

*Colonialism and Tourism in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula*

Elizabeth Woodruff

Senior Thesis

Spring Quarter 2019

**Thesis submitted in completion of Honors Senior Capstone requirements for the DePaul**

**University Honors Program**

*Thesis Director: Howard Rosing, Steans Center*

*A few words of gratitude*

I would like to thank several people who were involved in this endeavor. DePaul professors Howard Rosing and Juana Goergen were pillars of support throughout this project; Howard as my thesis director and Juana as my faculty reader. I am deeply grateful for your time and input as I developed my ideas. Thanks for the guidance, encouragement, and above all the time spent together. I have learned so much from the both of you through developing this project as well as in our classes and conversations over the years. Thank you for your work and everything you do for your students; you are appreciated more than you could ever know. I would also like to give many thanks to my family for encouraging my academic pursuits, as well as to the DePaul Honors Program for providing this opportunity for undergraduate research.

*Abstract*

This paper analyzes how tourism in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula functions through elements of neocolonial theory, particularly in the complex power dynamics of economic development. It considers the ways in which tourism can be a source of growth that provides significant financial opportunities, but does so while oftentimes perpetuating colonial imbalances in society. This is understood by the ways in which tourism can structurally disrupt the lives of residents and market an exoticized, touristic identity of local and frequently marginalized communities (most specifically the Maya First Nation).

*On the researcher's positionality:*

This senior thesis project seeks to understand the connections between colonialism and tourism in the Mexican states that make up part of the Yucatán Peninsula. Given the nature of this project, a few personal words regarding the researcher's positionality are essential to consider and contextualize this work. I had the immense privilege of studying abroad in Mérida, Yucatán for the first half of 2018, during my junior year of college. The primary objective was to continue my study of the Spanish language through an intensive program. I was confronted with significant questions about the tourism industry in which I was consequently participating. While I was at the same time moving throughout physical spaces as a tourist, I was also privileged to be hearing from my professors and people around me some information about what the tourism industry is and is not doing for people who are residents in Mexico, and how groups of people are affected differently depending on intersectional backgrounds.

I was prompted with questions that did not conclude when my program finished. I feel grateful for the opportunity to continue asking questions through this research about travel, positionality, and history. My short-term experience abroad does not give me any authority in this discourse but rather it planted many questions about my own self as a traveler, and what travel means as a well-oiled system in a globalized world economy. In this project I'm learning about the ways in which the modern tourism industry reinforces elements of neocolonial hegemony in society in this specific part of Mexico. It is an analysis of power structures as well as the discourse around tourism.

As this paper is of an analytical nature, I pull information from a range of sources and interpret meaning based upon a framework of neocolonial theory. Some sections include discourse analysis wherein I consider the rhetoric used from various public materials on this

topic. The way this paper creates meaning is indeed impacted by my own positionality. Based upon my own personal biases and background, I would like to propose that the sources utilized and the conclusions at which I arrive are likely heavily reliant upon my own biases and context. They may reflect more of what I think is important within this topic more than what others who are involved with or affected by the tourism industry in Mexico would deem important. I would like to acknowledge this room for error as I analyze and interpret information, being myself a white, female, cisgender, United States citizen who studied abroad through her private, urban, liberal arts university. I am not of Maya or Mexican background but am writing about how international visitors coming to Mexico for tourism may consume Maya and Mexican identities in ways that are misinformed and also affect the physical, built environment, therein paving the way for more tourism.

My approach towards this topic is from a critical lens while also recognizing that I do not personally belong to the communities most directly and most negatively impacted by tourism as it functions today. I would also like to acknowledge that the people for whom that statement is true should have their voices lifted in this conversation, and have more influence in the overall situation. I do not offer solutions and by no means is my work exhaustive of everything that can and must be said on this topic. The connections between colonialism and tourism in terms of ongoing power structures and struggles for controlling discourse is not unique to Mexico. While this phenomenon has its own iterations in the United States as well, I focus on Mexico in an attempt to reflect personally and better understand the system in which I was participating while being a study abroad student.

*Colonialism and Tourism in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula*

Elizabeth Woodruff 2019

In the mind of the average tourist looking for their next destination, the mental images that may arise in association with 'tourism in Mexico' could be idyllic visions of paradise. When considering the Yucatán Peninsula, due to innumerable sources that create a reputation geared towards vacationers, several images one might imagine are clear beaches, warm sand, and palm trees. To those who are uninformed about Maya peoples, other mental images might pertain to a mystifying vision of ancient Maya ruins across the Peninsula; what seem to be the curious, abandoned civilizations of a group of people whose physical presence appears to have vanished from the earth. The Peninsula depicted as a tourist paradise full of exotic discovery is not a new narrative. This vision is an intentional choice in the modern tourism industry, employed through mass marketing. It hearkens to neocolonial storytelling that exoticizes what scholars refer to as 'the other', in this case the Maya peoples of Mexico. In the way that tourism stands currently, this exoticized, perfect 'paradise' concept associated with visiting Mexico does not capture the entire picture for all parties involved in creating this mass-marketed tourist experience. Furthermore, it reinforces the erasure of Maya history and modern livelihood for Maya peoples across the peninsula today.

In the Yucatán Peninsula, tourism is a highly systematized industry that plays an essential role in the economy. There are clear benefits that the industry brings forth. However, this paper discusses how the industry reflects hierarchical structures of inequality in Mexican society and in many ways ultimately perpetuates a kind of hegemony that nods to the lasting, living history of colonization on the Yucatán Peninsula. The oppression of First Nation groups began

immediately in the early years of colonization and has persisted and proliferated in increasingly modern ways, some of these ways pertaining to the core of how the tourism industry operates.

Within the neocolonial framework of this paper and the resources consulted, the industry often functions through the manipulation and cooptation of First Nation history while simultaneously limiting opportunities for socioeconomic mobility for people of First Nation communities. This paper draws upon peer-reviewed materials regarding the various experiences of tourism on the peninsula as well as discourse analyses of marketing materials, utilized as primary sources. While there are many benefits that result from the tourism industry at the scale it is today, and there is no way to deny certain positive elements, these benefits are not distributed equitably or sustainably. There are serious consequences that increasing tourism development has on the Yucatán Peninsula. This paper argues that these consequences of the tourism industry often reinforce long-standing hierarchies of socioeconomic inequality, particularly to the disadvantage of Maya communities.

This inequality is rooted in the atrocities committed through colonial oppression, where colonizers from Spain executed centuries of genocide, slavery, sexual, religious and ideological violence, and much more against First Nations beginning in the 1500s. The following section marks some essential, enduring impacts of colonialism as it relates to tourism on the peninsula. This is non-exhaustive and furthermore does not detail exactly how these structures came in to place, but does provide some historical context. Among other, smaller groups of First Nations, specifically the Maya civilization is based on this Peninsula. Currently, the Yucatán Peninsula contains three Mexican states. Campeche to the West, the state of Yucatán in the middle, and Quintana Roo to the East, on the Caribbean. The peninsula also contains parts of Guatemala and Belize, but this paper is focused specifically on the Mexican peninsular states.

### *Colonial Context*

This paper accepts neocolonialism as a framework for investigating the physical and psychological realities of how intercultural tourism functions in Mexico today. This framework is informed by scholars in dependency theory, subaltern studies, cultural imperialism, postcolonial and neocolonial theories, particularly as they impact human geography through political economy. The key elements of this framework are drawn from several scholars; most prominent in this project's foundation are the works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Aimé Césaire, and Frantz Fanon. Frantz Fanon's work on the psychopathological impact of colonization is particularly relevant to this framework, in considering how colonization impacts not just the minds of colonizers but also the cultural survival, identity and self-conception of people who have been colonized. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as well as a Marxist understanding of cultural hegemony and is also at play in this framework.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's definition of colonialism, applied in this paper, is as follows: "[neocolonialism] starts with monopoly industrial capitalism which requires territorial imperialism in order to train up the subjects to establish markets, to free labour, and so on." (Spivak). Furthermore, in scholar Denise Fay Brown's work *Mayas and Tourists in the Maya World*, this paper utilizes her arguments that "societies require spaces and places in which to produce and reproduce. Loss of control over such spaces to another cultural or political entity is tantamount to the loss of the spaces themselves and loss of the most fundamental resource necessary for cultural survival" (Brown). In this framework, to lose ownership of space and of historical narrative is to lose original culture. To instigate the loss of cultural survival is then to kill culture, and to kill a culture is to kill a community. Therefore, as was true in the Spanish



colonization of First Nations across what is now Mexico, for one entity to manipulate space and narrative in this way is to neo-colonize. In this case of tourism in the Yucatan Peninsula, to neo-colonize is to continue the colonization of First Nation, predominantly Maya communities. This paper asserts neocolonialism as injustice and as a product of the neoliberal, globalized capitalist world economy.

### *Tourism in a Colonial Context*

In Mexico, The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) provides the following definition of tourism: “It is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people to places that are outside their usual place of residence, usually for leisure reasons” (INEGI). Moving forward with this project’s framework there are complications that arise that deem the industry structurally problematic. An essential question stands: how does tourism continue colonial structures in a colonial fashion, in today’s neoliberal context? In neocolonial, postcolonial, subaltern, etc. fields of study, the term ‘the other’ is often utilized to describe the ways that oppressed groups are categorized, oppressed, and consumed. This section seeks to categorize a few ways to consider this.

While there are many reasons for travel, and there may be more than one reason at play for why people travel, often people seek genuine’ or ‘authentic’ experiences of a culture to which they do not belong. While this may at times come from a place of appreciation or hoping to learn from a different culture, when the system by which the intercultural interaction occurs (the tourism industry) is problematic and reinforces colonial hegemony, travel then perpetuates elements of neocolonialism and the traveler is complicit. As mentioned in the introduction, there is widespread misunderstanding regarding the history and current lives of Maya people. For

many foreign tourists, they may only know the glorification of the fall of Maya Civilization. This often leads uninformed visitors to believe that Maya peoples no longer exist. Massive knowledge gaps such as this are an erasure of an entire group of people who are still living today. Maya peoples presently exist all across Mesoamerica and are ethnically, linguistically, spiritually, and culturally diverse. When parts of the tourism industry function off of reducing Maya history to stereotypes for tourists, this is part of neocolonial injustice.

The profit of the industry socioeconomically disadvantages local people, and in this context, especially historically First Nation groups through continued disempowerment, displacement, and disinvestment of communities in ways that perpetuate structures of colonial hierarchy. In the Yucatán, Maya history is central to the tourism industry. However people of Maya heritage don't reap equitable benefits of the tourism industry, even though the industry depends on Maya culture and history to attract tourists and often relies on migrants and Maya people to supply cheap labor in the development and service industry aspects of tourism.

Tourism has an impact not only in the immediate vicinity of tourist activity and infrastructure but also in communities far and wide whose communities are changed by people leaving to work in the industry. "The employment offered by construction has attracted thousands of Maya laborers to fill the lower echelons of the industry. Much of this work is linked to cycles of construction (heavy demand for cheap labor during the construction phase; few permanent jobs once construction is finished) or influenced by the fluctuating tourist market. It is a pattern of employment that entails minimal costs for the employer or the state." (Cultural Survival).

***Hegemony, the 'Built Environment', and Controlled Narrative***

In this project, to understand Yucatán tourism from a framework rooted in neocolonial geography, the goal is to examine what power dynamics look like in constructing the ‘built environment’ and what power dynamics look like in controlling the narrative about the significance and history of spaces and places. “The built environment is the human-made space in which people live, work, and recreate on a day-to-day basis. It includes the buildings and spaces we create or modify. It can extend overhead in the form of electric transmission lines and underground in the form of landfills” (Olery and Roof, 1).

The term ‘built environment’ refers not just to infrastructure but also to the process of creating space and place. Under neoliberal capitalism in this context, built environments are often constructed by those with privilege and those who align themselves with hegemonic objectives of maintaining the status quo. Thus building hegemonic environments in the context of colonized tourism then refers to development that is led by often elitist institutions like foreign investment companies, larger travel and resort agencies, sometimes the government, etc.

In terms of ‘controlling narrative’, this term calls into question who gets to create and distribute widely accepted meaning when it comes to space and place. Who defines and maintains cultural and spatial significance, and when it comes to tourism, what is the narrative that audiences consume when they come to the Yucatán Peninsula for a trip, maybe with few adequate references for Mexican culture and history, and how colonialism created enduring hierarchy.

This paper focuses on two particular cities on the Yucatán Peninsula for their touristic significance. The first city of concern is Cancun, located in the state of Quintana Roo, which is the second largest on the peninsula and sees the highest amount of tourists per year. Merida is the

second city of concern, which is the largest in population across the entire peninsula, and is the capital of the state of Yucatán.

A useful resource in framing this topic comes from the work of Henry Geddes Gonzales, professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. His work “Tourism, Mass Media, and the Making of Visual Culture in the Greater Yucatán Peninsula” provides many useful examples of how the current tourism industry benefits from the ‘othering’ of Maya people and their history and creates lasting cultural misunderstandings. He argues that representations of the peninsula in film play a key role in how people learn to perceive the people and places for which they don’t have previous context. The stereotyping that has occurred in video and film for many decades informs how foreigners consume culture in the Yucatán. The visual, cultural consumption is then carried by development choices that lead tourism investment in the direction of further stereotyping. This form of cultural consumption turned into investment opportunities supports the two-pronged argument of this paper: that tourism as a system in the peninsula demands problematic changes in the built environment while also commandeering the history and voice of the marginalized communities it is exploiting. This paper periodically refers to elements of Geddes Gonzales’ aforementioned piece and his discussion of how mass media information about the Yucatán influences what experiences are being sold to tourists and how it is done intentionally to exoticize Maya history.

In 1988 the governments of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico collaborated with the European Economic Community to organize a plan for capitalizing on tourism revenue by bolstering projects that promote what came to be called the “Mundo Maya” or “Maya World.” Through aligning historical information from diverse First Nation groups connected to Maya culture, the aforementioned parties coordinated and constructed public

memory on the history of archaeological sites and created a narrative they believed would be conducive to tourists (Brown).

The project produced a map in 1992 to represent this Maya World, only including places relevant to tourism infrastructure and not all places that were of Maya significance. This led to selective investment in infrastructure and selective storytelling around space and place, in their long-term plan to create destinations that would be attractive and competitive in the industry. This project reflects the manipulation of both narrative and physical space for the purpose of tourism; it continued and exacerbated the trend of profiting off of the backs of Maya peoples for the flow of foreign traffic and funds, hearkening to colonial patterns. In this sense the need for this flow of foreign activity and capital is due to the profitability of doing so under a neoliberalizing, globalizing world economic order: to act accordingly is to invest in what may seem to be the most economically secure future possible. This strategy augments “the impact of tourism projects of scale on physical and metaphysical spaces that a culture needs for their survival” (Brown).

In this light, in order for Maya culture to survive, the reclamation of the spaces and narratives is essential. Rooted from the earliest moments of colonial encounters, there is a “discursive subtext that continues to define contemporary space, visual culture, and forms of social being... it allows for the contemporary framing of nature as an idyllic playground for tourists and of the Maya as exotic remnants of a majestic past to be simultaneously desired and disavowed. The result is a symbolic order that is consistent with the geopolitical and cultural aspirations of empires past and current forms of transnationalism, a hierarchy of signs that naturalizes the accessibility, malleability, and subordination of the margins of the world system” (Gonzales). This adaption of space, place, history, and identity that was forever impacted by

colonialism is being perpetuated by the ways that tourism depends on cultural hegemony and exoticized stereotyping.

### ***Tourism and the Economy***

The tourism industry across Mexico plays a big role in the economy. Investment in Mexico's tourism is not a new endeavor. For more than forty years, the demand for tourism and consequent marketing and promotional campaigns has grown hand in hand with the establishment of coastal resorts that develop in concentrated areas (OECD 2017). In terms of economic policy, the tourism sector is of key interest. It was even included as "one of six priority sectors and sets out a strategic agenda to modernize and reposition Mexico's tourism industry globally and better harness the economic potential of the sector" for The National Development Plan 2013-18. Elements of this strategy included policy and planning goals such as investing in infrastructure and stimulating local and regional economies based on tourism. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) advises increased collaboration across levels of the Mexican government and the private sector (OECD 2017). This focus on the private sector creates opportunities for foreign investors. The OECD proposes that in order for the industry to be sustainable and inclusive enough to face increasing tourism traffic in the coming years there must be "greater involvement by government agencies with a more diverse and fragmented group of small and micro-enterprises, and policies to support smaller scale projects and small tourism businesses. This will require a deliberate and market-led policy focus on destination development and product diversification, supported by private sector investment." (OECD 2017).

Several entities have been central to this growth over previous decades and are actively preparing for the future. A key player in this growth is the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores/Secretary of Foreign Relations (SRE), which is the governmental department dedicated to developing Mexican tourism. The SRE webpage says the department's mission is to (in the researcher's translation) "lead the design and implementation of public policies oriented to strengthening tourist development, promote the sector's innovation, improve the quality of tourism services and competitiveness." (Gobierno de México). Another key player is The National Fund for Tourism Development (FONATUR). FONATUR, according to its website, is known as "the strategic instrument for the development of the tourist investment in Mexico" (FONATUR). It is an institution that is responsible for foreign direct investment in the tourism sector. As an organization it is "responsible for the planning and development of sustainable tourism projects, for selected investors." (Secretaría de las Relaciones Exteriores). FONATUR also runs what appears to be the central tourism webpages for the Yucatán and for all of Mexico.

Foreign investment is essential to understanding the tourism industry through a neocolonial framework due to its conversation around land usage and foreign ownership. According to the Santander bank website, in referencing data from investment network GlobalTrade.net (the International Trade Service Providers Directory), the Yucatán Peninsula is a unique recipient of significant FDI due to the tourism industry. However, for the rest of Mexico "foreign investments are mostly concentrated in towns neighbouring the U.S border (where many assembly factories are located), as well as in the capital" (Banco Santander). As considerable benefits for investing in Mexico, the webpage states the following: "the cost of labour (a young and abundant labour force) is not very high and is relatively well qualified [and

the] country is the 8th biggest tourist destination in the world and has in parallel a large and important industrial base” (Banco Santander).

### ***Domestic vs. International Tourism***

While domestic tourism is core to the industry, international tourism is concentrated in particular locations, perhaps creating a different kind of demand for resources, such as workers who speak English. What do international tourists need that domestic tourists do not? At this point it is important to note that not all travelers are international. Many travelers to the Yucatán Peninsula come from other states of Mexico, or are local to the area and visit these high-traffic, tourism locations. Traffic is both international and intranational. However, hosting international versus intranational tourists may reflect different experiences due to cultural and linguistic barriers, and it is essential to note here that the exotification of local culture will likely be received more easily and accepted as valid to those who are unfamiliar with Mexican culture in general, who may have limited cultural reference points from which they could move through spaces respectfully, as well as limited educational opportunities to learn essential histories of Mexico. According to the OECD, “domestic tourism is the mainstay of Mexico’s tourism sector, contributing 88 of every 100 Mexican pesos consumed by tourists in the country. Domestic tourists are more evenly spread across the territory and make an economic contribution in regions which do not attract international visitors. International demand is heavily concentrated in sun-sea sand destinations, including Cancún, the Riviera Maya and Los Cabos. Quintana Roo in the south-southeast region alone accounts for almost half of all international arrivals (47.5%) and almost two thirds of international overnights (62%). By comparison, 4% of domestic arrivals and 5.7% of domestic overnights are recorded in this state. “(OECD). According to the news



publication Mexico News Daily “the initiative was intended to diversify tourism beyond the beach destinations where most is concentrated” (Milenio).

Countless blogs discuss the significant opportunity for investment on the peninsula. For example, an author for [blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com](http://blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com) writes that. “All of this is fantastic news for anyone who has invested in vacation home rentals or any other type of real estate in Mexico and especially in the Riviera Maya region, which is still experiencing high levels of demand that often outpace supply, creating a “perfect storm” for real estate investment.” (Houghton).

### **Impacts of Tourism**

Given the significant economic role of the tourism industry, not just within states on the Yucatán Peninsula but across the country, there are consequential needs to accommodate for growth if it is to be sustained as a profitable area of development. For 2019, it has been predicted that there will be a 5.8 percent increase in “international tourist arrivals and a 4.3 percent jump in spending. In total, tourism contributes 8.7 percent of Mexico’s gross domestic product (GDP)” (Wood). To consider the ways in which tourism is understood to impact the host nation, an interesting source for consideration is a World Bank Report titled “20 Reasons Sustainable Tourism Counts For Development”. This source proposes that investment in the tourism industry is an effective development strategy (The World Bank Group).

Through this model the following list of twenty reasons in favor of sustainable tourism is organized in five categories. Under the first category are the following arguments that tourism creates “Sustainable Economic Growth” because it: “stimulates GDP Growth, increases international trade, boosts international investment, drives infrastructure development, and

supports low-income economies”. Category two concerns “Social inclusiveness, Employment, and Poverty Reduction” arguing that tourism “Creates jobs efficiently, promotes inclusive growth, strengthens rural communities, revitalizes urban areas, improves access to income via travel tech, benefits women, [and] bolsters artisans”. The third category concerns “Resource Efficiency, Environmental Protection, and Climate” because it “facilitates conservation, raises climate change awareness, [and] propels the blue economy”. The fourth category is “Cultural Values, Diversity, and Heritage” proposing that tourism “protects cultural sites [and] sustains intangible culture” while the fifth category on “Mutual Understanding, Peace, and Security” argues that tourism “spreads philanthropy, cultivates intercultural understanding, [and] aids post-conflict recovery” (The World Bank Group).

This report clearly sings the praises of what tourism can do when performed sustainably, through their model. While adapting to these changes means job creation, investment in infrastructure, and other benefits, when considering a more intersectional lens then this conversation of how tourism is carried out on the Mexican peninsula is not inclusive enough of First Nations. The World Bank was not specifically discussing industry planning in Mexico, however these twenty areas of interest are interesting to consider in the discourse of what powerful global entities are considering as the benefits of tourism, and how various elements of these twenty reasons are not beneficial for First Nations on the Yucatán peninsula.

While this report from one of the largest voices on the international stage proposes that tourism can be an effective and beneficial development strategy, it does attempt to acknowledge that it is not always entirely advantageous for everyone at all times. The report mentions that there are indeed ‘tradeoffs’. “When it is poorly planned, tourism can negatively impact cities, parks, and historic monuments, and put severe pressure on local infrastructure, resident

communities, and their resources” (The World Bank Group). The issue at hand is that what an international financial institution might consider ‘tradeoffs’ or externalities of a development strategy might be directly affecting the lives of people and the survival of communities within various systems, and likely communities that already suffer deeply. To consider the exact twenty facets of sustainable tourism development that the report mentions, it is not likely that each of these goals are clearly met by the industry in the Yucatán Peninsula. In the case of applying the World Bank suggestions to the Peninsula, by not centering Maya voices and leadership or equitably investing in accessibility to various resources, positioning modern, rapidly-growing tourism as a leading facet of the economy will only perpetuate systemic problems against Maya people.

Interestingly, the flow of tourism in terms of people as units of analysis is reminiscent of colonial relationships. According to a 2007 “Research Report: The lingering effects of colonialism on tourist movements” by Bob McKercher and Patrick L’Espoir Decosta, around the world “colonial legacy plays a disproportionately strong role in influencing long-haul destination choice among European and American tourists”. Essentially, tourists from colonizer countries travel to the historical places that their country previously colonized. People whose ancestors were colonizers can now visit lands of their previous colonies and be a tourist, then placing a demand for infrastructure and service industries to cater to them, which are naturally staffed by people who they previously colonized. Regarding the Yucatán peninsula, this is continuing the power structure of keeping the most marginalized communities in place by limiting their socioeconomic mobility.

A key aspect of how the tourism industry functions in Mexico (and in many other places around the world) involves the dependence upon cheap labor. Part of what also makes this

process rooted in neocolonialism, aside from dependence upon cheap labor, is the way in which private property is a colonial tool for taking land from local ownership, rendering its occupation by foreign entities. Scholar Tamar Diana Wilson, author of “Economic and Social Impacts of Tourism in Mexico”, writes that “for over two decades Mexico has attracted the most foreign tourists and foreign currency of any country in the Third World” (Wilson). While the usage of the term “Third World” is problematic, the key point from this resource is that the involvement of foreign activities and monies because of tourism has been significant for Mexico’s economy for a long period of time.

### *Peninsular Case Studies*

Regarding a discourse analysis around this theme, what seems relevant in tourism marketing is reaching out to modern, technological resources to carry the success forward. The main Yucatán travel website <http://yucatan.travel/en/home/> (run by SEFOTUR) has a tagline that reads “No travel is complete if it is not on instagram” (Yucatán Travel). This is rhetorical appeal to a young audience prone to posting on social media. The statement implies that the storytelling of space and place from a tourist lens is essential to a satisfying experience. In this logic, the fulfillment of travel is complete when it is shown to others. From the perspective of the public relations team running this Yucatán travel website, they are tapping into their audience and the modern tendency to share trip photos on social media. By modernizing the tourist experience through suggesting a guarantee of instagram-worthy pictures the website suggests that the Yucatán is conducive to this young audience of tourists.

In terms of the industry in the Yucatán Peninsula specifically, locations across the peninsula can be marketed differently depending on their reputation. For example, Cancun is

known for its “high-glitzy, flash-and-trash tourism” (Brown). The beach-vacation aspects of Cancún’s tourism identity have been solidified for decades. People often come for this type of tourist culture (and its reputation) which is spreading across the peninsula due to its economic success. Mérida, on the other hand, is often marketed for its ‘authentic culture’, where glorification of colonial history or mystification of Maya culture is commonplace.

### *Cancún*

Cancún is widely known as a city of mega-tourism. It was previously was a fishing village on a minor scale but FONTAUR changed the course of history in the 1970s in gearing the city towards a track of tourism. “Today it is now a city of three-quarters of a million people that attracts millions of visitors every year. But with little foresight or planning for their environmental impact, Cancún has suffered from deforestation, pollution, sewage problems, and habitat loss” (Pskowski).

It is a place many folks may know of for its sunny beaches and resorts, or maybe its reputation as a rowdy spring break destination for college-aged partiers. Cancún’s development as a form of beach resort city is due to massive amounts of tourist traffic. Continued investment in tourism infrastructure has naturally created more tourism. However, like in Cancún’s ‘hotel zone’, when hotels, resorts, restaurants, bars and clubs are built and expand spatially, in terms of urban development this causes gentrification and high costs of life for residents. As is the case with many other locations, this process also depends on migration to exploit workers and pay them low wages, which socioeconomically fortifies colonial hegemony.

On this topic, federal delegate of the Secretary of Labor Enol Pérez said “it is estimated that some 300 people arrive daily in the northern part of the state in search of better work and life

opportunities” and that out of the people arriving “a majority are of the “indigenous” population from various areas of the country... [who] arrive without any tourist work experience and/or lack of basic education and training and are exploited in low-paying jobs.” (Secretary of Labor Enoel Perez). This situation represents part of how neocolonialism plays out in the current tourism industry: through maintaining class struggle for people who are of Maya background.

For an example of how tourism impacts who competes for the narrative around Cancun, one can look to the renaming of the Cancún-Tulum corridor as the Riviera Maya. This was pushed by the Playa del Carmen Hotel Association in the late 1990s. This is a name summoning thoughts of the French Riviera, but revised to call upon Maya culture. This new name is then referential to a localized history of tourism. A key source for this section of my paper comes from a 2008 Henry Geddes Gonzales publication titled “Tourism, Mass Media, and the Making of Visual Culture in the Greater Yucatan Peninsula”. He writes that processes like the re-naming of this area are “exercises in the active "writing" of territory to shape it in accordance with a system of signs associated with an expanding tourism economy, in line with a neoliberal regime sanctioned by Mexican elites and their transnational associates” (Gonzales 51). Cancún is a “city which was conceived, planned, and built to receive visitors... and is therefore physically as well as symbolically essential to the Maya World landscape of the outsider” (Brown). With these concepts in mind, from a neocolonial framework it is clear that Cancún is exemplary of how tourism manipulates space and controls cultural hegemony.

### ***Mérida***

Similar hegemonic claiming and naming of space is seen in the city of Mérida. While not a homogenous experience across urban space, Mérida is a segregated city experiencing urban

sprawl that often further marginalizes people of Maya background. As aforementioned, Merida is already facing geographical inequality. Gentrification plays a role in this, and sometimes can be created by tourism in the form of 'overtourism'. Overtourism can be created in the following way: "Hosts can undercut nearby hotels and hostels, rooms open up in already-saturated districts, and as the "home share" concept becomes ever more commercialised, the demand for apartments means that rents are pushed up, and local people are pushed out" (Responsible Travel).

Some important historical information about this area is that from the early 1900s and into the 1980s the Yucatán economy was rooted in agriculture, and there was a largely monocrop system around henequén. Henequén or Sisal is an agave or cactus-like plant whose fibers were utilized to create twine. This was a major export to farmers from the United States before synthetics became more commonplace, which then caused the industry to suffer mid-1900s, and the Yucatán economy turned more towards tourism (Loewe and Taylor).

In that shift, the narrative around henequén production also changed. It was produced in places called 'haciendas'. The word 'hacienda' literally translates to 'estate' or 'ranch'. But many were essentially plantations. These estates were called "Haciendas henequeneras". What was considered more of a system of serfdom was in actuality a system of slavery, where Maya peoples were held to the land to perform labor for Yucatecan elites of the agricultural industry. The main buildings on the estates were expansive, elaborately decorated, and were homes to these elites. Before them, many of the estates were owned by Spanish colonizers. This reflects the perpetual, augmented socioeconomic hierarchy from colonial roots that enslaved Maya peoples, but in its shift into a globalizing, nearing neoliberal world economy. There are haciendas all across the peninsula, but due to Yucatecan elites moving to Mérida some of the

biggest haciendas were around the city. The locations of haciendas henequeneras spatially impacted urban development in and around the city over the years (ASRI).

A look at the state of Yucatán's governmental webpage on haciendas describes their current function as such, in the researcher's own translated summarization: "That the haciendas have been able to recover their splendor and growth by those who are people of great sensibility and lovers of regional culture, who invested massive sums in their restoration, have converted them into hotels, restaurants, luxury hostels, museums, recreational and cottage homes or in profitable destinations for social events" (Gobierno del Estado de Yucatán). Knowing that the Maya were forced into slave labor on these estates, this begs an important question, given that the government frames the restoration and repurposing in this way: to whose 'regional culture' are they referring? Surely this is not a full reflection of what haciendas meant for the historical, regional culture of the Maya. Repurposing space is important and this paper does not propose that it is wrong to reclaim the spaces this way. However, from the resources used in this project, it appears that this was a deliberate and collaborative economic plan between the Yucatán state government and private investors to catch more traffic from tourists moving from Cancun and Chichén Itzá as they traveled West (Loewe and Taylor). This was a model of "diversification" in moving away from the henequen monocrop economy to a romanticized illusion of life on a hacienda to attract more tourists. This has proved to be an effective strategy.

Apart from the statistical evidence of tourist traffic, the discourse of haciendas from an international perspective can be observed on the internet through blogs and expatriate community groups. The news website "Yucatán Expat Life" reports that Yucatán ranks number 3 in all of Mexico for 'romance tourism'. Furthermore, that "a billion pesos was spent in 2018 on weddings at Yucatán haciendas, beaches and hotels" which are popular for the infrastructure,



accessibility by air travel, and public safety” (Yucatán Expat Life). Clearly marketing a romanticized version of haciendas has paid well.

However, at this juncture, working from this framework, one must ask again the question of historical erasure. For whom are the haciendas locations of “public safety”? Does it not further perpetuate hegemonic oppression by robbing Maya people of the historical truth of the haciendas being widespread public knowledge? Organizations, private groups, and individuals then profit off of turning these spaces from plantations into tourist destinations and event halls. The injustice compounds with revenue from these tourism enterprises not flowing equitably into the communities who supplied the labor and built the estates. The problem is further complicated with the low-wage job positions in tourism enterprises being filled by the same marginalized communities. The Loewe and Taylor article references the high cost of staying in hacienda hotels and the proportionately abysmal wage for workers. This is just one example of how controlling narratives is carried out today by tourist ventures. It reflects the perpetual, augmented hierarchy from colonial roots that enslaved Maya peoples, but in its shift into a globalizing, neoliberal world economy.

Also to note at this point, the state of “Yucatán received 110 million dollars in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2017. Most of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) received by Yucatán in 2016 was toward the transportation and warehousing services” but this 2017 report does not clarify how much of that FDI was involved with the tourism industry (Secretaría de Economía).

### ***Neocolonial Discourse: The Case of The New York Times***

The following sections will utilize some primary sources of literature that travelers might come across as they plan a trip, which could inform their cultural perceptions and anticipated experiences when traveling to Mérida. This impacts what was described earlier as the narrative surrounding space and place. This narrative generates serious revenue and effectively attracts tourists, and as will be discussed, also often attracts visitors to become expats and settle down in Mérida as residents.

*The New York Times* published a travel article in February 2019 titled “Shaped by Mérida’s Artistic Soul”. It was written by travel writer Peter Haldeman, who went to Mérida to stay with friends and create a guide of sorts for city visitors. This source, with the New York Times’ wide readership, can be a significant source of information for understanding how foreigners from the United States may be getting educated about Mérida and how they may be consuming cultural perceptions which were observed and published from a white, male, journalist, United States’ resident’s lens rather than from a local voice. This would theoretically create a collective imagination surrounding space and place that is not based on personally contextualized ‘authenticity’ but rather storytelling from the limited, non-local, international perspective of the traveler.

The cultural importance of New York Times in the United States is essential to understanding why this source matters. As a journalism company, it has won 127 Pulitzer Prizes and has the second-largest United States circulation and ranks 18th in world circulation (The New York Times). This article is a source from which this paper gathers information about how Mérida is perceived from a white, male, journalist, United States’ resident’s lens United States perspective. While it may contain only the reflections of author Peter Haldeman, he invokes common themes of a foreigner’s consumption of a trip to Mérida. Furthermore, the wide

readership likely expected for this article suggests the perpetuation of how these intercultural experiences are marketed in mass media. This is a form of sharing knowledge, and places Haldeman in the position of a 'cultural broker'.

As he writes, since he is a popular United States journalist for *The New York Times*, he is thinking of his audience as he prepares information. From a background of seemingly peripheral cultural context, he is selling an experience to *The New York Times* readership. He is catering to what he imagines is his audience's desire for media consumption. Haldeman's piece will be used to bring up several trends in how international travel to Mérida is conducted and creates a lasting impact, ultimately changing the urban landscape and culture. He begins the article with some anecdotal information about conversations with expats living in Mérida and hearing their perspective. He begins describing the urban landscape as a "magnet for creative souls from both sides of the border and beyond. They come from the United States and Canada, Mexico City and Europe, lured by the city's un-Disneyfied Mayan and colonial heritage" (Haldeman). By his standards, the Maya identity he sees as a traveler is not a reduced version of stereotype cultural signifiers. By calling the Maya heritage in Mérida 'un-Disneyfied' he suggests that what he sees as a traveler is not heavily influenced by tourism. This might not be the truth for most people who are coming to visit depending on their previous education, where they are visiting, what they are doing, and how they are talking about it. It makes one wonder with which specific elements of Maya culture he could be interacting.

He implies that visitors seek and sell the importance of an 'authentic' experience of Mérida. Ironically, the more people who come looking for that experience this will ultimately end up making this untrue. If Mérida is a place for foreigners to work and make a living while consuming and likely not participating and contributing to the culture in an informed way, then

what is perceived as an ‘authentic’ space is changed by the arrival of more and more people. This irony is seemingly lost to Haldeman initially because in the next few paragraphs of the article he mentions how visitors fall in love with the city so much that they begin to purchase land and spaces for themselves, hinting at a neocolonial phenomenon that creates urban gentrification and other implications in the process.

Haldeman writes that “happily for first-time visitors, more than a few of those who return and buy renovate their homes as boutique hotels or rentals” (Haldeman). He continues by mentioning a few different examples, ranging from “intimate B & B’s” to more luxury options, and brings up how the company Urbano Rentals provides options in restored homes within the centro historico (Haldeman).

A visit to the Urbano Rentals website can read the words of the company designers, two New York artists who created luxury rentals for vacationers after their 2001 move to Yucatán. They write the following, regarding their inspiration for creating their business:

“After our fashionista friends from Paris could not find a place to stay we got to work. Now we offer a selection of the finest designer homes in the historic center for your vacation. We hope you will feel at home in our houses, more like an expat than at tourist. We will help you plan your vacation and itinerary or we will leave you in peace. Read more about us, look over our properties and contact us when you are ready to experience the Best of Yucatan!”  
(Urbano Rentals).

From the point of view of these non-local designers from New York, they possess the key to unlock the ‘Best of Yucatán’ experiences that create a more ‘authentic’ experience, making the tourists feel like a longer-term expat resident of the city. This is a way to sell and market the city to a tourist from a previous tourist who knows what will likely be attractive to other visitors. By referencing their ‘fashionista friends from Paris’ needing a place deemed worthy enough to stay during their vacation as a source of inspiration for creating luxury rental homes, they expose their more niche audience of elitist, financially privileged travelers.

Haldeman uses some language that is reminiscent of a neocolonial perspective throughout the article. He uses the word ‘frontier’ to describe, a word that alludes to where the edge of settlement or civilization meets undeveloped land or wilderness (Merriam-Webster). By positing developing urbanity as the frontier Haldeman suggests that the previous space and the people living in the changing areas are part of what is undeveloped or in the wilderness, creating an exoticizing effect. In this logic between the lines, whoever is contributing to urban proliferation is a pioneer, or colonist of sorts.

In Haldeman’s anecdotes he also refers to his tour guide Fabio in ways that focus on particular details of his character that tend to essentialize who he is and how he talks about Maya peoples. When describing historical information he learned about the ancient Maya city of Uxmal, Haldeman writes that “competitions [at the grass-covered Ballcourt] generally concluded with a human sacrifice, Fabio said, doing a little pantomime of the victor having his heart ripped out and offered to the gods, his gold teeth sparkling in the mist” (Haldeman 2019). By focusing on Fabio’s gold teeth, Haldeman intentionally creates a visual of Fabio’s identity through his appearance with unclear intentions. He reduces Fabio to his gold teeth and animated telling of history, exoticizing both Fabio and the Maya history being told.

Furthermore, this description of human sacrifice in ancient Maya culture fails to mention the spiritual context for why the sacrifices were performed. Haldeman says the sacrifices were done after sport competitions but does not mention how sacrifices were meant to please the gods within a religio-spiritual context. He makes it a playful, exoticized description of the conversation and the topic and then moves quickly to the next topic of the article: the urban development of Merida.

To reference again the renovation of haciendas around Merida and their significance to tourism in the area, Haldeman's article describes a conversation with United States expats living in Merida. Expats named Laura and Richard compare hacienda restoration to the process of raising children, in the sense that the task is far greater than one realizes at the outset. To that end, it may also be true that the cultural and economic impact of doing so is also different than developers and renovators realize at the beginning. However, the article only mentions the experience of the expat-restorers, not the people who often work for low wages at hacienda resorts or the people who suffered at the haciendas when they were in production mode for the henequén agricultural economy of previous decades.

Haldeman wraps up the article with some more anecdotal moments. He says that "expat colonies can be insular, but Merida's outlanders are establishing deep roots here" (Haldeman). Here, he even uses the word 'colonies' to describe the proliferation of expat culture and space-claiming in the city. He concludes in a somewhat antithetical manner by referring to some of the ways expats he interviewed view problematizing phenomenon of the city growth, in a discussion they had over dinner. He mentions that not everybody is excited about the urban change and how traffic and noise are changing comfortability for people, and furthermore that "the Levi's plant was polluting the water with toxic dyes" (Haldeman). Laura, the aforementioned New York

expat who lives in a restored hacienda, says that “anybody looking for ‘a good place to be creative’ still couldn't do better than Merida -- a point disrupted by no one” (Haldeman).

The concept of a ‘creative city’ seems to suggest several things: that Merida is a place for inspiration, and that it is also a place for a specific group of people. One can read Richard Florida’s work regarding ‘The Creative Class’ and how it supports a form of urban development that draws in artist-types as a strategy to spur growth and craft an ‘artistic’ identity. (Florida’s 2002 publication “The Rise of the Creative Class: and How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life”). This urban development strategy has proven to be popular amongst planners since its publication. Florida tapped into the ears of professionals and politicians who employed his framework around the world, elevating him to celebrity status. However, he has since retracted some elements of his initial arguments. Some significant criticisms against the ‘creative class’ theory are based upon how his arguments can be discriminatory along intersectional lines when considering whose ‘creativity’ is often prioritized, which tends to create further inroads for the already privileged people of society to continue claiming territory across urban geography. A key scholar who considers the Creative Class strategy problematic is Jamie Peck (geography professor at the University of British Columbia, Canada). He considers the ways in which it can create identification and disadvantage particular communities. In his piece “Struggling with the Creative Class”, Jamie Peck states the following:

“for all the talk of local ‘authenticity’; they reconstitute  
urban-elitist, ‘leadership’ models of city governance,  
despite their ritual invocation of grassroots efforts...  
and they discursively and institutionally select subnational  
scales, highlighting in particular gentrifying urban neighborhoods

as the preeminent sites for both privileged forms of creative action and necessary modes of political proaction, the places that can and must act. As such, creativity strategies subtly canalize and constrain urban-political agency, even as their material payoffs remain extraordinarily elusive. The cult of urban creativity is therefore revealed in its true colors, as a form of soft law/lore for a hypercompetitive age. (Peck, 67-768)".

Jamie Peck's critical perspective of Florida's 'Creative Class' aligns with the arguments of this paper when it comes to unpacking what this development strategy means for a city like Mérida. *The New York Times* article by Peter Haldeman is entitled "Shaped by Mérida's Artistic Soul". Haldeman's central argument in this article summons Richard Florida's 'creative class'. Even if Mérida urban planners are not working based off of Florida's arguments, *The New York Times* is still selling travel to Mérida seemingly informed from this strategy: that stamping a location with a creative identity attracts traffic from the United States (and a particular category of visitor traffic that tends to be financially privileged). Furthermore, this strategy aims to be effective at marketing travel in order to uphold *The New York Times*' reputation as a credible source of information.

One can wonder at this point about what this 'creative' rhetoric does in supporting development trends in Mérida, and how it is impacting different groups. Mérida is already a segregated city and investment in the 'creative class', which articles like Haldeman in *The New York Times* seems to advocate, will likely further contribute to the long-standing problems. As has been previously discussed, the long-standing inequality is rooted in the history of peninsular colonization, and the rhetoric used in *The New York Times* article frames how tourism is likely to



perpetuate these inequalities and control the narrative of space and place for how United States travelers conceptualize their trip abroad.

### *Conclusion*

Ultimately this paper concludes by answering the question: How does the tourism industry reinforce colonial hegemony? It does so by exoticizing Maya history and exploiting Maya communities. The tourism industry is the largest service industry around the world and is facing consistent growth (The World Bank Group). This topic is significant because it considers how tourism functions through neocolonial structures and reinforces hegemony through its socioeconomic impact. It pays attention to the local impact that tourism has on particularly marginalized communities in society, most specifically Mayan people whose history and identity are both historically and directly impacted by colonialism and neocolonialism. Evidence for this is the widespread socioeconomic oppression of Mayan communities across Mexico.

Largely, this paper examined the topic of interest through a foundation in neocolonial theory, qualitative and quantitative information on how tourism functions in Mexican society, and considerations of demographics who profit from and are most directly impacted by tourism. This analysis pays close attention to how spaces of Mayan significance are marketed. This is a potential cultural transaction that sells an exotified and romanticized narrative of Mayan identity to attract tourist traffic (while discrimination against people of Mayan descent is still strong in society today) thereby pointing to a form of neocolonialism that reduces and profits off of Mayan culture. Understanding that this is injustice, moving forward it is therefore essential to consider spaces where tourism benefits local groups, where there may be progressive socioeconomic empowerment, and where the agency of local communities is strengthened.

This paper in no way denies the importance that tourism has in oftentimes creating jobs, increasing GDP, or that it has benefits for people of all classes and backgrounds and opportunities for social mobility. But as one can discern, that's not the full picture. Maya communities have also been able to find agency in the industry, fight against certain narratives, and push for more rights and recognition. Some examples of this are in protests and solidarity movements (like of the Zapatistas), in micro enterprising initiatives, in festivals and public celebrations of Maya identity (when organized and led by Maya people), in teaching Maya history in educational spaces and much more.

## Works Cited

- ASRI. "GESTIÓN DEL PATRIMONIO ARTÍSTICO EN EL MUNICIPIO DE MÉRIDA, YUCATÁN, MÉXICO: LAS HACIENDAS HENEQUENERAS." [Http://Asri.eumed.net](http://Asri.eumed.net), Arte y Sociedad Revista De Investigación, 2019, asri.eumed.net/0/rzc.html.
- Banco Santander. "WELCOME TO SANTANDER TRADE." [Https://En.portal.santandertrade.com/](https://En.portal.santandertrade.com/), Banco Santander, 2019, en.portal.santandertrade.com/establish-overseas/mexico/foreign-investment.
- Brown, Denise Fay. "Mayas and Tourists in the Maya World." *Human Organization*, vol. 58, no. 3, 1999, pp. 295–304. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/44127225](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44127225).
- Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine. "TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN QUINTANA ROO, MEXICO." [Https://Www.culturalsurvival.org/](https://Www.culturalsurvival.org/), Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine, Mar. 1990, [www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/tourism-development-quintana-roo-mexico](http://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/tourism-development-quintana-roo-mexico).
- FONATUR. "Home Page." [Http://Www.fonatur.mx/En/](http://Www.fonatur.mx/En/), The National Fund for Tourism Development, 2019, [www.fonatur.mx/en/](http://www.fonatur.mx/en/).
- Gobierno del Estado de Yucatán. "Haciendas." [Http://Www.yucatan.gob.mx](http://Www.yucatan.gob.mx), Juntos Transformamos Yucatán Estatal 2018-2024, 2019, [www.yucatan.gob.mx/?p=haciendas](http://www.yucatan.gob.mx/?p=haciendas).
- Gobierno de México. "Sitio De Secretaría De Turismo." [Https://Www.gob.mx](https://Www.gob.mx), 2019, [www.gob.mx/sectur/#192](http://www.gob.mx/sectur/#192).
- Gonzales, Henry Geddes. "Tourism, Mass Media, and the Making of Visual Culture in the Greater Yucatan Peninsula." *Journal of Film and Video*, vol. 60 no. 2, 2008, pp. 50-58. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/jfv.0.0003
- Haldeman, Peter. "Shaped by Meridas Artistic Soul." [Https://Www.nytimes.com](https://Www.nytimes.com), The New York Times, 25 Feb. 2019, [www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/travel/shaped-by-meridas-artistic-soul.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/travel/shaped-by-meridas-artistic-soul.html).
- Houghton, Richard. "2018 Mexico Tourism Numbers Show 'Exponential Growth.'" [Https://Blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com/](https://Blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com/), Investment Feed, 30 Oct. 2018, [blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com/investment/2018-mexico-tourism-numbers-show-exponential-growth](http://blog.investmentpropertiesmexico.com/investment/2018-mexico-tourism-numbers-show-exponential-growth).

- INEGI. "Number of International Visitors Entering the Country by Tourism Category According to Transport." 2019, doi:  
[http://en.www.inegi.org.mx/temas/turismo/default.html#Tabular\\_data](http://en.www.inegi.org.mx/temas/turismo/default.html#Tabular_data).
- Loewe, Ron, and Sarah Taylor. "Neoliberal Modernization At The Mexican Periphery: Gender, Generation And The Construction Of A New, Flexible Workforce." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development*, vol. 37, no. 3/4, 2008, pp. 357–392. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/40553413](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40553413).
- Merriam-Webster. "Frontier." <https://www.merriam-webster.com>, Merriam-Webster, 2019, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/frontier](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/frontier).
- Milenio. "Budget Cuts Halted Plans for Three Sustainable Tourism Projects." <https://mexiconewsdaily.com/News/>, Mexico News Daily, 2 Dec. 2018, [mexiconewsdaily.com/news/budget-cuts-halted-plans-for-thre-tourism-projects/](http://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/budget-cuts-halted-plans-for-thre-tourism-projects/).
- OECD. "Tourism Policy Review of Mexico", OECD Studies on Tourism, *OECD Publishing*, Paris. 2017. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264266575-en>
- Peck, Jamie, and International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. "Struggling with the Creative Class." *Struggling with the Creative Class*, vol. 29, no. 4, 2005, pp. 740–770., doi:[https://www.academia.edu/33637421/Struggling\\_with\\_the\\_Creative\\_Class](https://www.academia.edu/33637421/Struggling_with_the_Creative_Class).
- Pskowski, Martha. "Mexico's 'Mayan Train' Is Bound for Controversy." <https://www.citylab.com>, CityLab, 22 Feb. 2019, [www.citylab.com/environment/2019/02/mexico-travel-mayan-train-yucatan-tourism-economic-development/583405/](http://www.citylab.com/environment/2019/02/mexico-travel-mayan-train-yucatan-tourism-economic-development/583405/).
- Responsible Travel. "OVERTOURISM - WHAT IS IT, AND HOW CAN WE AVOID IT?" <https://www.responsibletravel.com/>, Responsible Travel, 2019, [www.responsibletravel.com/copy/what-is-overtourism](http://www.responsibletravel.com/copy/what-is-overtourism).
- Roof, Karen, and Ngozi Oleru. "Public Health: Seattle and King County's Push for the Built Environment ." *Journal of Environmental Health*, vol. 71, no. 1, July 2008, doi:<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6315/7a403f36a9c1c40e41f0b27c5a219ebb482c.pdf>.
- Secretaría de Economía. "Why Invest in Yucatán?" [Http://mim.promexico.gob](http://mim.promexico.gob), Secretaria De Economía, 2017, [mim.promexico.gob.mx/work/models/mim/Documentos/PDF/mim/FE\\_YUCATAN\\_vfi.pdf](http://mim.promexico.gob.mx/work/models/mim/Documentos/PDF/mim/FE_YUCATAN_vfi.pdf).

Secretaría de las Relaciones Exteriores. “Mexico: Investment Opportunities in Tourism.”

<https://Embamex.sre.gob.mx/>,

<https://Embamex.sre.gob.mx/Republicacheca/Index.php/Es/Avisos/447-Mexico-Investment-Opportunities-in-Tourism>, 2019, El gobierno de México.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, and Robert J.C. Young. “Neocolonialism and the Secret Agent of Knowledge.” *Oxford Literary Review*, 1991,

doi:<http://robertjcyoung.com/Spivakneocolonialism.pdf>.

The World Bank Group. “Tourism as Development: 20 Reasons Sustainable Tourism Counts for Development.” *Knowledge Series*, 2017,

doi:<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/28388/119954-WP-PUBLIC-SustainableTourismDevelopment.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

Urbano Rentals. “Best of Yucatan.” <https://Urbanorentals.com/>, Urbano Rentals, 2019, [urbanorentals.com/](http://urbanorentals.com/).

U.S. Department of Labor. “Statement of Labor Secretary Perez on January Employment Numbers.” <https://www.prnewswire.com/News>, U.S. Department of Labor, 7 Feb. 2014, [www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/statement-of-labor-secretary-perez-on-january-employment-numbers-244252711.html](http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/statement-of-labor-secretary-perez-on-january-employment-numbers-244252711.html).

Wilson, Tamar Diana. “Economic and Social Impacts of Tourism in Mexico.” *Latin American Perspectives*, vol. 35, no. 3, May 2008, pp. 37–52, doi:10.1177/0094582X08315758.

Wood, Donald. “Mexican Tourism Officials Predict 45 Million International Visitors in 2019.” <https://www.travelpulse.com>, TravAlliancemedi, 10 Dec. 2018, [www.travelpulse.com/news/destinations/mexican-tourism-officials-predict-45-million-international-visitors-in-2019.html](http://www.travelpulse.com/news/destinations/mexican-tourism-officials-predict-45-million-international-visitors-in-2019.html).

Yucatan Expat Life. “Yucatan Is No. 3 in Mexico for ‘Romance Tourism.’”

<https://Yucatanexpatlife.com>, Yucatan Expat Life, 29 Jan. 2019, [yucatanexpatlife.com/yucatan-is-no-3-in-mexico-for-romance-tourism/](http://yucatanexpatlife.com/yucatan-is-no-3-in-mexico-for-romance-tourism/).

Yucatán Travel. “Archaeological Sites.” <http://Yucatan.travel/En/Home/>, 2018, [yucatan.travel/en/home/](http://yucatan.travel/en/home/).