plastic expression or beauty. In this case, the religious architecture in Mexico had some European aesthetic traditions represented by medieval architecture like zoomorphic stone waterspouts and merlons. These merlons may appear along the edge of the roofs of the churches, in the battlemented walls around the monastery *atrio* or on indoor stair-rails. However and as McAndrew notices, all these elements were more decorative than functional (ibid: 268). The colonial church in Ecab offers us a clear example of decorative merlons since there is no access to the flat roof of the structure (Benavides and Andrews, 1979:23). In contrast, it is possible to distinguish opinions again the concept of fortress-churches. McAndrew suggests that the monasteries were placed in the center of the town and not at the top of hills, which would be more suitable for strategic military advantages. There are a few examples that were placed on top of hills such as the monastery of Atlixco, however, the reason for this was to “avoid mosquitoes and to take advantage of a surprising spring” (ibid: 269). In Oaxaca, the monastery of Etna was moved from wet land up to a drier and firmer site following a structural collapse (ibid: 271). There is written evidence mentioning the intentionality to fortify cities, as Kubler notes the idea of fortifying Mexico-Tenochtitlán in 1528 and in 1537 by the Viceroy de Mendoza (2012:125), or the desirability of the citizens of the newly founded Oaxaca in 1531 to construct a fortress (McAndrew 1969:273). However, in practice the material evidence points in another direction. We can summarily suggest that the monastery-building program in Mexico was far from being militaristic. What we see in many of the cases is not the functionality, but a decorative style that survived the Mesoamerican and European hybrid combination. The military function of architecture in Spain responded to different circumstances and geographical locations. Any relation between these and Mexico must remain no more than conjectural however, due to the lack of connecting evidence (McAndrew, 1969:258). In spite of the constant presence and attacks from pirates, there are few examples of fortresses in Mexico after the conquest. Some examples are: San Francisco de Campeche, starting with the first bastion (eight in total) and a dock in 1684, and ending with a wall and the bastion of Santiago in 1704 (Antochiw, 1994:228-229), the fort of San Diego in Acapulco, San Juan de Ulua in Veracruz or Salamanca de Bacalar in Quintana Roo

(see Calderón Quijano, 1953). All of them had the purpose of defending the coasts against pirates (Kubler 2012: 128; Toussaint 1983:2). To conclude the theme of fortresses, these authors coincide in mentioning the construction of *Atarazanas* by Cortez shortly after the conquest in 1521. From the Arab *Dar as saana*, the *Atarazanas* were a kind of arsenal created for military storage and were completed in 1524 subsequently becoming prisons (Artigas 2010:511; Kubler 2012:125; McAndrew 1969: 274; Toussaint 1983:1).

In relation to urbanism, the early colonial plan in Mexico started with a gridiron layout including public squares and monuments in the cities (McAndrew 1969:94; Kubler 2012:147). The main church built next to the central square in the towns and cities is a benchmark of urban space in this new plan. The introduction of this plan with a rectangular plaza in the center represented one of the best ways to control the population, to indoctrinate and introduce the indigenous people into the Spanish cultural forms. It is true that the gridiron plan had somewhat of a European origin. This is possible to observe in places like the agricultural towns with *bastides* in the south of France, or Spanish towns like Santa Fe de Granada as mentioned by Wagner *et al.* (Wagner et al., 2013:43), Villareal de Burriana in Castellón, or Briviesca in Burgos (Foster, 1960:41-42). However, the consolidation of prehispanic urbanism characterized by the plazas in many cities in the Basin of Mexico, like Teotihuacán or Mexico-Tenochtitlán, influenced the new and hybrid urban model. Jorge Hardoy (1978), for example, suggests that since there are no examples of the gridiron plan in the Prehispanic period; the only possible explanation of its creation is because it was exported from Spain. However, it is important to point out the explanation in footnote number 6 in which he continues:

“The designs most resembling those of a gridiron founded by the Spanish in America were Ollantaytambo, to the north of Cuzco, and the Aztec cities. In the latter, two perpendicular axes were incorporated into cities already inhabited and, through them, a gradual regulating was introduced. In Teotihuacán, more than a thousand years before the conquest, this concept was applied in a much more systematic manner” (Hardoy, 1978:223).

What is important to define is that it is not likely that the gridiron plan was absent in Europe before the arrival of the Spanish to America. Actually, as Hardoy suggests, the design of plazas as planned architecture was one of the principal contributions of the Italian Renaissance (ibid: 220), which in turn was imported to Spain. The gridiron plan existed in some parts of Europe where it was adapted to different social necessities. We can say that the *idea* was exported to be adapted and transformed from its original form, and re-used to fit in with the colonial necessities of the moment; to control and convert the indigenous population. Kubler suggests that: “En México, la traza en forma de damero no representaba una invención sino la mera repetición del sistema usado antes de la conquista en ambos continentes”³² (2012:144). More than a “repetition,” a mixture of elements occurred. The importance of Kubler’s argument is that elements from the colonizer and the colonized were integrated in the creation of the new plan. The establishment of Catholicism in Mexico motivated a new social order in both spiritual and urban meanings. The emergence of missionaries’ territories or *doctrinas* –as a system of conversion– left its mark on the urbanism and the religious architecture in Mexico. Some scholars agree that the Spanish Crown was not at all decisive in the urban and architectonic process, but the Church was an outcome of the necessity to convert the indigenous people into Christianity (Hanson 1995:15; Kubler 2012:116; McAndrew 1969). The latter suggests that:

“The Church was the chief patron of the arts in Spanish America, not only of architecture, and the painting and sculpture auxiliary to it in churches, but also of music and literature. Churchmen were the first scholars of the language, history, medicine, and extraordinary chronometry of the natives...The Church had a monopoly of education in two senses: it had nearly all of the educated men and it did all of the educating” (McAndrew 1969:19-20).

Headed by the Franciscans, the administrative control of the regular clergy was dominant in the center of Mexico; and in the particular case of the Yucatán Peninsula it was almost total. The Holy See gave the monks the

32. “The gridiron plan in Mexico may represent less of an invention or major departure, than a repetition of the system used before the conquest on both continents” (Translation by author).

broadest powers to administer the sacraments by two papal bulls: the first from León X called *Alias Felicis* dated 25th April 1521, and the *Exponi nobis fecisti* or *Omnimoda* dated May 9th 1522 by Pope Adriano VI. In these documents the friars were confirmed to have the spiritual direction of the regions that they had converted, with the only condition of having been appointed by their superior represented by the Real Patronato (Piho 1991:14-15). Further, as Hanson comments: “royal policy emphasizing the peaceful reduction of New World peoples had its origin in the 1508 *Patronato Real de Indias*, in which the Pope granted ecclesiastical administration of the Indies of Spanish sovereign” (1995:17).

The colonial third space, metaphoric or contextualized materiality?

The emergence of the gridiron plan in Mexico was the outcome of European and indigenous influences. The next transformation in the colonial system was the emergence of the *atrios*, churches, and plazas which gave a new appearance to the colonial cities and towns. In colonial encounters each group had their own particular socio-historical circumstances that defined them, this is important to note as McAndrew points out: “pre-conquest architecture had been made specifically for the ritual of one religion, and post-conquest architecture for the very different ritual of a religion of a very different character” (1965:187). To apply the concept of hybridity in the architectural dynamic created by the Maya and the Spanish, Artigas’ classification of “open-air architecture” is significant because the uncovered areas gain prime importance over the indoors areas. Three general models in architecture are proposed by the author; 1) the open chapels including the isolated with their uncovered naves,³³ atriums and posas chapels; 2) the *atrios* of the religious buildings with all their elements, and 3) the plazas in the towns, villages and cities (Artigas 2010: 13). I will discuss the two last models in this part. The open chapels will be addressed in detail in the next chapter.

Atrios and plazas are linked with cultural landscape interactions in terms of the combination of natural and man-made elements that comprise, at

33. Artigas means with “uncovered naves,” those structures that lacked of *ramada* or a thatched roof, but were part of a large *portico* adjoined to the extant church such as that described by Father Ponce in Tlaxcala.

any given time, the essential character of a place. Considering churches, *atrios*, and plazas as important spatial representations of social hierarchy within the urban construction process: “Physical space is ordered by and reflects the power structures to which the community is subordinated; the community may contest this subordination through local interpretation and use of space” (Low 1955:748). Spaces are creations of individuals in order to satisfy their necessities. The important aspect is the social position or role of the groups in the colonial situation and the ambivalence created between them, which in turn gave rise to the emergence of a third space in relation to the environment.

Henri Lefebvre provides a framework used to relate the sense of place encountered in cultural landscape studies to the political economy. He argues that every society has shaped a distinctive social space that meets its intertwined requirements for economic production and social reproduction, “Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it is also producing and produced by social relation” (Lefebvre 1991:286). For its understanding, space needs to be based on the aesthetics of experiencing places, that is, on aspects dealing with the sense of place from the humanities, architecture, and landscape traditions in geography and environmental psychology. Similarly, space can be addressed through the politics of experiencing places as hierarchical and dynamic territory. Following the same line, power and space represent an integral part in all relationships between individuals, as Foucault argues “space is fundamental in any form of communal life, space is fundamental in any exercise of power” (in Rabinow 1984:252). Foucault uses the example of Panopticon to illustrate how architecture as a form of disciplinary power is exercised. For him this building is an example of “a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men” (Foucault 1979:205).

Turning now to specific examples of hybrid material as an outcome of colonial encounters and following Artigas’ model, we notice that in the architectural dynamic created by indigenous people and the Spanish, the construction of *atrios* was an important and symbolic part of the religious architecture in Mexico. They represent the prehispanic plazas and household patios while offering the possibility to accommodate a large number of believers, simplifying the mass spiritual conversion. Artigas states that:

“En los atrios se hace evidente la costumbre mesoamericana de reunirse al aire libre y puede establecerse el nexo formal y vivencial de sus emplazamientos y amplias superficies con los de la arquitectura prehispánica, más relacionada con los espacios siderales que con temas puramente terrenos, plena arquitectura a cielo abierto”³⁴ (Artigas 2010:278).

In analyzing the colonial churches and chapels as an architectural program, we notice the complexity of the matter, since these programs included many constructive elements associated with each other. In Kubler’s description these new architectural programs were constituted by 1) a large patio or walled atrium, 2) a chapel that allowed the congregation to witness the mass from the outside, the so-called “open-air chapel”; 3) a group of four small chapels placed on the corner of the atrium called “capillas posas,” and 4) a stone cross in the center of the atrium or in front of the chapel (Kubler 2012: 382). This area had a symbolic meaning in terms of both prehispanic and Catholic worldview. Manuel Gonzales Galvan suggests that these constructions were: “las posas equivalen a los santuarios secundarios que rodeaban las plazas sagradas indígenas y, en lo europeo, a las capillas laterales de una catedral cuya techumbre simboliza la bóveda celeste”³⁵ (Gonzalez 1966:74). Artiga’s classification of open places and that proposed by Kubler share some similar attributes; the only difference is that Kubler makes a distinction in the *atrios* adding the stone cross as another architectural element. Another difference possible to observe is that Kubler forgets an important element, which is the plazas and their importance in the consolidation of villages and towns, as I shall present further on. Elisabeth Graham (2011) suggests that: “The atrio was functionally equivalent to, and in some cases probably was in actuality, the pre-Columbian plaza or patio; only the Christian sanctuary/presbytery, with its altar and related ritual space(s), were enclosed by masonry walls” (Graham, 2011:172).

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34. “In the atriums is clearly show the Mesoamerican custom to meet outdoors, establishing a formal and experiential link with their location and spacious areas with the prehispanic architecture, which is more related to sidereal spaces than with merely earthly matters, pure open-air architecture” (Translation by author).
 35. “The posas are equal to the minor shrines surrounding the indigenous sacred plazas, and to the European, the side chapels of a cathedral whose roofs represent the sky” (Translation by author).

The Mesoamerican perception of the cardinal's regions is significant in the spatial distribution and the different architectural elements constitutive in the open spaces like the *capillas posas* or the cross in the center of the *atrios*. In the prehispanic world, the universe was conceived in a vertical and horizontal plan. The horizontal plan was divided in four regions and a fifth main region where the cosmic forces were balanced (López, 2000:34). In the Western tradition only four regions are conceived; north, south, west and east. For the indigenous groups (prehispanic and contemporary), these geographical points include a fifth one, the place where the other four directions converge to make sense of the universe, Artigas argues about this that: "El conjunto conventual del siglo XVI puede considerarse como contenedor de un *axis mundi*, eje central que marca un centro en torno del cual gira la vida como todos los días, o sea, fuera y alrededor del recinto religioso"³⁶ (Artigas 2010:274). A similar conception of regions is represented in the Mexicas' culture with the Codex Mendoza showing an image of the four world-quarters, each represented with its representative glyph and one eagle in the center (Fig. 6). Evon Vogt demonstrates this idea with the idea of the quincuncial cosmology between the Tzotziles in Zinacantan Chiapas, and their relation to their dwellings and fields. He argues:

"The universe was created by the VAXAK.MEN, gods who support it at its corners and who designated its center, the "navel of the world," in Zinacantan Center. Houses have corresponding corner posts and precisely determined centers; fields emphasize the same critical places, with cross shrines at their corner and centers. These points are of primary ritual importance" (Vogt, 1976:58).

If we translate this same idea to the religious architecture we observe the same pattern; the main church with or without a chapel in front of a main patio hosting the people with the cross in the center, the *capillas posas* on the corners connected with a short wall delimiting the *atrio* and at the same time sanctifying it. "Su ubicación en los cuatro extremos angulares del atrio hace que delimiten el espacio sagrado y justifiquen su dimensión" (Gonzalez

36. "The convent of the sixteenth century can be regarded as a container of an *axis mundi*, a vertical axis marking a center, around which life revolves as usual, that is, outside and around the religious precinct" (Translation by author).

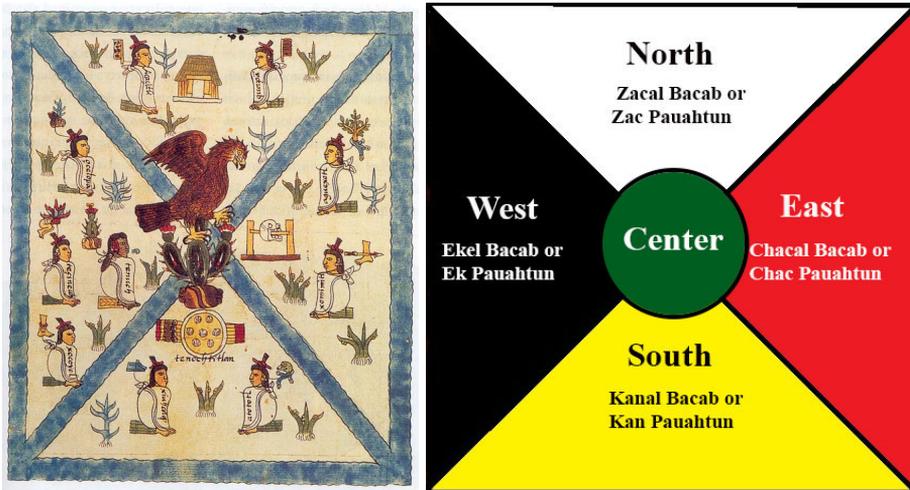


Figure 6. Left: Extract from the Codex Mendoza, source: <http://www.arqueomex.com/S2N3nHistorias97.html>. Right, Maya conception of the regions by the author based on the Libro de Chilam Balam.

1966:74).³⁷ These walls crowned the chapels symbolically representing the north, south, east, and west respectively. A cross in the center of the *atrios* represented the fifth cardinal point and the junction point of the two main axes, from which one could see the facade of the church, the *capillas posas*, the main entrance, and the interior of the open-air chapel.

Behind the symbolic meaning of the *atrios* as a container of cardinal regions and cosmic convergence, these hybrid open places had a practical use as well. During the first years after the conquest, the indigenous population increased causing a problem of intern space in the churches. In order to rapidly convert indigenous societies, the use of these open areas offered a solution giving the friars the possibility to carry out not just masses, but many other liturgical activities for the multitudes (Kubler 2012:381; McAndrew 1969:205-7). It would be wrong to state that there are no *atrios* in Europe, especially in Spain. The constructions of these open places in front of the churches are visible in many places; however, there are several differences between those in Europe and in New Spain. For instance, the Early Christian *atrios* were enclosed by colonnades; they had a fountain

37. "Their location in the four corner ends of the atrium, delimits the sacred space, justifying their dimension" (Translation by author).

in the center of the atrium for ritual ablutions called *Labrum*, whereas in Mexico there were no-colonnades and they had a large cross in the center. Probably the most significant difference was that in Europe they worked as forecourt used for rituals before they were taken inside the church, whereas in Mexico “the *atrios* was not only a court to be used with a church, but more importantly a court used *as a church*” (McAndrew 1969:232). Based on these observations we notice that the hybrid symbolism between the prehispanic and the catholic, in combination with the function and architecture of the atriums in Mexico, were *sui generis*.

After the conquest, the main priority of the secular and regular clergy was to found and urbanize towns in order to convert the indigenous societies to Christianity. This necessity motivated the creation of new spaces of evangelization; new hybrid spaces based on the prehispanic architecture represented in open ceremonial plazas, and the European architecture based on closed spaces like churches and cathedrals. In terms of the religious architecture in New Spain, Artigas points out that the “open-air” architecture in Mexico is one of the contributions to the history of architecture in general, simply because it represents a revaluation of the traditional architecture theory, such as the studies of the open places and their relation to the covered interiors (Artigas 2010:14). Gonzales Galvan wrote about the cultural combination manifested in the colonial architecture:

“El siglo dieciséis logró la conjunción, con sorpresas mutuas; para el indígena, la novedad de la arquitectura europea, con sus muros y bóvedas capaces de aprisionar inmensos espacios interiores y hacerlos sensibles...para el europeo, la novedad del espacio abierto arquitecturado, el descubrimiento de la funcionalidad de lo no cubierto” (1966:72).³⁸

Addressing the topic of the functionality of outdoor and indoor places, the Christian religion with its Masses had demanded that these rituals were carried out indoors. Hence, the religious architecture had emphasized the

38. “The sixteenth century succeeded in conjunction with mutual surprise; for the indigenous, the novelty of the European architecture, with its walls and vaults capable of trapping vast interior spaces and making them sensitive,[...] for the European, the novelty of the open architecture space; the discovery of the functionality of the uncovered” (Translation by author).

interior of its churches, where Mass was to be celebrated, rather than the exterior (McAndrew 1969:205). In the case of Mexico, outdoor rituals motivated complex and hybrid features reflected in the external religious architecture and settlement patterns, possible to observe for example in the gridiron trace of the colonial cities linked with the plans of churches. This combination of open and closed spaces to satisfy the necessities of the Catholic ceremonies generated a building dynamic that modified the colonial urban landscape, being one of the most important aspects in the construction of buildings on prehispanic platforms. Clendinnen exemplifies the latter with the city of Izamal in Yucatán; where Fray Diego de Landa was in charge of the construction, she argues: “the whole [the church] was to be set out on a vast Maya platform – Izamal had been one of the most important Maya religious centers. The design derived its undoubted grandeur from the scale and distribution of its great spaces for processions and collective ceremonial” (Clendinnen 1987:70). Landa himself suggests that:

“estos edificios de Izamal era doce por todos, aunque este es el mayor, y están muy cerca unos de otros. No hay memoria de los fundadores y parecen haber sido los primeros. Están a ocho leguas del mar en muy hermoso sitio y buena tierra y comarca de gente, por lo cual los indios, con harta insistencia, nos hicieron poblar una casa en uno de estos edificios que llamamos San Antonio, en el año de 1549.” (Landa, 2000:136-7).³⁹

This kind of open-air architecture differs from that of the European examples simply because the cities were already drawn and planned, while in America the towns and cities were founded or, as many cases in Mexico, they were re-planned on an extant prehispanic settlement. Looking at the prehispanic urbanism, we notice a model based on a ceremonial center composed of pyramid-temples. These pyramids were not built to house believers, as in the European churches; these were built to carry out religious

39. “There were twelve of these buildings at Izamal, this being the largest, all of which were close to each other. There is no memory of the builders who seem to have been the first inhabitants. It is eight miles from the sea, in a very beautiful site with good soil and surrounded of people, among whom the Indians, with much insistence, requested that we build a house in one of the buildings we call San Antonio, in the year 1549” (Translation by author).

ceremonies hosting many people inside the building. In the prehispanic plan, the pyramids were part of open-plaza complexes in which ceremonies took place. These ceremonies were mostly open simply because there was no space inside the pyramids to accommodate so many people. As George F. Andrews states, “the basic building group, situated in the center of the city, usually comprises the plaza; the pyramid platform and the temple. The plaza is delimited space and conceived to accommodate the general population” (1975:13). Juan Garcia Targa suggests about this:

“La construcción de Iglesias y edificaciones civiles en las poblaciones rurales constituye un aspecto de gran importancia, transformándose en muestras visibles del proceso de consolidación de una nueva realidad. La superposición de la retícula urbana colonial sobre un asentamiento preexistente tiene su equivalente con la disposición de un edificio o conjunto de edificios en el centro de una población prehispánica, generando una jerarquización espacial diferente y nuevos referentes físicos, visuales y estéticos para la población” (2006:107)⁴⁰.

In the same way, the earlier Catholic churches had a Latin cross shape containing many religious motifs in their architecture, while the prehispanic squares with their pyramids represented a symbolic mixture with the landscape. Mercedes de la Garza points out that:

“En la arquitectura maya, el templo pirámide siempre se vincula con la plaza, son dos elementos arquitectónicos absolutamente unidos, y esto se debe a su sentido simbólico; representan el vínculo de la tierra cuadrangular con el cielo piramidal, la unión del ámbito de los hombres y de los dioses...la plaza era para que el pueblo asistiera a las ceremonias y el templo reservado para los sacerdotes”(1998:68).⁴¹

40. “The construction of churches and civic buildings in rural communities is an aspect of great importance, becoming visible signs of the consolidating process of a new reality. The superposition of a colonial urban gridiron on a pre-existing settlement has its tantamount with the layout of a building or group of buildings in the center of a prehispanic population, generating a different spatial hierarchy concerning new physical, visual and aesthetic aspects for the population” (Translation by author).

41. “In Maya architecture, the pyramid temple is always linked to the plaza. These two architectural elements are inextricably linked, and this is due to their symbolic significance: they represent the link between the quadrangular earth and the pyramidal sky, the union of the world of men and gods [...] the plaza was for the people to attend ceremonies, while the temple was reserved for the priest” (Translation by author).

A very frequent attribute of the religious open places is the relationship between these and civic places such as plazas, as Artigas observes: “Con mucha frecuencia los espacios abiertos religiosos de las localidades virreinales mexicanas se concatenan con las plazas cívicas y llegan a conformar series de explanadas o plataformas relacionadas entre sí”⁴² (Artigas 2010:12). This observation is supported by Farriss’ explanation of the movement of population prompted by the *congregaciones*. Thus, the internal urban plans of the towns were rearranged into the familiar Spanish colonial gridiron pattern, in which the house sites were packed around a Christian church facing the main plaza.

In the Mesoamerican worldview, plazas represented the symbolic place where deities and mortals interacted to carry out religious ceremonies, and also represented a source and symbol of social order (Ashmore, 1991:199). In a postcolonial approach of third space, colonial plazas play an important role in terms of ambivalence; that is, the outcome of power and resistance. Apart from the prehispanic origin and the European influence, these places –together with the religious architecture– represented, and in many places still are symbolic traits of social control. This control was not exclusive of the Spanish authority during the colonial domain, but it is also possible to observe in Mesoamerican cities with societies such as Aztecs or Mayan and the constructions of plaza complexes with sacred and civil meanings.

Setha M. Low argues that: “Though the lowland urban form lacked the straight streets that characterized cities of the valley of Mexico, a hierarchy of central plazas and temples appeared in most Mesoamerican cities” (1995:749). In addressing plazas as specific spaces of interactions and social production of built form, i.e. the constitutive material elements, they give form and work as the means by which power is applied to control the society. In a similar way, Camille Wells suggests that: “Structures constructed by every sort of person and in every sort of environment and period are attempts to modify the material world...most buildings can be understood in terms of power or authority –as efforts to assume, extend, resist or accommodate it” (1986:9).

42. “Very often, religious open spaces of the colonial Mexican towns are concatenated with civic squares and form a series of concourses or platforms which were linked to each other” (Translation by author).

In another example, Low (1996) demonstrates again with examples of two plazas in Costa Rica that power relations are possible to analyze in modern times. In this work, she presents the sociopolitical forces, spatial practices and negotiations from different social groups to provide insight into the conflicts that arose in the process of defining and claiming the plazas. We can see from the perspective of these authors that the maintenance of power of one group over another is represented spatially in terms of architecture and location. The institutionalization of power through the reciprocal relationships of individuals turns into a continued negotiation of interests, getting to a level that includes the movement of the body in space as well as its control.

Swati Chattopadhyay brings us one example of the hybrid material culture in Calcutta and the taken-for-granted idea that the colonizer and the colonized lived separate lives represented in “black” and “white” towns; a highlighted idea based on the neoclassical architecture linked with the colonial background of the city. In this work, she questions the idea that “the buildings ideas were completely imported from England, for example, is based on the neoclassic “look” of the buildings with no attempt to document and examine plans and sections” (Chattopadhyay, 2000:154). In spite of the distinctive colonial architecture in a city, the social activities between colonizer and the colonized are important because they challenge or show contradiction in terms of material culture. What is important in her work is how the material culture lost the assumed boundaries and instead, “the blurring of boundaries lies in the heterogeneous use as well as the heterogeneous population who inhabited the buildings” (ibid). Hybridity in this example can be described in terms of the “blurred boundaries,” as she argues: “The landscape of colonial Calcutta was too complex to be usefully described in terms of duality of black and white towns. The city consisted on overlapping geographies and conceptions of space and territory, both indigenous people and foreign, that were constantly negotiated” (ibid:156).

Early colonial churches and chapels on the Yucatán Peninsula. A hybrid approach

Religion on the Yucatán Peninsula - especially the regular clergy – was a decisive element in establishing the norms in urbanism and architecture with the implementation of missions or *doctrinas*, which in turn produced a new third space of ambivalence possible to interpret as hybrid space. The arrival of the Franciscans to the peninsula took place during 1544 and 1545 by two groups of friars, the first from Mexico City headed by Fray Luis de Villalpando in company of the friars Melchor de Benavente and Juan de Herrera. The second group arrived to Bacalar from Guatemala with Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida as the only member. With the arrival of these two groups to Mérida, the definitive establishment of the Franciscan province in Yucatán was complete (Kalisch, 2006:3, Scholes and Roys, 1948:155). The Franciscan Order had full jurisdiction over the initial stages of spiritual conquest, and even held support from people like Hernán Cortes who, “after he had achieved his conquest he petitioned Pope and Crown that the establishment of the new Church in the Indies be entrusted to the Franciscans, whose simplicity, self-forgetfulness and devotion to poverty fitted them for the massive task” (Clendinnen, 1987:46). This control of the Franciscans was challenged only later by the influx of the less efficient secular clergy (Clendinnen, *ibid*; Farris 1984: 24; Kalisch 2006:3; Lockhart and Schwartz 1983:109; McAndrew 1969:30). After the first convent in Campeche in 1544, the Franciscan building work in the state of Yucatán started in Mérida in 1547, Maní in 1549 and Valladolid in 1552. In this way, an ecclesiastic triangulation was created corresponding with some of the most important Maya chiefdoms (*cacicazgos*) from the Postclassic period until Spanish contact; Mérida in the province of Chakan, Maní in the province of Maní or Tutul Xiu, and Valladolid in Cupul (Roys, 1957). By 1570 the main religious centers on the peninsula were consolidated by Mérida, Campeche, Valladolid and the isolated Salamanca de Bacalar, all with their respective *visitas* (Kalisch 2006:6).

Early colonial churches and chapels reflect the colonial daily life and demonstrate to some extent the ideology of society. They represent an important source of information about the social transformations in material and spiritual terms. The archaeological works have been poor and the information about them is old and/or out of date, therefore more

archaeological works are required for a better understanding of the colonial society and their interactions. In analyzing the early colonial churches in Mexico, one type is notable for its architectural features: the open-air type. The importance of these buildings is that they are one of the best examples of hybridization having unique attributes which are practically absent from European models. I will continue with a more detailed analysis of eight churches and/or chapels distributed on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize. These are Pochboc, Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh, Xcaret, Tanchah, Ecab, Lamanai (YDL I), and Tipú (Fig. 7). All these sites have similar and different religious architectonic features reflecting the degree of influence and impact in the regions where they are located. Some difficulties arise when defining the terms colonial church and chapel. The term “open-air chapel” was coined in 1927 by Manuel Toussaint with the intent of describing a type of chapel that is more open than usual, rather than to define a specific type of religious architecture (Kubler 2012:392). Despite the usefulness of the term at that time, the open chapels and churches are confusing, as Elizabeth Graham has rightly exposed (2011).

When analyzing the terms with the aim of unifying typologies, we notice that sometimes the concept of “open-air chapels” or “open-air churches” is incorrectly used, has explanatory contradictions, or is used in a vague way. One of the aspects to consider is the way the colonial chroniclers like friars described what they were seeing in the case of religious buildings, which are based on function. They never created typologies or formal categories; however, they have been taken as such (Graham 2011: 169). What chronicles describe are the physical features that make up an architectural program in terms of function. That is, the way the individuals made use of the space, rooms, and consecrated areas, and how they interacted adapting these physical spaces into their social necessities.

Two general classifications of early colonial chapels and churches are presented with the aim of observing architectural changes and/or the building phases that are possible to relate to their spatial location. As explained at the beginning of this thesis, two groups of buildings were distinguished: churches still in use and those that were abandoned following different circumstances; the latter are the aim of this study. For the purposes of this chapter works about religious architecture in Mexico by key authors were used. In chronological order: Manuel Toussaint (1983 [1948]),

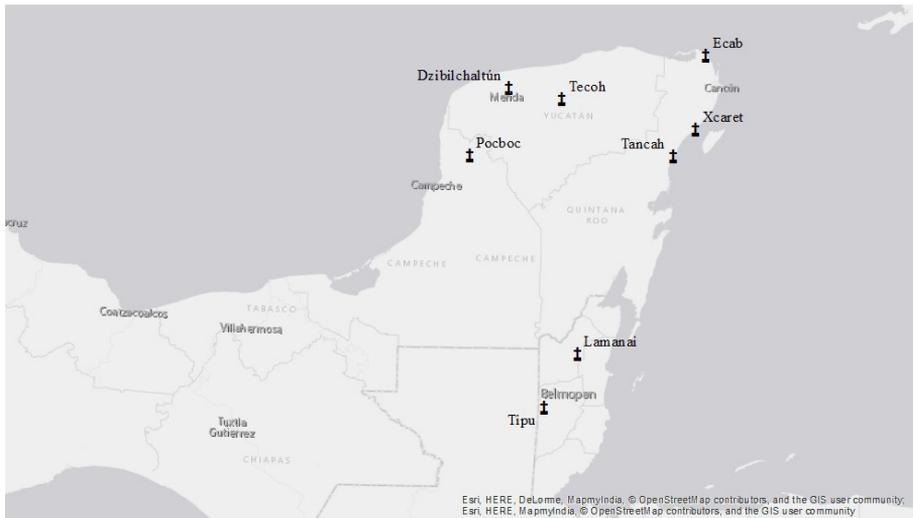


Figure 7. Map of the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize showing the eight churches selected. Map made by the author source: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community.

George Kubler (2012), John McAndrew (1969). Even though the work of these authors is valuable in any study of colonial religious architecture in Mexico, their works are merely monographic and descriptive. Many concepts in their works such as the “Mexican middle ages” proposed by Toussaint (1983) have been overcome by new architectural perspectives and analysis. In contrast Juan B. Artigas (2010) and Miguel A. Bretos (1992) present more recent data and more congruent and analytical approaches to the colonial religious architecture. However, I consider it important to notice that all these works focus on architecture from the point of view of art history and not from the perspective of an archaeological analysis. As I have mentioned earlier, the archaeological literature about early colonial churches is very poor, meaning that the literature mentioned above was of great help. Because of a lack of standard typologies about churches, I preferred to use the classification proposed by Anthony P. Andrews in his article “The Rural Chapels and Churches of Early Colonial Yucatán and Belize: An Archaeological Perspective” (1991), and Craig Hanson’s “The Hispanic Horizon in Yucatán” (1995). These two models differ in some aspects but are similar in others making it possible to compare and discuss them. The next table shows the name of the categories and the examples of chapels and/or churches.

HANSON	ANDREWS
TEMPORARY CHAPELS.	
SIMPLE RAMADA CHAPELS. Lamanai YDL I, Tipu, Tancah, Ek Balam, Xcaret	RAMADA CHAPELS. Xcaret, San Miguel, Tancah, Lamanai YDL I, Tipu.
RAMADA CHAPELS. Calotmul, Dzibilchaltún, Hunacti, Tecoh, Ecab, Lamanai YDL II	OPEN RAMADA CHURCHES. Dzibilchaltún, Hochtún, Tamalcab, Lamanai YDL II
COMPLEX RAMADA CHAPELS. Mani, Sisal, Tizimin	ENCLOSED RAMADA CHURCHES. Xlakah, Calotmul, Hunactí, Ecab and Bacalar
	UNDETERMINED RAMADA CHAPELS. Pocboc, Kanchunup, Sanahcat

Table 1. Typology of structures proposed by Hanson and Andrews.

The reason to analyze the two typologies of churches and chapels was to discuss differences and sameness, both are helpful and both have some limitations when defining these structures. These classifications were the base for my analysis when comparing them. We can start with Hanson and his first typology:

1) *Temporary Chapels.*

Despite Hanson's first category, this does not fit into Andrews's classification, I consider it important to discuss and analyze it. This is the most elementary kind of chapel composed of a *ramada* (thatched roof), and is very similar to that of the Maya dwellings in that it was constructed detached from any other building. This chapel is the kind of *xacal* constructed by the Augustinian friars in Michoacan as mentioned by Diego de Basalenque: "para las entradas y salidas de la predicación, y administracion de los Sacramentos, y assi ordenaron, que se hiziese un Xacal grande, donde la gente se juntasse a ser catequizada, y oir la palabra de Dios⁴³" (Basalenque, 1886:63). The characteristic of this type of construction is, as Hanson

43. "For the entrances and exits during preaching, and the administration of the sacraments, they ordered a big Xacal, where people gather to be catechized and to hear the word of God" (Translation by author).

points out, that it is very difficult to identify in archaeological contexts, since the building materials are perishables and unlikely to be discovered (1995:18). It is only through the historical sources, such as the information of friars, that these chapels are possible to track in time despite the vague and sometimes lack of descriptive clarity in them. An example of this is in Lizana's *Historia de Yucatán* where it is mentioned that one chapel was constructed in a day, made of wood, palm, and vine "without the use of a single nail" (Lizana, 1893:52 opp.). The similarities between an early colonial church and Maya Dwellings are enormous in architectural and material terms. Ethno-archaeological works have demonstrated that through the use of these materials without nails is possible to construct a church, however, the idea that it was built in one day is a little bit difficult to believe. Redfield argues that in Yucatán it can take about 16, 38 or 63 days to construct one simple house (quoted in Wauchope, 1938:140). Davidson explains that (in modern circumstances) it typically takes 40 days (2009:158). Rituals are important factors in the construction of the dwellings and determine the time of construction. Symbolic ceremonies have to be performed before the construction of a new house, for example, construction must begin under full moon (ibid:139).

2) Simple Ramada Chapels vs. Ramada Chapels

According to the typology used by Andrews, this is the simplest type of construction having the nave with its religious elements, covered by a thatched roof or *ramada*. Some chapels were either enclosed by masonry walls or open, or even half-walled. Because of their relatively small size and simplicity, these churches might represent the religious importance of the region where they were constructed, in this case frontier zones, which fitted well to small *congregaciones*. To Andrews, the complexity of other chapels and churches evolved from this type. Like Andrews, Hanson observes that the material constructions changed to masonry walls and partially enclosed the nave. The altars are relatively easy to identify archaeologically, normally being located in an area 20m long. For Hanson these chapels had a pole-and-thatch roof structure and were placed either to the east of, or in the monumental center of the prehispanic center.

3) *Ramada Chapels vs. Open Ramada Churches*

In Yucatán, these kinds of structures were associated with the urban plan of towns, representing a higher religious influence and promoting the reorganization of the society (Hanson: 1991:20). However, Andrews points out that these structures are characterized by the absence of masonry walls enclosing the nave, which in turn are facing the chancel. Perishable walls around the nave might be existed, being something extremely difficult to ascertain even with archaeological excavations (Andrews 1991:368). The authors have in common that these building were more elaborate and replaced the previous style with rooms for the sacristy and a choir with walls that supported beam-and-mortar roofs (Hanson 1995:20) due to the particular form of 'T', which in turn gave rise to the "open-air chapels"(Andrews 1991:367). These chapels had the option to add extra rooms with masonry walls for the friars, located either to the west or north of the chapel.

4) *Complex Ramada Chapels vs Enclosed Ramada Churches*

Hanson considers this to be the more complex and developed type of structure which integrated the previous *ramada* chapels into their structures. The *atrio* and courtyard were added as well as a single-nave church for the use of the friars. These constructions were over 30m long and were thatch-roofed. Andrews notices that this type is practically the same as the previous; Open *ramada* Churches, differing only in that the nave was enclosed by a wall with one or two doorways and windows. These constructions tend to be bigger having more architectural attributes such as bell screens and merlons (Andrews:1991:368).

5) *Undetermined Ramada Churches*

Andrews uses this last category to argue that these types of structures are more difficult and relative to identify since they were *ramada* structures in the beginning, changing to a masonry nave with a barrel vault, flat, or tiled roof using the example of Pocboc. It is almost impossible to ascertain whether the original structure was open or enclosed (Andrews 1991:368). This type of category helps to categorize the kind of structures, which -due

to their complex building development, would be arbitrary to specify with a single category.

I will continue with the semantic problem related to use of the words “church” and “chapel” and how the lack of general consensus causes problems defining them. An important factor to consider in religious architectural typologies is the relationship between function and form, because it is from here that the terms chapel and church gain importance and are defined. We can start defining these two buildings with the discussion in which Graham suggested that the Spanish referred to chapel or *capilla* as “the stone-built eastern end of churches in Yucatán and Belize, with their sanctuaries and adjacent rooms, whereas a number of modern scholars have used *capilla* to apply to the entire church” (ibid:171). This is probably the main problem; to generalize one concept arbitrarily taking for granted that it is valid for any kind of building, independent of its function. Continuing with Graham’s observation, the word “open” leads to another blurred term; what is “open”? The “open-air chapels” is normally understood as a building located in the *atrio* of the church “for it served as the sanctuary of the open-air church of which the *atrio* was the roofless nave. It was not always set in the same place in relation to the church and monastery building, but in the *atrio* it was invariably set back of an area large enough to hold a fair-sized congregation” (McAndrew 1965:344). There is another type of open-air church or chapel characterized by a thatched roof or *ramada* made of *guano* palm leaves typical on the Yucatán Peninsula, both with and without walls around the nave. Here lies a potential point of confusion, because to use the right name, “open,” the chapel had to not have walls. The “open chapel” of Dzibilchaltún is one example which had posts supporting the roof instead of walls inferred by information based on the presence of rectangular holes high in the masonry walls enclosing the sanctuary (Graham 2011:173). Despite the inaccuracy, it is possible to find one clear example of what an “open chapel” is in the descriptions made by the colonial chroniclers and friars: the description of Tizimin by Ciudad Real. He explains that: “está hecha una ramada de madera, cubierta de guano que son hojas de ciertas palmas, ancha y larga, capaz de mucha gente...no tiene paredes, para que así esté desahogada y entre el aire por todas partes, sino unos horcones,

postes o columnas de madera recisima sobre que está fundada”⁴⁴ (Cuidad Real 1873:398)

In the case of these types of structures that presumably were not-walled, the term *open-sided ramadas* might fit better, as Folan describes for the incorrectly called “chapel” of Dzibilchaltún⁴⁵ (Folan, 1970:183). It is correctly argued by Graham (2011:186) and Andrews (1991:365) that the term “open-air chapel” in the case of Mani is wrongly applied in the sense that the nave was walled but not open. Father Ponce described it: “arrimada al convento, su capilla, hecha de cal y canto, y de boveda, con algunos lazos. Y a esta llaman San Francisco”⁴⁶ (Cuidad Real 1873:172). However, it is possible to call it a chapel because this building is part of the whole church or convent, like in Motul or San Bernardino de Sisal, where the sanctuary or presbytery is appended to the extant church. Graham explains that: “Therefore, the stone-built altar ends of churches in these cases – and perhaps wherever *capilla* was the term used by the friars – indeed served as a chapel for small audience, in addition to being part of a church” (2011:184). Another example of an open *ramada* church is the church of Tecoh, close to Izamal in Yucatán. Based on excavations by Millet et al. in the 90s, this structure had a *ramada* roof and an un-walled nave (Millet et al., 1993:53). According to Artigas there is a variant of the “open-air chapel”: the isolated. The architectural program of these chapels have at least the following features; a) they are located in an isolated place away from the rest of the church complex characterized by walls and a roof (Fig. 8); b) they have built-up apses and an uncovered nave, or a thatched roof or *ramada*, which is possible to complement with one or two small rooms; one for the sacristy and the other for the baptistery (2010:41) (Fig.9).

As we can see, Roys’ example is the same type of church as in Dzibilchaltún, an open-air church without walls. Due their location, style and function, it would be wrong to call it a chapel, because traditionally the word “chapel” evokes a minor structure in terms of social range. The whole

44. “There was a *ramada* of wood covered with the thatch of *guano* that are the leaves of a certain kind of palms, which is very wide and long, big enough for many people [...] It has no walls, as it is more comfortable when the air comes in from all sides, but it is constructed on props, poles or columns of hard wood” (Translation by author).

45. It is a proper church, as it will be explained further on.

46. “Adjoined to the monastery is a chapel, made of masonry, with a vault and some bows, it is called San Francisco” (Translation by author).



Figure 8. Isolated open-air chapel without a nave and ramada in Tzintzunzan, Michoacan. In Arigas 2010.

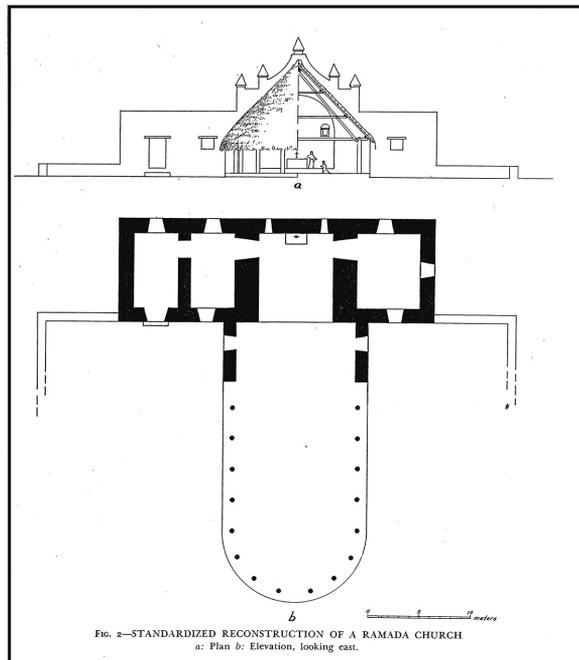


Figure 9. Idea of an open-air chapel with nave and ramada. Observe that Roys uses the name *church* instead of *chapel* for this kind of construction. After Roys 1952.

building was created for religious cult wherein the nave had a thatched roof and was half-walled, walled, or open, an altar, and its function was to serve the entire community of Maya with no expectation of a Spanish population of any size (Graham 2011: 187). This point is very important to consider in the classification of churches and chapels. I agree with Graham that we must consider the buildings in Tipu, Lamanai, and even Xcaret and Tanchah as churches and not as chapels. Despite their size (which might be one of the main reasons to label them chapels) these buildings can properly be called churches because they do not have any isolated building with *ramada*; the whole building is a *ramada*. They gain importance as a church because of their spatial location, having many kilometers between each other.

In addition, and for people unfamiliar with the issue, the term open-air chapel or church might sound confusing. Architecturally speaking these buildings would be impractical to construct, because this would represent a structure without a roof; i.e. an “open” nave with walls (or half walls), an apse, and a chancel where people congregate, similar to Artigas’ aforementioned uncovered nave. As we can imagine this would be unpractical since people would have to stand in the open and would have been affected by the weather conditions like sun and rain (McAndrew, 1965:346). However, “open-air chapels” which lack a nave and roof are possible to find in the center of Mexico, for example the chapel in the church of Tochimilco (Fig. 10), or the chapel in Huaquechula, both of which are in Puebla; (Fig. 11).

As we have seen in the previous subchapter, the gridiron plan had a European antecedent that combined the prehispanic urban features and gave rise to a hybrid colonial urbanism. The case of the open-air churches and chapels in Mexico did not have not a similar origin to the gridiron plan. Although there is some similar architectural features in the European primitive Christian churches, there were different necessities and circumstances in the New World. One example is the Capella di Piazza de Siena (McAndrew 1969:343; Palm 1953:60). Here it is possible to observe a little open chapel attached to the Palazzo Pubblico with a wooden roof. This building had the purpose of venerating a votive Madonna in the wake of the plague that struck Italy in the middle of the fourteenth century. It was used as a kind of special oratory, rather than for large masses, as in the case of Mexico.



Figure 10. View of the open-air chapel without a ramada in the church of Tochimilco, Puebla. In Artigas 2010.



Figure 11. Open-air chapel in Huaquechula, Puebla. In Artigas 2010.

The definition of chapel and church in contemporary literature has been determined to some extent by the religious and political importance of its location, and somehow in relation to their form and size more than function. This can lead to an analysis of the religious organization during the Early

Colonial period, when the Spanish divided their parish into *cabeceras* and *visitas*, as presented earlier. The former was the principal town and head of religious administration where the clerical residence was located, while the *visitas* were smaller towns dependent of the *cabeceras* (Farriss, 1984:149, Scholes and Roys, 1948:147, Gibson, 1964:101, Kalisch, 2006:4). In terms of size, this religious organization might imply that churches or the bigger buildings are possible to find in the *cabeceras*, while the chapels were in the *visitas*. However, this is not a rule. In terms of size this might fit in the idea that chapels are located in *visitas* towns, but the word church or *iglesia* is still used to define the buildings in the *visitas*, “They [churches] were small and unpretentious in comparison with the churches of the *cabeceras de doctrina*” (Gibson 1964:120). The case of Kachambay is one example of the usage of the word church or *iglesia* instead of chapel, on page 65 we can read: “que hiciesen sus casas como las hicieron y quedaron hacienda una casa grande que les pudiera servir de iglesia”⁴⁷ (AGI:60). The word church or *iglesia* appears several times in the text referring to the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church and, due to its size – which was very probably a simple ramada church, the scribe Francisco de Sanabria does not refer to it as chapel.

Size has nothing to do with function and range when defining a chapel or church, as Graham has correctly pointed out (2011). It is possible to find churches in *visitas*, having the same social function as a church in a *cabecera*, and it is possible to find chapels, “open-air chapels,” adjoining *cabeceras* churches as well (e.g. Mani or Motul). This reinforces the idea that we must rethink the name of chapels for the case of Xcaret, Tancah, Tipu, Ecab and at many others sites on the peninsula in order to determine the correct name of churches. This is also valid in the case of buildings like Dzibilchaltún or Oxtankah, sometimes wrongly called “Spanish chapels.” If we think about size again, they are considerably too big to be defined as such and, because they are one single structure, they instead fit Andrews’ category of “Open Ramada Churches” (see Roys 1952:149). The risk in assuming that the churches or *iglesias* are exclusive to the big towns might lead us to evaluate them from a perspective of center-periphery. Although, the

47. ..to build their houses and a large house possible to use as church (Translation by the author).

colonial religious organization on the peninsula is historically documented based on *cabecera-visita* like the Crónica de Mani (see Roys 1972:175), the judgment of buildings from this perspective might suppose a subjective assessment and it would lead to acceptance -as argued by Kalisch- of the fact that churches only exist in *cabeceras*, whereas chapels are exclusive of *visitas* (Kalisch, 2006:4).

Leaving behind the definitions of churches and chapels, we will now see the hybrid process in the material culture experienced by indigenous people and the Spanish. One of the most important piece of material evidence of the religion was the construction of churches and chapels and their complex architectural attributes. These buildings embodied one of the ideological institutions of power in colonial Mexico. They represented an important baseline for the study of colonial life and the hybridization process, which through archaeological works can shed light on the re-interpretation and re-construction of the colonial encounter. It is not just the reuse of stones in the construction of churches that is possible to understand as hybridity, but in a more complex way churches and chapels were the core of social relationships encompassing the life circle; baptisms, weddings, funerals, and even burials (Andrews 1991:355). The building materials and the architectonical plans of these buildings have a remarkable similarity to the Maya dwellings which is possible to observe in both archaeological and contemporary contexts. At the same time, the archaeology offers the possibility to analyze not just the hybrid material culture on the surface, such as architecture and urban plans, but also the analysis of burials within buildings and around them. The archaeological analysis of burials represents important evidence of the hybrid mortuary practices as marks of the social ambivalence between the Maya and the Spanish, as well as the way they embodied a colonial reality. Early colonial churches a chapels capture the ambivalent process proposed by Bhabha between the European intention to civilize the indigenous people transforming them into their own image, and at the same time keeping differences with the colonized, or “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha 1994:122).

In general terms we observe that most of these buildings are located in the middle of a prehispanic Maya settlement, on prehispanic platforms, or pyramids. This combination of material culture can be addressed as hybridization, since the place of their construction represents a place of

ambivalence and alterity that emerged in the colonial encounter. The reuse of prehispanic material like stones for the construction of churches is one example of hybrid material culture. Burkholder and Lyman have argued that this tendency towards overlapping religious buildings on prehispanic Maya settlements was not unique to Mexico, but it is a phenomenon observable in general in colonial Latin America from Mesoamerica to the Andean region (2004:183). One example of this settlement pattern is presented by the excavation in Magdalena de Cao Viejo, at the Chicama valley in the north of Peru by Jeffrey Quilter (2010), where the Dominicans built their church directly on the remains of a Moche plaza with an open *atrio*, and on a grid pattern with north-south streets (Quilter, 2010:106).

In the case of Mexico, particularly on the Yucatán Peninsula, the overlapping of structures followed several reasons lines of thought, as pointed out by Miguel A. Bretos; the previous Maya settlements ensured the presence of the indigenous population as they were already well-known places to them. In many cases the location of churches were on pyramids, like in Cholula in central Mexico, or Mani and Izamal in Yucatán; the former being an important *cabecera* or *kuchkabal*, the latter an important Maya sanctuary (Bretos, 1992:15). These buildings were also located on places with sacred and symbolic value for the indigenous societies such as prehispanic plazas, for example the Spanish church in Dzibilchaltún (Andrews IV and Andrews V, 1980), or Tecoh (Millet et al., 1993). Francisco Burgos argues that the foundation of the city of Mérida in Yucatán was possible because of large quantities of stone from the Maya site of *Tiho* or *Ichcaansihó* that belonged to the *cacicazgo* of *Chakan* which had a grid plan with a major plaza in the center (Burgos, 1995:19). The Franciscans had the possibility to construct a monastery, while Francisco de Montejo gave *solares* to the Spanish settlers to start the foundation of the city: "...who used to surround the monastery with the new city, which they called Mérida because its quantities of Maya masonry reminded conquistador Montejo of Roman Mérida in Spain. Four of the five hill-like pyramids in its center were flattened, and the fifth was made into a base for the monastery group" (McAndrew 1965:182). In turn, the Franciscan Lorenzo de Bienvenida argued that: "llamasse la ciudad de Mérida: pusieronle assi por los edificios superbos que ay en ella...edificios de cantería, bien labrados y grandes las piedras, no hay memoria de quien los

hizo; parecenos que se hicieron antes de la venida de Christo”⁴⁸ (1877:71). In general, the reuse of prehispanic remains in the construction of churches and towns by the Spanish was common across the whole peninsula (see Roys, 1952, Andrews, 1991:355), and in general in Mexico.

It is clear that the prehispanic ruins were a direct material source of cut and carved stone for the Spanish, which facilitated the urban reconstruction economizing time and effort, or “they could prudently be taken over as economical ready-made substitutes for the equivalent quarters in monasteries” (McAndrew1965:184). Under the process of colonization the architectural landscape was transformed and recreated, urban plans and its architecture drastically modified. A hybrid architectonical approach to early colonial churches and chapels is based on the ambivalent mixture of prehispanic and European elements, accompanied by the social circumstances that defined their urgent satisfaction of colonial necessities. Principally the urgent necessity to convert the indigenous people to Christianity and to celebrate Masses motivated the necessity to locate people into open places in order to solve the problem. McAndrew argues that: “for the first fifty or sixty years, the Indians’ outdoor church was virtually the only place in New Spain where a sizable native congregation could attend Masses regularly on Sundays and feast days. The open-air chapel was presumably a regular feature in the first establishment the friars built for their Indians, whether converted, being converted, or about to be converted” (ibid:341). Motolinia comments that the indigenous celebrations demanded open places during Easter: “que en estas tierras los patios son muy grandes y muy gentiles, porque la gente es mucha y no caben en las iglesias, y por eso tienen su capilla fuera en los patios, porque todos oigan misa los domingos y fiestas, y las iglesias sirven para entre semana”⁴⁹ (1985:182). The creation of the open-air churches was the result of the colonial demand to convert and maintain control over the indigenous population, keeping the prehispanic tradition of the open places. Some of these buildings could have accommodated

48. Called the city of Merida: it was so called because of the proud buildings existing there, buildings of limestone, well carved and big stones, there is no record of who made them, its seems that they were made before Christ.

49. “In these lands the gardens are big because there are many people and there is no space in the churches. This thus is why they have their chapel out in the garden, so that everybody can hear Mass on Sundays and holydays. The churches work during the weeks” (Translation by author).

several hundred people, for example in Maní. Thus, the Spanish brought the European church with its closed space to Mexico, which then hybridized or transformed into a new building, giving rise to the open-air church in the extant building or creating an isolated church. Bhabha explains the hybrid process with the notion of translation as “a way of imitating an original in such a way that the priority of the original is not reinforced but by the very fact that it can be simulated, copied, transferred, transformed, made into simulacrum and son on: the ‘original’ is never finished or completed in itself” (Bhabha1990:209).

Churches as dwelling and dwellings as churches; “almost the same, but not quite”

In terms of hybridization, colonial churches and chapels,⁵⁰ especially in their first building phases like those located in the east coast on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize, had a direct link with Maya dwellings. They can be addressed in terms of physical characteristics such as the building materials, and their sacred symbolism represented by activity areas inside and outside the structures. An archaeological approach to houses in terms of architecture can be addressed by acknowledging three aspects: a) the cultural (or structuralist) focuses on the house as an artifact encoded with generative meaning; b) the functional approach focuses on the house as an artefact endowed with social organizational meaning and; c) the social approach focuses on the house and its immediate surroundings to investigate the household (those who occupied the house), defined as a basic unit of socioeconomic adaptation (Johnston and Golin, 1998:143).

Bourdieu is one example of the structuralist approach arguing that the inhabited space and above all the house: “is the principal locus for the objectification of the generative schemes; and, through the intermediary of the divisions and hierarchies it sets up between things, persons, and practices, this tangible classifying system continuously inculcates and reinforces the taxonomic principles underlying all the arbitrary provisions of this culture” (Bourdieu, 1977:89). In this approach, the house is associated as an encoded

50. Early colonial churches and chapels in general, including the open-air, walled, or half walled.

meaning system, in which architecture plays an important role in terms of power, that is, on its symbolic expression in architecture (e.g. Hodder, 1989a, Hodder, 1989b). In the structuralist point of view, the reproduction of social structures reflects the way individuals conceptualize themselves and their surroundings including material and holistic representation.

The functional and the social approach share affinities which highlight the importance of analyzing houses as an artifact predominantly endowed with social organizational meaning. However, the relation between built form and socioeconomic aspects is inherently unstable and ambiguous, since the function of a house can change over time with no corresponding change in architectural form (Johnston and Golin, 1998:153). In general, the functional approach is based on the description and classification models linked with functions in relation with architectural variants. "Archaeologists establish these functions by investigating the formal properties of architecture (size, form, construction materials), the presence or absence of features (size, form, burials), and the composition of artifact assemblage found within houses" (ibid:150).

The social approach is centered not on culture but on society. They put attention on the household as a totality instead of focusing on a house as a singularity, defining the former as a unit of socioeconomic organization. In analyzing households, archaeologists seek to know the production and consumption relationships between the members of society that make up the household. Wilk explains: "The household economy is characterized by generalized reciprocity. All members of the household are involved in productive labor, and the male and female sectors of the domestic economy are poorly differentiated" (Wilk, 1990:39).

In analyzing plans of Maya dwellings, we notice that the forms have remained the same almost since the Prehispanic period till today. Although Landa's description of Maya dwellings are based on facts from the sixteenth century, archaeological excavations of house mounds at different sites around the Maya area has shown the similitude of his descriptions with the prehispanic ones, and even with contemporary models of Maya dwellings. Depending on the social class, the Maya lived in a variety of dwellings varying from simple one-room huts made from poles and thatch, to masonry walled dwellings with thatched roofs. All of the styles included rectangular, circular, and apsidal plan shapes (Andrews, 1975:47).

Archaeological evidence points out the use of the four types of plans at sites like Uaxactún and Chukumac in the Guatemala highlands; Chichén Itzá, Kabah, and Sayil in Yucatán, Mexico (Wauchope 1938:147). From the beginning of the Middle Preclassic period the use of wattle and daub walls, thatched roofs, and circular or semicircular dwellings were common building materials. There is evidence, however, that they occasionally used rectangular and quadrangular floor plans too. At “The Mirador Group” in Dzibilchaltún Yucatán, Andrews IV and Andrews V (1980) reported half-walled houses with masonry that were finished with pole-and-thatch and built on top of a number of platforms (Fig. 12). Dwellings with a rectangular and oval shaped plan, both vault and non-vault, were dated from the Preclassic period, like in structure 605 (Fig. 13). Extensive excavation at Cobá, Quintana Roo by Lina Manzanilla in the eighties showed the use of masonry in different house mounds in which the shape of dwellings had rectangular, apsidal and circular plans (Benavides, 1987:39). Based on ceramic analyses, Maya dwellings associated with households were dated from the Middle Classic to the Postclassic. These structures had the same building patterns as Dzibilchaltún: half-walled masonry finished with poles-and-thatch (Fig. 14 and 15). In surveys and excavations done in Sayil in the state of Yucatán by Killion et al., the authors analyzed the residential space and their architectural features. Four basal platforms were located

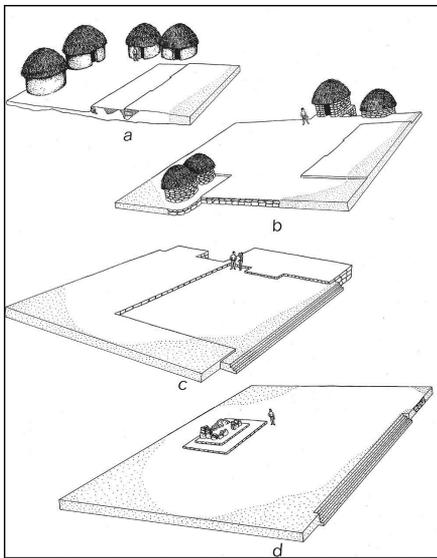


Figure 12. Perspective restorations of structure 605 with dwellings in Dzibilchaltún.

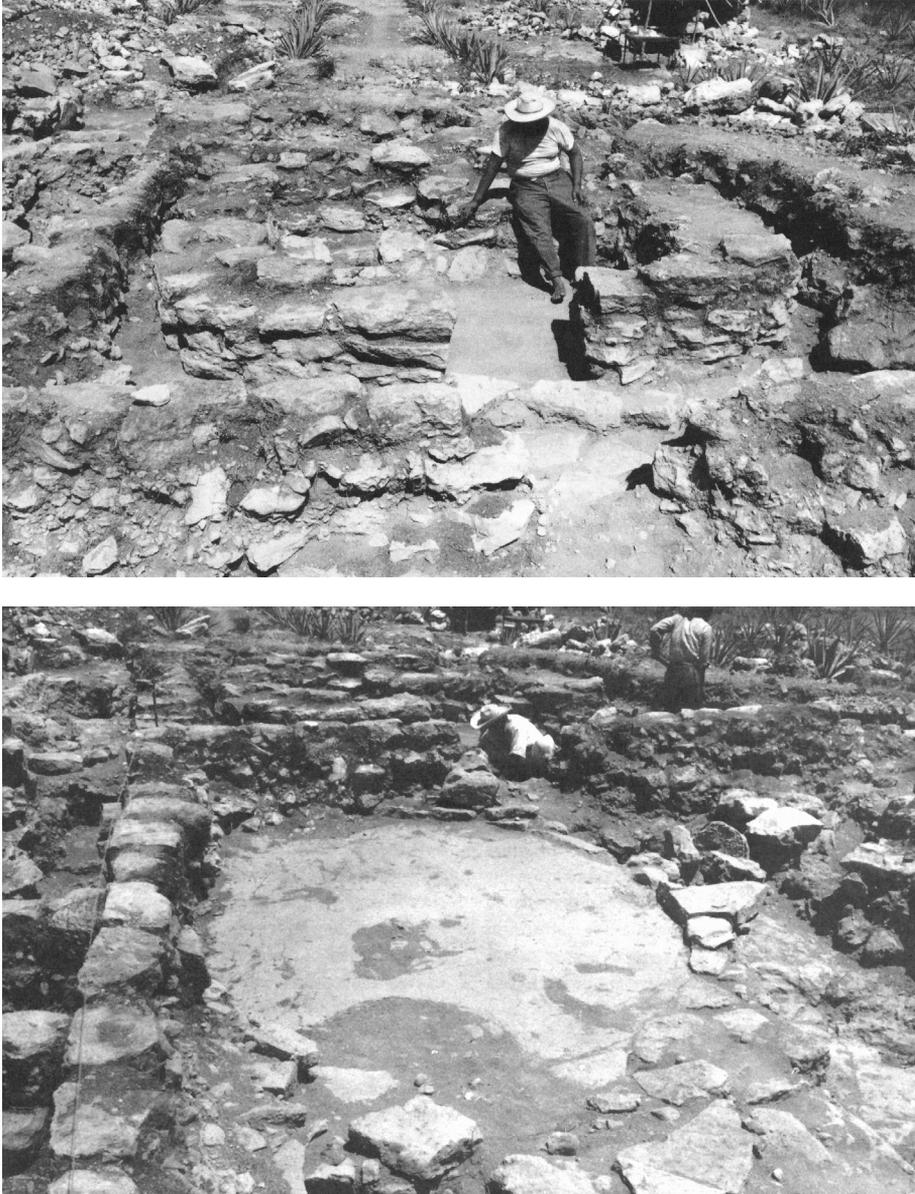


Figure 13. Top: Rectangular house. Bottom: Circular house in Str. 605 Dzibilchaltún Yucatán. In Andrews IV and Andrews V 1980.

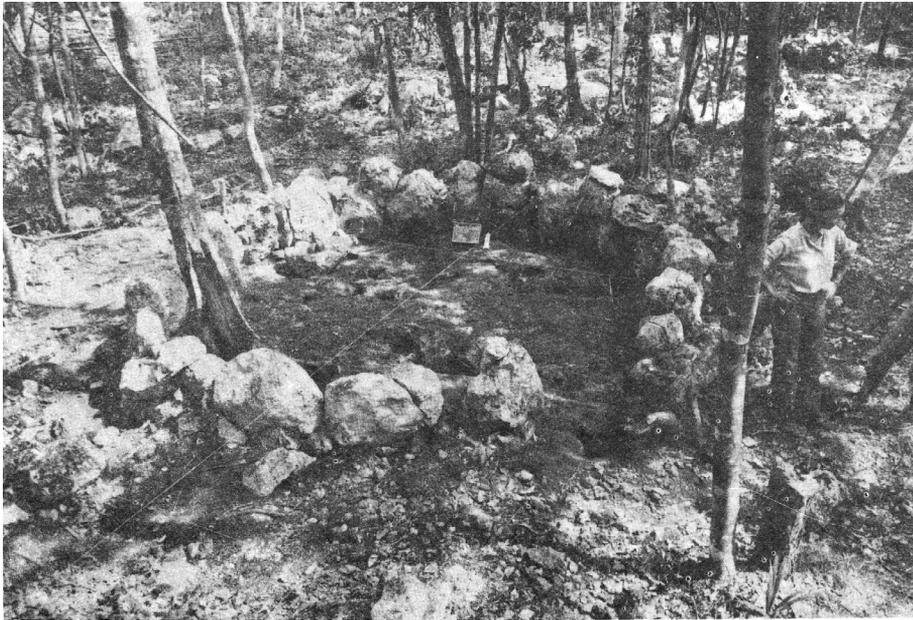


Figure 14. Top: Str. 22 oval dwelling. Bottom: Str. 4 squared dwelling at Coba. In Manzanilla 1987

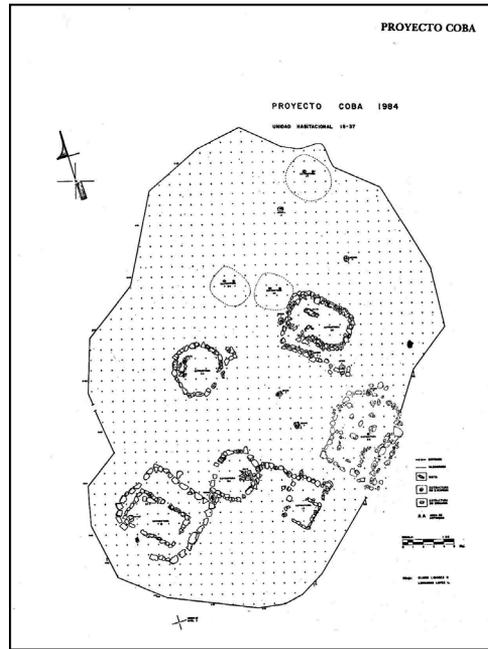


Figure 15. Plan of the household 15-37 at Coba. In Manzanilla 1987

with the remains of rectilinear stone alignments containing some rooms, having waist-height masonry walls that once supported daubed upper elements and probably thatched roofs (1989).

In building terms the limestone abundant in the whole peninsula was the main cementing material used by the Maya since prehispanic times, both for the structural and decorative purposes in architecture (e.g. Coe and Diehl, 1980, Hansen, 1998). Due to its geological origin, the Yucatán Peninsula provided a direct source of limestone for building use (Fig. 16). The word *sascab* is the combination of the Maya words *sak* “white” and *kab* “earth” as *sak-kab*. This material is a mixture of soft chalk and calcareous sediments that are abundant on the karstic Yucatán Peninsula (Villaseñor, 2010:47). The use of this material in the form of stucco remained in the indigenous constructions of Spanish churches. Its easy elaboration and high versatility made it the best option for the Spanish, not only for the construction of churches, but for buildings in general. The floors of the churches and chapels were covered with stucco as well as the walls and ceilings. This offered the possibility for painting religious motives, such as



Figure 16. Remains of red stucco on the walls in the pyramid of Tupac, Quintana Roo. Photo Author.



Figure 17. Remains of mural paintings in the church of San Bernabé, Pencuyut, Yucatán. In Putz et al., 2009.

the fragments of stucco reported by Folan in the chancel of the church of Dzibilchaltun, and it is still possible to observe in many others buildings (Fig. 17).

Another characteristic of churches and chapels was the thatched roofs or *ramadas*. The use of *guano* palm leaves (*Sabal mayarum*) and in some regions the *chit* palm (*Thrinax argentea*) was a typical building material for the roofs of indigenous dwellings even before the arrival of the Spanish (Fig. 18). In his book, *Modern Maya Houses*, Robert Wauchope (1938) makes an ethnohistorical analysis of the different characteristics of Maya dwellings, he explains about the roofs:

“In Yucatán **jaan** (*guano*) is standard everywhere that palm is the thatch material, with exceptions of some north coast villages like Chicxulub. In the latter towns they use a palm called **tjit** (*chit*). It has a much smaller, rounder frond than *guano* and the common rafters must be spaced much closer together when **tjit** is to be fastened to them” (Wauchope, 1938:106).

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, almost all the naves of churches and chapel on the peninsula were covered with *guano* palm (see Cárdenas Valencia, 1937; López de Cogolludo 2006; Lizana 1893),

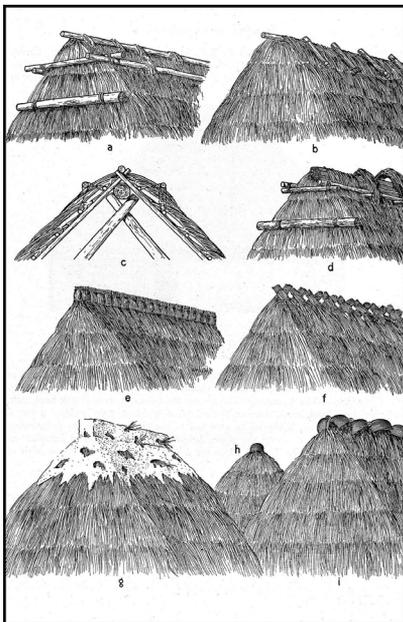


Figure 18. Nine different types of *ramadas* used by the Mayas on the Yucatán Peninsula and Guatemala. After Wauchope 1938.

a building element that did not change with time. In his *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*, Fray Diego de Landa mentions that these *ramadas* were a very common and waterproof covering for the houses which had a wall with some doors in the middle that divided the house (Landa, 2000:61). This palm is so practical that it has been used since the Prehispanic period until today by the Mayas in the constructions of their houses. This fact is evidenced in the Maya architecture style at sites like Uxmal and Labná in Yucatán (Fig. 19).

According to Wauchop's classification, the ground plans of Maya dwellings can be divided into four types: apsidal, flattened ends, rectangular, and square (Fig. 20). In contemporary cases, the houses were built on

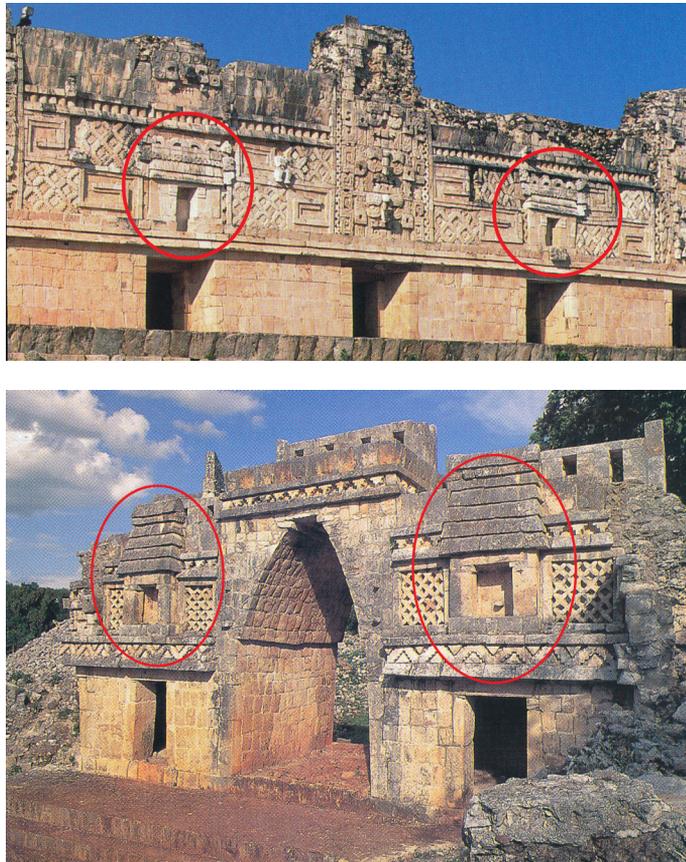


Figure 19. Top: Representation of Maya dwellings in the Nunnery Quadrangle in Uxmal, Yucatán. Bottom: Dwellings carved on the Arche in Labná, Yucatán. In *Arqueología Mexicana Especial 2*

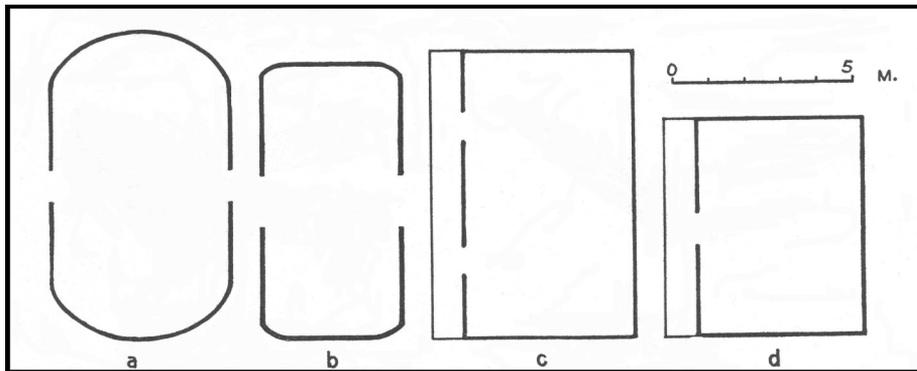


Figure 20. Ground Plans. a) Apsidal House, Yucatán. b) Flattened ends, Yucatán. c) Rectangular, Guatemala. d) Square, Guatemala. After Wauchope 1938.

platforms regardless of the flatness of the ground. In archaeological excavations this tendency is visible in sites such as Dzibilchaltún (see figure 14). The different plans can be associated with the geography of the regions, the weather being an important factor in the consideration of the building material. Apsidal plans seem to be more common in Mexico than in other areas, however, this plan has been reported in some regions of Guatemala (see Wauchope, 1937; Davidson, 2009).

Some walls of the Maya dwellings vary in type from being very simple, like vertical poles walls, horizontal or vertical wattle walls, to more complex like cane or wood framing walls and adobe-brick masonry walls, or the dry rubble masonries in which the use of limestone rocks is characteristic (Wauchope, 1938:62-82). In his classic study of Tzoztil house architecture in the highlands of Chiapas, Evon Vogt identified four types of walls in Zinacantan: wattle and daub, dried mud brick or adobe, split logs or branches, and flat boards. In contrast to the Yucatán Peninsula, Voigt classified three forms of roofs: the gable roof, the steep hip roof, and the shed roof (Vogt, 1969:72). Although dwellings in Chiapas may differ because of the geology and geography of the region, especially the lack of limestone characteristic on the peninsula, the construction techniques and some of the materials are similar and useful in this analysis.

Eight early churches were compared to observe their hybrid elements in relation with Maya dwellings. These churches, however, did not represent the only/best representative examples of religious buildings around the

peninsula. In spite of the lack of archaeological works about this particular issue, I selected them because they were archaeologically worked, recorded, and some of them had been excavated and therefore provided a general view of how they were, reflecting the early colonial life and the initial process of hybridization that resulted from the Spanish domination. They were chosen with the aim of encompassing the whole peninsula as they were located in the states of Campeche, Yucatán and Quintana Roo in Mexico, as well as two more churches in Belize.

Pocboc, Campeche

The archaeological works in the church of Pocboc demonstrate different building processes. Originally a sixteenth-century *ramada* church, it was given a masonry roof with a barrel vault in the seventeenth or eighteenth century (Andrews 1991:368; see Messmacher 1966). According to Andrew's classification the church was originally an open *ramada* church with the typical 'T' shaped form, and was composed of a chancel with an altar in the center which was flanked with two rooms for the sacristy and baptistery (Fig. 21). As with many colonial churches Pocboc is east-west oriented. Despite the nave being covered by a thatched roof, it is not clear if it was walled or not, but based on evidence from other churches, the nave had to have either a pole wall or probably wattle and daub walls. An interesting aspect of this church is the construction phases reported by Messmacher, since a new structure was added in the late seventeenth or eighteenth century giving it its current shape. The walls were completely made of stone and the interior arcades were presumably placed to support the choir (Messmacher, 1966:19). Following a medieval architectural tradition, the rectangular *atrio* without *capillas posas* presents a row of merlons at the top.

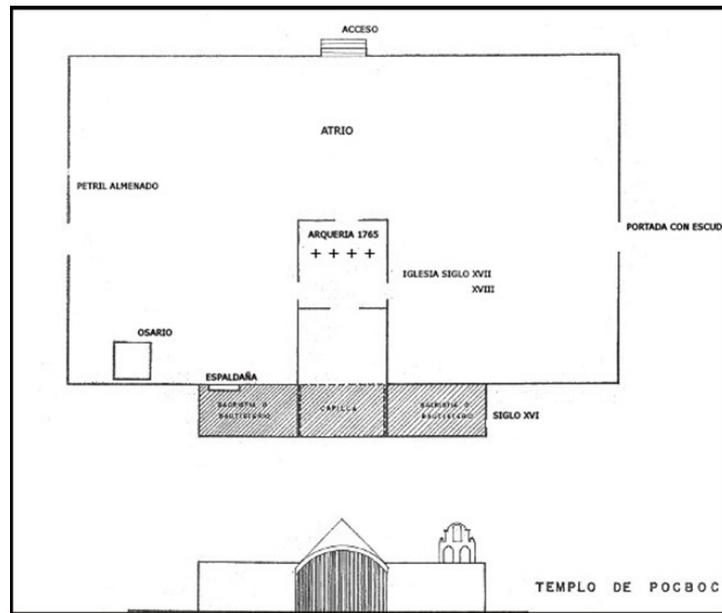


Figure 21. Top: Plan of Pocboc. After Messmacher 1966. Bottom: panoramic view of the church. Source: Pocboc. 20°14'16.86"N 90°06'14.07 W. Google Earth. October 2013. September 28 2015

Dzibilchaltun, Yucatán

The Spanish church of Dzibilchaltún is located in the north of Mérida. This building was constructed in the middle of a prehispanic site of the same name, representing a clear example of European elements overlapping with prehispanic. This church was probably an open-air *ramada* since there is no clear evidence of walls around the nave area. The church has a ‘T’ plane with a massive stone chancel, an altar, a barrel-vault roof, a room that served as sacristy, and an east-west orientation. Because its location is in the middle of a Maya site, the builders had no problem finding stones that were already carved from prehispanic periods, as Folan argues: “walls and other colonial buildings were formed by stone blocks from early period Maya structures with an occasional, more finely faced or carved block from Florescent structures. A few stela fragments were re-used” (1973:187). Some meters to the east of the church, a rectangular building was identified as the curate’s house, or *casa curial*, that assisted with the priest’s visits. This building seems to have been made from perishable wattle-and-daub walls, and topped by a wooden beams roof. Despite the *atrio* never having been excavated, there are three visible walls (south, north and east), each with an entrance. A European characteristic is the presence of merlons on top of the church, which had decorative purposes (Fig. 22).

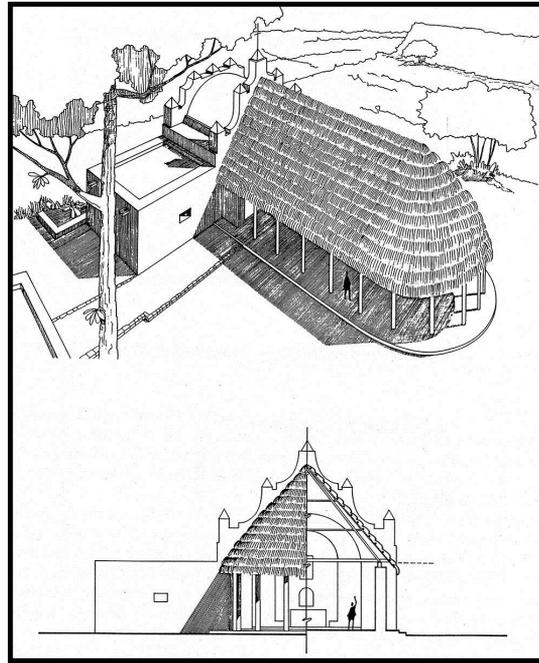


Figure 22. Top: North-south view of Dzibilchaltún church. The first level shows the nave's floor, at the back of the chancel with barrel-vault, altar, and to the left the sacristy. Photo author. Bottom: Perspective drawing of Dzibilchaltún. In Folan 1970.

Tecoh, Yucatán

The church of Tecoh is located east of Izamal. The building has the same 'T' plane as Poeboc and Dzibilchaltún (Fig. 23). As in Dzibilchaltún, it was built in the middle of a prehispanic site and oriented east-west. According to historical documents, Tecoh had a certain importance as it was a *cabeceras* town at the arrival of the Spanish (Millet, et al.1993:48). Important Maya buildings are located at the site such as a ball court and several prehispanic platforms. The excavations make it possible to date the prehispanic occupation to the Late Classic (ibid:56). Like many other churches on the Yucatán Peninsula, this has an east-west orientation with a massive stone chancery in the middle and two rooms on either side, one used as sacristy. The remains of one stone-arc were in the church where they were part of the *ramada* that covered the nave. The works of Millet et al. suggest that the *ramada* was very probably an open-air type, since there is no evidence of walls around the nave. If there was a wall, it was made of poles (ibid:53). Another colonial structure found in Tecoh is the curate's house made of masonry which had a roof of wooden beams. In total six Spanish buildings are reported at Tecoh. Despite there being evidence of an *atrio* around the church, the excavations did not reveal any additional information.

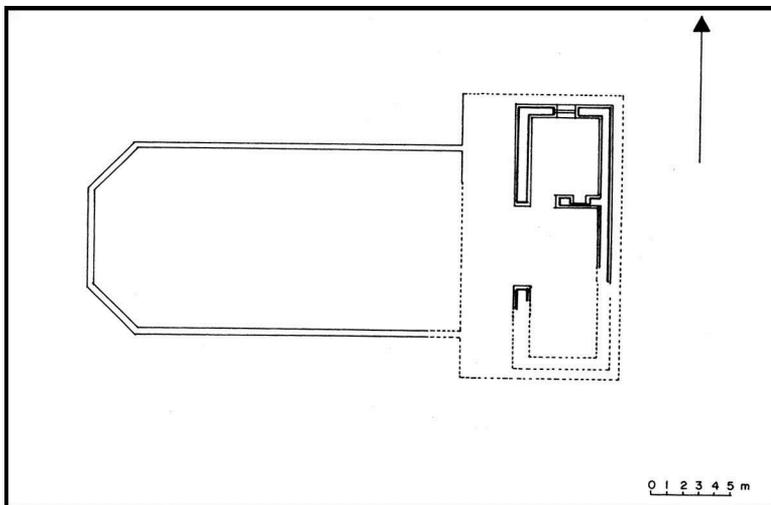


Figure 23. Plan of Tecoh. In Millet et al. 1993.

Ecab, Quintana Roo

Known to the Spanish as *El Gran Cairo*, the prehispanic site of Ecab is one of the most relevant colonial sites on the Yucatán Peninsula. The Franciscans built two structures: the church and the curate's house. The church consists of a massive masonry chancel - which in turn is divided into a sacristy and a baptistery, and the nave. The chancel was roofed with a barrel-vault sharing the same 'T' plan as the aforementioned churches. As many colonial churches in Mexico, the church at Ecab has a long row of merlons on the top that recall a medieval tradition. These merlons were, however, decorative rather than defensive since there is no access to the roof. Despite the church being located on a prehispanic settlement, the rectangular nave was built on a quadrangular Colonial platform in which a *ramada* was supported by walls made of a perishable material such as wattle and daub, in an east-west orientation (Fig. 24). From the archaeological works done, the rest of material on the surface revealed Postclassic and Colonial elements inferring a continuous indigenous occupation at the site even after Spanish contact. In addition, and given the size of the church and the curate's house, it is possible to believe that the church fulfilled the necessities of a congregation of some hundred people, as Benavides and Andrew has argued (1979:10).

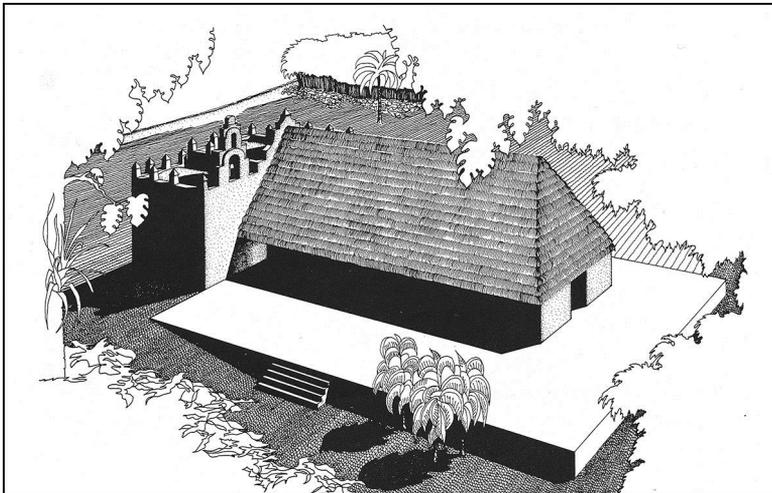


Figure 24. Perspective drawing of the Spanish church at Ecab. After Benavides and Andrews 1979

Xcaret, Quintana Roo:

According to Andrews (1991), these two churches were of the type *Ramada* chapel. Because of the lack of a perspective drawing of Tancah, and based on the plan done by Miller and Farriss, we can infer that the church was very similar to the one at Xcaret (Fig. 25).

In analyzing the perspective drawing of Xcaret, we notice a rectangular ground plan in the nave area combined with an apsidal form in the chancel. Based on the excavation carried out by Con (2002), the walls and the floor were made of wattle and daub covered with stucco. In this type of building the whole church had a *ramada* roof supported by seven posts and an east-west orientation (Fig. 26). The church was constructed on the remains of a prehispanic platform, a very common Spanish practice. Excavations done in the area of the nave revealed the presence of 135 burials; this practice turned the church in a cemetery which included adults and children. The burials showed a hybrid practice combining common Maya elements like obsidian flints and points, the remains of carved animals bones, shells, and snail ornaments. The European evidence is from the type of beads, some nails, earrings and a copper ring. In addition, Spanish, Maya and maybe *mestizos* skeletons were found (Con, 2002.389-392).

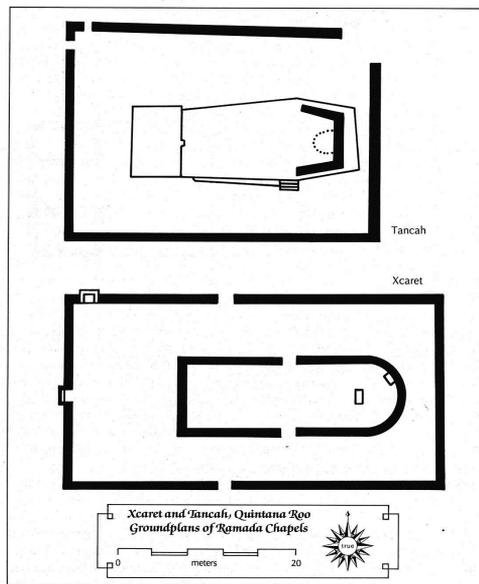


Figure 25. Plans of Xcaret and Tancah. In Andrews 1991.

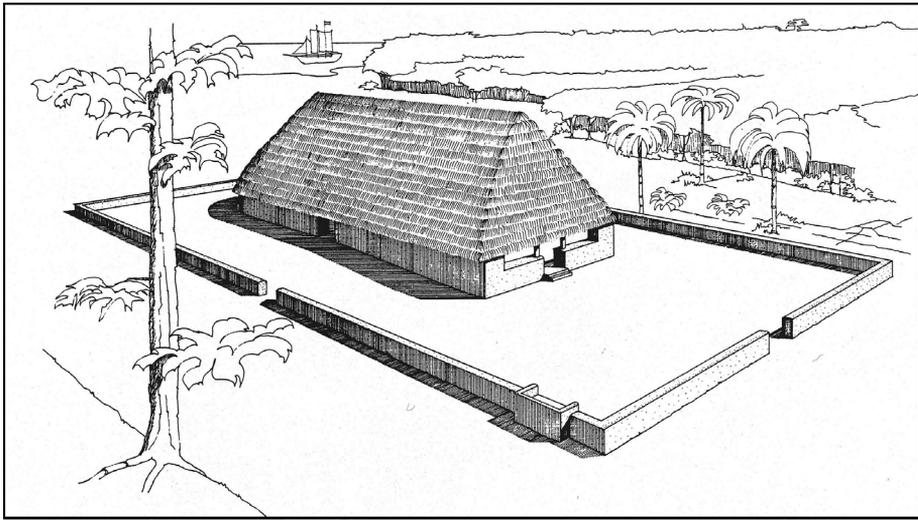


Figure 26. Top: Perspective drawing of the Ramada church of Xcaret, Quintana Roo. In Andrews 1991. Bottom: View from east to west. Photo courtesy of Maria José Con.

Contrary to the ‘T’ shaped churches presented above, the wall of the *atrio* in Xcaret is more evident as it was 20 m long and 24 m wide with three accesses points, two on either side and one at the front of the nave.

Tancah, Quintana Roo:

The Spanish church at Tancah is a building which still has much to show. During one of my explorations in the biosphere of Sain Ka'an, the regional INAH at Quintana Roo kindly gave me the opportunity to visit the site (currently closed to the public). The idea was to visit the church in order to use the information for my thesis. To my surprise, the church had been "lost." Since the excavations done by Miller and Farriss in the middle seventies the church has been lost to the jungle and several attempts to locate it have gone without results. The Tancah-Tulum complex is an important and very interesting region combining a power transition between the Postclassic hegemony of Tulum over Tancah until ca 1521 when Tulum was abandoned, and the Early Colonial period, when Tancah gained importance and became the colonial site of Tzama, which was represented by the Spanish church constructed there until its abandonment in 1668 (Miller, 1985:32, see Miller and Farriss, 1979).

As mentioned above the plan of the church is very similar to Xcaret. The church had an east-west orientation. The building lies on a Late Postclassic period platform making the construction of the building easier through direct access to prehispanic stones. Like in Xcaret, the whole building was a *ramada* with the chancel made of dry rubble masonry and the nave was probably enclosed by pole and thatch or completely open (1979:231), in this case classified as an open-air ramada church. An evident feature is the ca 1m high *atrio* surrounding the church which has two entrances, one to the northeast and the other to the northwest corner (Fig. 27). This characteristic is interpreted by Miller and Farriss as one way to perform religious processions by dividing men and women and segregating worshipers according to sex or some other criterion, one group entering from the northeast corner and the other group through the northwest corner (ibid:232). As in Xcaret, burials revealed an important aspect of the hybrid practice between Maya and Spanish. Nineteen burials were found under the stucco floor of the nave who were apparently only men, with one female found in the churchyard. It would be premature to state that the possible "sex segregation" was practiced in the burials as well, however, "the possibility of segregation of the dead by sex cannot be ignored in the light of the presence of ethnohistorical evidence for segregation of the living by sex" (ibid: 232).

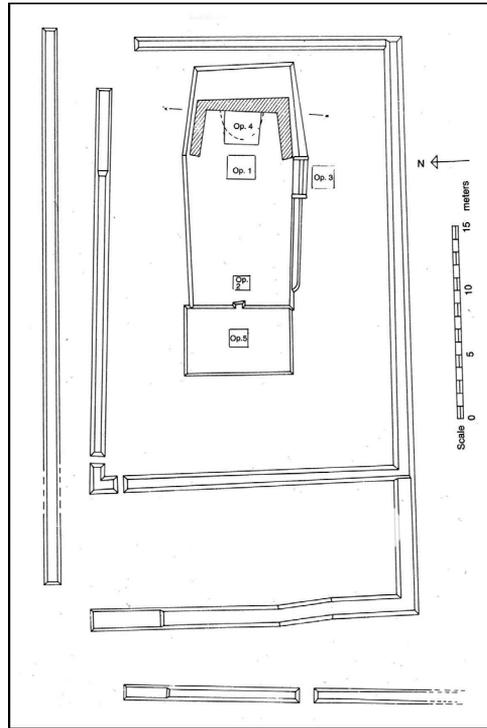


Figure 27. Plan of the church of Tancah. After Miller and Farriss 1979

The burials analysis revealed a hybrid mixture between Maya and Spanish with possible *mestizo* evidence, as in Xcaret. The material culture found in the burials highlights European iron nails and a wooden coffin; the Maya evidence was mainly jade beads and the common practice of cranial deformation. Tancah is an example of the ideological mixture of Maya and Spanish religious values, represented by a cache found in front of the altar. The cache was a ceramic vessel identified as an Tituc orange Polychrome of the Camichin Variety dated to the Early Classic period (ibid:233-234). In addition, and according to the excavations, there is evidence of a small colonial house very probably made from wattle and daub wall and with a *ramada* roof, which would have been used as clergy's residence (ibid:227). It is important to point out that after the work of Miller and Farriss in the middle seventies, the church has not been studied. Their article "Religious Syncretism in Colonial Yucatán" is, so far, the only source of information about it.

Tipu and Lamanai (YDL I), Belize

Located in Belize, Lamanai and Tipu are probably the best archaeologically studied colonial churches. Many years of continuous excavation had shed light on their possible exterior aspects bringing a very accurate idea of how they looked (Fig. 28). Excavation at both sites has been very important because they have revealed the hybrid practice manifested in burials with indigenous elements combined with European objects like silver earrings, bells, needles, rings in Tipu (Elizabeth et al., 1989:1258), and the presence of Maya caches in YDL I (Graham, 2011:219). In addition, both sites have contributed to the knowledge of the daily colonial life in the region, regarding architecture and material culture. YDL I was of the type of Tancah; part masonry, part pole walls and constructed over a prehispanic platform. The difference seems to be that in YDL I the chancel was made of poles or wattle, whereas Tipu was made of full-height masonry.

Because of the low height of the walls it is possible to state that both churches were of the open-air type. Both were *ramadas* with an apsidal plan and an *atrio* wall located at the entrance of the churches. In YDL I, two stone-bordered terraces were found in the form of an *atrio*, located in front of the southern entrance of the church. The excavations in Tipu do not suggest the presence of an *atrio* as in many other churches of this type. However, a line stone surrounding was found delimiting the church to some extent.

One of the first observable impressions in the eight churches presented above is the degree of architectural attributes and the complexity/simplicity of the construction. Those located in the west show a more developed architecture as they are bigger and more complex. The churches located in the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize have more

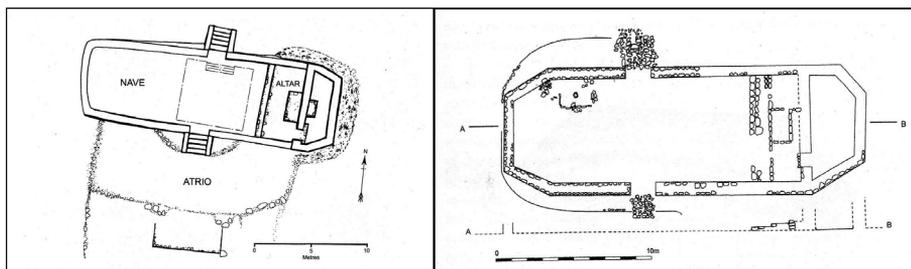


Figure 28. Plan and section of Lamanai (YDL I) and Tipu (right). In Graham 2011.

architectural attributes linked with the Maya dwellings than those located in the west-north. To some extent, one reason was the mobility of the population in the east coast and the successive abandonment of settlements and churches. Regardless of the size or level of complexity in their architecture, the building materials characteristic of the prehispanic Maya dwellings are present in all types of churches. These are for example dry-rubble masonry, wattle and daub, walls poles, and the *guano* palm leaves or *ramadas*.

Symbolic elements in Maya dwellings

The symbolic importance of the spatial organization and symbolism within the Maya houses are important aspects in the hybrid process in relation to the symbolism in the churches as well as and how the indigenous Maya readapted them and transformed Catholic practice. Because architecture represents a way to transmit ideas, power, and in general a cultural worldview, the use of space is determined by different factors. Wendy Ashmore states that, “house layouts define separable locations for activities associated with different genders and with variable levels of ritual purity, domestic intimacy, social standing, and the like. In this manner, house interiors often constitute microcosms, or worldview maps, providing ever-present spatial charts of the emic structure of social and ideological relationships” (Ashmore, 1991:199). Cultural and natural factors determine the type of structure and its social symbolism. However, houses are a *human* fact -as Rapoport argues- suggesting that socio-cultural factors become of prime importance in relating a man’s way of life to the environment (1969:48).

An opposite way, and as a colonial legacy product of the religious practice in churches, we can observe the modern Maya dwellings as a religious place having some symbolic function as a church. As we have seen with the *atrios*, the quincuncial cosmogony gains symbolic importance in the internal structure of Maya dwellings, they are divided into four symbolic corners represented by posts and at hearth at the center (see Davidson, 2009:152). In Zinacantan, Chiapas, Evon Vogt argues the importance of the directional symbolism represented in a quadrilateral model of the universe, linked with the dwellings and even with the natural landscape of the town:

“In most Maya communities there is the belief in four corner gods who are believed to hold the sky and /or the earth on their shoulders. Common expressions of this quadrilateral model are found in rectangular ritual tables, in rituals performed at the corners of square or rectangular houses and maize fields, and in the ritual recognition of four important sacred mountain around the ceremonial center as in Zinacantan”⁵¹ (1969:602).

Despite the importance of the quadrilateral model to explain the symbolism of the regions in relation with houses, this model was later adapted by the concept of the quincuncial cosmogony presented above, including the center. Thus, Davidson applies the quincuncial model in a symbolic representation of Maya dwellings; the four posts and one hearth very close the center: “the four corners of the houses representing the cardinal points of the Earth’s surface; the three-stone hearth representing specific heavenly bodies; the cooking fire as the *axis mundi* representing the connection between heaven and earth; and the spatial organization of interior furniture of the house” (Davison, 2009:153).

Beginning in prehispanic times, Maya dwellings, mythology, and European Catholicism hybridized in early colonial churches making it possible to trace it in Maya dwellings from the Colonial period until today. Based on the book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, Davidson points out the relationship between the internal structure of Maya dwellings such as the four main posts that support the roof, and the four Maya gods called Chaaks that support the four corners of the sky. He argues: “the symbolism of the four main posts (*horcones*) of the Maya house reflected and maintained the relationship between earth-sky. The four posts were literally seen as raising the sky in being supported by four gods” (ibid). In addition, Demarest suggests that the gods *Pawahtunes* supported the four corners of the earth; The *Bacabs* supported the heavens in a 260-day sacred cycle associated with the four color-directions; and similarly the *Chaaks* were associated with the directions and other manifestations (Demarest, 2004:182-3). Regardless of the different plans of the Maya dwellings, the four posts are present in all of the Maya area (Fig. 29).

51. Zinacantan in Vogt’s citation, represent the center or the fifth cardinal point.

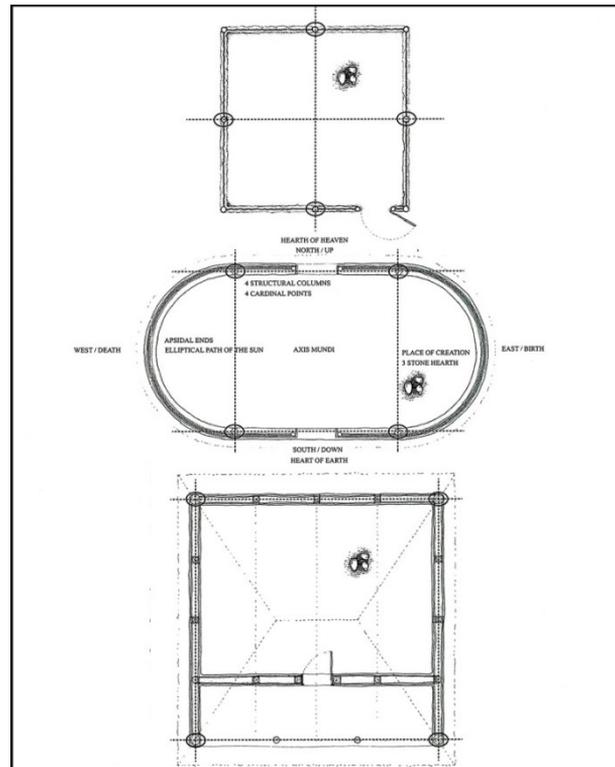


Figure 29. Semantic representation of the Maya dwelling. In Davidson 2009

The spatial distribution of Maya dwellings are characterized by specific places for different activities such as sleep, cooking or worship, the latter in the form of a house altar (Fig. 30). The altar together with the hearth is one of the most important places in Maya dwellings associated with religious aspects of daily life (Villa Rojas, 1976:207-08). In the highlands of Chiapas, Vogt explains that they were always constructed against the wall opposite the hearth, “Some altars are constructed against the idle of the wall; others are located in corners but with one edge against the wall opposite the hearth” (1969:83), he continues: “One of the most important tables in the house is that used for an altar” (ibid:67). Wauchope argues that, “In Yucatán it is opposite the main door, to one side of it, or in one end of the house...the shrine consists of a small table with a picture of a saint on top. There are generally candles in front of the picture.” (1938:142).

Altars in churches and Maya dwellings are important objects representing an area of religious activity. It is very likely that the prehispanic



Figure 30. Left: altar in a Maya dwelling in Yucatán. Photo by author.

Maya dwellings had a special area for some kind of family cult. If this was the case, then the introduction of Catholicism represented physically by churches, and Maya ritual traditions, were merged to maintain family cult in modern dwellings. Prehispanic and European burial traditions are other examples of hybridization. This is a common practice identified both in the naves of the colonial churches and underneath Maya dwellings. In the prehispanic life the familiar links were very strong, having a tradition of burying outside the house area or under the floor of the house (Demarest, 2004:176, see McAnany, 1995). The prehispanic tradition continued through the colonial period and was even a common practice during the nineteenth century, as mentioned by Eric Thompson in Guatemala: “Thirty or forty years ago people were often buried beneath the floor of their houses. It is believed that when a corpse is thus interred in the floor of the hut, the soul of the deceased will re-enter the body of the next child to be born in that or any other hut” (Thompson, 1930:82). It is evident that the symbolism they had in relation to families and the community. Fray Diego de Landa explains that the Maya had the tradition of burying the house owner under the floor of the house or in the backyard (Landa, 2000:92). In

a symbolic way, the house served as a church and gained sacred significance. In archaeological contexts, this practice is recorded by Miller and Farriss in excavations carried out in the Spanish church at Tanchah, Quintana Roo. They found nineteen burials in the nave of the church: “Most of the burials were located under the stucco floor of the nave, a practice which is not itself Spanish, since the Maya buried their dead under the floors of their houses and temples” (Miller and Farriss, 1979:232). In Xcaret, Maria Jose Con excavated 135 burials in the nave of the Spanish church; they were laid out on their backs with their head facing west and towards the altar. She argues,

“La densidad de entierros refleja una amplia utilización de la nave como camposanto, prácticamente en 52 cm de profundidad se depositaron todos los entierros...Observamos que la densidad de individuos disminuye cuanto más cerca al altar y desaparecen por complete en el presbiterio”⁵² (Con, 2002:389)

In the case of the Spanish church YDL I, Pendergast reported 230 individuals beneath the floor of the nave (Graham, 2011:233).

Observing the typical Maya dwellings plans, several external elements evoke similarities with those of early colonial churches. The Yucatecan houses are spatially delimited by a characteristic stone fence or dry-laid wall called an *albarradas*.⁵³ These dry-laid walls have a symbolic analogy with the *atrios* walls which were found in practically all of the churches described. Besides its use for delimiting a private property, these walls represent a symbolic protection of the inhabitants and their common activities. Vogt argues that in Zinacantan the stone fence enclosed the family patio and had a ritual importance because the house’s cross lay there. This cross and the patio had the function of a familiar shrine. “It marks not only the physical entrance but also the ritual entrance to the house’s soul” (Vogt, 1969:88). If we translate these *albarradas* to the walls in churches, we can find some symbolic analogies like the ritual space contained in the patio in dwellings,

52. “The density of burials reflects a wide utilization of the nave as a churchyard; the burials were deposited at a depth of roughly 52 cm. We note that the density of individuals decreases closer to the altar, disappearing totally in the presbytery” (Translation by author).

53. In the center of Mexico they are called as *tecorrales* and have the same function.

and the *atrio* in churches, both with a cross in the center. In general, *atrios* and patios represent a sacred space strongly associated with the five regions of the prehispanic universe, as mentioned earlier.

In addition, with this analysis of hybrid architecture, I will mention two examples of colonial churches with prehispanic features. The first is presented by Haagen D. Klaus and is the case of the chapel of San Pedro de Mórrope in north Peru. Established as a *reducción* in 1536, the chapel hybridized with European and indigenous features. The hybridization is described by Klaus not just in the religious architecture, but also in terms of burial practices. The chapel “contrasting with its exterior, the interior building styles are fundamentally Andean” (Klaus, 2013:219). An example of this hybridity is the 10m ramp with a strong prehispanic reminiscence, which provided access to *huacas*, shrines, or other sanctified places. Maybe the main hybrid attribute is the altar; a 3 m tall stepped pyramid sharing a common element of prehispanic north coast art, as Klaus argues (*ibid*:221). During the analysis of the burials, Klaus found that the orientation is north-south, which had been a common practice since at least 1500BC (*ibid*:222). This is an interesting feature because in contrast, the burials found in churches on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize, always had an east-west orientation clearly pointing to Christian practice (see Con, 2002, Miller and Farriss, 1979). DNA analysis made of teeth from individuals in burials recovered show a genetic hybridity possible to associate in parallel with the construction of the chapel (Klaus 2013:215). Although the chapel of San Pedro de Mórrope is not an “open-air chapel,” it represents a clear demonstration of the social interactions reflected in hybrid material culture motivated by the religious colonial policy.

In the case of Yucatán, the chapel of Santa Bárbara is one example where the hybridization between prehispanic and Spanish elements is more than evident (Fig. 31). This chapel is part of the hacienda “El Paraiso,” located very close to the prehispanic site of Santa Bárbara. The Spanish reused four Maya steles, two of them are located at either side of the stairs that led to the chapel. These stelae present two men wearing feathers attached to a wing element on a mask with necklaces and collar ornaments. The other two elements are located on either side of the door to the chapel. They are a type of sculpture more than stelae and show two men carved in the stone wearing typical classic headdresses. Both are wearing necklaces and collar ornaments and each one has a scepter in their left hand (Fig.32).

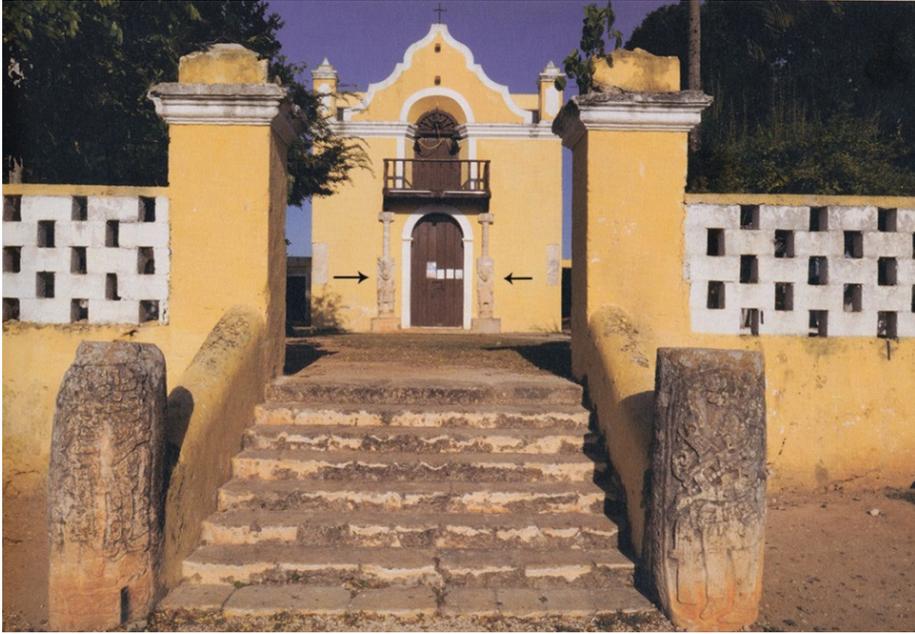


Figure 31. Entrance step to the Santa Bárbara chapel in Yucatán. The Maya Stelae are on the first level. Two sculptures are on the second level on either side of the chapel door.



Figure 32. Details of the stelae and sculptures.

In terms of hybridization, the architecture of the open-air churches can be interpreted as ambivalence between European architectural traditions, and the Maya building materials and spatial symbolism that combined new physically visible elements. Regarding the churches of Lamanai and Tipu in Belize, David Pendergast suggests: “they [the churches] are not a fully syncretic mixture of European concepts and techniques with those of the Precolumbian Maya, but instead are European buildings as interpreted within the Maya architectonic tradition” (Pendergast, 1993:122).

Summary

Two types of institutions represented the colonial power in Mexico: ideological and physical. The former are any form of beliefs or ideas, while the latter are any form of structure or buildings. Religion was one of the most important ideological institutions that arrived with the colonizers, and worked in parallel with the Spanish Crown in the colonial process in what is known as the “spiritual conquest.” The influence of religion was significant in controlling the society. The physical institutions represent buildings, common places like plazas, monuments, and general architecture and urban plans that embodied the colonial ideologies. The colonial situation motivated the emergence of the *encomienda*, *tributarios*, and *congregaciones* and *doctrinas* system. The *congregaciones* system transformed the social landscape due to its internal policy. This system was intended to relocate the indigenous population into big towns with the aim of controlling and facilitating their conversion to Catholicism. The poor organization of the *congregaciones* on the east of the Yucatán Peninsula combined with a lack of political and religious coercion created a negative reaction from the Maya population that Nancy Farriss refers as flight, drift, and dispersal. The new urban plan made by the *congregaciones* led to the reorganization of the towns and villages in *cabeceras* and *visitas* with the name of *Doctrinas*.

The colonial architecture in Mexico is linked to the Renaissance and its urban influence in Europe. Spain assimilated some influences which in turn were developed in Mexico in the form of religious architecture and urban design. After the conquest of the Aztecs in 1521, the main task of the conquerors was to found and protect towns from possible attacks by indigenous people. However, the idea of fortifying towns and cities

was never realized at all. Scholars like Tousaint and Kubler argued many decades ago that the churches worked as fortresses. Today this idea is obsolete and new architectural theories explain the complexity of the churches. The gridiron plan is probably one of the first characteristics in the new urban landscape in Mexico. Its rectilinear plan conditioned the urban design with a main plaza in the center of the towns and a church. The social hierarchies were marked with the center for the Spanish population, and the periphery for the indigenous people. The gridiron plan existed in Europe before the arrival of the Spanish; however, the colonial policies turned it into a more complex plan combining religious architecture with indigenous traditions. The next built form in the colonial order was the use of *atrios*, churches, and plazas. The combination of the Mesoamerican “open space” with the European “closed space” determined the urban and religious architecture in Mexico. The *atrios* represented the prehispanic plazas associated with open spaces; together with the open-air churches this facilitated the indigenous conversion process. The names of churches and chapels cannot be determined in terms of range, such as the idea that the *cabecera* towns only had large churches and convents because of the importance of the town, while *visitas* were basic units of indoctrination and only had a chapel of masonry and a *ramada* (thatched shelter).

Based on the classification of Hanson and Andrews, eight churches and chapels were analyzed to distinguish their architectural characteristics. These traits were compared with Maya dwellings in order to observe the hybridity in both. Two aspects are observable; on the one hand, the building materials and plans; like *guano* palm leaves for the *ramadas*, or the apsidal or rectangular plans. On the other hand, the symbolic meanings contained in activity areas are observable inside and outside churches and dwellings. Two examples are the altars in the dwellings in relation with those in churches, and the symbolism and use of the *atrios* in relation with the patios of Maya dwellings. Another hybrid element is the burial practice under the floor of both churches and dwellings.

Resumen

La religión fue parte decisiva en el proceso colonizador en México. Como forma de poder y autoridad, el colonialismo se vio caracterizado

por instituciones ideológicas y físicas para poder mantener dicho poder. Las primeras se refieren a toda creencia externa, filosofías, mitologías o ideas introducidas por el colonizador en los modos de vida de la sociedad indígenas. Las físicas se refieren a las estructuras materiales que albergan a las ideológicas, como son edificios, plazas, monumentos, etcétera. La política colonial española estableció los sistemas de encomienda, tributarios, congregaciones y doctrinas para facilitar el control y conversión de la población indígena. Estos sistemas modificaron dramáticamente el paisaje urbano y arquitectónico creando una nueva situación colonial en términos de hibridación.

La organización religiosa estuvo formada por el clero secular y el regular. La influencia religiosa en el desarrollo arquitectónico comenzó con la llegada de los órdenes seculares: franciscanos en 1524, dominicos en 1526 y agustinos en 1533. En la península de Yucatán los franciscanos establecieron una estrategia para facilitar la conversión indígena agrupando pequeños pueblos denominados visitas, alrededor uno central llamado cabecera. Después de la conquista, el modelo urbano que establecieron los españoles fue la traza reticular con una plaza en el centro. Dicho traza, así como la arquitectura religiosa de iglesias y capillas abiertas y sus atrios, son ejemplos del proceso de hibridación que se gestó entre indígenas y españoles. Entender que el arte arquitectónico colonial mexicano es una copia importada del europeo como lo expuso Manuel Toussaint en 1948, es subjetivo. Por el contrario, es una muestra de la combinación de ambas influencias. Dos elementos se fundieron para dar lugar a la hibridación material durante el contacto colonial; por un lado el concepto de “espacio cerrado” europeo, y la concepción y uso del “espacio abierto” mesoamericano. El europeo realizaba sus rituales religiosos dentro de los recintos sagrados; iglesias, monasterios, capillas etcétera. Mientras que en el mundo prehispánico las ceremonias y rituales se realizaban en plazas y áreas públicas abiertas. Esta combinación creó la nueva arquitectura religiosa a cielo abierto formada por las capillas o iglesias abiertas, sus atrios con sus elementos, y las plazas de los pueblos. Estos elementos vinieron a definir la nueva traza urbana colonial, entendida como el producto de una ambivalente interrelación entre el español y el indígena. En la urgencia de construir pueblos, el español buscó la mayoría de las veces los sitios prehispánicos mayas para fundar las iglesias, sacando provecho de la materia prima disponible y facilitando al mismo tiempo la

conversión religiosa de los indígenas. Esta práctica representó para el español un ahorro económico y de tiempo, rehusando las piedras labradas para la construcción de iglesias. Al mismo tiempo, el hecho de estar localizadas en la mayoría de los casos en plazas prehispánicas mayas, facilitó la conversión del indígena, representando simbólicamente una relación directa con su pasado, por ejemplo la fundación de Mérida, el monasterio franciscano en Izamal, y para el centro de México la iglesia de Cholula, Puebla.

Definir iglesias y capillas no es fácil, siendo motivo de confusión y error en sus definiciones. Es importante notar que a principios de la época colonial, los cronistas y religiosos describían las iglesias y capillas sin pensar en modelos clasificatorios, sino que se basaban en la función que aportaban a la comunidad. Igualmente, el uso arbitrario de las palabras “iglesias” y “capillas” se usa en muchos casos por igual sin importar si éstas se encuentran en cabeceras o visitas. Es innegable la aportación a la historia de la arquitectura religiosa colonial de México de George Kubler, Manuel Toussaint y John McAndrew. Es importante tomar en cuenta que la perspectiva analítica usada por ellos fue en gran medida, desde el punto de vista de historia del arte. Mucha de la información y conceptos usados por dichos autores es actualmente anticuada, siendo mejorada por investigadores que han propuesto nuevos conceptos y modelos. Los modelos clasificatorios de Anthony P. Andrews y Craig Hanson son ejemplos de estos adelantos en el análisis de iglesias coloniales. Sin embargo, al compararlos notamos algunas diferencias que valen la pena señalar como es el uso arbitrario de las palabras “iglesias” y “capillas”. Como hemos visto antes, es fácil caer en error de denominar “capilla” a una estructura juzgándola por su tamaño y localización, cuando correctamente podría ser llamada iglesia. Así, el modelo propuesto por Hanson omite cualquier posibilidad de iglesias siendo todos sus tipos capillas, mientras que Andrews es más flexible usando ambos conceptos en forma más homogénea.

Los conceptos postcoloniales de hibridación y tercer espacio se han considerado como meras metáforas, la arqueología tiene la capacidad de contextualizar y materializar dichas metáforas para su estudio en situaciones coloniales. Las iglesias y capillas abiertas fueron el resultado material híbrido de dos corrientes ideológicas. Al analizarlas en términos de su ubicación espacial, podemos interpretarlas como el resultado de las interacciones entre colonizador y colonizado. Factores como la religión

y la economía pueden verse como parte de dichas interacciones que a su vez, determinaron sus fundaciones en lugares estratégicos. La principal prioridad de los religiosos fue la conversión de los indígenas lo más rápido posible y con la fundación de las sedes eclesiásticas en Campeche, Mérida, Valladolid y la asilada Bacalar, pronto cubrieron dicha necesidad. Sin embargo, la costa oriental de la península se caracterizó por una ser más problemática, siendo un área de revueltas y conflictos sociales. Aún con el establecimiento de encomiendas y congregaciones, la población experimentó una baja movilidad concentrándose en la parte oeste-norte de la península, dejando a la parte este un cierto “vacío” social con una movilidad alta reflejada en migraciones. La falta de coerción social en esta zona, aunado a la falta de presencia militar y a fallidas congregaciones, ocasionó que indígenas huyeran a zonas agrestes y aisladas encontrando refugio en regiones como las bahías de la Ascensión y del Espíritu Santo.

CHAPTER FIVE

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF COLONIAL SETTLEMENTS IN ESPIRITU SANTO BAY

Religion played a decisive role in the consolidation of material culture and identity. On the Yucatán Peninsula it was physically established through the construction of churches and chapels. However, the knowledge of these constructions during and after colonial contact is still in a poor descriptive phase and more studies are required (e.g. Andrews, 1993:43, Pendergast, 1991:338). One of the main reasons for this situation is that the Prehispanic period in Mexico represents an identity provided by the archaeology, making the archaeological works of the Colonial period uninteresting and very limited, as mentioned earlier.

In historical archaeology, the use of written sources is a constant and valuable tool. Archaeologists resort to documents to locate sites as a method of reducing the area of research and increasing the likelihood of finding the sought after information. The materials which archaeologists work with are based on, among others, historical maps or ethno and historical documents. In spite of the importance of these materials, the archaeologist has to be aware of the context and the meaning of concepts used in such documents. Hodder comments:

“As the text is reread in different contexts it is given new meaning, often contradictory and always socially embedded. Thus there is no “original” or “true” meaning of a text outside specific historical contexts. Historical archaeology have come to accept that historical documents and records give not a better but simply a different picture from that provided by artifacts and architecture” (Hodder, 2012:172).

A lack of accuracy is a common characteristic when reading information that does not necessarily match with modern insights, such as the locations

of towns or villages. Pendergast et al. have argued that the fragmentary and sometimes contradictory geographical information about sites makes the inquiry work even more difficult, demanding many ways of interpretation (1993:60). Regionality is a problem when working with early colonial populations. Grant Jones points out the tendency to focus on sites as the unit of analysis of survey strategies considering the economic and time factors involved. This tendency is common in areas where sites are difficult to identify on the basis of identified architectural and ceramic features (1983:65). He proposes that ethnohistory is an important tool when analyzing social interactions with multi-community units and geographically-dispersed settlements, making the historical research regional, rather than site oriented. Societies after all – he argues- are organized in terms of spatial processes, not as temporal sequences at individual sites (ibid). Thus, in this work, the explorative method is largely based on the analysis and reinterpretation of written sources.

Based on the premises that: 1) religion was an ideological institution of power that influenced the hybrid transformation in material culture and ideology on the Yucatán Peninsula, and 2) churches and chapels were the physical representation of that colonial power; the analysis of these structures represents a direct way of understanding the ambivalence manifested between indigenous Maya and the Spanish during the colonial encounter in terms of material culture and ideology. Although they are a valuable source of information, considerable archaeological work remains to be done in order to shed light on the colonial social order. Surveys made in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay were aimed at providing information about the possible location of colonial sites as outcomes of the colonial policies of *congregaciones*. According to the historical document *legajo* Mexico 906, the site of Kachambay was founded somewhere north of Espiritu Santo Bay, and had a church called “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción.” Hence, the aim was to increase the poor knowledge about colonial churches with the possible identification of this site, and the region. Thus, a brief look at some theoretical aspects of archaeological survey will be addressed in order that the strategy used and the reasons for it can be presented.

Brief comments about method and theory in archaeological survey

Following a methodological line, survey might be considered as the first step in examining settlement patterns and as complementary to the core of any archaeological research; the excavation. Albert Ammerman points this out mentioning that: “it is recalling that the main function of early surveys, as well as some more recent ones, was that of locating an appropriate site for excavation. In other words, the survey served as a preliminary lightweight bout which preceded and complemented the main attraction” (Ammerman, 1981:3). In addition, and depending on the kind of investigation, an effective survey (based on a research design) allows archaeologists to design the “main attraction” - the excavation. This is important because surveys help to reduce the cost of an archaeological project in terms of financial resources, time, manpower, excavating material, and because they constitute a body of information that can be obtained on a regional scale (Dunnell and Dancey, 1983:270). These authors continue by mentioning that “Certainly, some kind of data can only be acquired by excavation, but even so, excavation might be better viewed as a technique to supplement surface surveys, rather than the reverse” (ibid). E. Banning suggests “Survey is not simply a poor substitute for archaeological excavation, or meant only to discover sites for us to excavate. In fact, it is a uniquely able to address some research questions that excavation alone will never answer” (Banning, 2002:1). Any survey has to be based on clear objectives and goals. There are common goals in surveying involving “estimating parameters of some archaeological population, testing some statistical hypothesis, or generating some predictive model” (ibid:27).

Despite the debates about its value, survey, unlike excavation, is important in archaeological research since the material evidence found on the surface is affected over a certain timeframe. Ammerman argues again that in one excavation, the subsurface material will not be affected to same degree as that located on the surface. Suggesting a “back to basics” approach, he highlights the importance of considering geomorphological factors and relationships between surface and subsurface remains “shaping the landscape as well as its influence on the visibility of sites on the surface of the landscape” (1981:82). It is not only geomorphological factors which affect the visibility of sites, but human activities are also responsible for damage and irreversible modification of the archaeological material on

surface. Plog defined three kinds of factors or boundaries that determine the right strategy to use in a survey, these are: natural, cultural, and arbitrary. The former are determined by topographic and vegetative patterns. Cultural boundaries are based on anthropogenic factors, and the arbitrary boundaries are defined “over criteria insensitive to either natural or cultural patterns” (Plog et al., 1978:384-85).

Many archaeological works about surveys have been written; one constant factor to consider in any survey is the climatological and topographical conditions of the region. Wilkinson for example, presents a 20 year survey analysis carried out in southern Mesopotamia of a variety of topographies such as riverine plains, deltas and marsh plains, and alluvial plains affected by rivers such as the Euphrates, which in combination with modern cultivation, determined the methodological strategy used in surveys (Wilkinson, 2000:230-31). Post-depositional factors affect the archaeological material visible on surface, making them sometimes irreconcilable due to erosional and deflationary processes. Aeolian deflation may be a problem to consider in arid environments, since deflation removes light objects with high winds, resulting in a lag deposit of heavy constituents or a palimpsest of materials from different time periods which cause inaccurate assessments of a sites size and even chronology (Rick, 2002:812).

In developing a survey design, Schiffer focuses on two categories important to consider: a) characteristics of the archaeological materials and environment of the study area; that is, factors that the archaeologist cannot directly control and which are divided in abundance, clustering, visibility, accessibility, and obtrusiveness, and b) factors totally under the control of the investigator such as survey techniques and strategies (Schiffer et al., 1978:4).

Because of the kind of the environment where the surveys were done, I will comment on some important factors from the first category: “visibility.” This is important since it creates a variability in the extent at which surface archaeological material can be detected (Gallant, 1986:406, Banning, 2002:46, Schiffer et al., 1978:6, Caraher et al., 2006:11). “Accessibility” is another factor that affects a survey in extreme environments demanding effort in the mobility of the surveyor (Banning 2002:63; Schiffer 1978:8). Schiffer distinguished five variables that influence accessibility: climate, the biotic environment, terrain, extent of roads and land-holding patterns.

Climate notoriously affects a survey because it refers to bad working conditions such as rain or extreme warmth, which should be avoided. The biotic environment constrains the mobility and thereby considerably reduces the length of the survey. Dangerous animals and toxic vegetation might be considered as a limiting factor that nobody wants to experience. Terrain is also important to consider because in rugged topographies, transportation to the area of study can delay the survey and may affect the shape, size or orientation of the survey's units. Finally, Schiffer points out that land holding is probably the greatest variable in surveying, since this requires movement through private properties. This requires permission from the owners to survey and collect and can take a lot of time and may demand several visits (ibid: 9). Another important aspect to analyze is obtrusiveness, as this relates to the sampling method selected. This concept represents the probability that archaeological material has to be discovered with a specific technique (ibid: 6). In this sense, obtrusiveness is related to the sensing method, environment, and on properties of archaeological materials.

Schiffer's second category represents the factors that the archaeologist can control in the survey design, determining the right or wrong outcome of the survey. It is here that the archaeologists have to choose the most suitable operational model to perform an effective survey, and in turn to analyze, interpret and assess the cultural remains at a site. An immense literature of probabilistic methods exists in survey sampling such as the "Discovery Model Sampling" and the "Estimating Site Density" (Nance, 1983), or the models of "randomization, systematization, and stratification" (Plog, 1978:402). Independent of the kind of model used in a survey, the main goal of them is to "optimize recovery of specific kinds of archaeological material (prospection), to allow us to estimate parameters of a population on the basis of a sample (statistical generalization), or to enable us to detect and identify spatial structure (pattern recognition)" (Banning, 2002:38). In addition, surveys make use of technology as an aid in the identification of archaeological material by air, with remote sensing imagery including airborne (airplanes, balloons) and spaceborne (satellite imagery) sensors. From aerial photography to the use of satellites, the development of this technology represents a breakthrough in the aerial analysis of regions with dense vegetation like the tropical rain forest. Saturno et al. explains:

“Thematic Mapper, IKONOS, and QuickBird satellite, and airborne STAR-3i and AIRSAR radar data, combined with Global Positioning System (GPS) technology, are successfully detecting ancient Maya features like sites, roadways, canals, and water reservoirs” (2007: 137).

On the surface, the use of geophysical prospecting methods have been improved when it comes to locating evidence of buried material that is invisible on the surface. Although this is not the place to discuss these methods in detail, I will mention just a few of them: Metal detector - probably the most simple and cheap method, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Electromagnetic surveys, Magnetometer surveys, and Resistivity surveys are some of the technological tools that provided their efficacy in combination with GIS⁵⁴ techniques during the detection or prediction of sites. Some advantages in these methods are the considerably cheaper costs and that they are non-destructive.

As we will see, the tropical rain forest presents a particular environment that requires a special design strategy in order to obtain positive results in surveys. Sometimes, however, the environment demands quick decisions being made in the field, sometimes changing the original design, or the implementation of a new one to maintain –as far as possible– the planned targets of the survey.

What is a site?

It is not an easy task to identify and interpret spatial patterns of possible settlements. Whether through the quantity of material found on surface or with the size of the concentrations, defining a site is a matter based on decisions more than observation (Dunell and Dancey 1983:271; Plog, et al. 1978:385). The primary link between the present day and original landscape might be the site. Despite its importance, the depositional and post-depositional process within a site can offer only a blurred representation of the cultural activity present on the surface. Most of the traditional definitions of a site are formulated to conceive it as a singular unit or entity of analysis (see Heizer and Graham, 1967:67, Willey and Phillips, 1958:18). Depending on the survey design and the environment,

54. Geographic Information System

a site may be considered as: scattered pottery, remains of lithics, a pyramid, or any other cultural material or combination of them. Nonetheless, human occupation is always dynamic rather than static and to consider these units as a simple point on a map, can lead to missing important information, since isolated artefacts and low density scatters yield data at a regional level (Dunnell and Dancey, 1983:271, McManamon, 1984:226, Thomas, 1975:62). The idea that a site is characterized and restricted by cultural and natural boundaries has been linked with the idea of the site as a *loci* of past activities being inadequate because “activities occur in systemic contexts and do not consistently result in remains deposited in archaeological contexts” (Plog et al., 1978:386). Additionally, the definition of a site has sometimes been established by prejudices such as the presence of other bigger sites, diminishing interest and excluding the small sites, as Plog et al. argues:

“This exclusion may be the result of conscious decisions made on the basis of the research objectives of the survey or, more likely, an unconscious decision made on the basis of the archaeologist’s perception of what a site was or not. Unfortunately, our perception of what a site should actually look like on the ground is too often influenced by the larger, more visible, but less frequent sites present in an area” (Plog, et al. 1978:386)

Thus, a site can be determined by the remains of material culture on surface. This fact can lead to the question of how much material culture? And, what kind? In some cases the definition was extremely explicit as the proposed by Plog and Hill in 1971 who stated that a site is “any locus of cultural material, artefacts or facilities with an artefact density of at least 5 artifacts per square meter” (1971:8). In some other cases, as argued by Banning: “there is no definition for one of several site types, such as pueblos, lithic scattered, caves sites, and so on” (2002:81). Thus, site definition becomes a matter of daring to cross the threshold above which material may be considered and valued to determine a site. The definition therefore is subject to both conceptual and methodological principles. The efforts to define the term site are many, and as Dunnell and Dancey suggest, it is practically impossible to not find examples of sample surveys in which the term site is not implicitly or explicitly the unit of discovery (1983:271).

We can distinguish two major types of approaches to site; site and non-site-oriented models. The latter is based on the empirical recognition that the archaeological record is not clustered in all places and therefore cannot be dealt with everywhere as discrete sites (see Plog, Plog & White 1978; Thomas 1975), while the former has been considered in American archaeology as the unit of any archaeological discovery, analysis and measurement. This view is supported by the idea that the site is the material continuity – or artifacts, left at different archaeological sites by representatives of a same culture, without the possibility of a mix of cultural traditions since “each people manifests its essential characteristics, its “spirit”, in its products” (Binford and Sabloff, 1982:142). In contrast, Ebert proposes the concept of “distributional archaeology” aimed at addressing the full distribution of artifacts in a landscape, based on “intensive recording of their locations and attributes over relatively large contiguous survey areas” (Ebert, 1992:246). It is possible to observe then, that archaeological surveys are based on two aspects which need considering: the sites and the artifacts. The concept of “siteless” is one attempt to break with the classic model of site, focusing on the analysis and interpretation of the distribution of artifacts directly, rather than considering the site as the core unit of analysis (see Caraher et al., 2006, Dunnell, 1992, Dunnell and Dancey, 1983). This concept –from which Ebert’s “distributional archaeology” is based – implies a full-covered survey strategy to some extent, which depending on the kind of archaeological environment would be difficult to make, for example jungle or rugged woodlands. Siteless contains another problem; the fact that the effects of site formation processes are conditioned by behavioral aspects instead of geological processes. This perspective makes the analysis of settlements much more complex than the site-focused survey analysis (Kantner, 2008:45, Galaty, 2005:301).

Scale is another common aspect in archaeology which is related to the spatial aspect of surveys. An implicit discussion in the concept of scale has been presented in archaeological works in which the regional and local perspective has been a characteristic topic. In the 1950s, Sanders developed two categories in order to address scale: “community settlement patterns” in which the individual units of population exist, and “zonal settlement patterns” in which the distribution of community sizes are concerned with symbiotic interrelationships between communities-societal, economic,

or religious (Sanders, 1956:116). This tendency of analysis in a macro versus micro way still remains without considering the intermediate scales of analysis, falling into the theoretical dichotomy of interpreting the archaeological surveys in terms of extensive vs. intensive. One of the problems raised by this kind of analysis is when a survey conducted at one of these scales motivates questions of another scale. For example Banning suggests that small units of analysis have statistical advantages, i.e. small units resulting in a larger sample size may result in a smaller standard error of population estimates (2002: 95). Caraher et al. comments that despite intensive surveys revealing more periods of occupation, they fail to assess the chronological subtleties of artifact patterning in the study area (2006:18).

Short introduction to the oriental coast of Quintana Roo

As presented earlier, the Aztec colonization was authoritarian in the Basin of Mexico, the south coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and the Soconusco region of Chiapas, and was characterized by a tributary system and military control. After the conquest of the Aztecs in 1521, and because the region colonized by the Aztecs had a large mining wealth, the Spanish military presence was constant. In contrast, the lack of this kind of wealth in the Maya area made this region less interesting to the Spanish since the main products valued by the Maya were cotton, honey, slaves and particularly salt (Andrews, 1993:52, Roys, 1965:670). The diversity of the Maya territorial division over 16 provinces *or kuchkabal*, in combination with a rough geography made single conquest campaigns problematic, and left some very sparsely inhabited regions in which the colonial power lacked efficacy. These regions were used by indigenous runaways or “flights” as shelter from the Spanish oppression, Espiritu Santo Bay is an example of this as the area and its surroundings turned into a resistance enclave. Grant Jones has mentioned that Dzuluinicob in the north of Belize, is one example of the regions characterized by a high independence and resistance against the Spanish (Jones, 1989, Jones, 1995:37). In addition, Bracamontes and Solis argues that the Maya of Tipú had a large level of autonomy, just as the Maya of La Pimienta, especially the town of Chinchanhá y Sacalum (Bracamontes and Solis, 2006:440).

The high presence of Maya sites is evident on the coast of Ecab, from Chiquila at the north, to Punta Xocán in the north of Ascensión Bay.⁵⁵ At this point, we can consider that this characteristic in the settlement pattern could mainly be determined by two interconnected factors: trade and religion. 1) A long-distance trade route by sea from the late classic, which linked the Petén region and Belize with the oriental coast of the peninsula, until the arrival of the Itzáes in the Late Postclassic which extended the network of regional and interregional trade to the Caribbean, 2) the importance of Cozumel as a site of peregrinations from sites like Potonchon, Xicalango, and Champoton, the inhabitants of which traveled to Cozumel to pay tribute to the goddess Ix Chel (Scholes and Roys 1968:35). Bernal Dias del Castillo describes that:

“Y diré como venian muchos indios en romeria [a] aquella isla de Cozumel, los cuales eran naturales de los pueblos comarcanos de la punta de Catoche y de otras partes de tierra de Yucatán, porque según pareció había allí en Cozumel unos ídolos de muy disfomes figuras, y estaban en un adoratorio en aquellos tenían por costumbre en aquella tierra, por aquel tiempo, de sacrificar”⁵⁶ (Días del Castillo, 2011:55).

Analyzing the human activity along the coast from the south of Ascensión Bay to Chetumal Bay, we notice only a few prehispanic sites: Punta Pájaros o Nohku, Tupac, and Chac Mool, the latter is located between Ascensión and Espiritu Santo Bay, which is probably the biggest site with occupation from the Late Classic to the Postclassic (Terrones, 2006). Chac Mool is located in the region known as Santa Rosa, presented further on, had importance in the interpretation of the colonial document *legajo* Mexico 906. There is currently no evidence of prehispanic ruins registered further to the south of this site until Canché Balám in Punta Herrero. Several minor sites have been identified from here to the entrance of Chetumal Bay on a small peninsula called Xkalak (Andrews et al., 1991). All of these

55. Nowadays Punta Allen

56. “And I will say how many Indians came in pilgrimage to the island of Cozumel, who were from the neighboring towns of Cabo Catoche and from other regions inland of Yucatan. There seemed to be some deformed idols located at a shrine in Cozumel, at that time they had the custom, to sacrifice in that land” (Translation by author).

sites were abandoned before the first Spanish contact and the region was practically unhabitated from the Colonial period until the nineteenth century (ibid:52). Considering that marine trade was an important activity during the Late Postclassic, there are many important sites located on the coast of the former province of Ecab, which in turn worked as marine ports and undoubtedly had the most heavily populated area. Despite this factor, the “emptiness” of areas, or *despoblado*, in the Uaymil province was to some extent, due to the rugged environment characterized by vast swamp areas, or *bajos*, which limited the possibilities to found settlements in both the Prehispanic and the Colonial period. This is why some groups settled in the uplands where there was fertile land and it was close to the coast and therefore offered marine resource access. The settlement pattern was linked to uplands to avoid flooding and as shelter from hurricanes and bad weather characteristic of the region. This model was followed by the Spanish during the construction of towns and churches like that in Tancab, Xcaret, or Oxtankah. This natural characteristic made the region – especially Espiritu Santo Bay- isolated and meant that they “remained largely outside the Spanish domain and became a refuge for Indians rebellious against the new authority” (Villa Rojas, 1945:3). Grant Jones adds that: “From the beginning it was apparent that the region was to be a rebellious one, its native inhabitants fanning the fires not only of local noncooperation but also of the increasing movement of fugitives who ran away from the encomiendas in the northern sectors of the peninsula” (Jones 1989:59).

Located at the south of Espiritu Santo Bay, the village of Salamanca de Bacalar played an important role in the development of the colonial site Kachambay. The role of this village can be considered in two ways; politically and religiously. At the time of the Spanish conquest, Espiritu Santo Bay belonged to the Maya province of Uaymil, a province that lacked defined political boundaries to the province of Ecab in the north, and Chetumal to the south (Fig. 34). This province was apparently delimited by the Lake Bacalar at the south and the city of Felipe Carrillo Puerto at the north. Although it was one of the four Franciscan seats on the Yucatán Peninsula by 1641, Bacalar was always an isolated and poor village affected by indigenous revolts like in 1640, pirate attacks such as that headed by Diego el “Mulato” in 1642, or the brutal attacks of the buccaneer Abraham in 1648 and 1652 that were characterized by cruelty to women and children

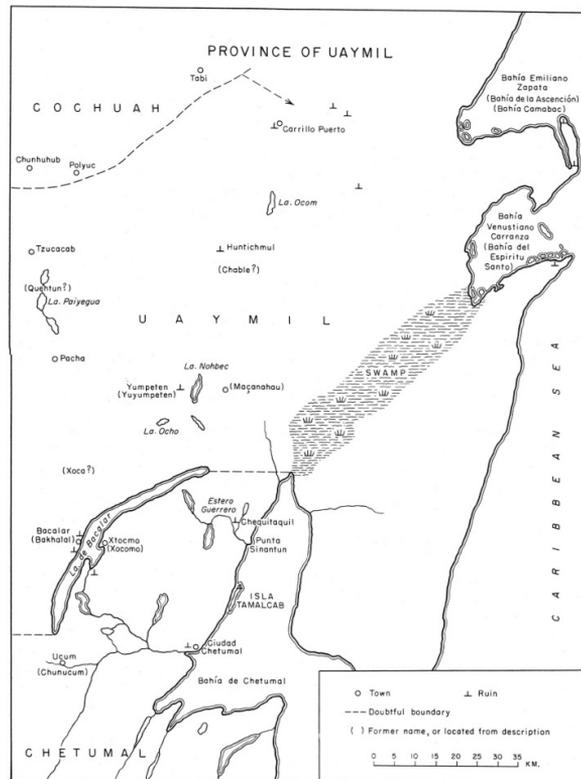


Figure 34. Map of the province of Uaymil with Espiritu Santo Bay. After Roys 1957

(Calderón Quijano, 1944:42). In addition, the town suffered abandonment which decreased the population for centuries (Cardenas Valencia, 1937:96, Jones, 1989:57).

According to Gerhard (1979), it is possible to believe that Espiritu Santo Bay belonged to the now established province of Bacalar around 1786. Despite the clear influence of Chetumal, Bacalar remained the main town of this province (Gerhard 1979:69; Jones 1989:98). The town controlled the current Belize to the south, where the towns that were divided into *visitas* and *reducciones* had to pay tribute to Bacalar (Jones 1989:98; Pendergast et al. 1993:61). In contrast, the east coast of the peninsula from Cabo Catoche at the north, to Ascensión Bay in the south was confined by Cozumel Island (Gerhard 1979:8). As I shall present further on, the site Kachambay was not an exception in marginalizing Bacalar and diminishing the power of the regular clergy.

Analysis of written sources

The information about the foundation of Kachambay lies in the *legajo* Mexico 906 which is located in the *Archivo General de Indias* (hereafter AGI) in Seville, Spain. The only published information so far about the site is in Grant Jones' *Maya Resistance to the Spanish Rule*, which in turn is based on the *legajo*. The only two pages of information about Kachambay in Jones' book were the basis on which to start the search for the site directly in this document.⁵⁷ Undeniably, the information provided by Jones was extremely valuable, however, reading the *legajo*, there is much more information about the site, and even some other valuable events that could open possibilities for new investigations.

Kachambay revisited

Based on Jones' book (1989), the first attempt to found a *congregación* in Ascensión Bay was headed by Ambrosio de Arguelles in 1595. This man had permission from the governor Alonso Ordoñez de Nevares to "pacify" the indigenous Maya of the region. Thus, Arguelles recruited people from Valladolid, Campeche and Bacalar. As well as his permission, Arguelles would also have had the right to be *encomendero*. However, in his trip to the bay in 1602, the Spanish met an English ship that ordered them to surrender, a battle ensued, the Spaniards lost, and the ship was sunk (Jones, 1989:128, Molina Solis, 1904:265-266, López de Cogolludo, 2006, Libro 8, Cap.VIII). The story continues in 1608 with another attempt of *congregación* at the bay which was this time carried out by Fray Gaspar de Sosa and resulted in the *congregación* of San Francisco de Hoyal. It was small, consisting of about 106 people of all ages (Jones 1989:131). The *congregación*, however, disappeared from the records and there is no more information about it. In 1620 Hernando de Landeras discovered some of its inhabitants in Espiritu Santo Bay located at the south of Ascensión Bay. Based on the information narrated by the scribe Francisco de Sanabria in the *legajo* Mexico 906 we can understand the origins of Kachambay as follows:

57. The valuable help of the archaeologist Anthony P. Andrews was also determinant in the expedition and interpretation of the *legajo*.

With a date of October 10th 1616, the scribe Francisco de Sanabria began the narrative of Hernando Landeras de Velasco⁵⁸ and the then governor Antonio de Figueroa y Bravo (1612-1617), who gave Landeras a commission to inquire after the reason of the loss of some *pipas*⁵⁹ of wine, which were thrown into the sea from the ship of Captain Pedro Sorenio in the port of Sisal (AGI:41). Landeras' target was to recover as much as possible of the barrels and to take it back to Mérida, as well as to imprison the guiltiest suspects. The confusion starts here⁶⁰ when Sanabria tells us that on August 20th 1615, Landeras was commissioned to rescue some remains of iron, wax and other things that six *naos* or ships carried on their passage by Cabo Catoche (AGI:42). López de Cogolludo gives the same information explaining that a heavy storm caused the sinking of these ships, the only difference is that he mentions seven ships instead of six (López de Cogolludo 1688, Libro 9, Cap. II). Landeras then tells us about the discovery of Espiritu Santo Bay and the indigenous runaways. His narration, which is a kind of letter to the then governor Arias conde de Losada y Taboada (1620-1621), is at the same time a petition to implement the foundation of a *reducción* at the bay, explaining the advantages that this would represent for the region in terms of protection against enemies, such as English ships and pirates.

Landeras explains that he lived in the port of Santa Maria de Sisal for fourteen years, and because of the lack of knowledge about the east coast of the peninsula, he decided to explore it. Landeras embarked on a boat in the port of Sisal someday in February 1620 and crossed the coasts of Cabo Catoche, Isla Mujeres, and Cozumel, continuing south to Ascensión Bay (AGI:44op). It was about 45 km south (10 *leguas*)⁶¹ that he found a new bay that was not in the nautical charts which he called Espiritu Santo. It was here where he found a Maya group who told Landeras that they had escaped from a town called Hoyal which was located in the province of Bacalar, and that because of the maltreatment of the *mayor* of the town, they had decided to run away and had hidden in the jungle for six years (AGI 44op-45; see Jones 1989:195). The Maya were found somewhere in

58. Sometimes the name as Hernando *de* Landeras appears as well.

59. Old Spanish word referring to barrels or casks.

60. Now the order of the events goes backwards.

61. 1 *legua* is about 4.83 km

a punt of the bay called by Landeras *Punta de Cruces*.⁶² They had built their houses and one church at this site which paid tribute to the Crown in the form of amber, something which seems to have been common in the region (AGI:45-46). Landeras made a *matrícula* or register counting 64 individuals including adults and several children. In the *matrícula* the names of the indigenous Maya appear with their Christian name and their Maya surname. The indigenous Maya told Landeras that there were about six more *rancherías* or hamlets with runaways in the region. Landeras found some Maya groups from these *rancherías* who told him that they had been living in the mountains for several years with children and were willing to be baptized (AGI:63op-64). Having recognized the Maya Alonso May as their leader, Landeras left him in charge of the settlements with orders to construct a “large house” which would serve as a church: “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church (AGI:65). Landeras described the site mentioning that the only way to get there was by the sea, passing by an island limited the entrance on one side there was the bay, and there were marshes and swamps on the other (AGI:68).

Landeras explained the importance of founding this new town as it would offer protection against the enemy (in this case the presence of English ships in the region). He highlighted the importance of people living in Espiritu Santo Bay because they could notify the authorities about any kind of threats, and this would offer security for the ships that might navigate in the bays and coast (*ibid*). Landeras proposed that a cleric would be sent from Tihosuco instead of Bacalar since, according to him, Kachambay is located outside the limits of Bacalar jurisdiction, and that because Tihosuco lies closer than Bacalar, the trip from Bacalar to Kachambay would otherwise be “uncomfortable” (*ibid*). After his explanation to the governor Arias conde de Losada y Taboada about the importance of Kachambay, Landeras offered to make one more trip to the bay (*ibid*:47). With this declaration Landeras seems to be interested in some aspect such as; the continued discovery of runaways and settling them in *reducciones* along the coast, taking care of the indigenous people (especially

62. Jones mentions in *Maya resistance to Spanish Rule* page 320, note 18, that Punta de Cruces might be the area called Santa Rosa located between Ascensión and Espiritu Santo Bay.

in Cozumel), and not abusing them through the Spanish authorities. He also seemed to be generally interested in following the development of Kachambay. Something important to notice is that Landeras was not alone in this trip. Reading the document we notice that Antonio Fragozo, Francisco de Cisnero, and Bartolome de Landeras⁶³ accompanied him throughout his entire trip.⁶⁴ The important thing here is that Bartolome de Landeras was *mestizo* and spoke Maya, and was therefore of great help to Hernando as a translator (AGI:72).

With this narration –and petition– of the events that happened to Landeras in February 1620, Governor Arias conde de Losada y Taboada decided to send Landeras to Cozumel in October 20th 1620 to compel the inhabitants to repair their churches, to see that they were being agriculturally productive, and to investigate mistreatment of the indigenous people by their *encomenderos*. Additionally, he was commanded to navigate along the coast to find new navigable routes, and in the case of finding more runaways he should convert them into Christians. With this confirmation from the governor, Landeras had all the support of mayors, *regidores* and other governors of the regions wherever he was, and he had obtained the authority of a judge in punishing any abuse or maltreatment by the Spanish (ibid:55op).

On February 2th 1621, Governor Losada y Taboada manifested his contentment and gratitude for the good results obtained in Kachambay, asking Landeras to return to the bay to see the conclusion of the church. Despite Landeras proposed a cleric from Tihosuco, the governor decreed a cleric from Ichmul: Juan de la Huerta to take charge of the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church. The *reducción* of Kachambay (as it was intended) was planned to be occupied only by indigenous Mayas. Losada y Taboada was clear in ordering that no Negro, *mestizo*, *mulato*, or Spanish were to go to Kachambay, otherwise, the Spanish would receive a fine of 200 *pesos*, and the negros, *mestizos*, and *mulatos* 200 lashes (ibid:59op). Because of abuse, harassment and general mistreatment against the indigenous Maya, the Spanish Crown had formulated a law to protect

63. Probably a relative of Hernando

64. This fact is clear in the page 70-71 with the declaration made by Antonio Fragozo, and in page 71op -72op the declaration of Bartolome de Landeras (See Appendix). However, there is no declaration found or any other information about Francisco de Cisnero (His surname is not clear in the text, so Cisnero is my assumption).

them by 1563, ordering that no Spanish, *mestizo*, mulato or Negro should reside in indigenous towns (Indias, 1681 Tomo 2, Libro VI, Título III, Ley xxi). Even more, Losada Y Taboada give instruction that in the case of a lack of food, the province of Tihosuco should bring aid in the form of maize, *aji*, beans, and more indigenous Maya to help in the construction of the church (AGI:60-60op).

In this same year, the governor sent a letter to Antonio May, who was the head of the site, expressing his happiness for the consolidation of the *reducción*, granting ten years free from tribute. He also promised to send an *indio maestro* to teach the inhabitants to learn and write (AGI:75op-77). However, and in spite of this generous decision, on November 12th 1621 the new governor in charge Diego de Cardenas (1621-1628) ignored the order by Losada y Taboada and declared Kachambay as *encomienda* and Hernando Landeras as its *encomendero*. Diego de Cardenas then demanded tribute to the Crown from each tributary; that is, 64 inhabitants or tributaries, a total of 16 blankets equivalent to 160 *pesos* each year. Additionally, this tribute was going to be complemented with hens and maize to be paid to the *encomendero* Hernando Landeras. (AGI:77op-79).

Apparently page 79 is the last mention of Kachambay. What happened to the site and why it was abandoned are still uncertain. Maybe there is information in the rest of the *legajo* (about 3900 sheets), maybe not. However, one of the reasons for the abandonment was very probably the increased presence of the English loggers and pirates along the coast, as Grant Jones and Anthony P. Andrews pointed out (personal communication).

Explorative works in Espiritu Santo Bay

The main reason to carry out explorative works in the north coast of Espiritu Santo Bay was to increase the poor knowledge about the region and focus on the possible location of colonial sites like Kachambay and the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church. The three expeditions were the first ever done with an archaeological purpose in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay. This fact made the decision making even more complex when planning the surveys.

The planned fieldwork included three surveys based on the information obtained in the *legajo* Mexico 906. The areas selected were: the small peninsula

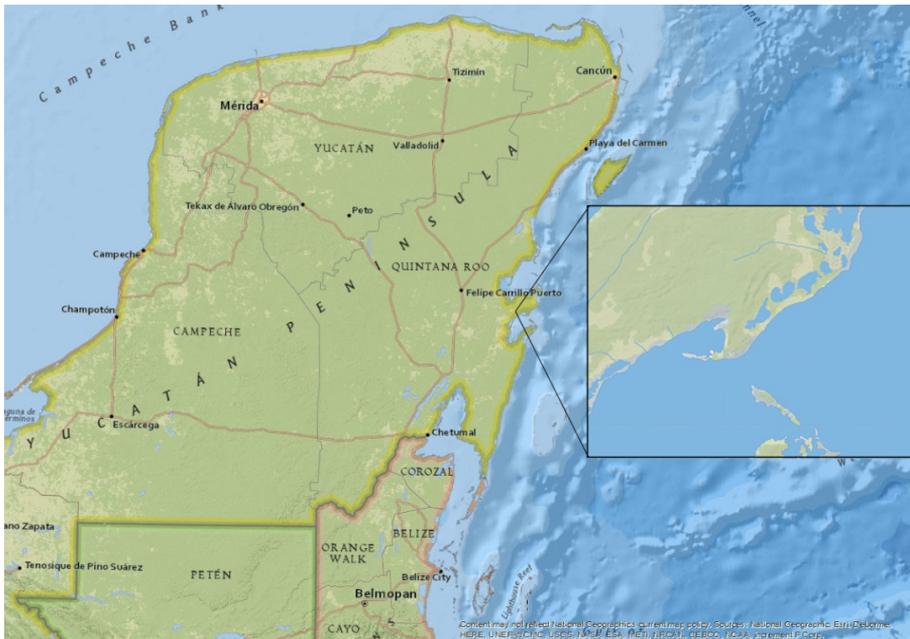


Figure 35. Map. Yucatán Peninsula and the north coast of Espiritu Santo Bay. Map made by the author. Source: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

called Punta Niluc at the north of Espiritu Santo Bay and the region called Santa Rosa, located between Ascensión and Espiritu Santo Bay (Fig. 35). Based on the historical document *legajo* Mexico 906 and the statement that Kachambay is located in the interior of the bay, the hypothesis was that the site might be located in the uplands of Punta Niluc. I use the word uplands in this context to define any kind of land elevation superior to the swamp terrain, based on the Spanish names *monte alto* and *bajos* respectively.

Area of study. Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve

Espiritu Santo Bay is located in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in the state of Quintana Roo on the Yucatán Peninsula. Due to its high biodiversity, the biosphere reserve was created by the UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site in 1987. The biosphere is located between 19°05' to 20°06'N and 87°30'to 87°58'W (UNESCO, 1987) and covers about 9% of the total area of the state. It covers a surface of 528,147ha: 375 000 ha of which are terrestrial and 153,000 ha are marine. To the east the Caribbean

Sea covers the bays of Ascension and Espiritu Santo and some portions of the barrier reef. The southwest boundaries coincide with the limits between marshes and semi-evergreen forests while the south is a line dividing the towns of Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Bacalar. The northwest limits are established by the land tenure as they are marked by the communal lands (*ejidos*) of the Pino Suarez and Chunyaxché suburbs. On its west boundary are the remaining portions of the *ejidos* of Chunyache, Tres Reyes, Andrés Quintana Roo, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, X-hazil (SEMARNAP, 2014:8).

Geology

Much of the Reserve is limestone of recent Pleistocene origin that still appears to be in a transitional stage; the higher ground is of late Tertiary age. Three geological faults cross the reserve from southwest to northeast under the bays, which have influenced the topography and hydrology. There is a large number of sinkholes (cenotes) characteristic of the karst landscape of Yucatán. The 120 km coastline includes white sand beaches, extensive mangrove stands and creeks, 105 freshwater and brackish lagoons, two wide shallow bays covering over 100,000 ha which are of varying salinity and dotted with islets and mangrove keys. The floor of the bays are either sand or covered by sea grass (UNESCO 1987). The region is flat with a slight south to north slope. The average altitude on the coast is about 10m. Its maximum altitude is 310 m above mean sea level at Xpujil, in the state of Campeche. The soils in the reserve correspond with limestone and *rendzina*. The subsoil is of the type *saskab* (granular whitish and brittle limestone) (SEMARNAP, 2014:10).

Climate

According to the Köppen classification, it is a sub-humid and warm climate Aw with summer rains: 75% of the rain falls during May and October. The average monthly temperature is always above 22°C and the average annual temperature is 26.5°C. The maximum temperature recorded was between 44°C and 45°C respectively (ibid:10). One climatologic characteristic is the presence of hurricanes in the Caribbean Sea which directly affect the coast of Quintana Roo.

Vegetation

The diversity of vegetation types in the reserve makes it unique, and features some endemic species. Some types are: Medium altitude semi-evergreen forest with species like chechem negro (*Metopium brownei*), chicozapote (*Manilkara zapota*), chacá (*Bursera simaruba*) y dzalam (*Lysiloma latisiliquum*), and between palmas: chit (*Thrinax radiata*), nakax (*Coccothrinax readii*) and kuka palm (*Pseudophoenix sargentii*). Flood forest species like: pucté (*Bucida buceras*) y dzalam (*Lysiloma latisiliquum*) el palo de tinte (*Haematoxylon campechianum*), pucté enano (*Bucida spinosa*). In the tasitales: tasiste (*Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*). The mangrove is one of the most important plants on the coast: red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), black (*Avicennia germinans*) and white (*Laguncularia racemosa*). Common plants on the coastal dunes include: siricote (*Cordia sebestiana*), silver saw palm, bay cedar (*Suriana maritima*), black poisonwood, sea rosemary (*Heliotropium gnaphalodes*), coastal ragweed (*Ambrosia hispida*), spider lily (*Hymenocallis latifolia*), Geiger tree (*Sesuvium portulacastrum*), sea grape (*Coccoloba coxumelensis*) and *Ageratum* spp. (ibid:13)

Fauna

A total of 103 species of mammals have been recorded including five species of cat, jaguar (*Panthera onca*), puma (*Puma concolor*), ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), and jaguarundi (*Puma yagouaroundi*). Caribbean manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and red brocket deer (*Mazama americana*), whitelipped and collared peccaries (*Tayassu pecari*) and (*Pecari tajacu*) Some 339 bird species have been recorded in Sian Ka'an, of which 219 breed in the Reserve. Reptiles: there are 19 families recorded, some are: green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Belize crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*), Columbian boa (*Boa imperator*), Yucatán rattlesnake (*Crotalus durissus*) between others. (UNESCO) The barrier reef in front of the coast is another important habitat with 83 species recorded including coral species, sponges, algae, and more than 400 species of fish (UNESCO)

Initial strategy in the northern of the bay

Three field seasons were carried out in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay. Because no formal archaeological reports have been published in the area of study (excluding the prehispanic site of Chac Mool and Tupac in Santa Rosa), these surveys were in many ways the first done in Punta Niluc and the south of Santa Rosa. The survey strategy used for the possible identification of Kachambay was based on the *legajo* México 906. As mentioned by Banning “surveys of this type beginning the search in the area where prior information suggest the probability of finding the target (or targets) is highest, and then widening or intensifying the search in the light of information gained as survey progresses” (2002:135). The main task of the surveys was mapping, the collection of possible archaeological material and architectural evidence. All the surveys were done with a partner using a Global Positioning System, when a site was found it was recorded, measured with a metric tape, oriented, drawn, photographed, and filmed.

When planning a survey largely based on historical documents, the archaeologist has to reinterpret the information to find a logical coherence to it. The use of modern data techniques such as satellite imagery is of great aid in the interpretative process; otherwise, the information turns the process into a puzzle of suppositions. The first trip was a reconnaissance planned with a spatial analysis of the area using GIS techniques and satellite imagery like ESDI, USGS, Bing, and Google maps. Although its utility in archaeology is very practical, the use of digital technology such as satellite imagery or aerial photos was limited in the region of study, its use was focused on visualization rather than as a predictive method. The type of environment is decisive when determining the best use of satellite imagery, as it has many functions in open areas where the vegetation is poor or scarce. On the contrary, the tropical rain forest is one of the most difficult environments in which to use this type of technology. However, there are more developed technologies which aid in the planning of surveys. The San Bartolo Project in the Petén region in Guatemala is one example of these technologies. The combination of high resolution airborne and satellite imagery, advanced remote sensing imagery like IKONOS and IFSAR, and extensive surveys, were of great help in discovering spectral vegetation signatures in relation to location, boundaries, and dimensions of ancient

Maya sites (Saturno et al., 2007). Another technique is LIDAR, which has a much higher accuracy when examining the surface. The use of these kinds of technologies in the expeditions would potentially have provided more information about new sites in the region explored. The main problem was the cost of using these techniques as most of the time they are expensive, requiring bigger projects and in many cases the participation of private or governmental institutions to cover the cost, especially with LIDAR. Thus, a decision was made to get to the area of study, assess it, and from there elaborate a survey design combined with the information of the *legajo*. Because of the lack of knowledge about the natural environment and the vacuum of previous archaeological data in the area, excavation was left in the background, survey being the first stage of the research in this case. Some test pits of 30 x 30 cm were dug, but no archaeological material was found. One of the main objectives of the survey strategy was the identification of uplands, or *monte alto* as the local inhabitants call it. These uplands are important because they represent areas with more possibilities for settlements in both the Prehispanic and the Colonial period. Following the Spanish settlement pattern on the coast of Quintana Roo with sites like Xcaret, Tanchah, Ecab etc. and because of the swampy nature of the region, the Spanish were looking for this type of lands in order to avoid flooding. In the case of Kachambay, these uplands were another decisive factor in planning the surveys.

The surveys were carried out in two regions: Punta Niluc and Santa Rosa (Fig. 36). In the former region the survey area was delimited in the form of a polygon of about 5 km², the widest part in the north was roughly 1 km from west to east, and about 100 m in the south. In Santa Rosa the surveyed area was delimited with a polygon of about 10 km² with Playa Blanca Lodge at the limits in the north, 700 m south from a place called Sacrificio.

Because of the rough vegetation, lack of time, and manpower, it was impossible to survey every single meter in the polygons. The region in general has been largely damaged by hurricanes, sometimes turning the jungle into an entangled environment. As a result, the lack of visibility from this natural factor sometimes made the work difficult, except in the uplands, which was comparatively easier to survey. A positive factor was that the season when the surveys were done was winter and the rain period was over. Thus, most of the marsh and swamp (*bajos*) areas were dry, which



Figure 36. Map. North of Espiritu Santo Bay and the areas of the surveys in Santa Rosa and Punta Niluc. Map made by the author. Source: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

to some extent, enabled the work. Despite the difficulties, the surveys yielded valuable information about human activities in the region in the form of material culture in Santa Rosa and in Punta Niluc.

The first expedition began in November 2011 after arriving at Punta Herrero in the south of Espiritu Santo Bay. A boat was required to cross the bay which arrived at the fishing camp Maria Elena located on the east coast of Punta Niluc, 11 km from Punta Herrero. During the first survey, I was aided by a fisherman from Maria Elena who acted as a guide. This first expedition yielded a general view of the environment in order to plan a survey design. The surveys were to be done, to the extent possible, in linear transects from west to east, however, the vegetation sometimes made this method impossible to follow. In the three expeditions, the surveys were always done in pairs. The natural boundaries in this area were the coast to the west, and the presence of mangrove to the east. There were uplands in Punta Niluc after the first 100 m of survey from the west coast to the hinterland which reached their highest altitude 10 m into the north side of the area. During this survey, no archaeological material was found.

However, the presence of water reservoirs, or *aguadas*⁶⁵ as described in the *legajo* was evident. In total, thirteen 8-10 m² examples were discovered, three of them containing water.

*SANTA ROSA*⁶⁶

In December 2012, the second survey was carried out in the Santa Rosa area. The surveyed area belonged to a private hotel resort called Casa Blanca located in Punta Pájaros, Ascensión Bay. Hence, permission was requested before the expedition. The survey area was a long and narrow coastal line delimited by the Caribbean Sea in the east, and the Santa Rosa lagoon system to the west. The widest part of the area was about 280 m and no more than 70 m at its narrowest: roughly 80% of the area was swamps and marshes. As we have seen, and according to Landeras' description, Kachambay was founded somewhere in Punta Nilut. However, the reason to carry out a survey in Santa Rosa was to confirm or dismiss the possibility that *Punta de Cruces* probably was Santa Rosa, as proposed by Grant Jones (1989). Another reason was that during the last excavations in Chac Mool, the archaeologist Enrique Terrones found a couple of iron nails. These nails however, were dated to the nineteenth century as they were found very close the surface, and according to Terrones this was the only colonial material found in Chac Mool (personal communication 2012). These two facts encouraged an expedition in Santa Rosa that primarily focused on the two *puntas* located in this region. The most obvious is called *Punta Tupac* which is an area of about 1.7 km² while the other smaller area, 700 m south of the rancho San Roman, offered an extension of about 0.7 km². The total area surveyed in Santa Rosa was about 10 km². The surveys in this region were relatively easier than Punta Niluc. The base camp was in a place called Sacrificio, a small beach used to park the hotel's fishing boats. From here, a polygon was divided into in segments 1, 2, and 3 for the survey. The reason for this was: 1) to have a better control of the material possible to collect and 2) to make the survey more efficient in terms of time and costs by

65. *Aguadas* is a Spanish name to describe water reservoirs. They can be natural; containing water permanently or just during the rainy season; and artificial, constructed by indigenous people to collect water during the dry season.

66. Hereafter SR

having clear targets. Banning explains: “From the practical point of view, it is often advantageous to arrange units with respect to natural topographies, so as to make field walking easier to reduce travel time between areas that need to be surveyed” (2002:100-101).

SR Segment 1.

The surveys began in this segment covering a total area of about 4.5 km². The most striking was the presence of stones clusters in the area of Punta Tupac. These clusters were difficult to identify as archaeological material associated with architecture. However, some stones presented a relatively squared rectangular shape with “slightly smooth” surface and some other with a roughly shaped surface. There was no archaeological material found on the surface in this area, or generally in the whole segment. The surveys were done in pairs with parallel straight transects of 10 m in between when the conditions were optimal.

SR Segment 2.

The area surveyed was about 4.3 km². Two stone alignments were found in this segment but after being recorded and measured we realized that there was only one. Because of this, and to avoid confusion, these walls were called A1 and A2.⁶⁷ At the time of its discovery, A1 was 7.5 m long in an east-west direction and 25 cm wide. Its orientation was 320° north. The expedition of the alignment revealed a 90° corner angle plan representing an enlargement to the left of 4.5 m having an inverted L shape. The alignment had a final measurement of 12 m. The site was located within the swampy area that dominates practically all of the coast. However, and despite its location in relation with the mean sea level (about 2 m high), the site seemed to be relatively safe from inundations during the rainy seasons.

A1 appeared to be a low wall made of roughly shaped limestone at an average of 50 cm high (Fig. 37). A provisory cleaning of vegetation gave a better understanding of the shape of A1. A lot of rubble stone was found in the internal and external side of the alignment, which could be interpreted

67. Alignment 1 and alignment 2 respectively.

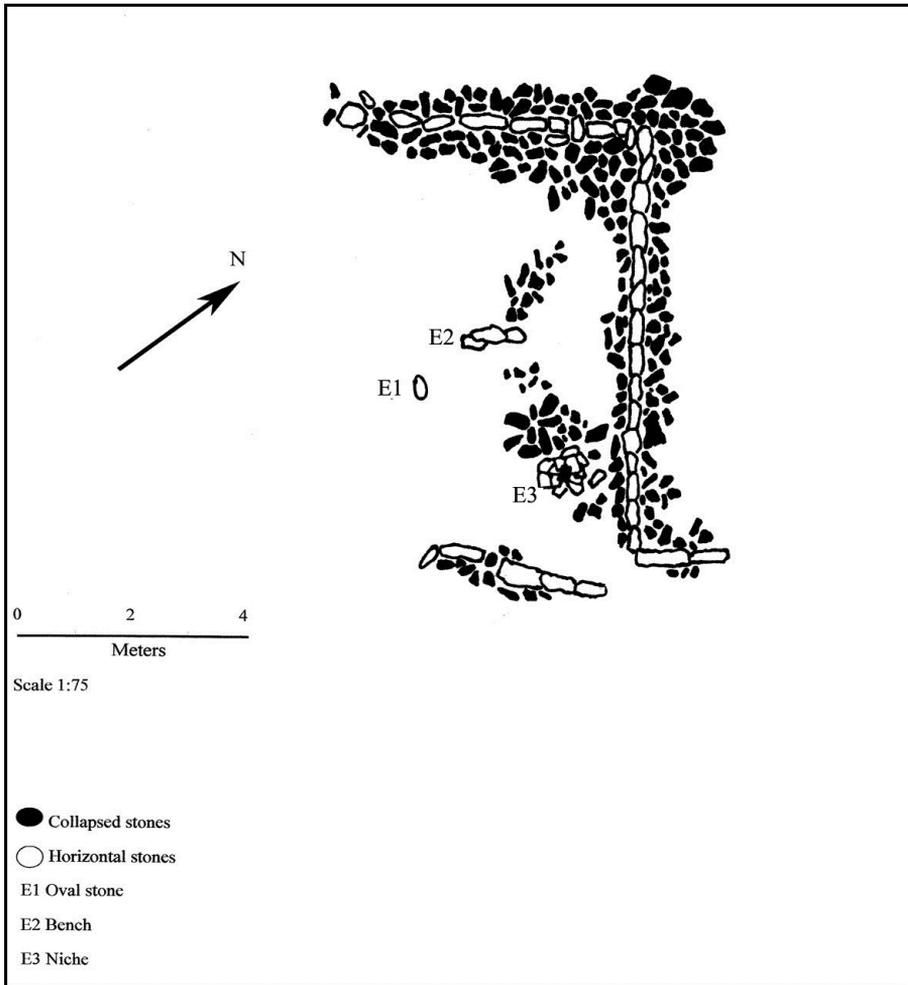


Figure 37. Plan of A1 in Santa Rosa. By the author.

as collapsed material suggesting that the alignment was apparently higher. The stones were vertically set very tightly to each other with no evidence of mortar. A type of entrance was clearly flanked with horizontal stones on the east side of the wall. The stones increased in height from east to west having the highest and biggest in the corner and in the left enlargement to the south.



Figure 38. From top to bottom E1, E2, and E3. Photos author

What is important about this site was the discovery of three architectural elements located inside the area of the alignment. These elements were named E1, E2, and E3 (Fig. 38). E1 consisted of an oval limestone with a smoothed face on its surface that was 35 cm wide and 45 cm high. It was located 2m from E2, being the only stone found in the site that had a smooth surface. E2 consisted of a group of three stones in the form of a little bench (two relatively squared stones on the floor and the third on top of them), reaching about 65 cm high and 75 cm wide. E3 is maybe the most significant find with a symbolic importance. A cluster of five shaped stones formed a circular niche of approximately 60 cm long and 40 cm high. The niche was laying 50 cm from the alignment facing to the south. Nothing was found inside the niche but soil and small rubble stones. The site was recorded, measured, and photographed.

Remaining in segment 2, the survey continued north to the Maya ruin of Tupac. The aim was to visit the structure and to explore the surrounding area. We took a canoe to get to this site navigating past mangroves, but much of the area around the site was *bajos* or swamps which were flooded. No material evidence was found, and after exploring the site on foot and by water, we returned to A1 to make a detailed record of the size of the site and to check if there was any archaeological material around it. Taking a pause while sitting on E2, a large limestone alignment about 5 m away from the possible entrance in A1 was identified. After exploring and cleaning these stones, we realized that this second alignment followed the same direction of A1 and was an extension of it. This alignment or wall (hereafter A2) was also composed of roughly shaped limestone. In contrast from A1, A2 had vertical and collapsed stones with no rubble stones on either side. Three vertical stones which were still in place ranged from 30 to 40 cm thick and up to 80 cm high with the same orientation: 320° north. The other four stones lay horizontally on the ground with approximately the same measurements suggesting that they were collapsed stones. Fragments of stones lay between horizontal and vertical stones. Like in A1, the stones in A2 were very close to each other and without mortar (Fig. 39).

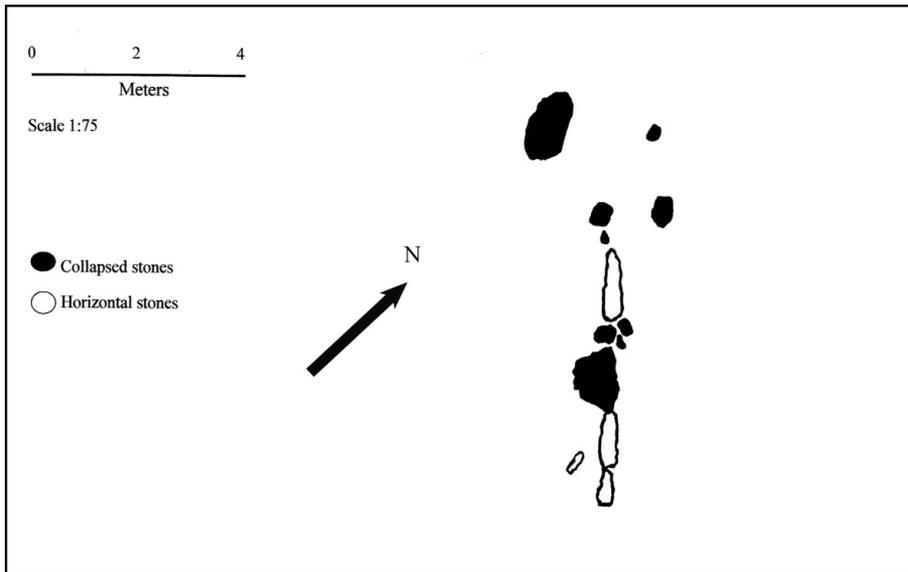


Figure 39. Plan of A2. Plan made by the author.

It was clear that the stones in A2 were considerably bigger than in A1. The length of A2 was 8m in an east-west orientation, which in addition to A1 reached a total east-west length of about 17.5m (Fig. 40). Having clarified that A1 and A2 were the same alignment, I decided to call it ASR.⁶⁸ An intensive survey was done around ASR in a polygonal area of about 300 m², delimited by the presence of mangrove with the aim of finding any other material or more possible alignments. Six test pits were dug without finding any archaeological material or architecture on surface. The test pits were 30 x 30 cm and were dug on both sides of the alignment. One of these pits was dug about 25 m from the alignment. The test pits showed a soil layer no deeper than 13 cm and with limestone bedrock underneath. This same situation was found in the test pits dug in Punta Niluc.

SR Segment 3.

The area covered was about 1.5 km starting in rancho San Roman⁶⁹ and finishing in the north, at the entrance of Playa Blanca Lodge, 300 m from Chac Mool ruins. This area was relatively flat and 70% was covered by

68. Alignment Santa Rosa

69. A private property belonging to Playa Blanca.

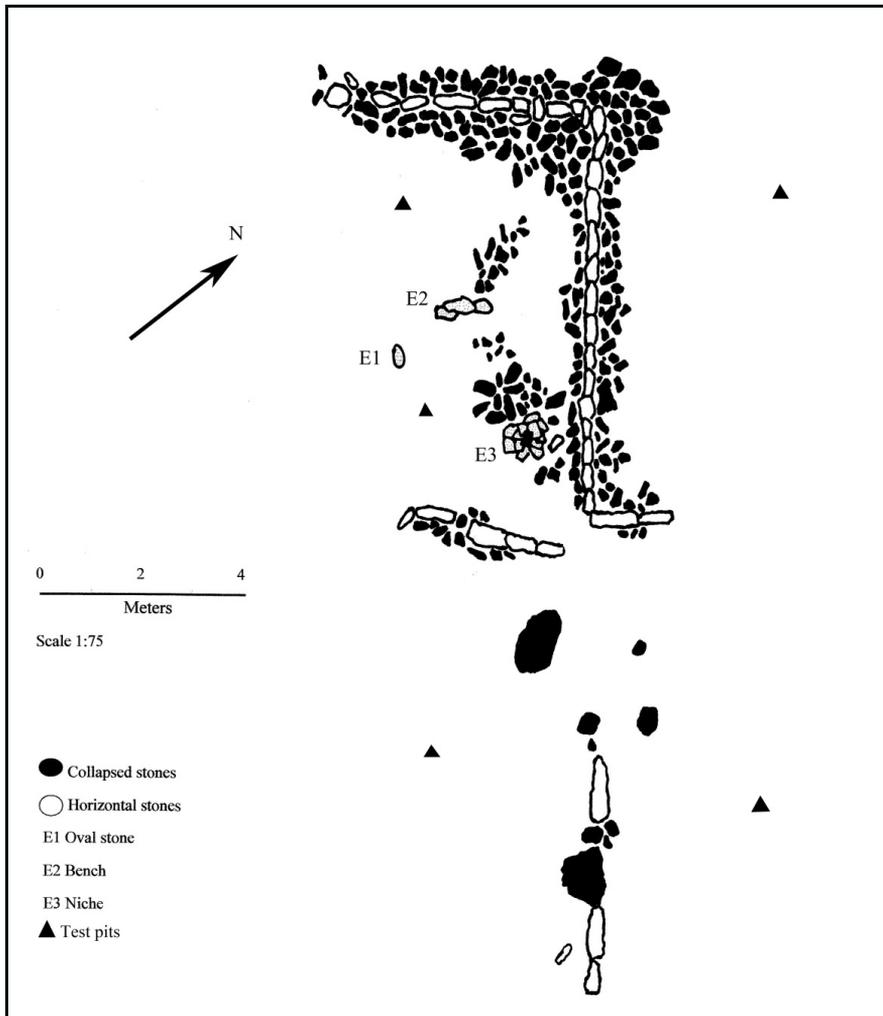


Figure 40. PLAN. Alignment Santa Rosa (ASR). Plan made by the author.

a thick layer of vegetation up to 80 cm high. The administrator of Playa Blanca told me that some years ago, workers found a couple of big stones beside the road that goes along the coast in Santa Rosa. To confirm the information we went to this area to explore. The natural stratigraphy of the road (about 60 cm high), showed small stones mixed with soil and sand, a kind of rubble fill. However, after a test pit and the analysis of the stratigraphy, neither evidence of archaeological material appeared, nor were big stones were found on the surface.

*PUNTA NILUC*⁷⁰

Some clues about the location of the site were found in the *legajo* which rule out the theory that *Punta de Cruces* might be Santa Rosa. These include the statement that Kachambay is located within Espiritu Santo Bay, the entrance of which is flanked on its left side by an island; the Chal island. The presence of many water reservoirs or *aguadas* and crops of different grains and fruit trees mentioned in the *legajo*, were other factors considered important and linked with the uplands. As we have seen, the most suitable areas for settlements and crops are those far from swamps and marshlands; that is, the uplands. After the result obtained in Santa Rosa and through the more detailed analysis of the document, the conclusion was that the place to find more evidence of possible settlements was in Punta Niluc. In February 2014 the third survey was conducted in this area. Like in Santa Rosa, the area of study was divided into 3 segments.

PN Segment 1

The survey started within the area previously selected during the first trip exploring from the north to the south in straight west-east transects, and when the conditions were optimal 10 m in between them. The area surveyed covered 2.5 km². The presence of *aguadas* was evident all the time; in total 7 were counted, most of which had diameters ranging from 5 to 13 m². Because of the season that the survey was carried out in, almost all the *aguadas* were completely dry sometimes reaching about 120 cm deep. The uplands in this segment reached 10 m high, the highest area of survey. The presence of one *chultún* was the only archaeological evidence found on surface of this segment. A *chultún* is an artificial cavity in the limestone bedrock which was used to store rainwater or other products by the indigenous Maya. These artificial holes usually open into a small bottle-shaped antechamber, which in turn can lead into larger inner chambers. In spite of the lack of time to carry out an intensive excavation, it was possible to liberate and excavate the surface of the *chultún*, starting with a bottleneck or entrance of about 70 cm deep and 80 cm in diameter that was made of flat stones (Fig. 41). A large root blocked the passage from the surface, burying itself deep within

70. Hereafter PN



Figure 41. Chultún. Photo author.

other possible chambers. This fact led to the conclusion that the *chultún* had a bottle-shaped form. Although the root was removed on surface, it was impossible to remove inside the chamber, so we left the *chultún* intact in order to avoid possible destruction of the context.

PN Segment 2

This area was about 2 km². The surveys were done in straight west to east transects in a north direction. The average height in this area was about 7 m the above mean sea level. The main characteristic of this area was the kind of vegetation which had more open spaces facilitating the survey. Given the characteristics of the vegetation, this segment was a perfect example of *monte alto*. The general topography was flat with short soil reaching no more than 10 cm deep in some areas, in others there were clearly flat limestone outcrops. Another characteristic in this segment was the considerable decrease of *aguadas*: only three were found. Because of these environmental characteristics, segment 2 might represent one of the best areas to find some kind of settlements. However, in practice the results suggested the contrary. Despite the relatively easy conditions for surveys, no evidence of materials were found on the surface.

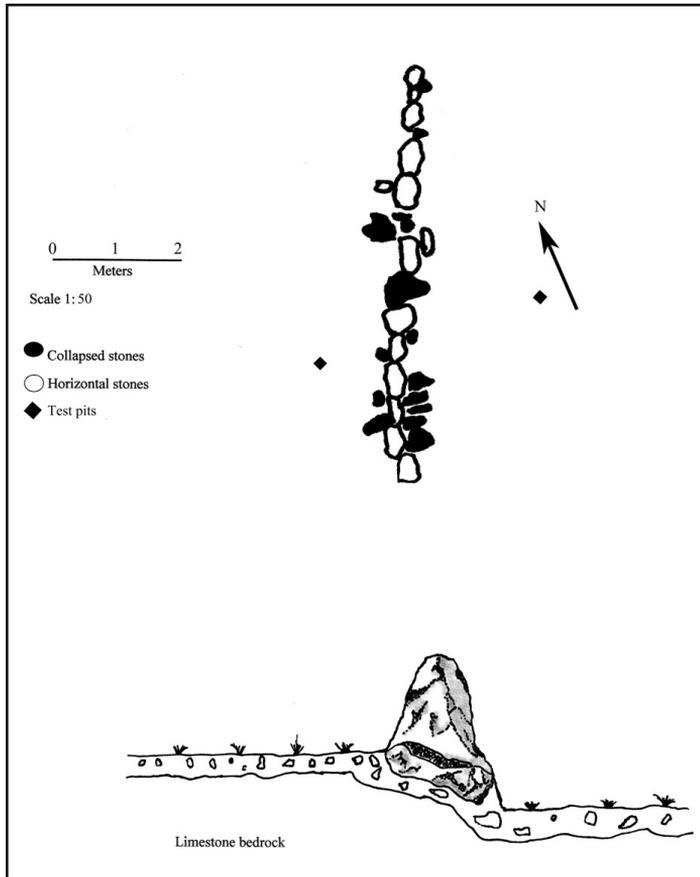


Figure 42. Plan and section of AN, with a view to the north. Made by the author.

Segment 3

The uplands in this area began to narrow as the survey headed to the south. Following the survey design, an alignment or wall of 6.7 m long was found (hereafter AN).⁷¹ This alignment had the same characteristics as ASR, consisting of fourteen roughly shaped limestones most of which were vertical and without mortar. The stones were aligned to the north with stones reaching 40 cm high and 15 cm wide. An obvious difference between AN and ASR is that there was no rubble stones along AN. However, some stones were found horizontally on the ground. Two test pits of 30 x 30 cm were dug in both sides of the wall without finding any material. The result

71. Alignment Nilut

of the test pits showed that both in Santa Rosa and in Punta Niluc the largest depth was no greater than 15 cm before reaching bedrock. A slight variation of terrain was observed on one side of the alignment; facing the north, the east side was about 10 cm lower than the west side, showing a kind of a level terrace or platform (Fig. 42).

In order to identify any other evidence of architecture, an intensive survey around the wall was made without results. AN was recorded, measured, and photographed. The survey continued to the south where the uplands were at their narrowest and where mangrove hindered the survey. The presence of *aguadas* increased considerably in this segment which led to a total of thirteen. A total of twenty three *aguadas* were located in the area surveyed in Punta Niluc (Fig. 43).

One of the aims in exploring Santa Rosa and Punta Niluc was to increase the poor knowledge about this particular region which has historically been called *despoblado* (uninhabited), and to possibly shed light on the colonial site of Kachambay and its church. Because these expeditions were the first done in the region (especially Punta Niluc), the material culture found represents an important step in the understanding of the interactions created by colonial encounters in the region.

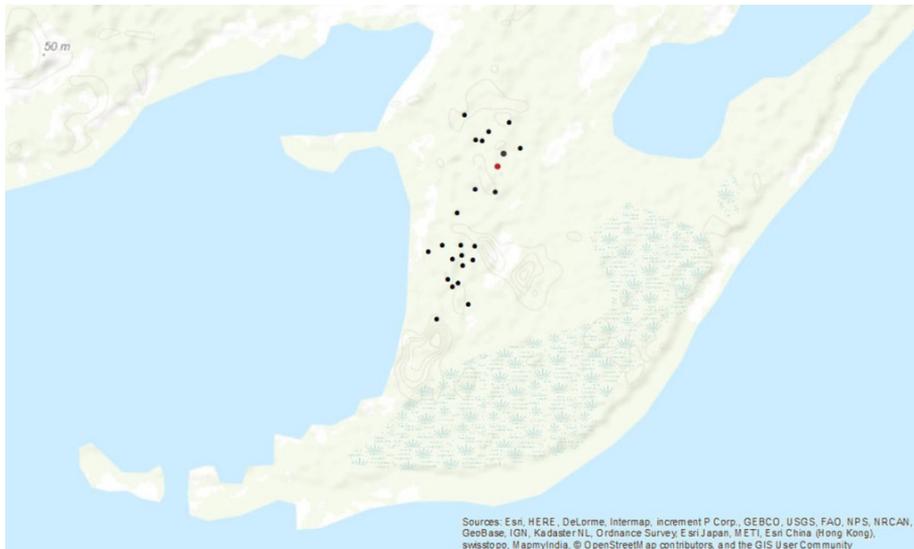


Figure 43. Map. In black the aguadas. In red the chultún. Map made by the author. Source: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

Summary

In this chapter, the use of written sources is addressed as an important part of expeditions and survey design. Maps as well as historical and ethnographic documents are of high value to archaeological work; however, they require reinterpretation to find the “real” meaning of the information contained. The lack of accuracy and fragmentary information that characterizes these sources is one of the first steps in planning surveys. Early colonial churches are one example of the ambivalence between the indigenous Maya and Spanish. The study of these structures represents one way of knowledge of the ways of life, ideology, material necessities, and even power relationships between these two groups during the colonial situation. There is, however, a vacuum of information about churches and more expeditions and archaeological works are required for a better understanding of them and the social dynamic created around them. In order to provide information about colonial churches and in general about the region, three expeditions were done in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay, on the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula. The aim was to identify colonial settlements or *rancherías* like the site of Kachambay and the “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción” church, which is mentioned in the *legajo* Mexico 906.

The methodology in surveys is mentioned briefly to explain the design used during the expeditions. The importance of an adequate survey design is that it may determine many factors such as, costs, time, and effort. To Schiffer, two categories are significant in surveys; factors that the archaeologist cannot directly control such as the environment and factors established and controlled by the archaeologist such as techniques and strategies. Normally the concept of site is referred to as a singular unit of analysis represented by the remains of pottery, lithics, or any material evidence. There are different approaches to the concept, like site and non-site oriented models, siteless, and regional and local perspectives.

At the arrival of the Spanish, the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula was divided into three provinces: Ecab, Cochuah, and Uaymil-Chetumal. During the Late Postclassic period, a maritime trade network was developed with the establishment of seaports like Xcaret or Chac Mool. The site of Kachambay was founded in 1620 in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay in a small peninsula called Punta Niluc. According to the *legajo* Mexico 906, the navigator Hernado Landeras found a group of Maya runaways; he

settled Kachambay with the indigenous Maya ordering them to construct a church called “Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepcion.” The site did not last long, probably because of the presence of pirates and English loggers.

The area of expedition lies in the Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve in the state of Quintana Roo on the Yucatán Peninsula. Limestone is the main kind of soil in the Reserve. The tropical weather and vegetation goes from rain forest, to mangroves, to coastal dunes. The expeditions were divided in two major areas; Santa Rosa and Punta Niluc. The former lies between Ascensión and Espiritu Santo Bay, and the latter in the north of Espiritu Santo Bay. Some evidence of material culture was found in both regions. In Santa Rosa, a 12 m long alignment or wall was found with three elements identified as: a niche, a bench, and an oval smoothed limestone. During the surveys in Punta Niluc, a wall of about 7 m was found. Further evidence of human activity was demonstrated by the presence of a *chultún*. Both were located in the uplands or *monte alto*. No evidence of materials like ceramics or lithics were found at either Santa Rosa or Punta Niluc.

Resumen

Las fuentes escritas son de un valor imprescindibles en la arqueología histórica, siendo herramientas comunes mapas, documentos etnohistóricos e históricos. Sin embargo, términos como “sitio” pueden ser imprecisos y ser usados en un contexto diferente al que podríamos creer. La falta de exactitud y de información descriptiva son características comunes al trabajar con fuentes históricas coloniales las cuales como arqueólogos, debemos tomar en cuenta todo el tiempo. La información geográfica de sitios o lugares en ocasiones contradictoria o carente de objetividad, hacen del trabajo una faena aún más difícil, demandando diferentes maneras de interpretación analítica, como Pendergast ha mencionado (1993:60).

El recorrido de superficie es un paso determinante en cualquier proyecto de investigación que incluya excavación. El desarrollo de la teoría arqueológica ha creado una rivalidad metodológica entre qué es más importante; el recorrido o la excavación. A pesar de esta lucha de importancia, el buen planeamiento de recorrido puede reducir el costo de la investigación, tiempo, mano de obra, material de excavación y gastos financieros. Los materiales recobrados en recorrido pueden ser afectados

de manera diferente a los hallados en excavación, ya que aspectos como erosión eólica o la agricultura llegan a deteriorar los materiales por el hecho de hallarse a nivel de superficie. Los procesos post-depositarios hacen a veces irreconocibles los materiales debido a la erosión eólica y los procesos deflacionarios. Este es el caso de zonas áridas donde los vientos constantes remueven objetos livianos llegando a crear una mezcla de periodos haciendo inexacta el tamaño de estos objetos, e incluso haciendo difícil establecer cronologías.

Lo que es claro es que existen dos factores que el arqueólogo debe contemplar a la hora de hacer recorrido, el primero son los factores naturales los cuales el investigador no puede modificar. El segundo factor es el diseño de investigación el cual puede ser determinado y controlado por el mismo arqueólogo. Autores como Michael Schiffer (1978) han trabajado en este tema definiendo varios aspectos importantes a considerar tales como abundancia, visibilidad, accesibilidad y obstruccionabilidad. Desde los últimos decenios, una amplia literatura sobre recorrido y prospección arqueológica se ha escrito, desarrollándose diferente diseño de investigación, basándose en los principios de distribución aleatoria, sistematización y estratificación (Plug 1978:402).

Analizando el proceso del recorrido de superficie nos encontramos con el término "sitio". Este término ha sido definido comúnmente como la unidad básica singular de todo análisis de prospección, entendiéndose como tal restos de cerámica o lítica esparcida en superficie, una estructura o cualquier otra manifestación de materia cultural o la combinación de la misma. Uno de los problemas al considerar al sitio como un simple punto en el mapa ocasiona que se pierda de vista información, ya que de esta forma, se le atribuye la idea de que el sitio está delimitado por barreras culturales y naturales. Esta idea convierte al sitio en el *loci* de actividades pretéritas siendo un error, ya que las actividades suceden en contextos sistémico los cuales no necesariamente dejan evidencia en contextos arqueológicos (Plug et al.: 1978). En muchos casos el sitio se define por la cantidad de material arqueológico en superficie, sin embargo, esta definición nos conlleva a cuestionar cuánta cantidad y de qué tipo. Algunas definiciones son tan relativas como las de Plug y Hill (1975), los cuales establecen que un sitio es cualquier evidencia de cultura material mayor a 5 artefactos por metro cuadrado. Esta definición puede causar conflicto cuando trabajamos con

estructuras más que con artefactos, por ejemplo un muro o alineamiento de piedra. Los esfuerzos para dar más claridad a la definición de sitio han llevado a los arqueólogos a proponer los conceptos de sitio y no-sitio (site y non-site oriented model), así como el término de “siteless” propuesto para romper con la idea generalizada de sitio como unidad básica de análisis. A pesar de su buena fe, este modelo cae en el error de considerar solo factores conductuales y no geológicos en el proceso formativo del sitio como tal (ver Kantner 2008:45; Galaty 2005:301).

En el análisis espacial de todo recorrido de superficie la escala ha representado una parte importante, diferenciándose lo regional de lo local como una característica notoria. Ya en los años cincuenta, William Sanders desarrolló dos modelos para trabajar con la escala: “patrón de asentamiento comunal” en donde las unidades individuales de población existen, y el “patrón de asentamiento zonal”. En éste último la distribución del tamaño de poblaciones tiene una interrelación simbiótica social, económica y religiosa. La tendencia de analizar espacialmente en términos de micro y macro motiva a caer en una dicotomía teórica al interpretar al recorrido de superficie en términos de intensivo y extensivo, aludiendo la posibilidad de escalas intermedias de análisis (Banning 2002:95; Caraher 2006:18).

Los recorridos de superficie dieron como resultado la identificación de dos alineamientos o muros. EL mayor localizado en el área conocida como Santa Rosa y con una longitud de 12 metros en forma de L invertida. Se encontraron tres elementos importantes como son un nicho, una piedra oval y una especie de banco. El segundo alineamiento de menor tamaño se localizó en Punta Niluc, en lo que se denomina “monte alto”. Dicho alineamiento consta de rocas de aproximadamente 7 metros de largo. En ninguno de los dos alineamientos se encontró materiales arqueológicos como lítica o cerámica. En la misma zona, un chultún fue descubierto. Dichos hallazgos se pueden interpretar como la presencia de actividades humanas en la región denominadas como rancherías en las fuentes históricas.

PART THREE

DISCUSSION



CHAPTER SIX

SPANISH CHURCHES AND MAYA DWELLINGS: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

Throughout the course of this thesis, Spanish churches and Maya dwellings have been considered as a hybrid material culture. Godelier (1988) explains material culture based on the interactions between nature and individuals and the repercussions that they have on a society in terms of materiality. His approach goes from landscape alterations like crops and domestic activities, to the creation and modification of buildings and objects, arguing that: “Tools, weapons, monuments and objects of every sort are the material supports for a mode of social life” (Godelier, 1988:4). Material culture and colonial encounters are important to analyze because they represent the mixture of daily life and routine practices under constant tension in which power relationships play an important role. Archaeologists work with material evidence that was the product of social interactions to understand and to recreate how those interactions were contextualized to satisfy necessities.

From the postcolonial perspective, material culture is not about the taken-for-granted idea of power from one group over another with the subordinated accepting the latter. It may be conceived as the aftermath of a negotiation and rejection of ideas and necessities, with recognition that both cultures were asymmetrically altered. Thus, in colonial encounters material culture (and culture in general) emerges as something hybrid, as Bhabha points out: “The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (Bhabha, 1990:211). Another reason to analyze material culture in a colonial situation, as argued by van Dommelen: “is the insights it may give into the lives and practices of those people who are usually absent from historical documents and novels, i.e. those better known as the ‘subaltern’” (2009:112). In colonial encounters, and due to its symbolic and social importance, architecture is one indicator of material

culture possible to conceive as: “a principal medium for the expression of power and control, but it can also be viewed as a class of material culture subject to manipulation by conquered peoples in negotiating social relations and reformulating cultural identities” (Alexander, 1998:490). For Tirpan, architecture is a manifestation of the way in which social structures and cultural categories gain material existence. She points out that, “At the same time, these built spaces become lived spaces and are used and changed by people in the performance of everyday life. Therefore, architecture can be viewed simultaneously as ‘architecture as constituted’ and ‘architecture as lived’” (Tirpan, 2013: 471-472).

A starting point of discussion in this chapter is the nomenclature used in the literature about colonial churches and chapels. The “arbitrary” use of names to describe these structures in the sixteenth-century by friars and chroniclers, complicates the typological interpretation when we try to form a consensus about what is a church or chapel and what is not, and even more complicated, the term open-air. McAndrew’s *The Open-air Churches of Sixteenth-century Mexico* is probably one of the pioneer analyses of the theme. However, as Graham argues, the examples used in the center of Mexico look like mosques in plan, differing from the buildings on the Yucatan Peninsula and making it even more difficult to homogenize terms (2011:185). It is common to generalize the idea that size determines the type of building related to its location in terms of range. It is true that size can determine the name of the buildings in many cases, like the *capillas posas* and other minor buildings. However, when describing buildings, friars and chroniclers never thought in terms of typologies, but in function, and most of the time they used both names interchangeably. Graham states that, “sixteenth-century names or terms for buildings, space, or rooms derived from their function. They arose as a response to how people knew the buildings or spaces or rooms were used” (ibid:169). It is important not to consider the name *churches* as exclusive to big towns, or *cabeceras* and *chapels* to small ones or *visitas*. The building at the Maya site of Tecoh commonly being called a Spanish chapel is one example of this confusion. As mentioned earlier, Tecoh was a *cabecera* at the arrival of the Spanish, meaning that the word chapel was not valid, but that church was. McAndrew argues about the chapels in Motul and Umán in Yucatán: “the small sixteenth-century chapels are, by exception,

overshadowed and downgraded by the big seventeenth-century churches beside them” (1965:523). His statement might be right for those specific chapels; however, there are exceptions like Mani and Tizimin, in which the size of the chapel (especially Mani) overshadows the rest of the building. In places like these, the chapel had an important social role at it was the place for Masses and baptisms, which is why they had baptismal font and a sacristy. Artigas, on the chapel at Mani, said: “Queda claro que el gran convento de Maní con sus espacios abiertos estaba edificado en torno a la capilla abierta con su enorme ramada. Aunque posee iglesia techada desde el siglo XVI, su volumen era secundario con respecto al de la “capilla y ramada de indios”⁷² (Artigas 2010:115).

Certainly, one of the variants in early colonial churches in Mexico was the open-air type. Together with the *atrios* and their symbolism, these buildings represented the ultimate form of introducing the indigenous society into Catholicism without violently altering the existing prehispanic use of open spaces. They also represented a building sometimes difficult to define in which the presence or absence of many architectural elements determine their condition. Defining the term open-air church is something unclear or misused in literature. One of the confusions may be the word “open”, since it does not clarify what is open in a church, and in combination with “air”, it might sound the church lacks a roof over the nave. I presented some types of open-air chapels in the center of Mexico that lack a roof and a nave. However, the term open-air is valid to walled and un-walled buildings too. The archaeological analysis of these buildings is difficult to identify, especially the no-walled churches since the only possible material evidence may be the holes from the poles and sticks that supported the thatched roof.

In terms of the particular type of open-air church or chapel, it is wrong to state that they were “improvised” structures with the intention of aiding religious practices (Kubler, 2012:389). They were built for different reasons, for example, the necessity to create a formal place to give Mass. Even when the economic resources were probably not enough to build complex structures like a convent in distant places that lacked permanent cures, the Spanish

72. “It is clear that the great convent of Maní with its open spaces was built around the open-air chapel with its huge *ramada*. Even the convent had a roofed church since the XVI century, its size was secondary in relation to the chapel and *ramada* of *indios*” (Translation by author).

built these kind of structures in order to satisfy the religious necessities. Hence, the solution was to construct structures that more modest and simple, but suitable enough for worship. This aspect is valid to the churches located on the coast of Quintana Roo like Xcaret or Tancah. Another reason was the importance of the use of open spaces in cults and ceremonies by the indigenous people, since they were not used to indoor cults that took place under a big roof, thus, this type of architecture was a psychological way to introduce the Maya to Catholicism. The churches on the Yucatán Peninsula cannot be understood as a monolithic phenomenon exported from Europe, but as a colonial negotiation and recreation of cultural values.

In general, we can observe that the term “open-air chapel” is valid when: a) It is defined as appended to an extant church without a nave or *ramada* (e.g. Tochimilco, Puebla), b) when it is a small isolated building without a nave or *ramada* (e.g. Tzintzuntzan, Michoacan). One polemic variant is the case of Maní in Yucatán; here the chapel is evidently appended to the convent beside the extant church. However, it would be wrong to call it “open” because the chapel had a nave, which in turn was walled to support the massive *ramada*. In contrast, the term “open-air church” can be valid when: a) the building has a masonry chancery, a *ramada* roof and un-walled nave (e.g. Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh, Yucatán), b) the entire building is a un-walled *ramada* or at least half walled (e.g. Tancah, Quintana Roo; Tipu, YDL I in Belize). It seems difficult to reach a general consensus about how to classify churches and chapels. Despite their value, the typological classification proposed by Andrews and Hanson presents some different perspectives of a single phenomenon. In the table presented below, both classifications were used in the column *type of structure*, in an attempt to better encompass the typologies proposed by these authors (Table 2). Due to their particular types, and based on Graham’s argument, the eight buildings are correctly presented as churches. However, the word chapel, used by the authors, was left out to avoid discrepancies. Far from proposing a revolutionary typological model, the intention was not to discredit the valuable work of these scholars with a wide knowledge on the theme, rather a simple attempt to unify judgment. At the same time, the idea was to illustrate the elements that hybridized in terms of architectural attributes and building materials. The categories are relative and based on Kubler’s typology for Yucatán (2012:391), which in turn are based on Ponce’s description.

Churches				Open-Air Church	Atrio	Prehispanic Platform	Type Of Structure		
	Barrel Vault	Masonry	Ramada				Simple Ramada Chapels/Ramada Chapels chapels	Ramada Chapels /Open Ramada Churches	Undetermined Ramada Churches
POCBOC	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
DZIBILCHALTÚN	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
TECOH	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
ECAB	X	X	X					X	
XCARET		X	X		X	X	X		
TANCAH		X	X	X	X	X	X		
TIPÚ		X	X	X	?		X		
LAMANAI (YDL I)			X	X	X	X	X		

Table 2. Architectonical attributes in churches and chapels.

Any of the eight churches and chapel on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize fall in Hanson's category "Temporary Chapels" or at least, it is almost impossible to know if they changed their architecture into what they are now. There are more architectural attributes in Pocboc, Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh, and Ecab located in the northwest of the peninsula where the settlements were more continuous. Dzibilchaltún and Tecoh were the type of open-air *ramada* church with a massive stone baptistery and sacristy, and a nave with a *ramada*. These two churches, together with Ecab, represent more complex structures that had additional features such as isolated *casa cural*, windows frames, and barrel vault roofs with merlons on the exterior. In these buildings, the hybridization associated with Maya dwellings is found in architectural characteristics such as the thatched roof (*guano* palm) and the types of walls. Anthony P. Andrews suggests that archaeologically, only Dzibilchaltún and Tecoh had an open-air nave (un-walled) making it possible to call them

open-air *ramada* churches (Andrews 1991:367), whereas the church in Ecab had a masonry walled nave with doors and windows on its sides. We can then distinguish that, the nave was walled, half-walled, or open-air depending on the type of church. In terms of hybridization, the first two types were made by building traditions that go from simple vertical pole walls to dry rubble masonry. Although the ‘T’ plans of these churches differ from the typical Maya dwellings, the building materials are the same as prehispanic times; masonry, wattle and daub, stucco, posts, and *ramada* roofs. However, it is just the chancel (with the baptistery, presbytery, and sacristy) that architecturally remained European, whereas the nave maintained a more indigenous tradition. What is possible to analyze in these buildings are the naves, which together with the churches at Tancah, Xcaret, Tipu and YDL I, have architectural similarities possible to observe in Maya dwellings. The ethnographic work of Robert Wauchope on Maya dwellings is a valuable guide to illustrate these plans. Practically all of the naves from Pocboc, Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh, and Ecab were rectangular, semi apsidal and had flattened ends (Fig. 44).

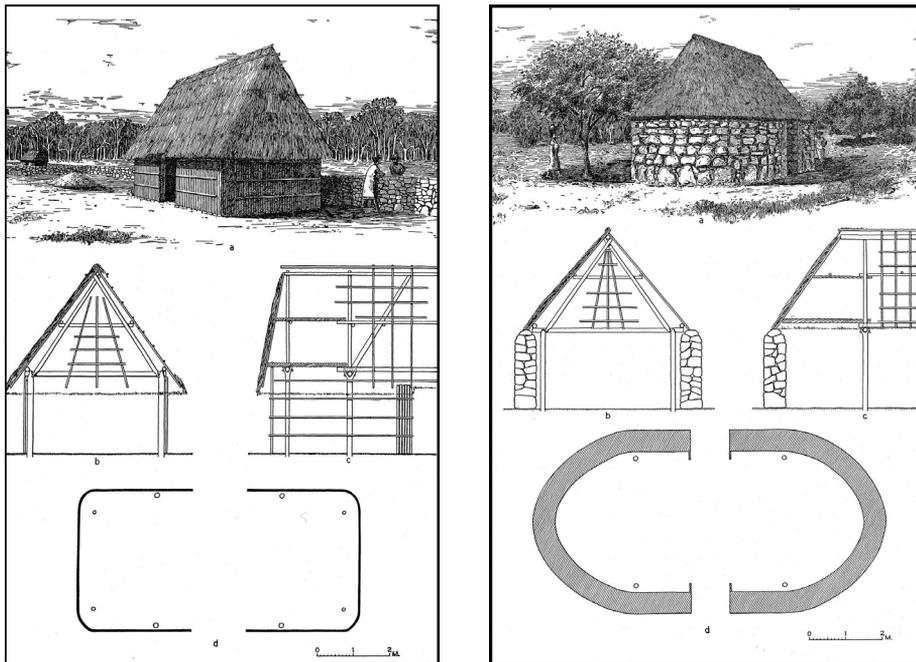


Figure 44. Left: Rectangular plan with flattened ends and a pole wall. Right: apsidal plan with masonry walls. Both have *ramada* roofs. After Wauchope 1938

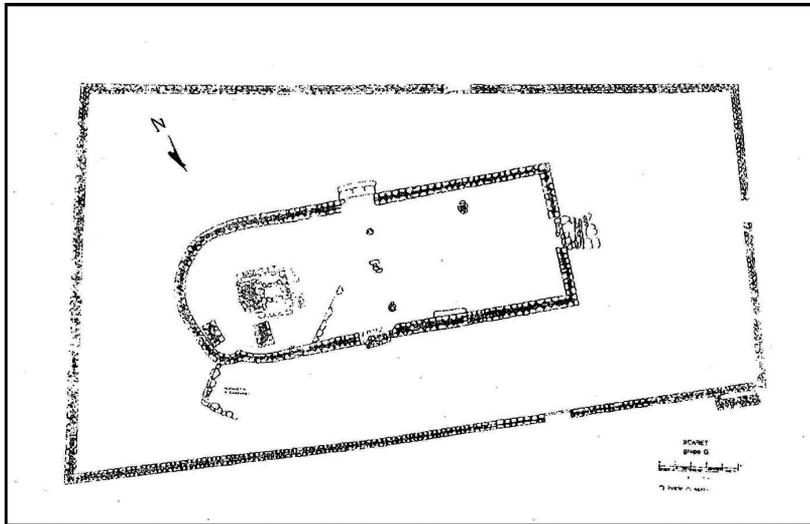


Figure 45. Top: Plan of Xcaret. In Con 2002. Bottom: Typical Maya dwelling in Yucatán. Source: Photo used courtesy The School of Architecture Visual Resources Collection, The University of Texas at Austin from Artstor's Hal Box and Logan Wagner Collection of Mexican Architecture and Urban Design (96-02919)

These examples infer an idea about the appearance of the naves of those churches, which together with their massive masonry chancels, represent a mixture of architectural elements

In analyzing the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula (nowadays Quintana Roo) and Belize, we observe a different situation. They had a more simple architecture that was more evidently a hybridization and parallelism with the Maya dwellings. Despite their “simplicity”, these buildings do not lose importance in relation with the previous and more complex buildings. The main characteristic of these building is that they were single structures in which the chancel and nave were covered completely by a *ramada* roof. Their plans vary from apsidal to rectangular, and their naves were part wood, part masonry, and of the open-air type. In the case of Tipu and YDL I, the chancel was smaller than that of churches at Tecoh or Ecab, having only space for the altar in the sanctuary and one door to the small sacristy (see Graham 2011:230). The excavations in Xcaret make it possible to state that the church was walled and combined an apsidal shape in the chancel with a squared shape in the nave area (see Con 1995:391) (Fig. 45).

To state that the churches at Tancah, Tipu and YDL I were open-air may be polemic because of their types of walls. According to the excavations carried out in Tipu and Lamanai (see Graham 2011); the height of the walls was very low, being only wooden posts that supported the *ramada* roof. A reconstruction of the Spanish church at Xcaret is one example that illustrates these types of walls. The structure was a typical ramada with very low walls, making it possible to recognize the name “open-air church” (Fig. 46).



Figure 46. Reconstruction of the Spanish church at Xcaret, Quintana Roo. Photos Author.

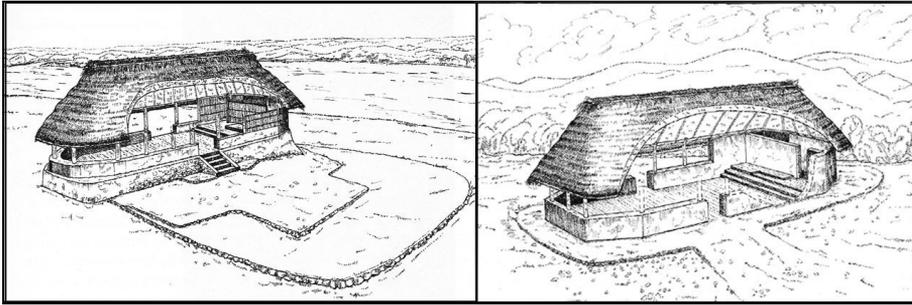


Figure 47. Drawing reconstruction of Lamanai (YDL I) and Tipu (right). In Graham 2011

In comparing Tipu and YDL I with the Maya dwellings, the architectural and building hybridization is more obvious (Fig. 47).

Despite the image below representing an apsidal masonry walled dwelling, they illustrate the plan and part of the building materials for Tipu and YDL I, considering that Tipu had masonry chancel and both had half masonry-walls (Fig. 48).



Figure 48. Left: Apsidal plan with half masonry wall and *ramada* in Yucatán. In Davidson 2009. Left: Apsidal dry rubble wall in Telchac Yucatán. In Wauchope 1938

From the eight churches analyzed, only those at Xcaret, Tancah, Tipu, and Lamanai (YDL I) have been excavated allowing a different way to rethink and understand the cultural interrelationships during the colonial encounter. The burials found in these churches shed light on the social interactions motivating the questions: What kind of results could be found by excavating complex churches like Poeboc, Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh, or Ecab? Could they bring material culture for a better understanding of the hybridization process in the early colonial daily life? Personally, I think so, as this is one of the major reason to pursue more archaeological works in early colonial churches and chapels.

Some final observations to conclude this section; the work of scholars like George Kubler, Manuel Toussaint, and John McAndrew were important to the architectural analysis of churches. However, many concepts and information is nowadays outdated. In contrast, the classificatory models used by Anthony P. Andrews and Craig Hanson are advancements in the typologies of churches and chapels, something that is not easy. One of the main problems is the arbitrary use of the words church and chapel. As presented earlier, it is very easy to fall into the mistake of denominating a building as a chapel just because of its size. In many cases, the correct word is church. Thus, Hanson's classification dismisses the possibility of "churches", denominating all his examples as "chapels" (1995). In contrast, Andrews is more "flexible" in his classification and uses both words.

We can assume that the Spanish had to adapt to external factors such as weather, natural resources and, in light of the need of indigenous conversion, they incorporated the Mesoamerican open-air space to satisfy their necessities. Because the use of the open space already existed in the indigenous societies, *atrios* and open-air churches and chapels fitted perfectly in the spiritual conquest. Pendergast suggests, "By adopting local methods and pre-contact architectural features to produce a building dedicated to Christian use, the European clerics gave tangible form to the bidirectional change that characterized a large part of their relationship with the Maya" (Pendergast 1993:123). The religion (materialized in the form of churches and chapels) had to adapt and change to fit the necessities of evangelization. The Franciscans on the Yucatán Peninsula introduced their faith by Masses which transformed the prehispanic religion into a kaleidoscope of idolatry. Churches became the physical representation of the faith, changing and retaking prehispanic elements to facilitate the Maya conversion to Catholicism.

Maya dwellings as a worship place

From the perspective of built form, churches and dwellings are one example of the use of space, form, and organization in the built environment. According to Lawrence and Low, built form represents one way to understand the reasons why the societies developed some kind of building and not others, the main emphasis focuses on the "urban phenomena and

institutional forces, and the changing historical and sociocultural contexts within which built forms exists” (1990:482).

Conceived as physical structures, dwellings represent a communication form in which individuals maintain, reproduce, and exchange their values and ideologies. Johnston and Gonlin argue: “To the degree that they encode cultural meanings, houses become both vehicles for communication of meanings and stages for reproduction of those meanings in the context of daily household practice” (Johnston and Gonlin, 1998:145). Commonly, archaeologists had based their architectural analysis of buildings in cultural, functional, and social approaches. According to these authors, a tendency amongst Mayanists is to analyze from the functional and social perspective, considering them to be a more materialist theoretical stance, leaving behind the cultural or structuralist position (ibid:144). However, the right combination of the three approaches can shed light on a more encompassed analysis of buildings, in this case dwellings and churches including the symbolic and holistic elements embodied in them. At the same time, environmental factors are obvious influences that affect the form, organization, and use of space. Rapoport points out that,

“house form is not simple the result of physical forces or any single causal factor, but the consequence of a whole range of socio-cultural factors seen in their broadest terms. Form is in turn modified by climatic conditions (the physical environment which makes some things impossible and encourages others) and by methods of construction, materials available, and the technology (the tools for achieving the desired environment)” (Rapoport, 1969:47).

An interesting shift occurred in the religious symbolism contained in churches and the use of specific areas of cult, both inside and outside, which are possible to observe in Maya dwellings. The area where the altar lies is called the sanctuary, this is one example of those areas where specific activities took place. The early Catholic altars were normally a wooden table endowed with a higher holiness as it was here that the cure or friar offered liturgy and Mass. Commonly, the altar was decorated with candles, religious relics such as crosses, a chalice, vessels, and incense was burned during the liturgy ceremonies. In many cases when churches were located far away and the visits from clerics were sporadic, the sanctuary had a

space to put a portable wooden altar base (see McAndrew, 1965:354). In observing Maya dwellings, the altar gained a special importance and symbolism, turning the area where it is located into a kind of small cult area. The altar was a wooden table that was always located in one corner of the house or opposite the main door; it is never visible at first glance from the outside. The altar is used to sanctify not just God and Catholic elements like saints or virgins, but it is also a place to remember the family ancestors of the dwellings inhabitants. Candles and incense, flowers, images of saints and deceased relatives, were always present at the family altar (Fig. 50).

Architecturally, an early colonial church or chapel is more complex than an indigenous dwelling. The symbolic association exposed by Davidson (2009) between the Maya Creationist myths linked with the architecture of Maya dwellings, might be difficult to transfer in the architectural design of colonial churches for a different reason. The Maya dwellings are built from four major posts that support the *ramada* roof; in contrast, a colonial church may or may not have posts used in its construction. In the case of Xcaret, Tanchah, Tipu or YDL I, the whole church was a *ramada*, being walled or un-walled. In the case of those that were open-air churches, more than four posts supported the *ramada*. In spite of these aspects, it is important to conceive the church as a symbolic building, where people congregate in an atmosphere of sacredness. In their plan and shape, for example, some Catholic churches contain symbolic elements such as the Latin cross representing the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Inside the churches, there are areas for specific cults with religious elements that represent, for example, passages of the life of Jesus or the apostles. These elements recreate Biblical passages and even a mythical period possible to compare with prehispanic creationist myths. Turning our attention outside Maya dwellings, we observe some symbolic elements recreated in the colonial churches. It was previously mentioned that the symbolic importance of the *atrios* and their relationship with the Mesoamerican open space linked with the cardinal regions. A dry-laid wall delimits the *atrio* area; in the Maya dwellings this wall is used to delimit houses or properties, and is called *albarrada*. The area between the *albarrada* and the house represents a sacred area in the same way as the *atrios* in the churches. Clergies and chroniclers referred to this patio area in historical documents as a synonym for *atrio*, thus *patio* and *atrio* were the same area.

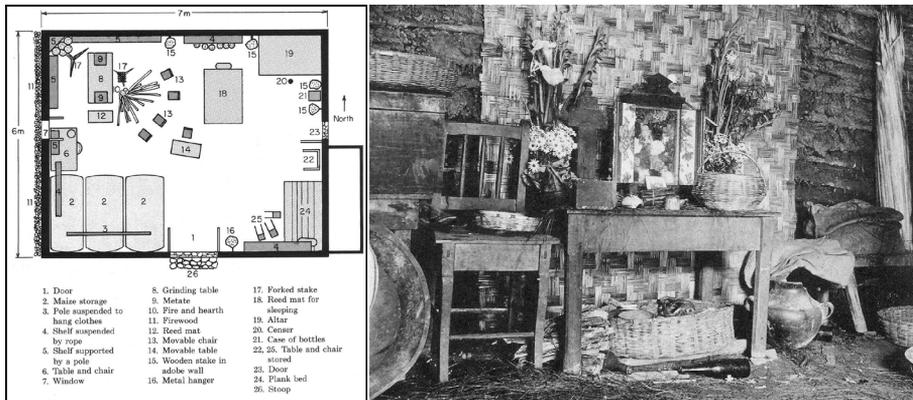


Figure 49. Left: Plan of a Maya Dwelling in Zinacantán, After Vogt 1969. Right: Domestic altar. In Wauchope 1938

The use of the three approaches to analyze houses proposed by Johnston and Gonlin, are important because of the holistic and symbolic meaning contained in Maya dwellings. Archaeological analysis based solely on socioeconomic aspects of societies fails in the exclusion of cognitive characteristics of social organization. Hence, it is important to reconsider aspects such as, gender, ethnicity, wealth, mythology, and stratification, which are embodied in the architecture and social spaces of built environments. To reiterate, it is important to combine the cultural, functional, and social approaches to the architectural analysis of buildings.

Archaeologically, Maya dwellings have been excavated that show different types of plans which take various forms from rectangular to apsidal or circular. This architectural tradition is observable from the Preclassic period through to present day. Some of the characteristics that remain in churches and dwellings are the building materials and the architectural forms. It is not just the reuse of prehispanic stones as a raw material in the constructions of masonry walls and the chancel that are examples of hybridization, but also materials such as wattle and daub walls, and the stucco made of lime or *sascab* used in the walls and floor of chapels and churches. These are clear evidence of Maya constructive practices used since prehispanic times. At the same time, palm leaves or *guano* were used in the Spanish buildings for the construction of the *ramadas*, being very fresh and waterproof. The Maya burial practices under the floor of their houses were maintained in Spanish churches turning these buildings into

a type of cemetery, as excavations in some of the churches have shown. In turn, the introduction of durable materials including iron by the Spanish, established a new building methodology of using nails, sticks and other building materials (see Pendergast and Graham, 1993:347).

These forms of material culture can be addressed as a hybridization of Maya traditions with Spanish influences. The process of cultural hybridity gave rise to a new reality of negotiation with a mutual and mutable representation of cultural variations located *in-between* Maya and Spanish traditions. Based on Bhabha's thought that hybridity is the third space which enables other positions to emerge (1990:211), then churches and chapels are these "other positions" as examples of the hybrid outcomes of the colonial situation. Thus, the colonial churches on the Yucatán Peninsula and Belize, and Maya dwellings are examples of an ambivalent continuity and change of materiality and beliefs. The churches were the manner by which the secular and regular clergy transformed the indigenous ideology in a nonviolent way, helping them to accept the new religion as something familiar and well-known. In contrast, the incorporation in the construction of churches of something as basic and important for the indigenous Maya as a dwelling, was the best way to ensure cultural conversion and their introduction into Catholicism. In addition, the symbolism inherent in the Maya dwellings associated with the prehispanic worldview or cosmology, fitted the "sacrality" inherent in churches in a brilliant way.

It is possible to state that in general, the colonial religious architecture on the Yucatán Peninsula is more European than prehispanic, otherwise, the construction of pyramids or at least some architectural elements, might have continued during the Colonial period and be represented in Spanish churches, but this was not the case. As argued earlier, because of their size, the prehispanic pyramids were not built to accommodate congregations in their interior like the European churches. What we can see are European architectural characteristics that were made and adapted entirely by Maya techniques. At the same time, it is possible to state that the colonial architecture in Yucatán is an example of a hybrid combination of elements, not an importation as scholars have argued, simply because there are no churches in Spain like those in Ecab, Xcaret, or Dzibilchaltún. They represent a way in which archaeologists can address colonial encounters, recognizing the role of the host society in the recreation of hybrid material culture.

In addition, the colonial churches are one example of the social dynamics that characterized the peninsula, such as the lack of political coercion and/or military control, and the lack of friars in some regions. These factors motivated mobility among the population causing the abandonment of towns and their respective churches, subsequently turning regions such as Ascensión and Espiritu Santo Bay into a haven for refugees and runaways (Andrews 1991:357). In terms of mobility, the west-north region of the peninsula was characterized by a “low-mobility” region. The people in this region enduringly settled for economic reasons because of the establishment of *encomiendas* and *congregaciones* (Antonio Benavides personal communication 2013). This is why many churches and chapels in the northwest had more architectural transformations making it difficult to determine their building processes, for example Pocboc. In contrast, and despite the establishment of *congregaciones*, the east coast had a “high-mobility”, causing many churches and chapels to be abandoned. Archaeologically this helps to analyze them in their last building phase before their abandonment. Examples are the aforementioned churches of Xcaret or Tanchah in Quintana Roo.

Although the colonial settlement pattern on the peninsula clearly varies from the east coast to the west, it is nowadays possible to identify Late Preclassic sites on the coast of Quintana Roo from other regions of the peninsula. Antony P. Andrews makes an interesting observation pointing out that: “Many of the towns and cities of the contact period became colonial settlements, and most of their structures were demolished and recycled into colonial buildings. Thus, sites with remains of the Late Postclassic architecture are found in rural areas where Spanish had little impact (the east coast being the prime example)” (Andrews 1993:40). This region remained beyond the mainstream of centralized control in the northern Yucatán with Mérida as the capital. Spatially, the distribution of churches is marked by a high concentration in the northwest part of the peninsula, leaving the east coast in relative “emptiness”. In building terms, we can notice that churches located in the northwest of the peninsula like Pocboc in Campeche, Dzibilchaltún and Tecoh in Yucatán, and Ecab in the north of Quintana Roo are more complex than those in the southeast, like Xcaret, Tanchah, and Tipú. Their architectural characteristics can be understood as examples of permanence versus mobility because they are

located in regions where the population continually occupied one place. According to Jones (1983) we can distinguish a vast frontier hinterland formed by the present-day Belize, the Petén, Campeche, and Quintana Roo beyond the more densely populated region; the northern Yucatán. He states that despite this inequality of population, it is possible to notice that the social dynamic in the more fully populated and administratively controlled area was deeply affected by the existence of the vast frontier beyond its borders. Another factor to consider is the internal dynamic of this marginal frontier, which was more coherent, structured, and extensive in scale than had been imagined (ibid: 64). In this sense, the religious influence on the east side of the peninsula was diminished by factors such as migration, famines, war, and in some regions a rough vegetation. Hence, all of these churches, whether complex or simple, were determinant markers on the new landscape of hybrid ideas and beliefs.

Resumen

El análisis comparativo entre las iglesias españolas y las casas mayas se ha abordado desde la perspectiva de material cultural, siendo ésta una parte importante en todo trabajo arqueológico. La importancia del estudio de materia cultural en arqueología es determinante ya que provee información sobre los modos de vida diaria y rutinas practicadas en constante tensión, en las cuales las relaciones de poder juegan un papel determinante. Desde la perspectiva postcolonial, no se puede dar por hecho la idea de un grupo hegemónico sobre otro dominado y subordinado, sino la mezcla de dos ideologías las cuales negocian por un proceso de aceptación, rechazo y adaptación. Estos elementos son un ejemplo de la ambivalencia creada en el contacto colonial sin poner énfasis en modelos eurocéntricos en los cuales, el grupo donador o colonizador, es el principal agente el cual importa directamente desde la metrópolis sus valores y tradiciones. Por el contrario, la arquitectura colonial en la península de Yucatán se puede entender como la continuación de uso en materiales constructivos característicos de las casas mayas. Debido a su valor social y simbólico, la arquitectura puede ser concebida como un ejemplo de poder y control, el cual es objeto de transformación por los grupos colonizados en la negociación de relaciones sociales y en la reformulación de nuevas identidades culturales, como lo expresa Rani Alexander (1998:498).

Históricamente el uso de los términos iglesias y capillas se ha basado considerando factores como tamaño y rango jerárquicos dentro de la sociedad. Esta perspectiva no es del todo errónea considerando por ejemplo, la relación entre los pueblos cabecera y sus visitas. Sin embargo, este punto de vista deja mucho que desear cuando analizamos las fuentes históricas hechas por doctrineros, militares o escribanos. En dichos documentos podemos ver claro que la función social – más que tipologías- de dichos edificios es lo que determina el uso de los términos. El término “abierta” puede presentar igual confusión ya que no define claramente en qué manera una capilla es abierta. Existen reglas arquitectónicas para definir las como el hecho de que se localizan aisladas del resto del complejo arquitectónico religioso, lo cual en la práctica no lo es siempre. Tal es el caso de las iglesias de Maní y Motul en donde la capilla yace a un lado de la iglesia, con nave, ramada y nunca aisladas. En otros casos las “capillas abiertas” son del tipo que se localizan o bien, en el mismo complejo arquitectónico a lado de la iglesia, sin tener nave y techo de ramada como en algunos ejemplos en el centro de México, o bien, capillas anexas a la iglesia siendo caracterizadas por tener arcos en la entrada de las mismas y sin nave ni ramada.

Ejemplos del término iglesia abierta es para el caso de Dzibilchaltún o Tecoh en donde la nave aparentemente no tenía muros que sostenían el techo de ramada, en este sentido era abierta. Ejemplos son también, Tipu y Lamanai I (YDL I) en Belice y Tancah, basados en las excavaciones realizadas en las cuales los arqueólogos no hallaron restos de muros en las naves de los edificios o bien, en que los muros de las naves son muy bajos como para considerarlos muros como tales, ejemplos son Tipú e YDL I en Belice (ver Graham 2011). La importancia de dichos edificios yace en la forma en que los españoles adaptaron el medio ambiente a la urgencia de evangelizar indígenas de una forma rápida, incorporando el uso de los espacios abiertos prehispánicos al modelo Europeo de espacios cerrados. No son edificios improvisados o incompletos como lo afirmó Kubler (2012:389) hace más de cincuenta años, por el contrario, son edificios que cumplieron con una fusión social equiparable al de iglesias establecidas o asociadas a conventos.

En muchos casos la literatura cae en el error de definir iglesias y capillas en función de su jerarquía basada en su ubicación y tamaño, dando por hecho que las iglesias son más importantes que una capilla si

se encuentran en cabeceras, mientras que las los edificios localizados en las visitas son necesariamente capillas. Es común leer a los cronistas y religiosos coloniales usar indefinidamente las palabras iglesia y capilla sin importar si están en cabeceras o en visitas. Los ejemplos de Xcaret, Tipú, Tancah, Lamanai y otras llamadas comúnmente “capillas” son propiamente iglesias, ya que son construcciones de una sola nave con techo de ramada sin ningún tipo de edificio anexo que sirvieron como lugares centrales de doctrina, cumpliendo las necesidades de evangelización y que en muchos casos no se pueden ajustar a modelos centro-periferia como cabeceras y visitas. Por el contrario, es necesario pensar en iglesias y capillas sin pensar necesariamente en jerarquías, sino en la funcionalidad que tuvieron en la sociedad en que se construyeron.

El análisis de las ocho iglesias se basó en los trabajos previos y documentados en la península de Yucatán y Belice. Es importante recalcar la falta de información de iglesias coloniales debido a la falta de trabajos arqueológicos en dichos edificios. Estas iglesias no representan en ningún caso el mejor ni el único ejemplo de estructuras religiosas en toda la península. Fueron seccionadas debido a que han sido trabajadas arqueológicamente aportando una imagen general de cómo eran. Así pues, se puede observar una mayor complejidad arquitectónica en las iglesias localizadas al oeste y norte de la península como son Pocboc, Dzibilchaltún, Tecoh y Ecab. Estos edificios tienen las plantas en forma de ‘T’, compuestos generalmente por la sacristía, el presbiterio y el baptisterio hechos de mampostería y la nave con techo de ramada localizada enfrente pudiendo ser abierta o con muros. Estas iglesias contaban con atributos arquitectónicos como son la casa rural aislada, marcos de ventanas y/o merlones. En este tipo de iglesia la nave es la que mantiene una semejanza con las viviendas mayas. Los ejemplos de iglesias de la costa oriental de la península como son Xcaret, Tancah y en Belice Tipu y Lamanai I, son estructuras más sencillas careciendo de la forma de planta ‘T’. La forma de dichas iglesias es elipsoidal, rectangular o la combinación de ambos. Son estructuras de una sola nave con ramada cubriendo toda la iglesia al igual que la sacristía y con o sin muros.

La hibridación que resultó del contacto colonial no solo se refleja en lo material como la arquitectura, sino también en un nivel simbólico-espacial. Los trabajos etnográficos han demostrado la forma en que los indígenas mayas han utilizado espacios específicos para actividades dentro

de las casa mayas (ver Wauchope, 1938; Vogt, 1969, 1976; Davidson, 2009). Los altares familiares son ejemplo de cómo los mayas convirtieron cierto espacio dentro de la vivienda en un lugar sagrado, tal y como los altares en las iglesias. De igual manera, es posible observar el mismo simbolismo fuera de las casas. Como hemos visto, el atrio de las iglesias cobra importancia simbólica no solo por ser un espacio abierto asociados con las prácticas rituales en plazas prehispánicas, sino porque su simbolismo es observable en el patio de las viviendas mayas. El atrio es el área delimitada por un muro de piedra conocido como albarrada, en cuyo centro se localizaba una cruz que podía ser de madera o piedra. Los religiosos realizaron prácticas litúrgicas tanto en los atrios como dentro de las iglesias. Las albarradas contemporáneas no solo sirven para delimitar la propiedad privada de una familia, sino que delimitan también un área sagrada la cual es coronada por una cruz. Estas similitudes tanto en lo arquitectónico como en lo simbólico, son un ejemplo de cómo los españoles e indígenas mayas recrearon una identidad basada en una mutua interrelación y afectación. Una recreación híbrida material en la cual la participación maya determinó el desarrollo arquitectónico religioso.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECONSTRUCTING THE NEW HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE

From the postcolonial perspective assumed in this thesis, power relations in the colonial process are unequal based on political interests, economic goals, and social identities. Although the colonizer has control over the host society, it is possible to observe multidirectional processes of negotiation and the recreation of material culture and identities, rather than mere acculturative or unilateral processes. It was also argued, that any approach or study of material culture in colonial encounters could be more objective if the idea of the colony as the core of the historical development is questioned. In doing so, we have the possibility to understand how the host society influenced the colony and even the metropole. The aim of this chapter is to discuss and articulate the information elaborated within this thesis. Based on the model of Matthew Liebmann (2008), some changes were made to integrate the postcolonial and archaeological perspective on three levels: 1) historically, in the study and analysis of archaeology's role in the construction of colonial discourse; 2) methodologically, as an aid to the decolonization of the discipline and a guide for the ethical practice of contemporary archaeology. Additionally, as an aid and guide in decolonizing colonial encounters in the past, and 3) interpretative, in the investigation of the past episodes of colonization and colonialism, through the analysis of the archaeological record and the material culture products of colonial encounters.

Historically

In order to know how Western colonialism has influenced the development of archaeology, a general view of European expansionism over the last 500 years and its repercussions in the colonized world are important to

discuss. Colonialism is not an easy matter to define, being understood as the process of expansionism and maintenance of control and exploitation of one group over other, while in contact with the metropole. This general definition has reinforced the notion that colonialism is a uniquely European phenomenon that began in 1492. In so doing, the establishment of colonies in the ancient world and in non-Western societies like in the Americas has been conceived as of the type we usually associate with Western colonialism. Dietler's explanation avoids this "taken-for-granted" definition and proposes a more encompassed version: "The projects and practices of control marshaled in interactions between societies linked in asymmetrical relations of power, and the processes of social and cultural transformation resulting from those practices" (2005:54). When addressing colonial encounters in archaeology we have to start proposing non-Western alternatives, interregional and long-term models, in a way that does not convey colonial dominance of the Western kind. Michael Rowlands points out that "the value of retaining and developing colonialism as a comparative concept lies precisely therefore in making explicit what is being avoiding by not using the term: power relations" (Rowlands 1998:328). Thus, it is important to break down the monolithic view of European colonialism in the analysis of non-Western societies. As argued by Loomba, colonialism is not a singular event in time (1492), but something traceable back through cultures like the Aztecs, Romans, or Phoenicians, Incas and so on (1998:2).

An interesting observation is proposed by Walter Mignolo regarding the term of coloniality. Even though the term is fit to define some historical events, as Mignolo states, it mostly focuses on modern situations; "Coloniality is the logic of domination in the modern/colonial world, beyond the fact that the imperial/colonial country was once Spain, then England and now the US" (Mignolo 2005a:7). It seems to be a concept more suitable in contemporary postcolonial studies such as the work of Fanon, Coronil or Ahmad to examine and condemn the impact and continuing legacy of the European conquest, and the exploitation and domination of peoples and cultures in non-European lands. Despite the fact that a European "modernity" began with colonial expansionism in the Americas in the sixteenth century, the dual concept of modernity/coloniality, particularly the concept of coloniality could be confusing to use in non-capitalist societies. Thus, the term is used for analyzing the

modern situation of the colonial world, assuming that we do not live in a postcolonial world, but in coloniality. From this perspective and according to the definitions mentioned above, the concept lacks analytical connotations in events before 1492. Hence, we cannot understand modernity without coloniality and colonialism, because the former is constitutive of the latter, it is the current extension of colonialism.

In analyzing Western colonialism, several circumstances characterized Europe that conditioned and shaped colonialism in the Americas. In the case of Spain, the taking of Granada in 1492 by the Crown of Castilla marked the reconquest of territories from the Muslims. To some extent this fact determined the expansionist mentality of the Spanish over new lands, like the conquest of the Canary Islands and of course the Americas. Reconquest and discovery played a central role in the Spanish colonialist purposes representing an end and a beginning in a series of events that marked the historical development of the modern world. Because Africa and Asia existed in the European worldview, the American continent was conceived as a new and “empty” territory with possibilities to recreate European values. However, America was inhabited by a large diversity of indigenous groups that required replacement in the new colonial order. Undoubtedly, one of the most important characteristics of Spanish colonialism was the invention of the concept *Indio*, as mentioned earlier. This word motivated the unequal social categorization placing the indigenous societies in a lower position, which in turn justified their subsequent conquest and in general, the implementation of economic systems such as *encomiendas*, and *congregaciones*. During the colonial situation, a comparative model was necessary to establish control and power from one group to the other. Thus, the colonizer first had to create a notion of “self,” justifying his presence in the host society, to then classify the “other” with an opposite definition, as Said has demonstrated. This fact created a binary situation that has existed ever since, and that has shaped the relationships between the Western and the non-Western culture in Mexico and in the colonized world.

By the mid-nineteenth century in Europe, the Enlightenment ethos of sameness between human beings became a blurred reality overshadowed by a prosperous economy with technological and scientific developments. As a feature of social Darwinism, the concept of “race” established differences between cultures, giving place to the European interest of knowledge about

the “Other”. Science and technology worked to legitimize colonialism based on the idea of modernity and progress. The development of evolutionism, classificatory systems, and power represented by the expansion of capitalism, motivated the use of the term *race* to control, differentiate, and establish power and hegemony over the colonized societies. Thus, the emergence of anthropology set the basis for a new way to colonize based on scientific knowledge. Archaeology emerged following the steps of anthropology focusing on the rest of material culture as evidence of past societies, becoming one of those scientific disciplines that worked as an “academic tool” to justify the presence of Western culture in indigenous populations. Gosden argues that: “Both archaeology and anthropology are the outcomes of colonialism, the academic reflex of physical attempts to understand and control” (Gosden, 1999:16). In the nineteenth century, classification and the collections of material culture became in an important activity in archaeological work. Despite the academic interest, archaeology was done by people with any link to the societies studied, especially if those societies had a direct link to contemporary groups, “Modern native peoples were seen as comparable only to the earliest and most primitive phases of European development and as differentiated from Europeans by possessing no record of change and development and hence no history” (Trigger 1984:360).

During the mid-nineteenth century and mid-twentieth century, two types of colonial discourses characterized archaeology; the discourse of civilization and the discourse of origins. González-Ruibal explains that the former was centered on the development of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, while the latter focused on places like sub-Saharan Africa or Oceania. Western saw the image of “Europeanness” in Classical cultures such as the Greeks, Mesopotamians, or Romans, while the rest of the world was used to interpret the prehistory of Europe by the creation of binary analogies. At the same time, the colonized world was an aid to reassure the bourgeois classes and their argued cultural and moral superiority of Western civilization, as it was considered to be the only civilization that had been capable of progressing from savagery to industrialization (González-Ruibal, 2010:40).

Historically, and as a Western academic discipline, archaeology has had the possibility to enhance the societies studied and at the same time to underestimate the technological, cultural and political achievements of

colonized groups. One example is Great Zimbabwe and the controversies about its origin attributed to white people such as Phoenicians or Sabaeans (Trigger, 1984:362, Pikirayi, 2001). Due to its monumentality, complex architecture, and settlement pattern, the site was impossible to attribute to primitive and uncivilized cultures, but instead it must have been constructed by white foreigners associated to some developed society. “With an estimated population of nearly 20,000, Great Zimbabwe was the largest metropolis in southern Africa. Composed of elite residences, ritual centres, and houses of commoners and artisans, it covered more than 700ha” (Pikirayi, 2013:5). Trigger argues: “amateur archaeologists kept alive the notion that Zimbabwe was the work of foreign invaders, merchants, or metalworkers. For white settlers, such claims served to deprecate African talents and past accomplishments and to justify their own control of the country” (1984:362).

In 1784, the ruins of Palenque in Chiapas, Mexico aroused interest about who the constructors were. It became in the first site in the Maya area in which archaeology began to be developed and implemented with scientific purposes. In 1787, the governor and general captain of Guatemala don José de Estachería, sent Captain Antonio del Río and the draughtsman Ricardo Almendáriz to Palenque to explore and to make a report with drawings and information about the site. In the report, del Río suggests the possibility that natives made the ruins, but Phoenicians, Greeks or Romans were there earlier and taught different building techniques to the indigenous Maya (Navarrete, 2000:27). During these expeditions, a group of stucco panels were found. The most representative was located in the structure known as the Temple of the Foliated Cross. In this panel, a representation of a cross caught the attention of the explorers alleging the previous presence of Christianity in the region. This kind of idea began in the middle of the seventeenth century on the affirmation made by the Jesuit Carlos de Singuenza y Gongora in his book *The Phoenix of the West*, which was about how the mythical *Quetzalcóatl* was the apostle Thomas, who went to Mexico to preach the gospel (Leonard, 1929:97, Bauer and Mazzotti, 2009:212). The Foliated Cross is not a Catholic cross, but a representation of the *Wakab-Chan* or World-Tree (see Freidel et al., 1993:59-122, Schele and Freidel, 2011:73), the shape of which resembles a cross. Thus, it was easy to argue that Europeans were already in the Americas before Columbus.

In the colonial process, collecting became one of the most important and popular activities of colonialist nations. This activity was not exclusive to Western colonialism, but it is possible to trace during the medieval period with “the Church, royalty, and a wealthy few like Duke Jean de Berry and the Medici” (Belk, 2006:536) as their primary sponsors. It was in the sixteenth and seventeenth century when interest in collecting increased heavily, in part because of the rapid economic growth resulting from colonial expansionism not just in Asia and Africa, but now also the Americas. Because of the quantity of artifacts and objects collected, special places were created to store and to present the mixture of zoological and ethnographic curiosities in the style of *Wunderkammern*⁷³ (Mason, 1994:1). However, it was during the nineteenth century that Europe saw part of its image and the idea and model of Europeanness exemplified by the Romans and the Greeks (Gosden, 1999:24). At the same time, archaeology was institutionalized in Europe and the United States, and many “societies” emerged turning the discipline into a more formal activity. Gosden argues, “The profession of archaeology and anthropology did not exist in the amateur world of the nineteenth century. The societies and clubs, had restricted entry but conferred no qualifications or license to practice” (ibid:35).

Collecting by archaeologists, and anthropologists, with museums as the ultimate destination place of material culture obtained, are possible to observe from two different angles. It is a typical “Romanticist” view of distant lands and exotic cultures with the idea of “knowledge”, being confined to museums with the possibility to transport the visitors to another place and time. Simultaneously, the museum represents the colonial past and contradictorily represents modernity in the form of buildings. Collecting had a negative impact which affected cultures in the process of appropriation of material culture without thinking of the repercussions that this may entail. Moira Simpson points out:

73. Wonder cabinets

“one must question to what extent the anthropological activities of the nineteenth and early twentieth century also contributed to the cultural decline experienced by many indigenous people, as cultural material was avidly collected in a desperate attempt to salvage as much as possible from tribal peoples who were deemed to be facing extinction...The actions of collectors stripped the communities of many of their cultural treasures and left them with few physical vestiges of their traditional ceremonial ways and material culture” (Simpson 2001:247).

With the institutionalization of archaeology in the late nineteenth century, different theoretical trends emerged based on evolutionary, social, and cultural frameworks. In Britain, the work of Vere G. Childe was significant in institutionalizing archaeology with new theoretical contributions. Despite the pseudoevolutionist, diffusionist and Marxist mixture in his archaeological approaches, Childe notes that the triumph over Eurasian prehistory was the result of European development and its subsequent influence across the world: “Among the Early Bronze Age peoples of the Aegean, the Danube valley, Scandinavia and Britain, we can recognize already those very qualities of energy, independence, and inventiveness which distinguish the Western world from Egypt, India and China” (Childe, 1925: XIII-XIV, quoted in Gosden 2004:21). For Gosden this argument is one example of how archaeology creates a version of the story of the rise of the West. It was because of this “spread” of Western colonial expansionism across the world that historical archaeology has played an important role in the construction of colonial encounters.

Since its origins, American historical archaeology focused on the history of the European descendants and their ways of life in colonized territories. This attitude leads to representation of the colonial encounters in a unilinear way, ignoring the complexity embodied in colonial contexts. This fact represents a series of historical stadiums such as colonialism, capitalism, and modernity, characterized by Western determinism. An archaeological approach from this perspective is problematic because it does not consider indigenous inhabitants and reduces cultural interactions, given that the colonizer is the main agent who makes any colonial research Eurocentric. American historical archaeology had a much more Western colonialist tradition than its European counterpart. One of the reasons is

because the former focuses on the European descendants in the United States searching for their colonial past in a “discovered” continent. Hence, archaeology has been used to tell the history *of* the Europeans, has been told *by* Europeans, and *for* a European audience. Lawrence and Shepard argue that the main subject of study in historical archaeology: “has generally been the European colonists, with interest in indigenous peoples and the slaves forced to migrate against their will being of secondary consideration” (2006:70). At the same time in Europe, historical archaeology lacks of the idea that Asia or Africa was “discovered” like America. A characteristic in the theoretical framework of Early American historical archaeology was the idea of “becoming American”, based on explaining how identities were created with material culture, like in Deetz’s *In Small Things Forgotten*. His work, similar that of other scholars at that time, focused on the European part in the colonial process. In contrast, Loren and Beaudry in their analysis of American historical archaeology use the phrase “becoming American” to: “highlight processes of identity formation and differential experiences of occupants of early America: Native American, European, African, and mixed blood women and men from different social and economic groups” (Loren and Beaudry, 2006:255). In this way they encompass all the constitutive parts of a colonial contact.

Scholars like Ivor N. Hume wrote in 1978 about the American past and the sense of “having roots”. In a natural analogy, he distinguishes two “trees” in order to understand the American identity; the indigenous people and the Europeans. Even when he points out the effort by the state or universities to protect and study the American Indian past, the “European tree” is the core of any American cultural identity:

“The past that belong to the majority of the American people began in the Spanish, French, and English settlements in the New World; this is where the history books commence, for these were the seeds out of which the culture of the United States has grown. It is the preservation and study of the relics of these beginnings that provide a “sense of having roots” (Hume, 1978:203).

In this statement, Hume neglects cultural interactions between indigenous people and Europeans during the colonialization process, assuming that the American cultural values were imported from Europe while being

maintained and unchangeable. This kind of statement raises the question of whether these European settlements were completely isolated, without any kind of contact with the host societies. Obviously not, otherwise, why would American historical archaeology focus –among other things– on missions, garrisons or forts, if they were not to convert indigenous people to Catholicism and to protect them against the “attacks” of the American Indians? The word “American” in Hume’s terms means the European descendants in the United States representing a Eurocentric view of events during the Colonial period. Mathis and Weik states that: “the chronology that has guided historians studying the last five centuries of history in the Americas has traditionally been a Eurocentric one, structured by phases defined by the accomplishments of European explorers, international wars, colonial settlements, European political regimes, colonial economical activities, the rise of nations, and the reactionary responses of the oppressed” (2005:283). Not even the “Father of the American Archaeology” Thomas Jefferson, who was writing for a European and Americans middle-class audience included Native American groups to his excavation in the Rivanna River Valley in 1784 (Atalay, 2006:286).

American historical archaeology has a strong relationship with colonialism because of the division between prehistory and history, in which the latter focuses on the Europeans or in societies with writing. For Laurence and Shepard “The archaeological study of European colonies and the societies that resulted can be understood more generally as bound up with the colonization process itself” (2006:70). This division of the past based on writing and non-writing societies, has been controversial because it motivates cultural classifications in which prehistory gains pejorative connotations, presenting the indigenous societies as primitive versus a developed society: the Western. At the same time, the division between history and prehistory represents a space divided between civilization and barbarism, the latter being the peoples who deserve to be colonized, or Wolf’s “people without history”. One of the central issues of this situation is undoubtedly the “civilizing” role that is often attributed to writing over other forms of communication such as oral. This binary system to classify societies leads us to consider unilineal relationships in colonial encounters, making the study subjective and essentialist, as Said demonstrated in his seminal book *Orientalism*.

The concept of prehistory may cause problems in different cultural regions, and when we translate the word to Spanish in Mexico, it becomes difficult to identify chronologically. In addition, in some cases the use of this word denotes certain discriminatory attitudes against the indigenous societies, like in Australia. If we analyze the Mesoamerican cultures from an American perspective, the concept of prehistoric would be valid in terms of them having no written history. However, the high development of the Maya epigraphy system for example, would question the term prehistory, because it could be considered as an elaborated and complex writing system used in many ways like in stelae, ceramic, murals, and so on. This observation is important to consider because in Maya epigraphy events such as myths, religion, astronomy, warfare, the kinship system, and many other things are observable and possible to *read*, making them a complex communication system. As Sharer and Traxler points out: “Maya texts deal with the histories of Maya states and the reigns of their kings, their political fortunes, genealogy, marriages, alliances, and conflicts. Like the records of Old World civilizations, these accounts must be treated critically, for they contain varying degrees of bias” (2006:126). Of course, it would be risky to compare Maya epigraphy with the Western idea of writing and books; however, it is a topic that is worth reconsidering for a moment.

Despite the criticism attributed to American historical archaeology, there are scholars who have worked in a more encompassed way recognizing the formation of multi-ethnic colonial communities; this is the case of the interethnic households at St. Agustín and the process of creolization (Deagen, 1983). The archaeology of the African people by Ferguson (1992) is an attempt to give a voice to this social category practically ignored in colonial discourse. In the case of colonial California, scholars have not only considered the host society in the region, but the interactions with ethnic groups such as Mexican indigenous people, mestizos, African people, the Spanish and even Russians, presenting a cross-cultural comparison (e.g. Greenwood, 1989, Lightfoot, 2005, Lightfoot, 2006). From the perspective of postcolonial theories, historical archaeology is a valuable tool in the analysis of colonial encounters, highlighting the positive aspects and denouncing their outrages. It provides the possibility to analyze the archaeology not just from the “literate” and dominant Western perspective, but the circumstances around them, the different scenarios and actors,

their environments, and the creation of material culture. In order to do this, it is necessary to reformulate and reintegrate the division in the sub-discipline. Lauri Wilkie (2007) exposes the situation within American historical archaeology showing the split between the dichotomy of 'prehistory' and 'history' and the risk of falling into Eurocentric modes of research. She argues that: "Definitions of historical archaeology that focus upon European peoples and their movements should be avoided, as should definitions that exclusively tie us to particular topics of study that have chronological dimension" (Wilkie, 2007:347). Her article is a critique and a call to re-engage the division between prehistory and history while questioning this arbitrary designation, arguing the benefits of the sub-discipline could integrate both parts for the sake of archaeology and the new generation of scholars.

To summarize, the relationship between archaeologists and indigenous societies in contemporary contexts is still marked by a Western centralism. In some archaeological institutions in the United States, the interest for an equal relationship between indigenous communities and archaeologists has been developed for many years creating important advances. Legislation such as NAGPRA is one example of the interest of the authorities in the repatriation and burial of human remains. However, institutions like the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), in their internal policies, consider the archaeologist to be the only one who can take care of the knowledge generated, specifically a "steward" of the past (McGuire, 1997:79). In an unconscious way (or is it conscious?) archaeologists continue in the role of "conductor" assuming the idea that they are the only ones qualified to own knowledge, or even worse, as a role of a "protective" father. In this sense, archaeology has not been able to release itself from its colonial baggage at all.

Postcolonial theories and historical archaeology can complement each other to deconstruct the essentialist and binary stereotype contained in colonial discourse by the study of material culture and even identity. At the same time, it offers the possibility for the archaeologist to give a voice to those people who have historically been ignored.

Methodologically

It has been argued throughout this thesis that when addressing archaeological works about colonial encounters using postcolonial terms like hybridity and third space, it is recommended to reconsider the possible Eurocentric perspectives in the study. In so doing, the aim is to realize that maybe (in an unconscious way) our analysis and interpretation of the object of study may convey certain Western approaches in which the indigenous participation in colonial encounters is omitted. We are educated in a Western academic tradition in which science does not question *how* we interpret the past. We usually assume that Western science is the objective truth and it is generally seen as the only valid source of knowledge. As Deloria has argued, "In America we have an entrenched state religion, and it is called science" (Deloria, 1997:211). As archaeologists, we are trained in this tradition of adopting the scientific method to understand, explain, and represent how culture works without acknowledging that there are ontological and even holistic ways to explain the same culture. Most of the time, this difference of worldview perceptions are not compatible with the Western view which causes conflict. As Liebmann points out: "archaeologists need to consider the ways in which their research shapes and is shaped by colonialist representations (2008:8).

Archaeology has used different explanatory models for cultural contacts. Briefly, we can notice that one of the major problems with acculturation is that it takes it for granted that only one of the interrelated cultural groups acquires the characteristics of the other. That is, one of them is going to "shape" its own traits either by influence or subjugation. This view represents that one of the cultures is totally powerless to generate or reproduce some of the features of the other; one of the cultures remains constant and the other is changed. From a hybrid perspective this is false since all social groups are active, interact with each other, and are in constant change. I briefly presented the concept that the acculturation theory is insufficient in explaining the changes made within complex social systems in cultural contacts. At the same time, cultural traits subjected to colonial contact are never lost, but transformed into new and hybrid things. For its very beginning, transculturation seemed to have some traces of Bhabha's hybridity. However, the concept and the work of Fernando Ortiz lacks analytical and explanatory acuity, having fallen into oblivion. Additionally,

the term has sometimes been used to represent cultural interaction within egalitarian and complex societies making it difficult to use in colonial situations like in the Americas. One of the limitations with syncretism is its almost exclusive and limited use in religion. This does not mean that the term explains anything incorrectly, but that it is very limited. In general, the terms mentioned and discussed above are to some extent representations of social changes in colonial contacts. Commonly, archaeology explains colonial encounters in binary terms, Young points out “In archaeology, for example, the models have been ones of diffusion, assimilation or isolation, not of interaction or counteraction” (1995:5). This was one of the aims of this thesis; to allow social interactions and even counteractions between groups with the use of the term hybridity.

One of the aims of this thesis was to make a call to rethink the colonial burden in archaeology through the analysis and subsequent deconstruction of colonial discourse in the discipline. This point is critical in recognizing the active participation of the host society during the colonial process in the past; that is, to reformulate the colonial discourse. This will give archaeology the possibility to give a place to those actors that have historically been omitted or displaced. In so doing, any approach to the material manifestation of the colonial situation will encompass the entire actors in the colonial process. Thus, the use of the term hybridity was proposed as an attempt to break away from Eurocentric models when explaining colonial encounters. For Bhabha, colonial discourse has one objective: “to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (1994:101). Two types of colonial representations are observable in which Western culture is the core of the historical development. Firstly, with the colonizer as an insider in the historical narrative as a donator of cultural values to the host society, describing himself and his role in the colonial situation. Secondly, with the colonizer as an outsider who describes the history of the “Other”. This “Other” is conceived merely as a receptor and an accumulative being that never reacts to the colonizers influence. In both types, the colonizer’s culture is not an object of change and transformation. The location of these two types is always the colony in which the role of the indigenous population and the metropole lacks relevance in the colonial discourse. Although the occasions when the host society appears to have

affected the colony were during warfare situations, the colony always had control of the development of the events differentiating between the winners and the defeated. Based on the idea that the archaeology emerged in colonial contexts, the discipline has had a decisive role in the re-presentation of the colonial past ever since.

In short, archaeology needs to rethink the colonial situation from a critical perspective, including the indigenous population into colonial discourse and breaking away from Eurocentric models. An approach that incorporates the study of all the cultural groups in colonial encounters in an inter-disciplinary way is necessary in order to leave behind binary systems of a single power form over the colonized. The binary model of “self-other” still present in archaeology needs to be changed for a more encompassed model. Politis and Perez Gollan argue, “this necessary efforts to break with the schematization of a past that lacks contemporary relevance (Society), an ethnographic present of Indians and *mestizos* frozen in their “otherness” (anthropology), and a dominance European society (history)” (2004:354). The binary models and ideas of superiority associated with them have shaped an essentialist conception of history and culture among many historians and archaeologists. The problem in addressing colonial encounters with binary models lies in masking information, as Michael Given points out, “Binary world view is a denial of the complexity and richness of human dynamics, and a clear falsification of every colonial situation” (2004:10). Funary et al. points out a certain class-consciousness overtone in it: “written documentation and its use in society takes diverse forms and that literacy was limited, and to some extent still is, to certain section of society, (historically, these often consisted of elites or specialist groups)” (1999b:5). These kinds of approaches push the colony culture into the core of social changes, leaving the host societies in the role of mere spectators of those changes.

In contrast, the use of the term hybridity allows the possibility to break down binary models, as Liebmann explains, “[Hybridity] thus foregrounds the issues of power and inequity inherent in colonial societies, underscoring the empowering nature of hybrid forms, which often make space for anticolonial resistance through the challenging of binary categories” (2013:31). The analysis of colonial encounters is possible in archaeology if we focus not only on the way the “other” is represented by

the colonial power, but what is more valuable is to distinguish how the “other” is reconstructed by itself under such power. As I have emphasized throughout this thesis, the colonial power was always dominant, making it impossible to compare the colonized and the colonizer in an equal relationship. However, analyzing colonial encounters in a global way also makes it possible to observe how the colonizer’s culture is altered in the colony and in the metropole. Traditionally, historical archaeology has centered on the European impact over other cultural groups. When incorporating the metropole in colonial encounters, new perspectives open up for the understanding of the dynamic created in the colony and the host society. This way of approaching colonial encounters is necessary because they break away from binary systems, Johnson argues:

“What has been neglected, then, at least in archaeological circles, is the topic of how processes of colonialism in particular came to transform the lives of ordinary Europeans who stayed “at home”. As a result, we have some idea of how colonialism and modernity transformed the lives and cultures of colonizer and colonized around the world, but less archaeological grasp of related transformations in Europe” (Johnson, 2006:313).

Gil Stein’s model of colony, metropole, and the host society was proposed as an alternative to a postcolonial approach to decolonizing colonial discourse in archaeology. This model allows us to address the complex interrelationships in colonial encounters in a multidirectional way, rather than unidirectional explanatory concepts. The role of the colony loses importance as the core of the historical development, becoming a complementary part of the whole. In so doing, the traditional Western perspective of the history can be changed, since their interactions allow the explanation of colonial encounters in terms of hybridity. In this model, however, we cannot expect that the impact *to* the metropole created between the colony and the host society is equal and homogeneous, to the impact *from* the metropole to the colony. For example, we cannot find traces of the particular religious architecture on the Yucatán Peninsula like open-air churches and *atrios* in Spain. These structures, as well as certain urban patterns which were the product of the colonial policies were never imported to the metropole or Spain.

Analyzing Stein's models, and in comparison with the binary colony-host society relationship, the metropole was greatly influenced by the economics. Scholars have demonstrated that the development of capitalism was one outcome of Western colonialism since 1492 (e.g. Braudel, 1992, Wallerstain, 1974). These arguments are based on the world system model and the power relations between center, periphery, and one intermediate semi-periphery. An economic restructuration from feudalism to more developed economic systems was supported by the struggle of economic power among the main colonialist countries in Europe, since new products were introduced such as sugar, tobacco, cacao, potatoes, and silver from America (Wolf 1982:109). The contribution of raw material from the Americas to Europe modified the economy and the entire society. The entrance of the Spanish colonies to the Americas in the global economy was an outcome of the exportation of mercantile wealth, incorporating new products and gradually changing the relationship of production to support commodity exchange. Historical circumstances in Europe such as the shift from feudalism to an effervescent system of world trade, involved the dissemination of colonies in the New World with new forms of slave-based production. The establishment of the *haciendas* in Mexico was one of the models adopted by the Spanish in the economic process, which in turn influenced the Spanish economy. In the case of Spain, silver was the main product exported, initially from San Luis Potosi in Bolivia, and then from several places in Mexico. Between 1503 and 1660 more than seven million pounds of silver reached Sevilla from America, tripling the European supply of the metal (Wolf 1982:139). Sidney Mintz has shown that the emergence of plantations is one example of how this mode of production determined the European economy. As he argues, the Caribbean became in an important sugar production region that motivated the development of plantation systems and industrial factory production in Europe, being one of the earliest colonial enterprises. Mintz argues that: "The creation and consolidation of a colonial, subordinate plantation economy based on coerced labor stretched over four centuries. But the system in the colonies changed little, relative to the tremendous changes in the European centers that had created it" (1985:58).

In the case of colonialism in Mexico, the metropole and the colony had an economy-centered relationship rather than an "architectonical-style"

exchange. The new architectural and urban forms were never imported back to Spain, but raw materials and new products were the detonator of the economic development in Spain and Europe:

“With the creation of European colonies after AD 1500, silver, gold, spices, and gems flowed from the colonies to Europe, reinvigorating the European economies which suffered an imbalance of trade with India and China. This imbalance had led to a continual flow of precious metals eastwards, eroding the basis for investment in local European developments” (Gosden 2004:12).

The study of the host society has commonly been addressed by an acculturative perspective in which the indigenous populations absorb external cultural values becoming a passive and dependent agent of global forces. This tendency in analyzing cultural encounters is greatly rooted in the world-system model and the overall idea of a fundamental asymmetry in power relationships between the core and the periphery in which the role of the local population is ignored or minimized. Dietler (2005) argues that the problem with world-system models in archaeology is that they are “unable to accommodate culture or local agency and, in their uniformity, they deny the fundamental historicity of colonialism” (2005:58). Schreiber argues that this situation relates to the educational system in which the archaeologist is trained because: “Part of problem lies in the nature of the source material used by scholars. In the case of world-system models, social historians rely on written texts, the source of which is typically the metropole, expressed in terms of rhetoric of dominance. The voices of the host polities are rarely heard” (Schreiber, 2005:239). Thus, the problem arises when the archaeologist trained in a Western tradition does not consider the role of the indigenous society in both the disruption of the colonial authority and in the creation of hybrid material culture. The use of world-system models in the analysis of colonial encounters may fall into Eurocentric perspectives and binary models, in which the center or colonizer maintain hegemony because: “An overreliance on textual data tends to privilege core agency, since the core, not the periphery, writes the history” (Stein 2005:29).

In order to readdress the Western stereotype of the passive and irrational colonized and their supposed incapability to make their own history,

postcolonial theories and the term hybridity and third space are an aid to break away from this type of Eurocentric interpretation. However, their use has been a motive for discussions and criticism. In the nineteenth century, the idea of hybridity associated with the question of species reached racist connotations based on the classifications made about different varieties of human beings, like the comparison between Africans and apes. Associated with biological intermixing between animals, the main point of the term, and the crossing of different races of men, was the problem of an alleged infertility of such offspring (Young 1995:8). Nowadays the term is used to refer to several kinds of things, not just in biology or social fields, but also in technology like cars or computers. Centered on the biological definition of hybrid we can see the use of the concept of “cultural hybridity”. To Brian Stross the term is a “metaphorical broadening of the biological definition. It can be a person who represents the blending of traits from diverse cultures or traditions, or even more broadly it can be a culture, or element of culture, derived from unlike sources; that is, something heterogeneous in origin or composition” (Stross, 1999:254). Because of the troubled background in its definition, the term hybridization has been used to encompass the interactions and negotiation between various groups in colonial encounters as the active form of those interactions.

An important factor to consider in any critique of hybridity is the temporality; that is, any historical moment in the past or present when hybridization is going to be analyzed. We cannot generalize time and space as one simple entity of historical events. In doing so, misunderstandings and critiques can arise because the division of the timeline is mixed arbitrarily. We have to remember that postcolonial theories emerged as a reaction against the social condition of the colonized world in modern times, that is, a capitalist, industrialized, and globalized world and its colonial outcomes. When we use them, and especially the term hybridity, in colonial encounters, regardless of the cultural group like Maya and Spanish, Greek or Phoenician colonialism and so on, we have to keep in mind that the social contexts were completely different from today; there were non-capitalist societies or societies where capitalism was on its way to being developing. Criticisms to postcolonial theories are many and, as I mentioned earlier, postcolonial theories are not a panacea. However, it is important to analyze such critiques for the sake of the use of postcolonial terms in archaeology.

Stephen W. Silliman, in his article *What, Where, and When Is Hybridity* (2013), makes an important critique of hybridity. He points out the risk of its use in archaeology, arguing that the term is imprecise and difficult to validate: “to be useful, the notion of hybridity should be a theoretical construct, not simply an empirical restatement of a series of cultural events of sharing, accommodation, exchange, modification, and experimentation” (2013: 488). He requests that the term is transformed into a more theoretical framework, which to some extent is correct. Continuing with Silliman’s critique, he instead proposes the use of the term hybridity in the conceptual term of “practices” when focusing on people, places, or things. He continues proposing the use of the term as “the agency of past social actors with strategies, histories, and resources not as an etic category applied later based on effects” (ibid: 497). These observations are worth analyzing in order to show how hybridity can actually be used in practices as he suggests, including people, places and of course things. I want to believe that Silliman uses the term “practices” from his previous article *Blurring for Clarity: Archaeology as Hybrid Practice* (2009), a brilliant text about the decolonization of the archaeology by the hybrid practice between indigenous communities and Western archaeologists in contemporary situations. He argues: “the way to make archaeology a hybrid, and a powerful one at that, is to hybridize its practice” (Silliman, 2009:19). What he means by the term hybridity in this text is the active participation of indigenous communities in archaeological works. He argues that this action (in which he claims identity is involved), will not produce hybrid people or will not be mixed: “we do not necessarily need archaeologists, especially those of European descent, to become ‘more Native’ nor do we need Indigenous people to become ‘more academic or more ‘Western’” (ibid). He points out the practice of archaeology as hybridity, not in the analysis of artefacts or in the genetic mixture of people. His arguments are correct, and I agree with him about this way of conceiving hybridity. However, hybridity is much more than the single archaeological practice between Western and non-Western communities in order to decolonize archaeology. What we are going to obtain, according to his point of view, is just a “hybridized knowledge” product of both parts, not “hybridized people.” He continues: “Collaboration can promote hybrid practices because it does not require that people give up their identities” (ibid:20). Despite his correct observation about decolonizing archaeology,

he misses that the term hybridity can be applied not only to contemporary situations as he proposes, but in the construction of the colonial past too.

If hybridity has been criticized for being a kind of “metaphor” that lacks contextualization, or that it ignores the real cruelty of the colonial situation, or that it is full of “fantasy” –as scholars have criticized Bhabha’s work for example- then archaeology has the possibility to materialize the term, as Liebmann argues:

“...hybridity does in fact have something to offer to the investigation of mixed forms of material culture and the study of “how newness enters the world” more generally. Through its explicit foregrounding of power and inequity, hybridity is a valuable theoretical lens that can enhance the investigation of the archaeology of cultural amalgamation” (2013:31).

The study of material culture in colonial encounters is one important part of the archaeological process, simply because we are dealing with the meeting of cultures which have “materialized” (in the form of clothes, architecture, writing, food, pottery, and so on) their ideologies, identities, mythologies, necessities and values to interact, negotiate, reject, and re-create a new social order. As van Dommelen mentions: “Taking material culture into account not only provides an alternative source of evidence, demonstrating why colonial discourse analysis can be problematic in historical and anthropological terms, but also allows us to consider representations of the colonial situation in another light and effectively to contextualize them” (van Dommelen 2009:113).

In contrast with Silliman’s “hybrid practice”, the work of Tronchetti and van Dommelen (2005) in Monte Prama, Sardinia, is an example using the same name of “hybrid practice”. The difference is that they address hybridity in terms of archaeological materials from contact between Phoenician and Nuragic Iron Age communities, “The objects, activities and meanings that were adopted and adapted at Monte Prama were derived mostly from indigenous contexts but the hybridization process itself was very much influenced by the nearby presence of Phoenician settlers”(Tronchetti and van Dommelen, 2005:203). Cañete and Vives-Ferrándiz (2011) suggests another example of “hybrid practices” this time in Spain and the Iron Age site of Lixus, Morocco. Based on mobility, they analyzed a Phoenician trade

diaspora to understand the complexity of the foundational society in the region, and the pottery production in terms of hybridity. Hand-modelled open formed pottery like plates and bowls, or hand-modelled imitations of wheel-made ware types were produced in the local area, but the presence of technological innovation and fusion presented by hand-modelled ceramics points to regional and local differences which were then addressed by the authors as a phenomenon of mobility with a hybridity outcome. They explain: “we use the terms as epistemological tools that embrace the key concepts of the accommodation of new objects, people, ideas and relations that are inherent in any case of mobility. Second, we hold that the concept has to be understood in relation to the inequalities and constraints imposed by domination and hegemony” (Cañete and Vives-Ferrándiz, 2011:139).

The postcolonial terms hybridity and third space offers the possibility to break away from Eurocentric models of power in colonial encounters, since the role of the colonized acquires importance as active agents in the interrelations between the colonizer and the colonized. Hybridization is created in an ambivalent relationship in which the colonized makes a grotesque copy of the colonizer while disrupting the colonial discourse. Thus, the third space emerges displacing the traditional history by creating new and hybrid social structures. From an archaeological perspective, the use of the term hybridity in colonial encounters can only be useful if we differentiate their common practice in modern situations like in literature, movies, music, and so on, and its use in the critical analysis of colonial discourse in past societies. The metaphoric hybridity that can be materialized by the archaeology in addressing colonial encounters since the creation and re-creation of material culture is implicit in colonial situations. Deagan argues about the use of the term in archaeology,

“there is a clear utility in conceptualizing what we call hybrid material culture as a material amalgamation of distinct traditions at the scale of production. This is not only in support of clarity in archaeological dialogue and method but also because the production of objects by combining technologies from distinct traditions implies consciousness and intention in a fairly direct way (Deagan, 2013:262)

In short, I have argued that any archaeological work about colonial encounters needs to reconsider for a moment the actors and their interactions in the conformation of the society. At the same time, I pointed out that the use of binary models should be avoided because they fall into unilateral relationships of power characterized by the colonizer. Instead, the concept of hybridity and the use of long-range and multidirectional models like the colony, the host society, and the metropole are an alternative which breaks away from Eurocentric representations of colonial discourse. This fact leads us to reconsider the social interactions between the integral parts of the colonial situation: “hybridization refers to the ways in which social, economic or ethnic groups of people construct a distinct identity within the colonial context and situate themselves with respect to the dominant, i.e. colonial culture” (van Dommelen, 1997:309). Although hybridity and third space are not a panacea, they encompass in a boarder way the varied intercultural mixtures, allowing a critical approach to the colonizer that is better than an acculturative, transcultural, or syncretism model.

Historical archaeology has the possibility to contextualize the ideas of hybridity and third space proposed by Bhabah with the analysis of material culture and its relationship with ideology, for example Maya idolatry and the idea of “the idol behind the altar” in Spanish churches. The interpretative part of this work will be now presented with the materialization of indigenous people and Spanish interactions, in which negotiation and recreation of cultural elements created hybrid material culture. Colonial policies established on the Yucatán Peninsula were part of this materialization affecting architectural and urban plans, as well as the social order and the landscape.

Interpretative

Mesoamerica is a complex concept made to encompass the cultural variety of the prehispanic groups before the arrival of the Spanish. In general, Mesoamerican archaeology is based on five periods. Each period was characterized by particular social developments possible to observe in the material culture left by prehispanic groups. Small settlements turned into towns and cities creating an interrelation between different cultural groups. In terms of material culture, architectural styles characterized each period

which, in combination with religion, led to particular architectural features like those from the Classic period. It was during this period that religion was the social motor, and was possible to observe in big cities like Teotihuacán or Tikal with complex urbanism and architectural development. In contrast, Postclassic Maya was characterized by a considerable decrease of religious influence from the previous period. Trade became the main activity motivated by the arrival of the Itzáes, bringing with them a large tradition of navigation. Despite the fragmented political organization on the Yucatán Peninsula during the Postclassic based on *cacicazgos*, indigenous Mayas formed a complex trade network around and beyond it, reaching the Caribbean Sea and the Central American coast.

Historically, some archaeologists have considered the Classic period as the highest cultural point of social development, whereas the Postclassic has been considered as the “decadent” period. Some of the reasoning was the archaeologists’ fascination with the monumental architecture and the development in art, sculptures, or science that characterized the Classic. Big pyramids and temples, and the complex plaza-systems caught their attention as one of the most important aspects of the archaeological work. The important matter was to reconstruct pyramids and temples in order to show the “magnificence” of the Mayas. In contrast, and because of the lack of monumentality, especially in the Late Postclassic, the archaeologists did not find many interesting aspects to work with. The sites were smaller, and in general, the architecture was simpler as it was less attractive in terms of material culture than the previous period. These prejudices are today overcome and the Postclassic is considered a complex period where a cultural interrelationship dominated a region in topics that still need to be analyzed in depth such as the navigation routes, not just around the Yucatán Peninsula but also in the Caribbean Sea.

A cultural watershed occurred following the arrival of the Spanish to Mexico which created a new social dynamic that created a hybrid material culture and ideology. The Mexican history, however, has silenced an important part of the national identity during the Colonial period, focusing on the Prehispanic period as a source of national identity. Many scholars have analyzed the significance of the pre-conquest history in Latin America on the formation of the postcolonial subaltern identities. In “The Wretched of the Earth” Fanon explains that the use of prehispanic groups by native

intellectuals and their societies is a common way to talk about nationalism. He stresses the importance of the past processes of postcolonial nation formation:

“But it has been remarked several times that this passionate search for a national culture which existed before the colonial era finds its legitimate reason in the anxiety shared by native intellectuals to shrink away from that Western culture in which they all risk being swamped. Because they realize they are in danger of losing their lives and thus becoming lost to their people, these men hotheaded and with anger in their hearts, relentlessly determine to renew contact once more with the oldest and most pre-colonial springs of life of their people” (Fanon, 1963:209-210).

If we look at the Mexican timeline, we notice that the Colonial period lies between two other major periods that overshadow it: the Prehispanic and the Independent period. Compared with these two, the Colonial period has been little studied and, particularly the Early Colonial period, is still a “black box” of information that has not been determined regarding the complex interactions during the colonial encounter. The hybridity created during contact is reflected in a particular material culture and ideology of which interest in the history has lacked. In material culture, the influence of religion was clear in the construction of churches and chapels and the complexity of the Mexican *atrios* with open-air churches. In genetic and ideological terms, the colonial encounter resulted in five hierarchical social organizations or *castas* headed by the Spanish, *criollos*, *mestizo*, *indios*, and finishing with a minority, but not less important class; the black people. Each of these categories became racial categories that experienced a particular “Self” in the colonial order.

Religion in the form of secular and regular clergy was one of the most important influence in the new and hybrid reality that was observable in religious architecture and urbanism in Mexico. The Spanish colonial policy demanded the control of the indigenous population with the creation of programs such as *encomiendas*, *congregaciones*, and *doctrinas*. Economically, and unlike the Basin of Mexico, the Yucatán Peninsula lacked mineral wealth, the main value being the exploitation of the large indigenous population and salt. Hence, *encomenderos* played a key role in the control of the wealth that

centered around and extended out from the city of Mérida; a city which was established in a region with a high density indigenous population. As part of the *encomiendas*, the *haciendas* were established which centralized the economic power originally based on sugar, maize, cattle, cotton, and wax: this led to the production of *henequen*, which was the most important economic wealth in the later centuries. The establishment of churches at the same time represented the emergence of more dominant colonial systems such as the *congregaciones*, causing a displacement of the Maya society in the form of flight, drift, and dispersal (Farriss 1978). Historically the north and west of the peninsula experienced a relatively easy conversion process based on these systematic programs. In contrast, the east coast of the peninsula and Belize was more conflictive. This colonial policy generated the mobility of indigenous communities and the consequent abandonment of towns. This fact made it possible to identify regions in the peninsula that had low and high hybrid materiality represented by these buildings. These colonial systems affected the indigenous social order creating a mixture of values and materiality.

Power and control are implicit in any colonial situation characterized by the dominant authoritarianism of the colonizer. Space and built forms are one of the ways that a colonizer establishes control in a host society motivating spatial organization, which in turn gives place to social reproduction. Built forms are, in turn, a way in which social individuals communicate within society. Thus, any architectural manifestation encodes a social message of different meanings. In the colonial situation, power is objectivized and contextualized in built forms: "Social control as a mechanism of power is encoded in architecture, particularly public architecture, which serves as a stage where structures of power, privilege, and inequality are created, enacted, and re-created" (Johnston and Golin, 1998:146). Thus, the control of the indigenous people required straight and clear urbanism, i.e. the gridiron plan in which the streets converge in a main central plaza. Although indigenous people did not live in the center of the towns, but in the peripheries, this urban plan made their mobility within towns and cities easy.

Neither the Mesoamerican architecture and urbanism nor the Spanish styles had continuity in Mexico; instead, both suffered a hybrid mixture manifested in the development of gridiron plans, plazas, churches, and complex *atrios*. In urban contexts the gridiron plan was not a typical

Mesoamerica trait; if we observe the settlement pattern in the Maya area we notice a lack of straight streets that characterize it. There are, however, some exceptions found in some cities in the Basin of Mexico, such as Tenochtitlán and Teotihuacán, the latter being the clearest example of a gridiron pattern with a more organized urbanism. Although there are examples of gridiron plans in Europe, this is not a model which has been completely exported from the donator culture to the Americas, but it is the most striking example of the mixture of two traditions (Foster, 1960:34). In open-air churches with the annexed *atrios*, we can observe the prehispanic and European ambivalence between the concepts of open and closed spaces. These spaces are the result of the colonial dialogue in which prehispanic and Spanish influences were created by a hybrid materiality in the colonial situation. In this sense, the hybridization located in open-air churches together with the *atrios* were the material solution to the colonial necessity of conversion into Christianity, combining new elements in their architecture from the two previous ideals; the prehispanic concept of open space and the European closed space. Thus, the *atrios* with the *capillas posas* symbolized the Mesoamerican conception of the universe. Even when the Christian churches represented the introduction of an external ideology, the Mesoamerican sacred space was continuously celebrated and practiced by indigenous communities. It is clear that the *atrios* existed in Europe before the arrival of the Europeans to America, however, they lacked the symbolism and importance that they had in Mexico.

In analyzing the new and hybrid architecture, we need to consider the architectural European influences that determined the Spanish architecture, which in turn were introduced in New Spain merging with the Mesoamerican architecture. That is, to include the colony homeland in the analysis to understand the dynamic of the colonial encounter. The Spanish architecture is synonymous with hybridity and creativity because of the different styles that modeled the land over the centuries. Styles that go from the Roman, Visigoth, Arabic, and Baroque architecture, combined to create the Spanish Renaissance and Gothic, which in turn arrived to New Spain in the form of *Plateresco* (McAndrew 1965:168). Probably the most important influence was the Arabic or *mudéjar* style which is possible to observe in the facades, latticed paints, ornamentation, and door arches in many of the churches in Mexico (Artigas 2010:243-245; McAndrew 1965:173). The church of Cholula in Puebla is one example mentioned by

Palm (Palm, 1953:59), which, besides containing all of these architectural features, is located on the top of one of biggest pyramidal bases in the world. In order to understand the urban and architectural development in colonial Yucatán, it is necessary to observe how the Renaissance set the basis for a new urbanism in Europe, which in turn influenced New Spain. Undoubtedly, the work of Leon Batista Alberti was crucial in urbanism and the development of plazas. However, it was not until the middle of the sixteenth century that the Renaissance influence was evident in Spain. The evident obstacle was - as Kubler explains- the abundance of urban material and the influences inherited from previous periods like in the Middle Ages. He argues: “it would appear that the Spaniards in Mexico, working with an extremely plastic human material, and under no obligation to preserve the monuments of an old culture, were able to implement Italian theory with extensive practice” (2012:149).

With the concept of hybridization in archaeology, colonial encounters were presented as the creators of material culture. This represents the possibility of analyzing the way in which the host society had an impact on the colonizer’s culture observable in materiality. This way of perceiving the colonial situation is what the postcolonial approaches and the term hybridity attempt to explain since: “long periods of forced dependency and hegemony have profound impact not only on the societies of colonized but on those of the colonizer as well” (Liebmann 2008:2). There are however, opinions that in many ways deny the reciprocal cultural interactions created in colonial encounters, focusing solely on Europe as a mere donator of features and attributes, which were introduced and absorbed by the indigenous population in a receptive and passive way. I consider it interesting to discuss some of these opinions in order to have a broader approach to this topic.

Because the early colonial architecture derives from the Spanish style at that time, i.e. the *Plateresco*, it is not appropriate to state that the Mexican colonial architecture went through a “Middle Ages”, as Manuel Toussaint stated decades ago (1983). The Middle Ages was a European period that finished when America was discovered, given that this event was a consequence of the Renaissance. Toussaint possibly wrote this in 1948 in a metaphorical way, however, his statement seems out of place. One of the arguments in his study of the colonial architecture is the alleged “fortified architecture” that appeared after the conquest. For him, the Spanish were urgently fortifying

towns. There are few examples of European “fortifications” in Mexico. The only colonial village fortified with a wall was Campeche, and the reason was not because of the threat of indigenous attacks, but due to pirates. In the case of Campeche, there are two forts; San Miguel and San Jose el Alto which were constructed in the late eighteenth century when the pirates were a thing of the past. Another argument was the idea of conceiving a church as a fortress (e.g. Kubler, 2012: 144; Toussaint, 1983:2), a structuralist idea nowadays overcome by a more functionalist architectural framework. Although Toussaint’s *Arte Colonial en México* is an important work in colonial architectonic analysis, his work is based on fine art perspectives, overlooking the Mesoamerican influence in the early urban process. Instead, he only recognizes the Spanish gridiron plan, especially from Andalusia, as the guideline in the consolidation of the cities and towns (Toussaint 1983:3). He is right to some extent; however, the urban Arabic influence in Spain was characterized by smaller and more irregular streets and spaces with “narrow and twisting streets often coming to dead ends” (Foster, 1960:48). Thus, Toussaint’s analysis is to some extent, a Eurocentric point of view: “El arte de la Nueva España es en un principio arte importado, imitación del europeo”⁷⁴ (Toussaint, 1946:169).

If we turn attention to the material culture product of the colonial encounter, we notice that open-air churches and their complex system of *atrio*, which in turn were linked with the main plazas of the towns, created what we can call open-air architecture that had no equal in Europe. This is supported by Valerie Fraser who argues that:

“These, the open chapel, atrium and *posa*, are architectural forms without any direct or obvious European antecedents. It is true that various forms of Christians teaching and preaching have traditionally taken place in the open-air in Europe, in towns squares and from open pulpits, but in Spanish America the space around a church is always deliberately and carefully organized with such purposes in mind, whether the space be in the form of a separate atrium or simply the town square” (Fraser, 1990:113).

74. “The art of New Spain is an imported imitation of the European” (Translation by author).

Her statement has coherence and she is right. However, her book *The Architecture of Conquest* (1990) is interesting in many ways and contradictory in others. For her, colonial urban and architectural features such as those mentioned above are in no way the result of the mixture of indigenous people and Spanish influences, but rather the result of a Spanish dominant power. She argues: “to suggest that such uses of external space demonstrate the influence of indigenous architectural traditions of Spanish would be to misunderstand the nature of the relationship between the two cultures” (ibid: 116). It seems difficult to understand then, how new colonial forms such as open-air architecture were created if -as she states above- there were no such elements in Europe. Even more confusing in her second statement is the possible “misunderstanding” in the relationship between the indigenous people and the Spanish.

It seems that she forgets that her book is about colonial encounters and that “the nature of the relationship between two cultures” is about colonialism. Any colonial encounter is a matter of an unequal power relationship. However, she does not mention that in any colonial relationship the participants negotiate and re-create ideological and material values. In terms of ambivalence, the colonial ideology seeks neither the complete assimilation of the “Other” nor their complete dissociation, but a negotiation and displacement of both. Her book is a good example of *atrios* in South America, in particular the case of Peru. She presents the examples of churches in Chincheros near Cuzco, constructed above a niched Inca wall; Santo Domingo and La Asunción churches at Chucuito, and La Asunción church at Juli; all of which are from the sixteenth century and are related to prehispanic settlements. Despite the poor description of their use in her book, it is possible to infer that the *atrios* had an important social function just as the *atrios* in Mexico had symbolic attributes. For her, the colonial situation in Peru was a type of unidirectional power and influence from the Spanish, denying any sort of possible indigenous influence and presenting the indigenous society as a mere receptor of external influence. We cannot address colonial encounters in an “acculturative” way without considering the active participation of both parts in the recreation of identity and material culture. Setha Low states that in spite of her correct description of churches and the colonial architecture in Peru, her book carries a Eurocentric burden (Low 1995:750).

In his book *Culture and Conquest* (1960), George Foster makes an analysis of the colonial encounter in Mexico and the Spanish culture. His text suggests that the way to address cultural interactions is as two recipient groups in the process of change: indigenous people and the Spanish. From his perspective of “cultural crystallization,” he allows both parts to influence each other. “That is, the Spaniard as well as the Indian was exposed to conquest culture. Both were faced with similar problem of selection and adjustment” (1960:227). According to him, old European rules were the parameter in the urban forms of Spanish America: “Many characteristics of the traditional Spanish American community are modeled after Iberian prototypes” (ibid:34). It is certain that the Spanish used European styles in the urbanization of the Americas, and in the case of the gridiron plan the Spanish Crown developed something new, not so easy to observe in European contexts. Although Foster tries to encompass both actors in the colonial interactions, the problem in his perspective is the acculturative way of explaining the colonial encounter, paying more attention to the study of the impact of the donor culture or the colonizer than to the cultural reaction of the recipient culture. Based on the donor culture, he coined the term “conquest culture” differentiating it from contact culture: the latter is understood as the result of the colonial encounter, and the former as the process that generated it.

There are many examples that devalue the indigenous influence in colonial encounters. The problem with these perspectives lies in the fact that they deny cultural interrelationship, contemplating them from a unidirectional and monolithic model. This way of proceeding becomes problematic when we work with data that is clearly documented and materially available for study and analysis. Data that presents the Mesoamerican context with its open-air architecture and urban symbolism on the one hand, and the Spanish with its Renaissance legacy in closed spaces in architecture and military reconquest on the other, consolidates a hybrid material culture in Mexico. Setha M. Low points out that we can observe two tendencies related to this issue; a tendency to state the solely European style in the architecture and urbanism as a direct importation of elements; and those who argue the clear evidence of the indigenous influence (1995:751). In my opinion, these Eurocentric approaches are common in archaeological works, which is why it is important to rethink the archaeological discourse

of colonial encounters. The Mesoamerican settlement pattern was radically changed by two broad categories: political/economic and spiritual. Together they established the ambivalent colonial dynamic between the Maya and the Spanish. To complement this part of hybrid material culture, Matthew Restall comments on the case of native clothes, such as the use of loincloths which the Church considered to be overly scant, which were then replaced by loose cotton trousers. However, and in spite of these changes the use of native clothes remained unaltered over time, and they were in turn adopted by the Spanish. He states, "Like other aspects of native culture, native dress survived, not in any "pure" form, but by very gradually absorbing European influences, and to some extent influencing the evolving culture of the colonists" (Restall, 2003:75).

Material culture is not the only issue that is possible to address in colonial encounters from a postcolonial perspective, identity is an important part of the analysis. This does not mean that identity is a compulsory issue in such studies. If we use the term hybridity for the deconstruction of colonial discourse in past situations, we can notice that identity is inevitably implicated as being an object of change because of the interactions between groups and their role in the reconstruction of a new social order. Thus, we need to analyze this discourse and the spaces *in-between* that created a "new sign of identity and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (Bhabha 1994:2).

The "spiritual conquest" with the introduction of Catholicism in the indigenous communities is one example of the hybrid ideology on the Yucatán Peninsula. Religion as a domination form sought a way to utterly eradicate all traces of native religion with the establishment of a European one. Both secular and regular clergy succeeded in such an enterprise with the consolidation of a vast religious territory and the construction of churches associated with the urbanization of new and prehispanic towns. However, their enterprise failed to some extent, because they could never eradicate the idolatry in the indigenous societies. The outcome of the spiritual conquest, in terms of identity, was the combination of prehispanic and European ideologies that are possible to understand as hybridization. As illustrated by Nancy Farriss (1993), the practice of pagan rituals by the Mayas is an example of this hybrid ideology turning the Christian practice into a mockery. The hybrid mixture between Christianity and pagan

ideology was the result of the ambivalent negotiation of both parts. Jeffrey Quilter states: “much of the prehispanic religion was recycled because it was relatively easily Christianized and, as much, Christianity was relatively easily indigenized” (2010:124).

The struggle between European monotheism and Maya polytheism gave place to an ambivalence in which the “exclusiveness” of the Christian God failed. Although the Maya accepted the introduction of Christianity in some cases, as they had accepted the beliefs and deities of other conquering groups before the Spanish, they transformed the image of the Christian God into idolatry, worshipping pagan deities in sacred ritual performances in caves and remote forest sanctuaries. Idolatry to Farriss can be understood as: “any kind of ritual involving idols, in practice they [the Mayas] focused their evangelical fervor on the public rites that by tradition were performed in temples and plazas and which represented the Maya’s collective bond with the supernatural” (Farriss, 1984:144). This subversive practice was also performed within the Spanish churches hiding Maya deities underground or behind the altars, simulating a monotheistic worship, and contributing to a certain type of mockery. The indigenous peoples practice of “idols behind altars” is mentioned by Motolinia in his book *Historia de los Indios de la Nueva España*:

“Entonces vieron que tenían algunas imágenes con sus altares, junto con sus demonios y ídolos; y en otras partes, la imagen patente y el ídolo escondido, o detrás de un parámetro, o tras la pared, o dentro del altar, y por esto se las quitaron, cuantas pudieron haber, diciéndoles que si quería tener imagen de Dios o de Santa Maria, que les hiciesen iglesia”⁷⁵ (Motolinia, 1985:130)

The excavations carried out in YDL I, Pendergast reported the discovery of a Maya hollow jaguar figurine at the entrance of the church. He interpreted this action as the result of the mixture of religious values and the practice of idolatry, in which neither the prehispanic tradition nor the Catholic

75. “They show images of demons and idols on their altars, and elsewhere the hide idols, behind a parameter, or behind a wall, or inside the altar. That is why they were taken away from them telling them that if they wanted an image of God or the Holy Mary, they needed a church” (Translation by author).

imposition won. Both hybridized actions; physically in the form of the jaguar figurine, and ideologically by the indigenous attitude to hide it, perpetuated the Maya worship within Catholic supervision (1993:121). This ambivalent practice of negation and acceptance between Maya and Spanish is commended on by Pendergast:

“Faced with s new religion that denied the validity of the old, many of Lamanai’s citizens must, like Mayas everywhere, have undergone a period of confusion....there is evidence that while they professed the new faith they, together with the people of Tipu, retained old beliefs and succeeded in blending the two systems into one reasonably coherent whole” (ibid:122).

If the Spanish Crown and the religion were aimed at eradicating the polytheist tradition within the indigenous Maya, they failed. Strongly rooted in a prehispanic tradition and more than 500 years after the conquest of the Aztecs, the Mexican culture is still idolater. To some extent, the population still believes in prehispanic deities transformed by Catholicism into Western saints, virgins and a complex system of beliefs that attempted to replace the prehispanic idolatry in an “*almost the same but not quite*” fashion. To conclude this section, probably the best example of hybrid identity in Mexico is the cult of the Guadalupe virgin which according to Wolf, is “a Mexican national symbol” (1958:34). Her presence in Mexican society has been one of the clearest examples of a national identity raised in the colonial encounter. With the *nahuatl* name *Tonantzin*, the Aztec goddess suffered a hybridization turning into the *mestiza* Guadalupe virgin. The hybridity is possible to observe in her image as a mixture of prehispanic elements with Spanish, in this case a virgin from Extremadura, Spain. (Lafaye, 2006:293).

Espiritu Santo Bay: colonial contacts and material culture

A correctly designed survey design is undeniable important when planning an excavation. Polemics about which designs are the most important have yielded a sea of literature to analyze. However, it is clear that in a methodological way, survey can be crucial to the results of an excavation in terms of money, time, and knowledge. Theoretical principles of survey

have been developed to the point that it has become a fieldwork method on par with excavation. Survey may therefore be understood as the spatial analysis of the material remains of human activities, and their diachronic and synchronic continuity in a particular area based on the number of sites and artifacts dated. The quality of conservation in materials found on the surface varies from those located underground. External factors such as wind erosion, or agriculture are important to consider when collecting material. There are two important aspects to consider in survey design, as Schiffer has argued, those that the archaeologist cannot control, and those that are established by the archaeologist (Schiffer et al., 1978). The surface distribution analysis cannot simply be projected back in time taking for granted that this will reconstruct the original distributions of settlements. We have to consider the complexity of depositional and post-depositional processes associated with the sites, which in turn affect both the quality of the artifacts found and the survey design.

The term “site” is inherent in all survey design as it sometimes creates problems with its definition. We can identify site and non-site-centered models with varying importance placed on the amount of artifacts associated with them. Traditionally, when the goal of an archaeological project is the intention of future excavations, the site is conceived as the unit of analysis. This basic unit may be a scatter of potsherds or lithics, the remains of buildings, or any other entity of material culture left by human activities. Depending on the nature of the survey, artifacts cannot be considered as the core of analysis when dealing with a site. A site might not present any kind of artifact on the surface, only the remains of architectural elements. As I will present further on, this is the case for the sites found in Espiritu Santo Bay, where the presence of structures such as walls and some other architectural elements is evident, lacking any other artifacts on the surface. In examples like this, the use of artifact density to define a site lacks relevance since there is no material to define it.

The expeditions in Espiritu Santo Bay were planned with the aid of satellite imagery, historical maps, and written sources, especially the *legajo* Mexico 906. These kind sources are of vital importance to historical archaeology and ethnohistorical records as they provided information about early colonial life. However, these historical sources are not always objective and lack explanatory accuracy. Pendergast et al. argues that in

terms of the location of Maya-Spanish settlements, particularly in Belize and the south of Quintana Roo, there are two major accounts that are important to consider; first the *entradas*, or the military expeditions made with the purpose of conversion and domination; and the *reducciones*, aimed to relocate indigenous people into new or old towns (1993:60). Historical documents such as the *legajo* Mexico 906 were written by religious officials or scribes who, whether in field or in a courtroom of a town, captured in their own personal way historical accounts in which: “Circumstances dictated that the language employed generally be telegraphic in style, and hence descriptive detail is almost always notable for its absence” (ibid). The narration by the scribe Francisco Sanabria in the *legajo* Mexico 906, is one example of the way of describing the landscape in an unclear way requiring a re-interpretative work that needs to be verified in the field.

The identification of areas for surveys in Santa Rosa and Punta Niluc was made with the use of maps with GIS technology, showing color variations between the upland and swamp areas (*bajos*) in order to avoid them in the field. At the same time, they were intended to delimit the surveyed areas into segments and calculate their areas, and the distances involved. The use of limestone as a building material is characteristic of the Maya area, and the discovery of two walls or alignments is clear evidence of its use. This type of material and any related structures were practically impossible to identify using common satellite imagery however.

In general the surveys were done according to the proposed plan. However, the vegetation required a matter of quick decision-making. The vegetation in Santa Rosa sometimes made the surveys difficult in terms of visibility, because some areas had a thick layer of weeds covering the surface which obligated walking through 30 cm high plants. The swamps characteristic along the coast might be another indicator of the low possibilities of finding material evidence. The constant humidity of the swamps and marshes (even during winter) largely affect the possibility of finding materials like ceramic on the surface. However, and as I have presented, a wall or alignment was discovered in the middle of the swamps, demonstrating the presence of human activities in the area. Because of the lack of archaeological material like ceramic or lithics, it was difficult to date the wall to determine if it was prehispanic or colonial.

Because of the presence of uplands or *monte alto*, surveys in Punta Niluc were relatively easy as they had the best visibility. Mangroves and swamps were localized in the periphery of the area and they created the greatest challenge for the first days of the surveys as there was no path to reach the uplands. To illustrate this, in the first day of survey during the third expedition it took about 2 hours of “machete-hacking” to walk about 60 m in order to reach *monte alto*. The localization of the *chultún* was another indicator of human activity in the area. Due to the lack of rivers, the Mayas have saved rainwater in artificial reservoirs such as in *chultúnes* since prehispanic times. It was not just water, but many seeds and grains were also stored by the Maya in these cavities. The work done in the region might be one example of the difficulties that, as archaeologists, we have to face when we combine historical sources and fieldwork. The situation becomes even more complicated when there is no previous archaeological information about the study area, starting everything from “zero.” Pendergast et al. argues about this fact:

“The fragmentary, uncertain, and often contradictory topographic information contained in individual accounts usually dictates that several reports about a single place be compared and contrasted before tentative identification of a locale is possible. Even when the disparities among several accounts regarding a single place can be reconciled, the evidence regarding location is so imprecise that successful identification is rare” (1993:60)

The analysis of the *legajo* Mexico 906 showed the difficulty in translating the gathered information into surveys in order to identify possible sites. There are several important things to analyze in Landeras’ narration such as political and religious organization, or naval disasters like shipwrecks. The description of the location of Kachambay is important since this is the only information known so far about the site. According to him it is first necessary to enter the bay; on one side there is a bay (left side), and on the other swamps (right side), Landeras is clearly mentioning that the site is located on the right (AGI:68). One of the problems when interpreting this information was how to delimit the entrance of the bay. I believe that Jones had the same hesitation, which was probably the reason why

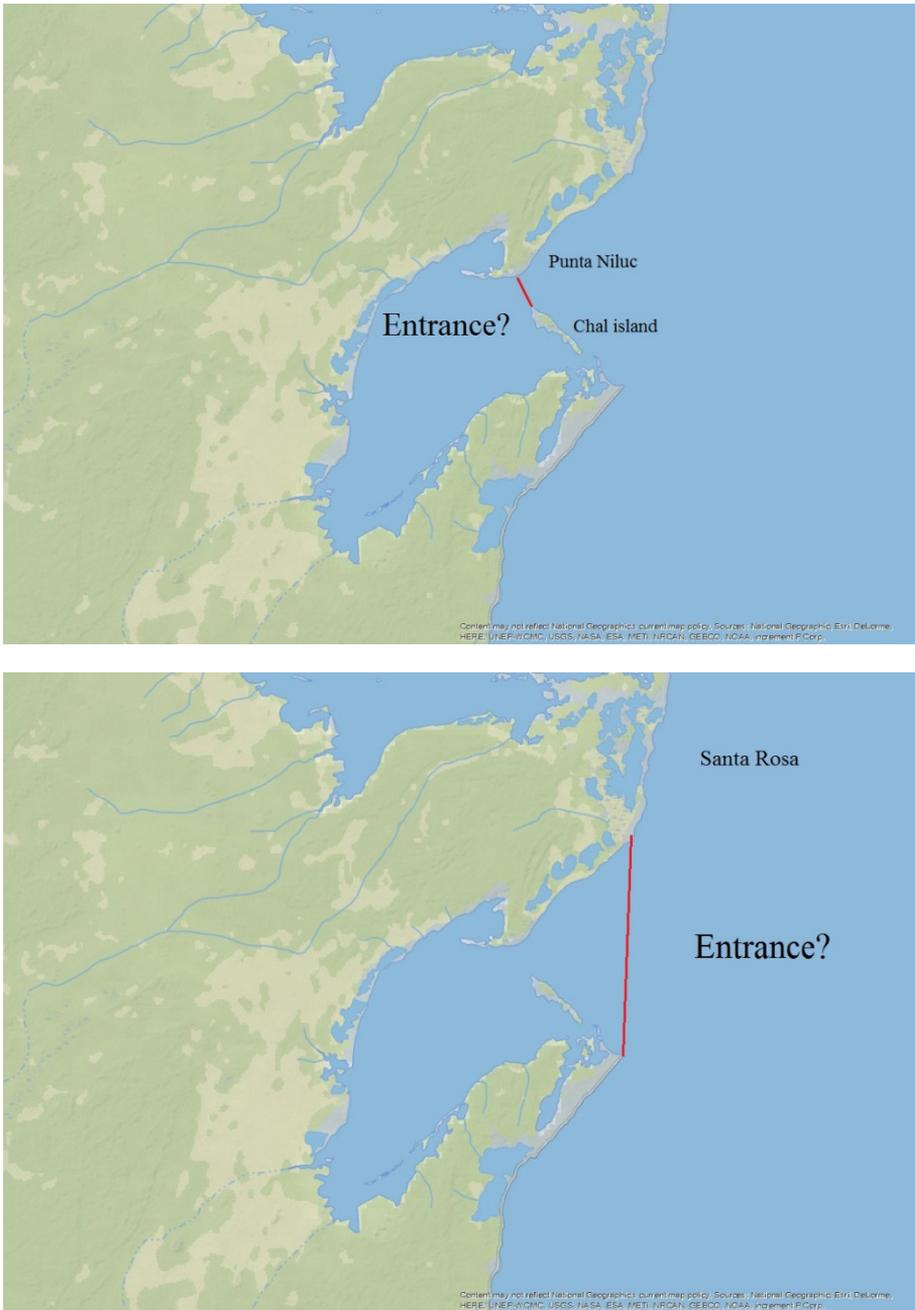


Figure 50. Top: Map showing the possible entrance to the ES Bay in Santa Rosa. Bottom: Possible entrance in Punta Niluc. Map made by the author. Source: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

he proposed that Santa Rosa could be Punta de Cruces.⁷⁶ If we analyze the map of the bay we notice that there are at least two possible entrances (Fig. 50). However, reading some of the pages in the beginning of the narration, Landeras explains that there is an island in the middle that demarcates the entrance to the bay and serves as shelter.⁷⁷ This island is indeed Chal Island. Landeras continues by discussing the distance between the island and the north coast (Punta Niluc) stating that it is about half *legua* (league) or 2.4 km wide and about 4 *brazas* (fathom) or 7 m deep which is pretty accurate.⁷⁸

The island mentioned by Landeras was significant enough to establish that the entrance of the bay is limited by Chal Island and *Punta Niluc*. From this statement on, I decided to move the surveys to *Punta Niluc* located on the right side of the bay. This decision was based on a kind of deductive process; reading the historical document, I selected information relevant to translating it into a map of the region, with places where this information could be found or not. Examples are the crop areas and fruit trees where the site was founded. As already mentioned, the whole bay is characterized by marshes and swamps making any kind of crops, if not impossible, very difficult to produce. A clue was the word *monte*,⁷⁹ giving allusion to the uplands where Kachambay and the *rancherías* or hamlets are located, and where the land is fertile for crops.

The lack of *aguadas* in the area surveyed at Santa Rosa was another reason to move the surveys to Punta Niluc. It is clear that the *aguadas* may be natural or artificial, and in the case of those found in Punta Nilub, it was difficult to state if they were made by humans or are the result of natural processes. The important aspect, however, is the fact that the *aguadas* could have served as drinking water sources containing rainwater. Considering the lack of rivers throughout the whole region, the *aguadas* might have helped the inhabitants of *Punta Niluc* to satisfy their food

76. By a personal communication, Jones and I agree that this is wrong and Punta de Cruces must be Punta Niluc.

77. “*una isla en medio de la boca que le hace abrigo*”. An island in the middle of the entrance as shelter”(Translation by author).

78. “*porque la canal tiene cerca de media legua de cuatro brazas de fondo*”. The channel has about half league of four fathom Deep (Translation by author).

79. In English “hill” or any kind of land elevation.

and drink necessities. This is practiced even today by the fishermen in Maria Elena who save rain water in huge plastic reservoirs to satisfy their necessities. Another important fact is that the indigenous Maya traveled by canoes through the lagoons to Ascensión Bay (AGI:68op). This is possible since navigation has been the main method of transport for trade by both coastal and inland waterways since the Late Postclassic (e.g. Andrews 1998). The region of Santa Rosa is a large inland lagoon system that is still navigated today. The most clear material evidence of this activity is the site of Tupac located in the middle of the lagoons which worked as a guide for navigation during the Postclassic period (see Riqué 1991, Romero, 1998).

Turning back to the discussion about the political importance of Bacalar, Grant Jones suggests that the decision to send a cleric from Ichnul and not from Bacalar was an example to keep the town marginalized from its control over the region that they sought to manage and exploit (Jones 1989:196). This observation is correct considering that Bacalar was a poor and isolated village. According to Landeras, the location of Kachambay was in the limit between the administration of Bacalar or the province of Uaymil-Chetumal (see Roys 1957), and the province of Cochuah with Tihosuco as its capital, a province that was closer to the site.⁸⁰ However, the distance from Kachambay to Bacalar and to Tihosuco or Ichnul is relative, Bacalar is actually located some kilometers closer to Kachambay. I believe that further than trying to isolate Bacalar from its administrative dominion in the region, the secular clergy wanted to diminish the power of the regular clergy. Despite being one of the four Franciscan sees on the peninsula, the lack of influence by the Franciscans in Bacalar and in the area between Espiritu Santo and Ascensión Bay was clear as between 1565 to 1599 there were twelve secular priests against three regular; Fray Francisco de Benavides, Fray Martin de Barrientos, and Fray Alonso Toral (Jones 1989:85). It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the province of Bacalar was established with the *villa* of Bacalar as the administrative town of the province, including Espiritu Santo Bay (Gerhard 1979:67-75) (Fig. 51).

80. “de suerte que este pueblo de la Limpia Concepción viene a estar en los límites y distrito de Tihosuco e Ichnuly así por la cercanía le viene a pertenecer...”. This town of *la Limpia Concepción* is in the limits between Tihosuco and Ichnul (Translation by author).

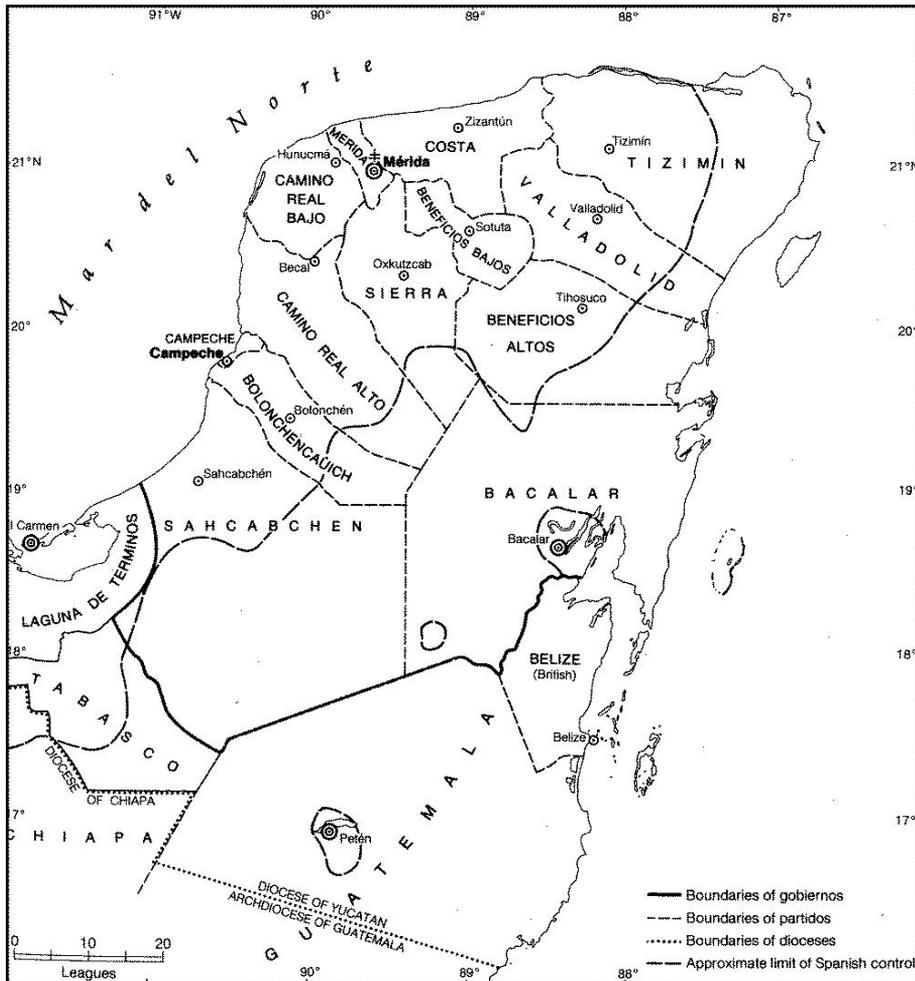


Figure 51. Map of the Yucatán Peninsula in the middle of the 18th century. In Gerhard 1979

What can we learn of Kachambay?

The material evidence of one *chultún* and two stone alignments or walls represents the presence of human beings interacting and living in the region around Espiritu Santo Bay. The alignments found are now registered by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) in Quintana Roo, Mexico, as two new sites in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve. The study and analysis of the *legajo* Mexico 906, in combination with the surveys, has shed light on new questions regarding the social dynamic between the Maya and the Spanish. From the surveys done we can suggest that:

The material culture found in the region can be interpreted as a cause-effect of a hybrid relationship between the Spanish and the Maya. Historically, the Uaymil province with its coast has been considered uninhabited land or *despoblado*, lacking clear political borderlines in the sixteenth century. The roughness of the vegetation prevailing in the region of Espiritu Santo Bay has been the natural reason for this idea, which in turn made unattractive to both clergies to settle missions in the region. However, this idea is worth reconsidering because the analysis of written sources such as the *legajo* Mexico 906 and Landeras' narration is evidence of the presence of small groups of indigenous runaways gathered in *rancherías* or hamlets scattered in the region.

Extensive excavations are required with more manpower and especially time, to know if the walls or alignments are prehispanic or colonial. Based on the results of the expeditions, I argue that the social dynamic in Espiritu Santo Bay needs to be rethought, considering that small indigenous communities interacted in this region because of the establishment of *congregaciones*, which obligated the indigenous Maya to escape and find shelter in Espiritu Santo Bay. Thus, these two new sites and the *chultún* are very probably the material remains of these *rancherías* mentioned by Landeras. The lack of archaeological material on the surface might be attributed to the short period of occupation and the construction of the walls, but also because of the humidity of the environment in the case of ceramics. The site of Kachambay was not found directly and more surveys are required if this would be the target for research in the future. However, in an indirect way Kachambay might be strongly linked with the *chultún* and the alignment in *Punta Niluc*. Some new questions arise at a local scale such as did the inhabitants of Kachambay create the alignment and the *chultún*? How many *rancherías* are possible to find? Considering the conditions of the runaways under colonial rule, what kinds of interactions were created between these *rancherías* in material culture terms?

At a local scale, I suggest that future research analyzes the *congregaciones* system and its social impact as a generator of indigenous mobility in the region, with the settlements of *rancherías* as the outcomes of this system. A question that seems difficult to avoid is what happened to the development and decline of Kachambay? We might believe that the presence of pirates on the coast of Quintana Roo and the English control of logwood, or *palo*

de Campeche (*Haematoxylum campechianum*), and the *grana* or Cochineal, were one of the main causes of the abandonment of Kachambay. These factors motivated King Felipe IV to order a certification to create an armed coastguard to protect part of the Gulf of Mexico and the Yucatán Peninsula on 6th February 1629 (Molina Solis, 1904:69-70). Despite the urge of the Spanish Crown to protect their interests, not much was done which led to the development of these negative activities (Calderón Quijano, 1944:41). It is impossible to know how many years Kachambay was inhabited by the 64 indigenous Maya registered by Landeras, but the historical records and material evidence demonstrate that it is possible to suppose that it was not very many. From the information gathered during the fieldwork, it was possible to state that the region of Santa Rosa is not *Punta de Cruces*, but the current *Punta Niluc*. Hitherto, there is no other document or *legajo* known about Kachambay, nor any colonial map with its location. It is possible to suppose that Kachambay was a small site made of perishable materials such as wattle and daub and *ramadas* roofs, explaining the difficulty in finding the remains of the settlement.

In addition, and aimed at subaquatic archaeology, the *legajo* Mexico 906 shed light on another issue which was indirectly linked with Kachambay; that is, the shipwrecks on the coast of Quintana Roo. Landeras explains that in 1614, six Spanish ships “disappeared” in front of Cabo Catoche after some of the remains of their products were found along the coast. As we have seen, this information is also mentioned by López de Cogolludo describing seven, not six shipwrecks. Because of its historical circumstances, Cabo Catoche is an area with high archaeological potential (on land and sea), having a colonial and prehispanic occupation with both Spanish and English presence. The other shipwreck is the that which occurred somewhere on the coast of Punta Niluc,⁸¹ and from which Landeras found many walnut boxes (broken and whole), two ship decks, one anchor, and one boat (AGI:67). In addition to this this information, the INAH Sub-direction of subaquatic archaeology informed me about the location of two shipwrecks in front of the coast between Punta Santa Rosa and Punta Niluc. They are dated between early XVII-XVIII centuries, which means

81. Landeras, on page 67, does not specify where.

that one of them could be part of the remains of the ship mentioned by Landeras (Dr. Helena Barba M. personal communication 2016).

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

From a postcolonial perspective this thesis presented an attempt to address material culture in colonial encounters analyzing Spanish churches and Maya dwellings. I argued that archaeologist has to rethink who is going to have voice and presence in the interpretation of the past. In a multidisciplinary way, historical archaeology can only offer the possibility of interpreting the colonial situation with all its actors if we acknowledge the active presence of the host societies. The thesis has called for the analysis of colonial encounters without using binary systems in order to explain them; otherwise, we fall in the mistake to create explanatory models of the type of active-donor vs passive-receptor, or acculturative models that lacks of objectivity. That is why I proposed the model of the colony, the metropole, and the host society in the analysis of colonial encounters. Postcolonial theories and the terms hybridity and third space can be used as an aid in interpreting the interactions of different groups when they meet and create materiality and ideology.

Taking a hybrid approach to Spanish churches and Maya dwellings presented the way they mixed in an ambivalent manner combining different architectonical features. Based on archaeological works, this thesis has shown that while house architectures was consistent along hundreds, if not thousands of years old, the Spanish churches presented in this thesis integrated Maya plans and buildings materials into their construction making them hybrid. In addition, it was shown how Maya dwellings gained sacred aspects from churches, such as the familiar altar within dwellings, and the patios with a cross in relation with the *atrios* of churches. One of the problems that I found during the development of this thesis was the poor information in general about colonial churches in Mexico. Much remains to be done with regards to daily life during the Colonial period,

the analysis of churches and chapels are one example which would bring this about. I argued that the Colonial period in Mexico is a “black box” of information and that more archaeological works needs to be done in order to open this box. This thesis is a call for an understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of indigenous societies in the interpretation of colonial encounters in archaeology, as an example of a cultural diversity and the way different actors negotiate hybrid and new built environments.

There is a hidden history below the rain forest in Espiritu Santo Bay. The analysis of written sources combined with the results of field expeditions demonstrated the presence of human activities that were possible to associate with scattered Maya groups or runaways. The history of these runaways lies there, waiting for somebody give them a voice.

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APPENDIX A

REINTERPRETING HISTORICAL SOURCES; SOME COMMENTS ABOUT PONCE'S CLASSIFICATION OF COLONIAL CHURCHES

The classification proposed by Andrews and Hanson are valuable for the study of early chapels and churches. Hanson's classification is interesting because he proposes an explanatory model in order to understand the civilizing process used by the Franciscans on the Yucatán Peninsula. According to him, the Franciscans created a series of environments to progressively transform the behavior of the Yucatec Maya (Hanson 1995:15), in this case religious architecture. He named his interpretative framework composed of the chapel, atrium, friary, and the associated village a "Metropolitan model of Franciscan missionization" (ibid:17). This model fits with Artigas concept of "open-air architecture" in which these three elements break away from the European concept of "closed spaces"; the European churches against the prehispanic open plazas for example. The settlement of missions on the Yucatan Peninsula with the successive construction of chapels is Hanson's core argument. In terms of colonialism, I agree with his statement that, "mission became the primary environment for the nonviolent perpetration of Hispanic culture" (ibid: 17). This approach focuses on the religion from the standpoint of a built environment representing in turn, control over the Maya for an ensuing cultural conversion (see Low 1996). The Metropolitan model is based on Kubler's chronological sequence of church and chapel constructions, which in turn is based on Fray Alonso Ponce's description in the province of Tlaxcala in the center of Mexico (Kubler 2012:389). According to Kubler, Ponce describes three types of sequences; "1) If the conventual buildings were already in existence, a chapel adjoined the conventual entrance (*portería*) as a place for the celebration of Mass. Next the chapel in turn might be a large portico, where the Indian congregation could gather [...] the open chapel may be interpreted either as a church without lateral walls, or better, as the presbytery of a church without a

complete circuit of the walls. 2) Another type lacked facilities for the descent housing of the Sacrament between services for the Indians, the Host was kept in part of the conventual buildings where the friars might perform their conventual offices. 3) A sheltered supplementary chapel was maintained for the Indian congregation; even the settlement already had its regular conventual church” (Kubler 2012:389).

Kubler explains that the right order of the chapels should be 2, 1, and 3 or: a chapel of construction substantial enough to house the Host; the second implies an inadequate chapel of the rudest construction; and third, an extant permanent church in addition to the Indian chapel. Hanson interprets Kubler’s work and adds one more sequence, we can read: “the first building was a provisional thatched shelter; the second building was a temporary chapel substantial enough to house the Host; the third was a permanent open chapel; and the four was a large, single nave church appended to the extant building” (Hanson 1995:16). As part of the analysis of written sources in historical archaeology, I will stop for a moment to analyze these two authors since what they are mentioning seems inaccurate, maybe because the information described by Ponce is misunderstood. It is a bit confusing that Hanson judges there to be “four” sequences, when Kubler (based on Ponce) only defined three. Ponce’s description is based on the visit made in 1585 to the town San Felipe Ixtacuixtla in the state of Tlaxcala⁸² in the center of Mexico followed by the Franciscan Antonio de Ciudad Real, who was in charge of transcribing Ponce’s information.

Reading Ponce’s description, three different buildings are possible to identify differing from Kubler. We can read that the first building mentioned by Ponce is: 1) a convent with cloister. There is no church yet constructed so the construction of chapels were necessary to comply with religious activities. 2) The next building is a walled chapel with lockable doors, in which there was suitable to house the Holy and the rest of the religious objects within it. Despite Ponce never mentions the presence of thatched roofs or *ramadas* in his description of San Felipe, this chapel was probably an “Enclosed Ramada chapel” or “Simple Ramada Chapel”, that

82. “Llegó [Fray Ponce] andadas tres leguas, al pueblo y convento de San Felipe, llamado en aquella lengua Cuyxtla” (Ciudad Real 1873:115).

is, an isolated building. 3) A chapel of the type *porteria* at the façade, this building had the function of church and it was appended to the convent separated from the previous chapel. Probably this chapel had wooden trusses on the ceiling fitting in Artigas' category of an "uncovered nave"; that is, without a *ramada* roof and nave. This chapel lacked of doors and was not very safe to keep religious objects, so friars had them in their conventual rooms in order to preach (Ciudad Real 1873:115-6). Ponce notices that in the province of Tlaxcala these chapels (*porterias*) were common even when there was an extant church.

As we can see, there are only two types of chapels in Ponce's description. The second building mentioned by Ponce corresponds with Kubler's type 3, since the chapel has "puertas que se cierran con llave para mayor seguridad"⁸³ (Ciudad Real, 1873:115), i.e. it was an enclosed and walled building. Following Ponce's description there is a big *portal* beside *this* chapel, which corresponds with Kubler's sequence 1, which in turn had the function of church where people gathered to hear mass (ibid). Ponce's descriptions lacks of accuracy since he do not explain if the *portales* is an isolated building from the previous chapel, we may believe that he is talking about two separated buildings.

The confusion lies in the sequence 2 proposed by Kubler because he consider two different buildings when Ponce is describing them as one, Kubler argues, "Another type lacked facilities for the decent housing of the Sacrament. Between services for the Indians, the Host was kept in part of the conventual buildings, where the friars might perform their conventual offices" (2011:389). If we turn now our attention in Ponce he points out that: "de estas mismas capillas (*portales*) usan en aquella provincia en los conventos donde no hay iglesia, aunque no tienen en ellas el Sanctísimo Sacramento, por no haber la comodidad que en aquella de San Felipe, pero tienenlo allá arriba, en alguna celda o aposento hecho a posta[...] y aunque haya iglesia en el convento tienen también semejantes capillas en los patios para decir misa y predicar a los indios..."⁸⁴ (Ciudad Real 1873:115-116). As we see Kubler's type 2 is the same of his type 1, that is, the *porteria*.

83. Doors are locked for safety (Translation by author).

84. And even if there is a church in the convent, they have *such* chapels in the courtyard for saying Mass and preaching to the Indians (Translation and emphasis by author).



Figure 52. Top: Example of an open-air chapel with portales appended to the convent of Zinacantepec, Edo. de México. In Artigas 2010.

The key word in this discussion is the Spanish word “*semejantes*” which in English means similar or like. What Ponce is telling is that he is refereeing all the time to the second type of building in his description, that is, the chapel *portales* or arcades without *ramada* roof or more properly an open-air chapel which lacked of the facilities for the decent housing of the Sacrament (Fig. 52).

Even more confusing is Hanson’s “evolutionary” way to interpret Kubler’s buildings. One observation that should be noted in Hanson’s model of missionization is the fact that Ponce is describing a particular convent in the center of Mexico. The environmental and cultural circumstances in this region were not the same as on the Yucatán Peninsula, which make a bit bold to create a general building model. We cannot interpret Ponce’s description in terms of an “evolutionary building sequence” as presented by Hanson, since the colonial chroniclers never described the buildings in terms of typologies as we have seen. Ones again, the interpretation of historical sources like Ponce’s description must be analyzed carefully to obtain better accuracy with the archaeological data.

In short, Ponce’s description deals with only two types of chapels, neither three nor four, and one convent. In addition, and related to Hanson’s model, it is not clear why he added one more sequence to the three categories

Ponce's buildings	Kubler's sequence
Convent	
Open-air church or <i>Portales</i>	1 and 2
Enclosed Chapel	3

Table 3. Comparative table between Ponce and Kubler. By the author

proposed by Kubler. In this particular example it seems archaeologically dubious to assume that the architectural development of the buildings followed an evolutionary model from the most simply to the most complex, since the combination of different types or sequences is perfectly possible. A “temporary chapel” -using Hanson’s category- could have been built after the construction of a “complex *ramada* chapel”, or after the construction of a church with convent; in short, there is no established rules that define the order of constructive types. Reading Ponce’s work we notice a lack of accuracy when he describes the chapel in San Felipe in Tlaxcala causing, in my view, certain confusion. What is important to consider is the risk of generalizing from a singular and unclear example like the chapels described by Ponce in the center of Mexico, to translate it into a general and regional model as Hanson suggests.

APPENDIX B
EXCERPT FROM THE LEGAJO MEXICO 906
AND THE SITE KACHAMBAY

ello que sea a proposito para la
buena admistracion de su Duc.
Juna y que leguas aya de la
primera y si son de Religiosos
y Clerigos del Linbo de la
lla de Oaxaca o Calladolia
y que sea a menester y lo demas
que se le pidiere y todo sea
en este su Escrito para que hecha
la dicha declaracion se provea
lo que mas convenga al ser
Vicio de Dios nro Señor y salu
ger Cad. ~~Arzobispo de Soada~~
Ensemo Francisco de Sanabria
Escrivano de su Magestad

2

En el pueblo de Maxcabá ter
minado y la villa de la Ciu
dad de Merida de Yucatan
en veinte y Ocho del mes
de Enero de mill seiscientos
y veinte y En año el Señor
Cartellano Arzobispo de Soada
y Ferrada. Gobernador y Capitan
general por su Magestad
en estas provincias de Yucatan
Comendador de Tabasco D. Diego
paxerer Anterior a Hernando

63

de Bandejas Contenido en
 el Auto de su Merced. Del
 qual fue recibido Juramento
 segun forma de derecho y prome-
 to de decir Verdad, y serido que-
 runtado por el Senor del dicho
 Auto de lo que luego que este
 declarante salio de la Ciudad
 de Merida con Comision del
 Senor Governador para vedar
 los yndias que hallasse en los
 sitios y montañas de las Villas
 de Cosumel Caya de la Asem-
 cion y Caya de Cacalax llegado
 alla Nueva Caya de Espini
 su punto que es el mismo la der-
 cubo, y a punto el dicho nom-
 bre que esta a la Orilla del
 Sur de esta Provincia de Yucac-
 tan ochos leguas a sotavento de
 la Caya de la Asemcion, y qua-
 renta de la Caya de Cacalax
 en altura de diez, y nueve gra-
 dos Menos Interio aviendo
 Entrado en esta Caya y son dados
 la por noticia que tubo de aver
 algunas Vanchezas de Indio.

fue siguiendo los y encontrados de
 quinas apartadas unas de otras
 fue descubriendo algunos yndios
 apartados Con sus de edad de
 nueve a diez años para arriba
 que los mismos yndios sus Padres
 les Testificaron a este declarante
 que auian nacido en aquellas
 Montañas y estaban por bautizar
 por el declarante halló en las
 Yanchexas diez yndios yndios
 de Condo dichos en el dho lo
 quales le dieron las cosas dha
 una gente en otras en Yanche
 mas que estaban diez leguas en
 contorno de la dicha Caya del
 Espiritu Sancto y auendo ydo
 en persona llevando Con sus dho
 John Frasco y a Francisco de Ge
 sero Españoles y a Bartolome de
 San Blas Mexicanos hallaron en
 las dichas Yanchexas algu
 nos yndios yndios que en sus
 de y antes se mostraban aver ex
 tado en las dichas Montañas
 de muchos años a esta parte lo
 quales animado tenían dho
 de todas edades que también le

64

Dixerun Citaban por baxa baxa
 ganendo lei dadas a entender en
 declarante por su lengua y por la
 del dicho Bartolome de Sander
 ras que es la misma que hablan
 los Indios. Se feo de su Comand
 o de las dichas Montañas y
 el de lo que manda al dicho Don
 Alvarado en nombre de su Mage
 stad e Reverendales los Dignos Doctri
 na Christiana y sacerdote que
 administre los Santos Sacramentos
 y predicque el Santo Evangelio en
 nombre de su Magestad e
 de sus almas y que en lo que goberne, guar
 tenga justicia y en su jurisdiccion con
 los Indios de todas Castiellas y
 otras Chicas y grandes de su tierra
 ellos y sus hijos y que se
 fe por nombre de su Magestad e
 de su Rey y de su declarante el qual por
 nombre de su Magestad e de su
 cesion y de los Indios, y Malinche
 lo escribiendo en su nombre y so
 bre nombre conforme a lo memo
 ria que va adelante firmada
 de su nombre y de sus señas
 si quedan por baxa son muy fe

Lites y abundancia de Montañas
 y árboles frutales para el res-
 giento de la misma y demás muy
 dispuesta para plantar árboles de
 Cacao, y que con poca fuerza se
 dará mucha cantidad es muy
 sumida y con muchas aguas de
 jentes este año esta de la nue-
 va Caya del Egipto y en todo
 fin de Moqueche, y allí viene
 sus Causas con que se van y ve-
 nen desde la Caya a guerra
 firme aprendiendo fundado este
 declarante como dicho es en el
 dicho sitio de Nuestra Señora
 de la Concepción que es el mismo
 que ellos eligieron. Este declaran-
 te de lo dicho apercibirá si esta-
 ban contentos, y gustosos con la elec-
 cion que aquí se hecho del dicho
 asiento, y no, y si querían probar
 se a otro alguno que esto decla-
 raven que luego al punto los es-
 tancia adonde quisieren por que
 no sea ama, que a reducción les a-
 las partes, y lugares que ellos seña-
 laren y quicieren en Peru Voluntas.

65
 y no fundado, por lo que, y como
 es, y todo quanto se responde
 con que de su voluntad se quiere
 de poblacion y reducir al dicho
 sitio de Sanchaquay que es el
 mismo nombrado Huertita fe-
 rra de la Limpia Concepcion
 por que alli estuvieron antiguam-
 ente poblados sus Padres, y
 Abuelo de sus Padres San Felix
 y sus hijos, y buenas las dichas tierras
 y sitio como tiene declarado fue-
 ron mucha cantidad de pescado
 en la dicha Baya del Espiritu
 Santo, y Patuzas, Collos, Tangoray
 ligas, Vacalamey, pazos, Yayas
 y otros generos de pescado, y visto
 por este declarante que el dicho
 asiento era un buen orden
 no con los Indios, que los vivian
 sus Casas como las hicieron, y
 daxon haciendo una Caraguan:
 de que les pudiere dar de la
 ita, y visto el grande sereno
 tenian de educarse, y poblarse
 para que con mayor orden

Audiencia a las Ocho de la tarde
 de Dios, E de su Magestad, y
 en su Real nombre En Virtud de
 de la Comision, que este declarante
 sellero de la Señora Governadora
 Alvaro, y combro por Caxera, y
 Juan de los dichos Indios, a
 Ocho de Mayo, que ellos pidieron nom-
 brado Alonso Diaz, al qual en
 cargo este declarante el buen
 Gobierno de aquel pueblo, y de
 Administracion de Justicia en el
 pnterim que Ocho de Mayo de
 Ocho de Mayo al Señora Governadora, y
 quedaron quietos, y sossegados en
 el dicho pueblo, y se prometieron
 que darian Obsequio a otros qu-
 dias que estaban en diferentes
 Montañas, y Rancherías para
 que se fueren reduciendo, y a
 este declarante le parece cosa
 muy conveniente, que la dicha
 poblacion se haga, y que el Se-
 ñora Governadora, y Capitan Ge-
 neral le de para ello su lizen-
 cia para el remedio de

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Estos Indios Reducidos, como pa-
 ra los que adelante se Reduxeren
 por lo que importa al Servicio
 de Dios Nuestro Señor, que en
 las partes que son pobladas por si
 algun Enemigo Oviendo las tan
 hostiles no sea que las quierian
 poblar, que sean de grandísimo
 daño para estas provincias espe-
 cialmente a la Provincia de Yucatac
 donde el año pasado de seiscien-
 tos, y diez, y siete entró Ma-
 tancha de Inglaterra, y después fun-
 do en mitad de la Guerra hasta
 que hizo presa en algunos Cer-
 rinos, que inadvertidamente se fue-
 ron a ellas, nombrados Pedro
 Roso, Antonio Gomez, y otros
 diez Cerinos, y estos daños, y otras
 semejanças, que puede el ene-
 migo hacer se podran evitar an-
 do poblacion en estas partes pa-
 ra que den aviso al Señor Do-
 naxada que si fuere de estas
 provincias de los Navios que a esta
 Costa llegaren para remediarlo



En tiempo por que del Encer-
 pido se entrare en ella no asi
 endo poblacion, ni quien de años
 de aver tomado se entrara
 quella Caya, y no estar en las con-
 tas de Manana podria estar mu-
 cho año y fortificarse por ser el
 sitio muy a proposito para ello
 y tener tan buen fondo como:
 en la Canal, y entrada de la di-
 cha Caya, y ser capaz de entrar
 una muy buena Armada por que
 la Canal tiene de ancho cerca
 de media legua de qualro bra-
 sas de fondo, y bien colada el
 suelo, para entrar dentro de la
 Caya donde ay de ser a siete bra-
 sas de buen fondo Arsenico, y
 a qualquiera de las dos partes y
 se armen, asi a la otra y
 esta en la boca de la misma
 Caya; como a la tierra firme
 de la Banda del Norte es todo
 fundable, y seguro de qualquiera
 temporal, y en la otra
 puede poner plancha entera

67
 qualquier parte, gano es de pare-
 cer poblar la dicha tierra por lo á
 vna dicho, gano mismo por lo otro
 fertile para qualquiera frutos
 de la tierra, y acagualales, como oy
 lo tienen En el Monte Muy Alto
 q proveer has para el remedio de la
 peste de las Indias, y sus Indias, y otras
 Indias, que por allí se pierden pa-
 ra no aver quien lo socorra, con que ven-
 nen a perecer totalmente por que esto
 escibito, y se dexa Entender porq
 En las playas de aquella Costa en
 de declarante halla muchas Ca-
 sas de Mogal, y otras Indias en:
 Texas, y Taciar, y de Quixas de
 Indias de guerra, una ancha, y Ma-
 chalpa, y lo mismo qndio di-
 xeron de este declarante que en
 aquellas Montañas Indias adelant
 se adonde estaban poblados una
 mucha cantidad de Indios mor-
 taras, y fugitivos En diferentes
 Varchexas, que sabiendo, que ellos
 estaban poblados de su Voluntad
 venian ellos, tambien vedados
 viendo quien lo favorecia y
 ayude sin hacerles agravio, y
 por tener este declarante por

Caudal no pudo animarse con
 mas adelante a las dichas tan
 chevas por la yn Comodidad que
 lleuó de Caratlo. Y tamemes ha
 ta que el señor Governador no de
 ne que se le de al gun socorro
 de la Real Casa por el fruto de
 estas Reduções de que se agosar
 su Magestad, y de pidiéndose
 de los dichos Indios se pidieron
 muy en careçidamente por lo
 de ampararse, y que Colónelle
 vande les Of Indio Maestro
 que le enseñare, y a sus hijos
 la doctrina Christiana, y a leer
 y a escribir, y que pudiese servir
 de Escriuano para dar cuenta
 a su Governador de lo que se
 ofreciere por quando se les man
 dase pagarian tributo a su Ma
 gestad, y este declarante lo Con
 soló, y dio palabra de llevar lo
 el dicho Maestro para lo efe
 to que se lo pidieron, y de ayu
 dantes en nombre del señor
 Governador, y lo pido crede
 clarante Escriuaron a lo de
 mas Indios se Reduxeren a

buenas poblaciones, y diereen Ma
 Jicia del Frato, y amirraal que
 ter aya hecho, y así que daran
 de haver lo. Lo mismo decla
 ra, quella dicha población de la
 Caya del Espíritu Santo nom:
 brada Nuestra Señora de la Con
 cepcion no tiene entrada por nin
 guna parte por tierra por ser por
 la una parte situada de la Caya
 y por la otra sierras, y parajes
 y así su derecha entrada ha de
 ser por la dicha Caya, y no por
 otra parte donde se ynfiere por
 de naturaleza el sitio tan fuer
 te y de de el sitio y población de
 Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Con
 cepcion donde ay citan poblados los
 dicha seenta, y quatro indios
 hasta el pueblo de tela que es el
 primer pueblo de los de la Mica
 ria y Beneficio de Ahoyuc
 yehmul que es doctrina de diez
 y ay treinta y dos leguas
 poro Ma o meno en esta mane
 ra la doce leguas de la sehande



Andar con canoas por lagunas de
 de el dicho pueblo de la Santa
 Concepcion hasta la Caya de
 la Atencion y desde alli para
 la dicho pueblo de Tela ay
 veinte leguas, que se han de
 caminar por tierra a pie o a
 caballo, y es Brai cerca de este Pe-
 nefino que no de la Provincia
 y Ciudad de Bacalar por que
 desde el dicho Nuevo pueblo de
 Nuestra Señora de la Concepci-
 on al pueblo de Samalcaro que
 es de aquella Provincia de Ba-
 calar ay cinquenta, y cinco
 leguas por mar, y por tierra de
 Buerte que este pueblo de la San-
 ta Concepcion tiene a estar en
 los limites, y distrito de Tixho-
 que Cuchmul, gavi por cercania
 de Tene apertencor, y esto es la
 Verdad de lo que Vio, y sabe de
 cargo de Juramento que fecho ki-
 ne, y lo firmo ante el Señor Jue-
 nador, y por ante mi el presente Es-
 cribano, y declaro ser de edad de qua-
 renta, y ocho años como me no = Aco-

Conde de Losata = Hernando San
 Jerau de Velasco = Antemi Fran
 cisco de Sanabria Escrivano de la
 Magestad

Memoria de los Indios que es
 San poblador en el sitio, y pueblo
 nombrado Nuestra Señora de
 la Limpia Concepcion Cerca de la
 Nueva Caya del Espritu san
 to con Indios fugitivos, y monta
 ñas salidas de la Montañas
 Cuyos nombres, y bores nombres
 son los siguientes

1	Alonso May	1	Domingo May
1	Pedro Ay	1	Juan Pat
1	Martin Na	1	Do Pat
1	Agustin Pat	1	Domingo chan
1	D ^o Ag	1	Sorenio chan
1	Pedro May	1	Agustin Na
1	Juan May	1	Juan Pat
1	Fran ^{co} Cri	1	Xoimol Pat
1	Ju ^{an} Sol	1	Fran ^{co} Pat
1	D ^o May	1	Sorenio Pat
1	D ^o Pat	1	Miguel Ay
1	Andres Pat	1	Sorenio Ay
1	Fran ^{co} Chan	1	Juan Cri
1	Balthazar Etz	1	Pablo Chi
1	Balthazar May	1	Alonso Ay
1	Fran ^{co} Jun	1	Pedro Pat

1. Dorothea	1. Menica Ay
1. Jacinto Es	1. Maria Pat
1. Saizay May	1. Ines Esay
1. Hernan Ay	1. Juana Chan
1. Pedro Pat	1. Francisca Chim
1. Ana Pat	1. Ines Es
1. Elena Pat	1. Andrea Pat
1. Luisa Pat	1. Maria Pat
1. Maria Pat	1. Maria May
1. Carlina Pat	1. Andrea May
1. Menica Ay	
1. Maria Es	
1. Ana Muchim	
1. Ines Pat	
1. Clara Chim	
1. Maria Camal	
1. Beatriz May	
1. Ana Na	
1. Francisca Chim	
1. Andrea Chim	
1. Menica	

Montan Secenta, y quatro Chib
 Taino yndio, y el Taino, y Certi-
 fico = Hernando de Landera
 de T. Saiz = Antem Francisco
 de Sanabria Escriuano de su
 Magestad.

Declaro
 en el pueblo de Napicaba de mi

Nos de la Ciudad de Merida
 de Yucatan En primer dia del
 mes de Febrero de mil sei-
 cientos, y Veintey Un año. El
 Señor Castellano Alonso de
 Esada, y Faboda Governador
 y Capitan General por su Ma-
 yestad en estas Provincias de Yu-
 catan. Quiendo Oyo la decla-
 racion desta traça fecha
 por Hernando Sanderas de Pe-
 lasco para mas abexiguacion
 de las rriso parecer Anterior a
 Antonio Frasso Vecidente Crie-
 de pueblo que esta Ciudad en la di-
 cha declaracion, del qual fue he-
 cido Juramento segun for-
 ma de derecho, y prometio de
 decir Verdad, y Venderle leido
 por mi el precedente Cerruran-
 do de Verbo ad Verbum la de-
 claracion que hizo el dicho Her-
 nando de Sanderas de Belar-
 co ante su Merced alon de Esada
 y Oydor de Merida de Mexico

Deciete años, y la memoria
 de Dios firmada de su Nombre de
 Los Indios Cynchas que se vean
 poron apoblacion de unidos lo todo
 aydo, y entendido de los que todo
 lo fue en su declaracion de lo del
 dicho Hernando de Landeas y
 verdad por que este declarante
 anduvo siempre en su Compañia
 desde que salió de la Ciudad de
 Mexico, hasta el dicho día y
 día el dicho Enque y Citan po-
 blados los setenta, y quatro que
 dier Cynchas nombrados Nue-
 tra Señora de la Sympia Con-
 cepcion, y la Nueva Cayá del Sr.
 Sixto Sancto que el dicho Her-
 nando de Landeas nuevamente
 descubrió que no estan en las
 Cartas de Mexico, y asimismo
 por otros las Van Cheras Montey
 y sitios, y aguadas donde citaban
 poblados los dichos Indios, y
 tienen la Comdad, y fidelidad
 y Cacaguatales que dice en su de

Claracion y tambien de las Ca- 74
 das de Mogal, y de otras Ma-
 deras en la Chalupa y las Omi-
 dias de Mas, de guerra, y las
 otras particularidades que se
 fiere en su declaracion, y este
 declarante es del mismo par-
 cer del dicho Hernando de
 Sanderas, y dice lo mismo que
 declara con juramento de la
 dicha su declaracion por que
 es cierto, y Verdadero todo
 en ella contenido por que este
 declarante le dio, y ayudo al
 dicho dicho a condax la dicha nue-
 va Leya, y esto dixo en la Ver-
 dad por cargo del juramento que
 fecho tiene, y no firmo por que di-
 xo no sabe firmelo a suuego.
 Rodrigo Alvarez Vecino de la
 Ciudad de Mexico, y en Com-
 endero de Indios, y de edad
 de veinte, y siete años pero mas
 o menos firmolo el Señor Gobernador
 Alonso de Sotomayor. Ro-
 drigo Alvarez. Antes de Francisco



SAMMANFATTNING

Denna avhandling var tänkt som ett försök att använda begreppen hybriditet och tredje plats i historisk arkeologi, med en jämförande analys av tidiga koloniala kyrkor och Maya bostäder på Yucatán-halvön och Belize. Denna analys syftade till att ompröva inverkan av de inhemska samhällena i koloniala möten som företräddes av hybrid materiell kultur. Den första delen av denna studie analyserar kolonialism och arkeologi från ett postkolonialt perspektiv. Tanken var att bryta med binära modeller och eurocentriska metoder som till exempel koloniatör donator mot koloniserade-receptor i koloniala möten och istället presentera, en ambivalent relation där koloniatör och koloniserade identitet och materialitet förhandlas och återskapas.

Den andra delen presenterar en kort översikt av den förspanka perioden, för att därefter fortsätta med den koloniala perioden. Kolonialismen i Mexiko har analyserats och visar hur koloniala maktinstitutioner etablerade grunderna för en ny bebyggelse och religiös arkitektur. Tre utforskningar gjordes i Espiritu Santo vik med syftet till att identifiera nya indianska bosättningar eller *rancherías* som ett resultat av den koloniala politiken av kongregationer eller *congregaciones*. Särskild uppmärksamhet ägnades åt platsen Kachambay och dess kyrka *Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción* som grundades 1621. Platsen har nämnts i det historiska dokumentet *legajo México 906* vilket ligger i General Archive of the Indians i Sevilla, Spanien. Två små bosättningar påträffades i norra delen av Espiritu Santo vik, vilka bevisar förekomsten av mänsklig verksamhet i en region som historiskt har ansetts vara obebodd eller *despoblado*.

I den tredje delen behandlas avhandlingen i allmänhet och jämför maya bostäder och spanska kyrkor i fråga om planer och byggmaterial. Resultaten visade att deras kontinuitet i användning av byggande med material som

frimureri, stuckatur, halmtak eller *ramadas*, samt halvrunda, runda och fyrkantiga planerna är möjligt att observera i vissa typer av spanska kyrkor. Denna avhandling påtalar bristen av arkeologiska arbeten om koloniala kyrkor. Den hävdar att flera studier krävs för att förstå de kulturella förändringarna i det tidiga koloniala livet på Yucatán-halvön och Belize.