

UCLA

UCLA Historical Journal

Title

Interethnic Mayan and Afro-descendent Relations through War, Trade, and Slavery during the Mayan Caste Wars, 1848-1901

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0538c4tt>

Journal

UCLA Historical Journal, 28(1)

ISSN

0276-864X

Author

Serrano Nájera, José Luis

Publication Date

2017

Peer reviewed

ARTICLES

Interethnic Mayan and Afro-descendent Relations through War, Trade, and Slavery during the Mayan Caste Wars, 1848-1901

José Luis Serrano Nájera, Ph.D.
California State University, Long Beach
Lecturer, Department of History

Introduction

Many times in modern history, complex interethnic relations are oversimplified, obscured, and even hidden by nationalist attempts to create homogeneous and hegemonic national identities. Moreover, international political economies depend on oversimplified and demonized depictions of exploitable labor forces to rationalize injustice. However, sometimes critical thinkers begin to ask the questions that defy nationalist or international trends. In Mexico, Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán published his landmark study on the peoples of African descent in Mexico in 1946 to begin defying the obscured history of these peoples in the Mexican nationalist imaginary.¹ Since then, interest in the Mexico's African-descent population has gradually increased, and scholars have shed light on the significance of this population in Mexico. For instance, some scholars found that although 678,000 Spaniards arrived in Spanish America between 1500 and 1750, the 716,000 Africans that arrived during the same time period outnumbered them.² Yet demographic studies only partially address a historical understanding of African descent peoples' impact on Mexican society and culture, or vice versa. Furthermore, interethnic and racial contact between Afro-descendants and other ethnic groups occurred in Mexico long after the colonial era ended. In this essay, I will provide a focus on the contributions of African descent peoples in the

Yucatán peninsula during the late nineteenth-century. Through specific foci on regions and time periods, much more is revealed about how 716,000 Africans and their descendents impact intercultural relations with and among Native Americans and Europeans, and how these relations impact cultural and social change and continuity over time among Mexico's diverse peoples.

Consequently, the broader purpose of this paper is to contribute to an awareness of the cultural and social role of African descent peoples in the history of late colonial and nineteenth-century Mexico. Since that objective is much too broad for one essay, I specifically focus on the ethnic relations between African descent peoples and Mayans in communities of the Yucatán peninsula during the 1847 to 1901 *Guerra de Castas* or Caste Wars. This period offers unique insights to interethnic relations in a region and time where Indigenous peoples maintained autonomy from western powers, which influenced the parameters of the dynamic interactions between African descent and Native American peoples. A focus on ethnic relations between Mayans and peoples of African descent, instead of peoples of African descent and Europeans or Native Americans and Europeans, reveals a world of colonial and nineteenth-century ethnic relations that was not limited by a historical paradigm of European or metropolitan centers and colonial or rural peripheries. However, I do not ignore the significance of European colonialism and nineteenth-century imperialism since they have been major determinants of the context of Indigenous and African ethnic relations in the Americas since 1492.

To examine Mayan and African descended peoples' interaction during the nineteenth-century *Guerra de Castas*, or Caste Wars, I utilized both quantitative and qualitative sources to depict the social, political, and cultural context of the Yucatán peninsula. I consulted census data that provided documentation of the racial make-up of late colonial Yucatán. After Mexican independence, the *casta* system was dismantled and Mexican officials stopped collecting data on *casta* racial categories. Nevertheless, late colonial census figures provide a racial demographic picture of the area before Mexican independence and establish substantial Afro-descendent population in the Yucatán that continued to live there after independence. I also examined court documents that depict Caste War era sale of Mayans to Cuba as part of a revival of international slave trade of prisoners of war. As discussed later in this essay, these documents point towards Mayan and Afro-descendent interethnic relations outside the Yucatán that resulted from the Caste Wars. Moreover, British colonial records from Belize document both the trade with Mayan soldiers and Yucatec Mayan refugees that worked alongside Afro-descendents as lumberjacks.

Although the aforementioned sources make reference to interethnic contact in the Yucatán, and as a result of the Caste Wars outside the peninsula, they do so sparingly. Mexican and British colonial officials did not concentrate their efforts on documenting ethnic relations between Afro-descendents and Mayans, but instead focused on describing the area's trade, population, and political

development as it related to national or colonial control. Moreover, in the context of war and the rural nature of most of the peninsula makes these sources sparse and perhaps inaccurate. Yet, the sources examined in this essay can direct future ethnographic research that perhaps can document oral history among Mayans and Afro-descendants (primarily in Belize) who hopefully have retained information regarding interethnic relations and possible cultural exchange during the Caste Wars. In doing so, scholars can further clarify what I broadly argue in this article, which is that the influence of African descent peoples in Mexico continued after the colonial era and into the twentieth century. This focus on the Caste Wars is also important because when the racialized influence of Western political hegemony is diminished in autonomous Indigenous zones, alternative forms of cultural identity construction are revealed. Thus, I contend that Mayans and Afro-descendants during the Caste Wars demonstrated co-equal race relations even in the midst of the highly racialized social hierarchies that prevailed in the context of transnational nineteenth-century imperial nation building in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America.

Historiography

The study of Native American and African descent peoples in Mexico parallels broader studies on the impact of the African Diaspora in the western hemisphere. Thus, the following historiography relates the topic of Native American and African interactions with historical studies on the African social and cultural presence in Mexico. An examination of these two bodies of literature provides valuable insights to the historical contexts of Black and Maya co-equal race relations during the late nineteenth century.

Africans in Mexico-The Third Origin of Mestizaje

In the 1920s, Mexican government officials and government sponsored ideologues and artists promoted a nationalistic cultural syncretism project known as *mestizaje*. Ideologues constructed a cultural identity with origins in Spanish and Indigenous contact that led to the creation of a *mestizo* nation.³ However, this nationalist construction of cultural identity neglected that Indigenous and African cultural developments occurred along side and in dialogue with *mestizo* cultural development over the course of Mexican history. As a result, Africans, their descendants, and their contributions to Mexican cultural history and society were omitted from the national narrative. Furthermore, Indigenous cultural significance was relegated to the past, while Mexican officials seeking *mestizo* “modernity” depicted Indigenous peoples in the present as “backward.”⁴ However, various scholars have since scrutinized this nationalist construction of Mexican cultural identity.

Mexican intellectuals like Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán began to challenge the Mexican nationalist narrative that generalized the Spanish and Indigenous cultural syncretism of all Mexicans. As mentioned earlier, Beltrán’s *La población negra*

de México published in 1946 inspired scholarly interest in the social and cultural contributions of Africans and their descendents in Mexico. Since his seminal study, scholars have shed light on the complexity of cultural syncretism in Mexico. In his *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, Patrick J. Carroll finds that as a result of Indigenous and Spaniards communities' lack of acceptance of the Afro-*castas*, African descent peoples actually ended up living in both communities instead of being segregated from them. Consequently, Afro-Veracruzanos, through rituals like marriage, socially bonded with Indians and other non-Afro-*castas* with more recurrence than any other social group. Thus, Carroll concludes that even in the context of colonial legal segregation, white racism, ethnocentrism, and the institution of slavery that Spaniards utilized to hinder racial miscegenation, Afro-Veracruzanos' actions proved to be the driving force behind the cultural syncretism between Africans, Europeans, and Indigenous peoples in Veracruz.⁵ Carroll contends that:

Afro-Veracruzanos' relationships with other groups in general became so economically, socially, and politically restricted that they had little choice but to try to circumvent prejudicial laws and conventions. Not fully accepted into either creole Hispanic or the native Indian community, Afro-*castas* and blacks lived in both. As a result, Afro-Veracruzanos represented the most socially outgoing element within the developing regional population.⁶

Carroll demonstrates that Afro-Veracruzanos played the primary role in Veracruz cultural syncretism, which indicates the necessity to understand the historical, cultural, and social context of the African presence in Mexico.

Understanding the influence of African descent peoples in Mexico requires thorough examinations of complex heterogeneous African populations in Mexico that changed several times from the colonial era to the twentieth century. Although enslaved Africans outnumbered Spanish immigration in Mexico between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, it is necessary to scrutinize this population majority by relating it to demographic differentiations and social and cultural change over time. Although Africans were a larger ethnic group than Spaniards in Mexico during the first half of the colonial era, by no means were they a culturally homogeneous group. For example, Carroll demonstrates that mid-sixteenth-century trade figures indicate that ninety percent of slaves in Mexico arrived from West Africa, while less than five percent came from Central Africa. However, in the seventeenth century, the amount of West Africans that arrived in Mexico via the slave trade had dropped to thirteen percent of the total, while Central African's representations rose to eighty percent of the total.⁷ Moreover, the location of the enslaved African population varied depending on the nature and necessity of slave labor. Labor markets and their segmentation emerged differently dependent on different economic zones in the diverse regions of Mexico, and colonial political and social trends.⁸ Thus, the heterogeneity that

characterized the enslaved African population indicates the complex contributions Africans and their descendents made to Mexican cultural syncretism. These cultural contributions cannot be viewed as one directional since Africans and their descendents also influenced, and were influenced by, the cultural syncretism between Mexico's Indigenous, European descended, and *casta* populations.

When centering historical narratives on African descent peoples, or other Mexican populations subsumed by the *casta* system, Spanish colonialism can be analyzed from the perspectives of racialized populations aware of their unequal power relations with Spanish elites. Scholarly inquiries into Africans' and their descendents' cultural and social contributions must make insights into this ethnic group's relations with Native Americans and native born *castas* to fully understand Mexican cultural and social history. For instance, Douglas Cope's depiction of Mexico City's 1692 riot indicates that persons of multiracial backgrounds united to resist Spanish officials' oppressive policies and corrupt practices instead of following the perceived divisions of the *casta* system.⁹ The 1692 Mexico City riot demonstrates that peoples of multiracial and multiethnic backgrounds interacted, shared common experience, and maintained a common understanding of each other's subject positions in contrast to Spanish elites. This served as enough of a unifying factor against oppressive colonial system in an opportune moment. Although interethnic unity was not always the case, the riot does direct historians to look deeper into Native American and African relations that defy European hegemonic social orders, like the Spanish *casta* system.

Native Americans and Africans in the New World

Although European hegemony had an ever growing effect on the Americas through time, examinations of relations between Native Americans and Africans in the Americas may reveal the limitations of this hegemony and alternatives to it. The nascent historical field of Native American and African relations in the Americas since 1500 is by far outnumbered by studies that focus on Native American and European relations or African and European relations. In *Africans and Native Americans*, Jack D. Forbes implores scholars to re-conceptualize the historical studies of ethnic relations in the Americas. He contends that studies formulated on a paradigm focused on European colonial centers' relations with colonial "others" oversimplifies the cultural development that occurred in all the continents surrounding the Atlantic.¹⁰ In regards to African and Native American relations from New England, through the Caribbean, to Central and South America, Forbes states:

. . . in many cases we are dealing with 300 to 400 years (twenty generations) of intermixture of a very complex sort. Very seldom would we be looking at, for example, a half-American and half-African person in the later nineteenth century, but rather at a person both of whose parents might have varying amounts of African and American ancestry derived at different intervals and from extremely diverse sources . . .¹¹

Forbes's observations thus should influence the study of Mexican cultural and social history towards the study of Native American and African relations. The complex miscegenation and consequent cultural syncretism between these groups demonstrates that the origins and development of Mexican cultural syncretism lay as much, if not more, in the relations between Africans and Native Americans than in the relations between Europeans and Native Americans.

The complexity of miscegenation and attempt to interpret its effects on Native Americans and African descended peoples is partly related to trends in African and Indigenous peoples in Latin America as either collaborative or in a state of conflict. In their study of Nahuatl and Afro-Mexicans in central Mexico, Norma Angélica Castillo Palma and Susan Kellogg found that collaboration between these two groups stemmed from similar social, cultural, and economic class characteristics.¹² Ben Vinson III and Matthew Restall acknowledge that conflict between Native Americans and African Americans during the colonial era formed a significant part of these groups colonial experience, but it did not form the sole or the primary relational context between these groups. Instead, social, political, and economic contexts contributed to whether Native Americans and African descended peoples collaborated with each other in daily lives and resisted colonialism, or if colonial powers and other circumstances pushed these two groups to conflict and disagreement with each other.¹³ Thus, locally focused and/or socio-cultural historical monographs provide insight into to the complex change and continuity of relations between Native Americans, Africans, and their descendents over 400 years. Thus, the remainder of this essay will focus on the Yucatán peninsula and its Mayan, European, and Afro-descendent peoples.

Historical Background: Yucatán Demographics, Slavery, and the Military

Even after widespread colonial epidemics and conquest wars during the sixteenth century, the majority of the Yucatán peninsula remained primarily Mayan.¹⁴ However, with colonialism, significant numbers of Europeans and Africans populated the area as well. Thus, before discussing the Caste Wars, a brief description of colonial Yucatán illuminates the demographic, political, and cultural context for understanding the African and Afro-descendent presence in the primarily Mayan province, which contributed to Mayan and Afro-descendent relations in the late nineteenth century. Early colonial records indicate that in 1530, Spanish colonists in Campeche traded slaves for grain and horses from Puerto Rico. Although the records do not indicate whether the slaves were African or Mayan, it is probable that at least some of these slaves could have been African.¹⁵ Although the 1530 records do not indicate the race of the slaves traded to Puerto Rico, in 1533 one hundred enslaved Africans were transported to Nueva Salamanca (the early colonial predecessor to Campeche) at the request of sugar plantation owner Francisco de Montejo.¹⁶ Montejo originally made his request for slaves from Spanish colonial authorities in 1531, but Mayan resistance to Spanish colonization forced the colonists in this region to postpone their agricultural endeavors

for two years. This early conflict exemplifies the long history of war and slavery that brought together Mayans and Africans in the Yucatán during the colonial era and into the Caste Wars. Another institution that brought Mayans and Africans into contact with one another was the colonial military. During the conquest of Mexico, many Spaniards possessed enslaved Africans, whom provided labor and military service. For instance, Sebastián Toral, an enslaved African, fought as a conquistador, gained his freedom, and became a free Black settler in Mérida around 1542.¹⁷ Thus, by the 1540s, military service and the institution of slavery in the Yucatán peninsula brought Africans to this region and defined much of Black and Maya relations.

By the late colonial era, the population of Afro-descendants formed a substantial proportion of the Yucatán population. According to the Spanish colonial census, in 1779, there were 19,095 Afro-descendants in the Yucatán peninsula, 1,490 of whom were classified as Black and 17,605 whom were classified as *pardos* (or mulattos).¹⁸ The larger population of *pardos* indicates that, like throughout the continent, a large degree of miscegenation occurred among Spaniards, Africans, and Mayans on the peninsula. Even though they lived through out the peninsula, the majority of Afro-descendants lived in the larger towns and cities. Campeche and its outlying districts held 36.5% of the Yucatán's Afro-descendants, Mérida and its outlying districts held 48.4% percent of them, Valladolid 13.6% and Bacalar 1.4%.¹⁹ Later census records indicate that by 1789, the population of Afro-descendants in this region had grown to 45,201, out of 364,621 people who resided in the Spanish colonial province of Yucatán.²⁰

Although the majority of Afro-descendants in the Yucatán were classified as *pardos* by the late eighteenth century, a closer look at the aforementioned cities and towns illuminates important regional differentiations. For instance, in 1779, 26.9% of the Yucatán Afro-descendants population of Afro-descendants resided in the town of Campeche. However, when examining Blacks and *pardos* separately, 73.9% of Black non-*pardo* Afro-descendants resided in Campeche. Moreover, while the Afro-descendent population in Campeche was primarily Black, in the more rural districts surrounding the Campeche in the southwestern part of the peninsula, Afro-descendants were primarily *pardos*. In contrast, the majority of the Afro-descendent population in Mérida, and its surrounding rural districts in the northwestern part of the peninsula, were classified as *pardos* by census takers.²¹ The racial differences between Campeche and Mérida indicate localized factors contributing to racial miscegenation. Throughout the eighteenth century, Campeche merchants, willingly and unwillingly, participated in trans-Caribbean contraband trade that brought unknown amounts of enslaved blacks to Campeche.²² Thus, the presence of a concentration of a racially Black population in Campeche may demonstrate that its relation to contraband trade made it a continuous port of entry for both free and enslaved Afro-descendants during the eighteenth century.

Although the majority of the Afro-descendent population in the Yucatán was racially mixed, or *pardo*, there was a significant and continuous inflow of Blacks from other areas in the trans-Atlantic colonial slave trade network. In turn, Campeche and Mérida demonstrate larger trends in Mexico, as well as Latin America, where the Black population mixed with Indigenous and Spanish populations, while being legally segregated from other populations by *casta* laws.²³ Legal segregation benefited Spanish colonial politics to control subordinate *castas* through divide and conquer methods. For instance, the 1794-1795 census of all the regions and towns in the Yucatán province indicates various divisions of Spanish troops in these districts, which included jurisdiction over *Milicias Disciplinadas de Pardos* (or mulatto militias).²⁴ Thus, it may seem that the racial and cultural miscegenation in the Yucatán adhere to trends of conflict between Mayas and Afro-descendents in the colonial era, where Black soldiers were used to control the Mayan population. However, as Vinson and Restall indicate, collaboration also formed part of Indigenous and African relations in colonial Latin America, and the Yucatán does not differ.

Vinson and Restall begin their anthology with a depiction of San Fernando de los Negros on the northeastern coast of the Yucatán peninsula. A Spanish militia unit of 115 Black soldiers, veterans of the war for Haiti and Santo Domingo, founded this community in 1796 and remained until the beginning of the Caste Wars in 1848.²⁵ To describe the outcome of the Black population of this town, Vinson and Restall cite local legend that describes the Black persons of this town as being slaughtered by Mayan forces, as well as records that indicate they may have also fled to Belize, which upholds previously held beliefs of only conflict existing between Mayans and Blacks.²⁶ However, Vinson and Restall contend that a history of Mayan and Black collaboration may have also contributed to the desertion of the town. They state:

... by 1841 only 57 percent of San Fernando was black; the trickle of Mayans coming in from nearby villages over the decades had become a 40-percent presence. That movement went in both directions. In 1826, for example, a number of black militiamen from San Fernando were listed as having “deserted”; an investigation showed that they had been working *milpas*, or cornfields, some distance from the town for a while and had eventually moved permanently to Maya villages nearer to their *milpas*.²⁷

Vinson and Restall reveal decades of collaboration between Blacks and Mayans indicate that the two groups successfully collaborated in areas like San Fernando and that Spanish *casta* classifications are not indicative of social and racial interactions nor notions of racial purity.²⁸ Moreover, the rural social conditions of San Fernando indicate that less Spanish colonial authority contributed to more equal racial relations and Black assimilation into Mayan communities. Also, it is likely that during the Caste Wars, patterns of collaboration and conflict continued. As

depicted below, collaboration also seems likely in the eastern rural half of the Yucatán because Mayans possessed autonomous control of this region for much of the Caste Wars in the second half of the nineteenth century.²⁹

The Caste Wars

From 1847 to 1901, Yucatec Mayans led one of the most successful Native American rebellions and movements in the history of the Western hemisphere to gain autonomy from foreign nations. Within the context of an autonomous Mayan region, Native American and African relations demonstrated a co-equality that resisted the trends of hegemonic racializations that defined nineteenth-century westernized societies. There were several political, social, and ethnic factors that caused Mayans to rebel and resist Yucatecan state government and rebel militias, the Mexican national government, and economic pressures that positioned Mayans as laborers in an international market. First, during the 1830s and 1840s, Yucatec *ladinos* (or mestizos) were engaged in civil wars for independence from Mexico. Since the independence wars of the 1810s and 1820s, Yucatec *ladinos* allied themselves with federalist and liberal forces that supported state rights over centralized national governments. When President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna began his efforts to solidify national power over Mexican states in 1838, *ladino* militias began to revolt. During these wars, *ladino* officials recruited and forced Mayans to serve in subordinate positions during the Yucatán civil war armies, and as a result, Mayans received extensive military training, weapons, and experience.³⁰

Mayans also resisted changing trends in Mexican national control, which increased as the federal government strived to incorporate Indigenous Peoples into westernized norms of a capitalist political economy. With Mexican independence, Mayan communities lost their separate status as Indigenous *Hidalgos* that granted them larger degrees of autonomy from local *ladino* governments. In fact, one of the initial concerns for Mayan leaders was new taxes and equal treatment of Mayans and *ladinos* from the Catholic Church. As the following letter from Mayan leader Jacinto Pat to Catholic priest negotiators suggests, *ladino* liberal politics were perceived as threatening to Mayans accustomed to large degrees of autonomy:

Not for one half of the tax will any Indian rest, but only if the tax is abolished . . . otherwise, life or death will decide the issue, because I have no other course . . . Likewise I tell you that the cost of baptism is three reales, and that of marriage ten, for the Spaniard as well as the Indian, and the same for the salve and the response.³¹

Jacinto Pat's letter demonstrates that Mayans were concerned the political and structural advances of modernity. Rather than embrace what *ladino* leaders saw

as equal treatment from social and political institutions, Mayan leaders desired to remain as autonomous as possible in rural areas of the eastern Yucatán peninsula.

Although Mayans resisted Yucatec and Mexican attempts to racially subordinate them, the most persistent contributing factor to war was the context of exploitation of Mayan labor for an international economy first by Spaniards, and later, elite *ladinos*, as well as the context of colonial violence that existed in the Yucatán since the 1530s. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the end of Spanish colonial control over the Yucatán had not changed the socio-economic disparities between *ladinos* and Mayans. *Ladinos* were well aware of the tension between themselves and the majority Mayan population, which newspaper editor and diplomat Justo Sierra O'Reilly rooted in the by then centuries old colonial racial conflict:

Muchos de los conquistadores, o vinieron casados, o acudieron después a buscar esposa entre las hijas de los españoles establecidos ya en la Nueva España, Cuba y Santo Domingo. Desde entonces se levantó ese muro invencible entre las dos razas . . . de aquí el altanero dominio de una raza, y el vasallaje humillante de la otra [empezó]. De aquí el odio ciego y brutal de la raza conquistada, que se extiende a todas las que han formado de la mezcla con ésta; y de aquí también, uno de los gérmenes fecundos de la presente guerra.

Many of the conquerors either came married, or came later to find a wife from the daughters of the Spanish established in New Spain, Cuba and Santo Domingo. Since then, an invincible wall arose between the two races . . . from here the haughty domain of a race, and the humiliating vassalage of the other [started]. Hence the blind and brutal hatred of the conquered race, which extends to all who have mixed with it; and here also is one of the fertile seeds of this war.³²

Besides Sierra O'Reilly's erroneous belief in conquistador Spanish racial purity, this statement demonstrates elite *ladino* perceptions of racial others, or the *castas*, that were cognizant of their oppression. The anxious undertones in this statement were countered with views of Mayan backwardness in another of Sierra O'Reilly's articles where he describes Mayans as “. . . medianamente civilizado[s], sin embargo su religión y teogonía significativa y simbólica, estaba sembrada de errores groseros e indignas supersticiones [fairly civilized, yet their significant and symbolic religion and theogony was seeded with rude errors and unworthy superstitions].”³³ Sierra O'Reilly's views on Mayan backwardness demonstrate *ladino* dichotomous understandings of their relationship with Mayans. On the one hand, Sierra O'Reilly recognizes that the two populations are inextricably linked by a history of conquest and is sympathetic of Mayan subordinate position in colonial relations. On the other hand, in Sierra O'Reilly's opinion, Mayans were responsible for civilizing themselves toward Western

mores if they hoped to relinquish their conquered status and benefit from modernization. Sierra O'Reilly's patronizing view of Mayan peoples reveals the core hegemonic belief in the superiority of Western modernity, which was a central threat to Mayan autonomy.

For the Mayans in autonomous zones on the eastern Yucatán peninsula, Western modernity did not represent progress, but instead threatened their way of life. The *ladino* push to acquire more resources and labor to support an expanding capitalist economy conflicted with Mayan subsistence farming, spiritual and political autonomy, and access to natural resources.³⁴ Thus, two opposing world views, *ladino* and Mayan, met in yet another reenactment of colonial conflict that was repeating itself all over the continent and was manifesting itself in the nineteenth-century era of industrialization and capitalist expansion.³⁵ In this case, however, Mayan forces were able to exploit divisions among the *ladinos*, as well as international tensions between Mexico, the U.S., and Great Britain to gain their goals for autonomy for a generation.

The Caste War resulted in a half-century of Mayan political autonomy, in varying degrees, which provided the context for Mayan and Afro-descendent co-equal relations. This war consisted of two broad phases: the first, from 1847-1855 was characterized by *ladino* political instability and Mayan political demands,³⁶ and the second, from 1855 to the end of the century, when Mayan forces experienced a spiritual movement defined by what is known as the cult of the Speaking Cross.³⁷ However, for the purpose of this essay, the events and militaristic outcomes of the war will be omitted.³⁸ Instead, focus will be on three outcomes of the war that resulted in Mayan and Afro-descendent interethnic contact: slavery, trade, and labor.³⁹ First, Yucatec *ladino* politicians reinstated the slave trade of Mayans to Cuba as a means to both punish their opposition and raise revenue to fund their war. Second, Mayans both traded with Belize to sustain their economy during the war and migrated to the area to labor for British colonists. This border zone between Mexico and Belize thus serves as a geographic sight to examine Afro-descendent and Mayan interethnic contact and subsequent co-equal relationships.

Slavery

The reinstatement of a slave trade of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico during the nineteenth century put together Mayans and Afro-descendent peoples as enslaved labor in a broader Caribbean economic zone. On March 1, 1849, the *El Fénix* newspaper reported that the steamship *Cetro* had sailed into the Sisal port with a Cuban merchant willing to pay *ladinos* twenty-five pesos per Mayan prisoner of war to work in Havana. The merchant also proposed to pay for the transport of Mayan prisoners, and promised to set the Mayan prisoners free as soon as he recuperated his expenses. In the meantime, Mayan laborers were obligated to perform whatever labor the merchant designated. The article also mentions a merchant from Veracruz with the same objectives willing to pay the same prices

for Mayan prisoners of war.⁴⁰ As a result, in 1849 150 Mayan prisoners were sent to Cuba in forced labor for up to ten years according to the contracts between Cuban merchants and *ladino* politicians.⁴¹ The merchant's proposal to buy Mayan prisoners of war in this article describes the beginning of a slave trade between the Yucatán, Veracruz, and Cuba that continued at varying degrees throughout the 1850s and 1860s. Since slavery was illegal in Mexico, the total amounts of what amounted to be a clandestine slave trade are impossible to determine. However, demand for Mayan labor in Cuba was high. For instance, on July 1, 1853 a man by the name of Agustín de Bolívar requested permission from Spanish colonial officials to introduce 3,000 to 4,000 Mayan slaves to the island colony. According to the colonial consul's rationale for approving this request, they were enthusiastic to purchase Mayan prisoners because of their perception of Mayan laborers as being more docile, possessing stronger family values, and harder working than Chinese immigrants.⁴² However, due to protest from the national Mexican government, the sale and transport of Mayan laborers probably did not reach the numbers requested by Bolívar. Even so, the demand for enslaved Mayans in Cuba, and that demand being met by a clandestine slave trade, reveals a context for Mayan and Afro-descendent relations outside of the Yucatan and a contempt for an emerging need for exploited labor in the context of nineteenth-century trans-Atlantic economies.

The shared designation as exploitable labor of Mayans and Afro-descendents by Europeans and their descendents in the Caribbean economic zone of the trans-Atlantic economy reveals contexts outside of the Yucatán where Mayans and Afro-descendents lived and worked together. Although the amount of Mayan prisoners sent to Cuba may not have reached into the thousands, prosecution of clandestine slave traders indicates that the total amount of Mayans sent to Cuba may not have been far off. For example, in May of 1853, British Naval officials arrested Juan B. Anduse, captain of the "Alerta," for selling thirty-six enslaved Mayans (thirty-three men and three girls) in Havana from Isla de Mujeres.⁴³ The ship's captain, Juan B. Anduse, and his accomplice, Carlos Carillo, were eventually convicted by the British under their international ban on the slave trade on July 19 and sentenced to four years in a hard labor camp in Belize.⁴⁴ In January of 1854, after the conclusion of an international investigation, of the thirty-six Mayans, twenty-seven returned to Mexico, three remained in Cuba as agricultural workers, five had already died, and one was working in Spain as a "salaried servant."⁴⁵ Although persecution of clandestine slave traders by British and Mexican navies resulted in lower numbers of Mayans being sent to Cuba, it is probable that larger cargos of enslaved Mayans were sent to Cuba, where they interacted with Afro-descendents as part of broader laboring communities.

The clandestine slave trade of Mayan peoples in the Caribbean demonstrates various examples of Mayans being integrated with Afro-descended communities. In 1858, the Mexican navy intercepted another clandestine slave transport of Mayans to Cuba on an unnamed ship captained by Gerardo Tizón. On October

25, he was tried by Mexican officials and asked how many male, female, and child Mayans he had successfully taken to Cuba. Tizón responded that he had transported 169 males, 106 women, and seventy or eighty children under the age of ten from Valladolid and Tizimín, and twenty-two Mayans from Mérida (he does not mention gender or age for the this group).⁴⁶ In total, Tizón had shipped 377 Mayans to Cuba as slaves. Although a battle did occur in Valladolid in 1858,⁴⁷ the fact that 186 of Tizón's human cargo were women and children indicates that these were not prisoners of war. Moreover, in this point of the war, Valladolid and Tizimín were under *ladino* control, which makes it more probable that these Mayans were not associated with autonomous city of Chan Santa Cruz or its surrounding Cruzob zone further to the south on the eastern part of the peninsula.⁴⁸ This successful slave trader thus demonstrates the possibility of more slave traders like Tizón accomplished their goals of transporting enslaved Mayans to Cuba where they would have probably been integrated into enslaved Afro-descendent communities as part of the broader labor force.

The connection between Cuba and the Yucatán through the clandestine slave trade reveals a significant number of Mayans forced to work in Cuba, where they would have formed part of the broader enslaved Afro-descendent population. By 1899, Cuban records verify that 576 Mayan men and 179 Mayan women had been sent to Cuba via the slave trade with the Yucatán. However, according to the U.S. War Department census report, in 1899 census takers could only locate one Mayan in Cuba, which led them to conclude harsh working conditions claimed the lives of the rest the Mayans.⁴⁹ Although Cuban records indicate that only 755 Mayans were enslaved in Cuba, the totals from this clandestine slave trade could have been more. For instance, the census records do not indicate that children were counted. Nevertheless, even with 755, enslaved Mayans could have had an impact on the African and Afro-descendent slave population in Cuba. Thus, the context of hundreds of years of cohabitation and interethnic relations among Mayans and Afro-descendents may point towards other conclusions not limited to death. For example, the enslaved Mayan population was disproportionately male, which may point towards interethnic partnerships and marriages. By 1899, it is probable that census takers would have encountered a subsequent and racially mixed generation that would have been missed by U.S. census takers with different consciousness of racial blackness. Therefore, future examination of marriage, family, and sexual partnerships among Cuban slaves in the late nineteenth century may reveal the extent of Mayan influence on African and Afro-descended populations and vice versa in Cuba that could reveal co-equal relations between these populations within a hegemonically racialized world dominated by European social norms. However, for the purpose of this essay, focus will remain on Mayan and Afro-descendent populations outside of total influence of European hegemonic norms in the Yucatán peninsula and Central America.

Belize: Trade, Labor, and Multiethnic Populations

During the Caste Wars, Mayans controlled most of the Eastern half of the Yucatán peninsula, which allowed them to establish an autonomous Indigenous controlled zone where hegemonic European cultural norms had diminished influence. Mayans ensured their autonomy by establishing trade relations with rival imperial powers. On November 20, 1848, enraged *El Fénix* journalists reported the sale of arms to Mayan forces by merchants in the British settlement of Belize:

Habra cosa de dos meses que los especuladores de la infernal colonia de Belice, ruina de Yucatán y baldón del débil gobierno que permitió su establecimiento en el territorio de su dominio, enviaron a Nueva-Orleans un agente para comprar armas y municiones de guerra, que en Belice y Jamayca escaseaban para vender a los bárbaros que nos hacen la infame guerra que está presenciando el mundo civilizado.

For about two months speculators from the infernal colony of Belize, ruin of the Yucatan and the reproach of the weak government that allowed its establishment in the territory of its domain, sent to New Orleans an agent to buy arms and ammunition, which Belize and Jamaica scarcely distributed to instead sell them to the barbarians that make infamous war against us that is being witnessed by the civilized world.⁵⁰

The munitions trade between Mayan soldiers and merchants in Belize was essential to Mayan militaristic victories, and autonomous economic trade that was made possible by establishing relations with the rival British colony. However, it was also site of interethnic contact and collaboration. In the 1840s, Belize's population, excluding indigenous Mayans, consisted of about 1,000 white men and 5,000 Black and *mulatto* laborers.⁵¹ Moreover, what *El Fénix* journalists failed to report was that along with White and Black merchants, Mayans also conducted munitions trade with *ladino* refugees that sided with their profits instead of the Yucatán government.⁵² Thus, Mayan trade with Belize indicates increased collaboration between Mayans and Afro-descendants during the Caste Wars occurred in and around the Mexico-Belize border. Moreover, Mayan trade and labor migrations to Belize created an interethnic context in the British agricultural and timber industries.⁵³ Although this context mirrored in some ways the racialized labor context imperially controlled Caribbean islands, the ability for Mayan migrant labor to move freely across the border provided Mayans with varying degrees of more autonomy.

During the Caste Wars, Mayan migrant labor across the Mexico-Belize border went hand in hand with Mayan economic trade. Mayan trade with British colonial merchants in Belize provided autonomous Mayan communities with the vital economic lifeline to sustain their economy. In return for cattle, gold, silver, and jewels sacked by Mayans in their victories over *ladino* towns, Mayans would receive guns, gunpowder, and munitions.⁵⁴ The trade patterns among

the British and the Mayan resemble those of other economies in the Americas when Europeans first tried to exert colonial power over Indigenous peoples through economic trade. During these initial stages of European colonialism in the Americas, which occurred at different times in different regions from 1492-1900, Indigenous Americans played competing colonial societies against each other.⁵⁵ In this case, outnumbered by Mayans, the British officials could only trade and negotiate with Mayan soldiers as a means to continue their economic endeavors and avoid conflict. For instance, in 1848, Mayans indigenous to Honduras attacked the Hillbank settlement with bows and arrows. Even with superior military technology, to quell the violence, the British were only able to send thirty police men. When West-Indies regiment reinforcements arrived, they only totaled one hundred and were accompanied by advice from the governor in Jamaica to avoid conflict.⁵⁶ Thus, the only choice the British had was to trade with the Mayans, which in the end would prove to be economically and socially beneficial to the British settlement. As a result, on May 9, 1848, British officials notified Mayan soldiers at Bacalar that they would receive the privilege granted to peoples of all nationalities to trade with British settlers as long as they conformed to British laws.⁵⁷ This ensured that the British maintained social stability in their settlement by preventing Mayan invasions, while establishing a market for British goods. Moreover, the trade enhanced interethnic relations among Mayans and Blacks/*mulattos* in Belize merchants.⁵⁸ Thus, trade within this border economy reveals collaboration between Mayans and Afro-descendants, which demonstrates an important zone of interethnic relationships with important cross-cultural implications.

Besides trade, Mayan and Afro-descendants had long established cross-cultural contact in British lumber camps. Each of these labor camps was home to various crews consisting of a foreman, captain, carpenter, two cattlemen, and thirty laborers. In total, by March 1849, the lumberjack crews had cleared three to ten miles of timber in both directions from all rivers.⁵⁹ These lumberjack crews were made up of “Chinese, Creole, Charib, Negro, [and] Indian” laborers.⁶⁰ According to British officials, “At Christmas time labourers engaged in mahogany and logwood cutting assemble in Belize from all parts of the Colony. They spend a few days, re-engage for another term, receive an advance of from three to six months wages and then return to the forests.”⁶¹ Thus, a study of Belize religious celebrations, particularly Christmas, may reveal that Mayans and Afro-descendants possibly partook in collective religious festivals. During this time period, British Jesuits in Belize heavily recruited Ikaiché Mayans to strengthen the size of the Catholic Church, as well as to draw them away from the cult of the Speaking Cross.⁶² As a result, a focus on Jesuit conversion efforts may reveal their recruitment of Blacks and *mulattos* as well. Consequently, religious conversion and festivals may provide a window to examine Mayan and Afro-descendent cultural exchange in the context of diminished, in this case,

British, imperial control, relaxed racial hierarchies, and less influential European racial hegemony.

Although during the Caste Wars all Mayan Indians successfully gained autonomy by playing Great Britain against an emerging Mexican national government, Mayans eventually succumbed to expanding Mexican industrialization and capitalist expansion. The debilitating blow to Mayan autonomous economy was dealt when the Mexican national government and Great Britain resumed political relations in 1897 British and Mayan trade came to an end as a result of a treaty signed by Mexico and Great Britain that established an agreed upon border between Mexico and Belize. In return for an end of border disputes, British officials banned the sale of weapons to Mayan soldiers.⁶³ Thus, Mayans could no longer utilize one nation over another, and as such, they lost their political and economic leverage to continue their war. Without this leverage, Mayan and Afro-descendent social and cultural relations could no longer maintain a barrier against westernized hegemonic cultural norms and views of modern progress. The loss of that leverage, and the subsequent battle over the future directions of Mexico during the Mexican Revolution, have all but erased the alternative social-cultural views on race shared by Mayans and Afro-descendents in the late nineteenth-century Yucatán. However, some evidence remains in twentieth-century ethnographies about how Indigenous Peoples and descendents of Africans might have created alternatives to European racialized hierarchies within Mayans views of cultural and racial difference.

Mayan Views on Cultural and Racial Difference

A depiction of cultural exchange and change that resulted from Mayan and Afro-descendents during the Caste War would require new ethnographic evidence from populations in the Yucatán and Belize. However, a preliminary examination of past Mayan ethnographic sources reveals possible directions in cultural change and exchange among Mayans and Afro-descendents that challenge broader trends in racial hierarchies established by westernized ruling elites. One example is descriptions of Mayan treatment of prisoners of war. Although Mayans suffered from capture and enslavement from *ladinos*, Mayan soldiers also captured and enslaved their prisoners of war. In 1859, *ladinos* claimed that Mayans from the Cruzob⁶⁴ had taken five hundred prisoners, and killed two hundred of them. The rest were forced into labor. Women were forced to do domestic labor, while men were parceled out to manual labor, as well as to teach music, reading, and writing in the Spanish language. However, *ladino* child captives were brought up as part of Mayan communities without discrimination.⁶⁵ This indicates Mayans viewed *ladinos* as capable of assimilating to Mayan mores and capable of becoming members of the Mayan community. These perceptions of enemy incorporation into Mayan communities demonstrate that Mayans were definitely capable and willing to incorporate Afro-descendents into their communities who were not enemies. Perhaps the fact that Afro-descendents were not enemies to Mayans

provided the context for socio-cultural acceptance of Afro-descendants into Mayan communities as co-equals.

Mayan acceptance of Afro-descendants as co-equals in an autonomous Mayan-controlled portion of the Yucatán peninsula during the nineteenth century may reveal socio-cultural relationships not bound by racialized social hierarchies. Evidence of this acceptance can be found in ethnographic interviews, which reveal that Mayans viewed Afro-descendants as social equals. In his 1945 ethnographic study on the Mayans of Quintana Roo, Alfonso Villas Rojas describes Caste War-era Mayan perceptions of racial and ethnic difference as follows:

The natives have had dealings with Negroes, called *boxuinicob* (black men) and with Chinese. Both are considered more akin to the *mazehuals* [common Maya people] than any other race. Negroes especially are treated with friendliness and familiarity, due perhaps, to the good treatment received from members of this group when the Indians encountered them in British Honduras. The Chinese, although sympathetically treated, are somewhat looked down on, and thought to be rather eccentric. The descendants of immigrant Chinese who married Indian women are mocked because of their origin and their peculiar manner of speech.⁶⁶

Villas Rojas' interviews indicate that Mayans considered Afro-descendants their social equals. The term *mazehual* indicates a social classification for all Mayans except *bataabs*, or Chiefs. Thus, adhering to their social hierarchies, Mayans' perceptions of Afro-descendants as *mazehuales* indicates that Mayans were capable of willingly incorporating Afro-descendants into their communities as long as they adhered to social norms. This contrasted with *ladino*'s dichotomized views of Mayans as savages and labor, both of which were racially inflexible and subordinate to Western civilization.

Caste War cultural assimilation, just as during the colonial era, may have also been multidirectional. For instance, the Caste War also caused many Mayans not willing to fight a war against the *ladinos* to flee to Belize as refugees. Over time, these communities developed differentiated localized cultural identities, identified themselves as Ikaiché Mayans, and no longer formed part of the Cruzob Mayans revolting against the *ladinos*.⁶⁷ An examination of this population may reveal that these Mayans were affected by external cultural influences. Moreover, in combination with the study of religious conversion and festivals, the study of this group may reveal Mayans acquired and even assimilated into Afro-descendent communities in Belize.

Conclusion: Future Directions in the Study of the Caste Wars

The 1847 to 1901 Yucatán Caste Wars demonstrate that Afro-descendent and Mayan relations continued beyond the colonial era in ways that demonstrate social and cultural relations between Mayans and Afro-descendants that defied

Mexican nationalist imaginaries rooted in mythologies of exclusive Spanish and Indigenous hybridity or *mestizaje*. A study on the Caste Wars contributes to an understanding of Mexican culture that is not bound by modernist constructions of *mestizo* identity. This essay has revealed that complex socio-cultural interactions between Mayan and Afro-descendent populations continued from the colonial era, but also changed in the context of nineteenth-century modernized economies in the Atlantic world. Although the ability for Mayans and Afro-descendents to control these changes in the autonomous Mayan zone ended in 1901, complex socio-cultural relations between descendents of Africans, Europeans, and Indigenous peoples continue to the present day. Thus, at no point in Mexican history did the influence of Afro-Latin American culture ever end. Instead, Afro-descendent peoples continue to contribute to Mexican cultures in coeval and interrelated courses of development with Native American and European cultural influence. Moreover, nineteenth-century global migration trends contributed to even more diverse influences on Mexican cultural history.

Besides studying the Caste Wars to reveal the nature of Mayan and Afro-descendent relations, the study of Caste War interethnic relations can be placed in a larger global and transnational context. The rationale for this is the existence of Chinese immigrants in this region as a result of transnational labor migrations that formed part of nineteenth-century modernized economies. For instance, in 1866, one hundred Chinese immigrant laborers escaped an “estate” and fled to the Mayan city of Chan Santa Cruz due to cruel and neglectful treatment, bad food, lack of rice, and overwork.⁶⁸ British colonial officials continue by describing the conditions of the Chinese immigrants in Chan Santa Cruz:

The deserters were placed in captivity by the Santa Cruz Indians and subsequently distributed among the various Chiefs. They were engaged in clearing ground and planting corn. Their principal food consisted of corn-cakes or tortillas, the ordinary food of the Indians. The mortality among them was less than in the Colony. Of the 100 it is reported that 77 to 80 are still at Santa Cruz: that 14 died, 2 were murdered, and 4 escaped to the Spaniards.⁶⁹

Thus, along with providing a view of the continuity of Mayan and Afro-descendent relations from the colonial era, a study of Caste War era interethnic relations can also provide insights on multiethnic relations, in the context of Indigenous autonomous zones, during a time of global migrations. The uniqueness of an area autonomously controlled by Indigenous peoples in the Americas during the expansion of capitalistic empires in the nineteenth century may reveal alternative forms identity construction and definitions of community.

Finally, through this essay, I infer future directions in ethnographic research that can further illuminate Mayan and Afro-descendent relations during the Caste Wars. Although it has now been 170 years since the beginning of the war,

oral histories continue to possess generations of handed down knowledge. For instance, in Reed's revised edition, he revisits towns in Quintana Roo during a 1997 trip where he originally conducted ethnographic interviews in the 1950s. During his 1997 visit, he speaks with an old friend, Don Marcelino. He asks him about the existence of Juan de la Cruz, the original prophet of the Speaking Cross in the 1850s. After conversation and dinner, Don Marcelino responded to Reed in a low formal and ceremonial tone: "We know the foreigners have these things . . . It has been said that the Americans are going to help us. We are waiting. Thank God I have been kept so long, and I hope that the help will come." With this statement, Reed is reminded of his interview with Comandante Román Cruz thirty-eight years earlier who had also spoken of American help.⁷⁰ Reed's experience demonstrates that an oral history of the events of the Caste Wars remain among Mayans in the Yucatán peninsula.⁷¹ This is especially true since newer variations of the Speaking Cross religion are still practiced today. Moreover, Mayans continue to possess political claims to their sovereignty rights. Thus, although the Caste Wars have long since passed, their cultural and political significance remains among the Mayans. Similar investigations can reveal if Afro-descendants, especially in Belize, also retain oral histories of the cultural and political significance of the Caste Wars from their perspective. In short, if the interviewees are willing, and historians are empathetic to current social injustice,⁷² oral histories can reveal better understandings of previously undocumented perspectives.

NOTES

¹ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etno-histórico* (Mexico, D. F., Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1946).

² David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

³ Refer to José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race/ La raza cósmica*, translated and annotated by Didier T. Jaén (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). Spanish version first published in 1925.

⁴ For examinations of the effects of Mexican middle-class nationalism on Indigenous peoples, refer to Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization*, translated by Philip A. Dennis (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996); and Natividad Gutiérrez, *Nationalist Myths and Ethnic Identities Indigenous Intellectuals and the Mexican State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

⁵ Patrick J. Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz: Race, Ethnicity, and Regional Development* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 147.

⁶ *Idem*.

⁷ *Ibid*, 29.

⁸ Refer to Luz María Martínez Montiel, ed., *Presencia africana en México* (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional par la Cultura y las Artes, 1994).

⁹ Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 125-165.

¹⁰ Jack D. Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 1. Forbes illustrates that beginning in 1500, not only were Africans transported from Africa to the Americas, but they were taken to Europe and Native Americans also were transported to Africa and Europe in significant numbers. For the multidirectional movement across the Atlantic of Native Americans and Africans, refer to pages 26-64.

¹¹ Ibid, 270.

¹² Norma Angélica Castillo Palma and Susan Kellogg, "Conflict and Collaboration between Afro-Mexicans and Nahuas in Central Mexico," in *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Matthew Restall (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 116.

¹³ Ben Vinson III and Matthew Restall, "Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers: Meanings of Military Service in the Spanish American Colonies," in *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Matthew Restall, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 2-4.

¹⁴ Refer to Christopher Lutz and Matthew Restall, "Wolves and Sheep? Black-Maya in Colonial Guatemala and Yucatán," in *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Matthew Restall, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 194-201 for a depiction of Mayan population amounts and their relation to black and mulatto populations during the colonial era.

¹⁵ Refer to Brigido Redondo, "Negritud en Campeche: De la conquista a nuestros días," in *Presencia africana en México*, edited by Luz María Martínez Montiel (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional par la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), 341, where he cites the *Cartas y relaciones históricas y geográficas sobre Puerto Rico, 1493-1598*.

¹⁶ Ibid, 356.

¹⁷ Refer to Lutz and Restall, "Wolves and Sheep?," 189.

¹⁸ Ibid, 190.

¹⁹ Ibid, 193.

²⁰ The colonial province forms what today are the states of Yucatán, Quintana Roo, Campeche, and Tabasco. Refer to J. Ignacio Rubi Mañe, ed., *Arquivo de la historia de Yucatan, Campeche y Tabasco* (Mexico City: 1942), 249-250.

²¹ For the distribution of the African Population in the Yucatan peninsula in 1779, refer to table 7.3 in Lutz and Restall, "Wolves and Sheep?," 193.

²² Refer to Redondo, "Negritud en Campeche," 373-378. For documentation of legal and illegal trans-Atlantic colonial trade networks, refer to Peggy K. Liss, *Atlantic Empires: The Network of Trade and Revolution, 1713-1826* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983).

²³ Redondo, "Negritud en Campeche," 407-419.

²⁴ J. Ignacio Rubi Mañe, ed., *Arquivo de la historia de Yucatan, Campeche y Tabasco* Vol. 1 (Mexico, D.F., 1942), 207-234.

²⁵ Vinson and Restall, "Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers," 1-4.

²⁶ Ibid, 3.

²⁷ Ibid, 4.

²⁸ Idem.

²⁹ Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, revised edition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 197-279.

³⁰ Ibid, 28-29.

³¹ Jacinto Pat to Padre Canunto Vela, Tihosuco, February 24, 1848, quoted in Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 87.

³² Justo Sierra O'Reilly, "Consideraciones sobre el origen, causas y tendencias de la sulevación de los indígenas, sus posibles resultados y su posible remedio," *El Fénix* (Campeche, Yucatán), January 15, 1849.

³³ Justo Sierra O'Reilly, "Consideraciones sobre el origen, causas y tendencias de la sulevación de los indígenas, sus posibles resultados y su posible remedio," *El Fénix* (Campeche, Yucatán) January 10, 1849.

³⁴ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 54.

³⁵ During the nineteenth century, Indigenous populations all over the continent were involved in warfare with expanding Western states. For instance, various Native American nations were resisting the U.S. government, and the Yaqui Indians were resisting the national government in Northern Mexico. For a description of Indigenous peoples wars with the Mexican government, refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 55.

³⁶ Refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 59-196.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 243-278.

³⁸ Refer to Reed's *The Caste War of Yucatán* for an extensive depiction of the war.

³⁹ Although I have not found any proof of Black and Maya collaboration during Caste War battles at this point of my preliminary study, Reed does note two important Maya leaders who may have had African ancestry. One was the initial general for northern Maya forces Jacinto Pat. Reed concludes that if true, his African ancestry came from Belize. Refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 62. However, he could have been descended from the 115 Afro-descendent militia members that founded San Fernando de los Negros in 1796 on the northeastern region of the peninsula, which is closer and more accessible to Jacinto Pat's eventual residence in Tihosuco. For a picture of his descendent Leonardo Pat whom exhibits black racial characteristics, refer to *Saastun: Revista de Cultura Maya*, no. 3 (December 1997): 111. The other was 1860s Mayan general Crescencio Poot who was described as tall and of Black racial complexion. Refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 267.

⁴⁰ "Indios Prisioneros," *El Fénix* (Campeche, Yucatán), March 1, 1849.

⁴¹ For depictions of these labor contracts, refer to Moisés González Navarro, *Raza y Tierra: La guerra de castas y el henequén*, Centro de Estudios Historicos Nueva Serie, vol. 10 (El Colegio de México, 1970), 124.

⁴² *Idem.* González Navarro paraphrases a document he found in the *Archivo Nacional de Cuba*, Fomento, Leg. 202. Num. 8,981.

⁴³ "Superintendent to Naval Commander in Chief, Bermuda 1853, June 10, r. 40," *Archives of British Honduras* Vol. 3 (London: Sifton, Praed & Co., Ltd., 1931-1935), 167.

⁴⁴ "Grand Court, 1853, June Term, G.C.C. 2," *Archives of British Honduras*, 168, and González Navarro, *Raza y Tierra*, 127.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁴⁶ Carlos R. Menéndez, *Historia del infame y vergonzoso comercio de indios, vendidos a los esclavistas de Cuba por los políticos yucatecos, desde 1848 hasta 1861. Justificación de la revolución indígena de 1847. Documentos irrefutables que lo comprueban* (Mérida, Yuc., Mexico: Talleres gráficos de "La Revista Yucatán," 1923).

⁴⁷ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 259.

⁴⁸ *Idem.*

⁴⁹ *Report on the Census of Cuba, 1899*, U.S. War Department, Office of Director of Census of Cuba, Washington, 1900, App. 19, 727-35. Paraphrased in Alfonso Villa Rojas, *Los Elegidos de Dios: Etnografía de los mayas de Quintana Roo* (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1979), 497-498.

⁵⁰ "Refuerzos a los Bárbaros," *El Fénix*, Campeche, Yucatán, November 20, 1848.

⁵¹ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 127.

⁵² *Idem.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁵⁴ "Minutes of Meeting of Legislative Assembly of State of Yucatan 1869, July 28, r. 101," *Archives of British Honduras*, 315.

⁵⁵ For an example of Native Americans utilizing competing colonial powers for their economic advantage, refer to Daniel H. Usner, *Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in a Frontier Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley Before 1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

⁵⁶ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 127.

⁵⁷ "Superintendent to Principal Magistrate, Bacalar 1848, May 9, r. 22b," *Archives of British Honduras*, 107.

⁵⁸ Reed notes that Belize merchants were also black and mulatto. Refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 127.

⁵⁹ "Superintendent to British Minister, Mexico 1849, March 12, r. 22b," *Archives of British Honduras*, 118.

⁶⁰ "Lieutenant Governor to Governor, Jamaica 1870, February 28, r. 98," *Archives of British Honduras*, 318.

⁶¹ Idem.

⁶² Miguel Alberto Bartolomé and Alicia Mabel Barabas, *La Resistencia Maya: relaciones interétnicas en el oriente de la península de yucatán* (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1977), 40.

⁶³ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 278.

⁶⁴ Cruzob was the autonomous Mayan zone on the Eastern coast of the Yucatán peninsula. Literally translated as "place of the cross" after the spiritual movement of the Speaking Cross.

⁶⁵ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 218.

⁶⁶ Alfredo Villas Rojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1945), 96.

⁶⁷ Bartolomé and Barabas, *La Resistencia Maya*, 40.

⁶⁸ "Lieutenant Governor to Governor, Jamaica 1869, September 16, r. 98," *Archives of British Honduras*, 315.

⁶⁹ Idem.

⁷⁰ Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 351-352.

⁷¹ For a discussion of the importance of counter-hegemonic oral histories and long established oral history methods, and sensitivity to Indigenous Peoples' concerns during oral history interviews, refer to William Schneider, --*so They Understand: Cultural Issues in Oral History* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2002). For counter-hegemonic oral history methods with People of Color, refer to Teresa Barnett and Chon A Noriega, *Oral history and communities of color* (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, 2013).

⁷² Reed ends his book with a statement from Mayan leaders to scholars at a 1997 Caste Wars conference that reminds scholars that Mayans still suffer from injustice similar to that of the Caste War era and that research must relate to Mayans in the present, not just the past. Refer to Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 359-361.