

## **Culture-Nature vs Commerce Disjunctives: Touristic Mayan Train Trans-Isthmus Mega Project and its Cultural Heritage and Urban Impact in Mexico.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper performs an holistic assessment referred to the Mayan Train project in Yucatan, Mexico. This evaluation includes 1) the impact of the construction and operation of the railroad way 2) the challenges between economic development and traditional living indigenous life 3) the demarcation of social participation in managing forecast 4) the safeguard perspective for the Mayan Intangible Heritage 5) An alternative design for better practices as a whole: train, communities and urban-tourist development.

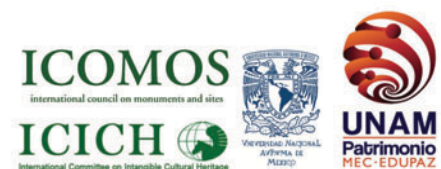
Without any rigorous popular methodologies for consultation the construction of the railroad way will increase the unfortunate collision between “culture-nature” vs “economy-innovation-technology transfer”. Looking for equity and diversity progress the edge effects caused by the Train, especially in critical areas such as the wildlife passages will change the daily sustainable life styles focused on their traditional social experiences supported on the spiritual meaning sense of housing the earth and sky as a whole, collective memory, and local dreams.

Impacts of modernity will clearly change the sense of Mayan associative landscape. Urban tourist development will also have a direct impact on the occupation of natural spaces and will exacerbate the barrier and edge effects caused by the railroad way that will have an indirect effect on the habitat and original sense of the place accompanied by the new daily life urban style practices such as vehicular traffic and demand of a new infrastructure.

The boundaries of collective and cultural duties and rights must be the question likewise the lack participation of the local people.

To avoid these impacts, we propose a) the dynamic process of involving local people and stakeholders, b) promote own building capacities in sustainable managing forecast, c) empower the development of a low-scale and sustainable tourism.

**Key Words:** Mayan diversity; Intangible Heritage; Sense of the place; Cultural Human Rights and Duties; Building capacities.



## **Disyuntivas entre “Cultura-Natura” vs “Comercio”: Megaproyecto Turístico del Tren Trans-ístmico Maya y su Impacto Patrimonial y Urbano en el Sureste de México.**

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### **RESUMEN**

Este artículo propone una evaluación integral del mega Proyecto del Tren Maya en Yucatán, México, partir de: 1) el impacto de la construcción y operación de la línea ferroviaria 2) el entorno de la vida maya 3) la antigua cultura, religión y arquitectura mayas 4) la vida contemporánea 5) el megaproyecto del tren maya 6) La zona de conflicto 7) los desafíos entre el desarrollo económico y la cotidianidad indígena tradicional 8) perspectiva de protección del patrimonio inmaterial de los mayas como alternativa a las mejores prácticas en su conjunto: “tren”, “comunidades” y “desarrollo urbano”.

En busca de prosperidad, justicia y diversidad, los efectos marginales causados por el tren, particularmente en las áreas críticas de su tramo, como son los paisajes de vida silvestre, los estilos de vida cotidiana maya y los valores del patrimonio inmaterial, afectarán el carácter de su habitabilidad, cosmovisión, y congruencia con los estilos de vida que se concentran en su conjunto como memoria colectiva, hábitos alimenticios, gobernanza tradicional y carácter asociativo del paisaje cultural. Los efectos de la modernidad cambiarán significativamente el desarrollo del turismo en los espacios naturales cercanos al ferrocarril, con efectos indirectos sobre el espacio habitable, la comprensión tradicional del lugar y las nuevas demandas de la vida urbana intensificadas por el tráfico de vehículos motorizados, la movilidad, el equipamiento e infraestructura.

Carentes de métodos participativos rigurosos de consulta a la población, la construcción del ferrocarril aumentó la desafortunada confrontación entre las decisiones colectivas y el esclarecimiento de los riesgos entre “cultura-natura”, “economía-innovación” y “transferencia tecnológica”. Para evitar estos impactos, proponemos a) un proceso dinámico de involucramiento de la población local y los grupos de interés, b) la multiplicación de estrategias para que las comunidades se conviertan en las responsables directas de la gestión sostenibilidad de sus cambios y respectivos riesgos c) la promoción corresponsable y participativa del turismo sostenible regulada.

**Palabras Clave:** Diversidad Maya; Patrimonio Inmaterial; Sentido de lugar; Derechos Humanos y Deberes Culturales; Desarrollo de capacidades.



## Compromiso Entre "Culture-Nature" et "Commerce": Mégaprojet Touristique du Train Transisthmique Maya et son Impact Patrimonial et Urbain dans le Sud-est du Mexique.

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### Résumé

Cet article propose une évaluation complète du méga projet de train maya au Yucatán, au Mexique, basée sur: 1) l'impact de la construction et de l'exploitation de la ligne de chemin de fer 2) l'environnement de la vie maya 3) la culture, la religion et l'architecture anciennes mayas 4) la vie contemporaine 5) le mégaprojet du train maya 6) La zone de conflit 7) les défis entre développement économique et vie quotidienne indigène traditionnelle 8) perspective de protection du patrimoine immatériel des Mayas comme alternative aux bonnes pratiques dans son ensemble: "train", "communautés" et "développement urbain".

À le désir de prospérité, de justice et de diversité, les effets marginaux causés par le train, en particulier dans les zones critiques de son tronçon, tels que les paysages sauvages, les modes de vie quotidiens mayas et les valeurs du patrimoine immatériel, affecteront le caractère, son habitabilité, sa vision du monde et sa congruence. Avec les modes de vie qui se concentrent dans leur ensemble comme mémoire collective, les habitudes alimentaires, la gouvernance traditionnelle et le caractère associatif du paysage culturel. Les effets de la modernité modifieront considérablement le développement du tourisme dans les espaces naturels à proximité du chemin de fer, avec des effets indirects sur l'espace de vie, la compréhension traditionnelle du lieu et les nouvelles exigences de la vie urbaine intensifiées par le trafic de véhicules motorisés, la mobilité, les équipements et les infrastructures. Faute de méthodes participatives rigoureuses de consultation de la population, la construction du chemin de fer a accru l'affrontement malheureux entre les décisions collectives et la clarification des risques entre «culture-nature», «économie-innovation» et «transfert de technologie».

Pour éviter ces impacts, nous proposons à) un processus dynamique d'implication de la population locale et des groupes d'intérêt, b) la multiplication des stratégies pour que les communautés deviennent directement responsables de la gestion durable de leurs changements et risques respectifs c) la co-promotion responsable et participative d'un tourisme durable réglementé.

**Mots Clés:** Diversité Maya; Patrimoine Immatériel; Sens du lieu; Droits de L'homme et Obligations Culturels; Développement des capacités.



## **„Kultur-Natur“ und „Handel Disjunktive“: Touristisches Maya-Zug-Transisthmus-Megaprojekt und sein Erbe und Städtische Auswirkungen im Südosten von Mexiko.**

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### **Zusammenfassung**

Dieses Papier führt eine ganzheitliche Bewertung durch, die sich auf das Maya-Zug-Projekt in Yucatan, Mexiko, bezieht. Dieses Papier enthält 1) die Auswirkungen des Baus und des Betriebs der Eisenbahnstrecke 2) die tatsächliche Maya-Lebenswelt 3) die alte Maya-Kultur, - Religion und - Architektur 4) das zeitgenössische Maya-Wohnen 5) das Maya-Zug-Megaprojekt 6) die Konfliktzone 7) die Herausforderungen zwischen wirtschaftlicher Entwicklung und traditionellem indigenem Alltag 8) Schutzperspektive für das immaterielle Erbe der Maya als Alternative für bessere Praktiken als Ganzes: Zug, Gemeinden und städtebauliche Entwicklung.

Auf der Suche nach Wohlstand, Gerechtigkeit und Vielfalt wirken sich die vom Zug verursachten Randeffekte, insbesondere in den kritischen Bereichen seines Abschnitts, wie Wildtierlandschaften, dem täglichen Lebensstil der Maya und den Werten des immateriellen Erbes, auf die Bewohnbarkeit, das Weltbild und die Kongruenz des Charakters aus mit den Lebensstilen, die als Ganzes als kollektives Gedächtnis, Essgewohnheiten, traditionelle Regierungsführung und assoziativer Charakter der Kulturlandschaft konzentriert sind.

Die Auswirkungen der Moderne werden die Entwicklung des Tourismus in natürlichen Räumen in der Nähe der Eisenbahn erheblich verändern, mit indirekten Auswirkungen auf den Wohnraum, das traditionelle Verständnis des Ortes und die neuen Anforderungen des städtischen Lebens, die durch den Kraftfahrzeugverkehr, die Mobilität, die Ausrüstung und die Infrastruktur verstärkt werden. Ohne rigorose partizipative Methoden für die Konsultation der Bevölkerung verstärkte der Bau des Eisenbahnweges die unglückliche Kollision zwischen kollektiven Entscheidungen sowie die Klärung der Risiken im Sinne des Verhältnisses von „Kultur-Natur“ zu „Wirtschaft-Innovation“. Technologietransfer". Um diese Auswirkungen zu vermeiden, schlagen wir vor a) einen dynamischen Prozess der Einbeziehung der lokalen Bevölkerung und der Interessengruppen durchzuführen, b) die eigenen Gebäudekapazitäten für eine nachhaltige Managementprognose zu fördern, c) die Entwicklung eines geringen und nachhaltigen Tourismus zu fördern.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Maya-Vielfalt; Immaterielles Erbe; Sinn für den Ort; Kulturelle Menschenrechte und Pflichten; Kapazitäten aufbauen.



## **Compromessi tra "Cultura-Natura" e "Commercio": Megaprogetto Turistico del Treno Transistmico Maya e Impatto Urbano e Patrimoniale nel Sud-est del Messico.**

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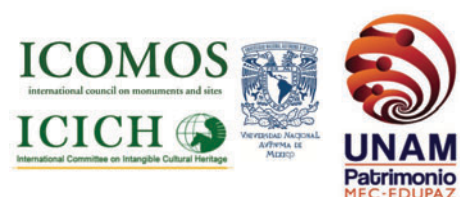
### **Sommario**

Questo articolo propone una valutazione completa del mega Maya Train Project nello Yucatán, in Messico, basata su: 1) l'impatto della costruzione e del funzionamento della linea ferroviaria 2) l'ambiente della vita Maya 3) la cultura antica, la religione e l'architettura Maya 4) Vita contemporanea 5) Il megaprogetto del treno Maya 6) La zona di conflitto 7) Le sfide tra sviluppo economico e vita quotidiana indigena tradizionale 8) Prospettiva di protezione del patrimonio immateriale dei Maya come alternativa alle migliori pratiche nel suo set: "treno", "comunità" e "sviluppo urbano".

Con il desiderio di prosperità, giustizia e diversità, gli effetti marginali causati dal treno, in particolare nelle aree critiche della sua sezione, come i paesaggi faunistici selvatico, gli stili di vita quotidiani Maya e i valori del patrimonio immateriale, influenzeranno il carattere della sua abitabilità, visione del mondo, e congruenza con gli stili di vita che si concentrano nel loro insieme come memoria collettiva, abitudini alimentari, governance tradizionale e carattere associativo del paesaggio culturale. Gli effetti della modernità cambieranno in modo significativo lo sviluppo del turismo negli spazi naturali vicino alla ferrovia, con effetti indiretti sullo spazio abitativo, la comprensione tradizionale del luogo e le nuove esigenze della vita urbana intensificate dal traffico automobilistico, dalla mobilità, dalle attrezzature e dalle infrastrutture. In mancanza di rigorosi metodi partecipativi di consultazione della popolazione, la costruzione della ferrovia ha aumentato lo sfortunato confronto tra decisioni collettive e il chiarimento dei rischi tra "cultura-natura", "economia-innovazione" e "trasferimento tecnologico".

Per evitare questi impatti, proponiamo a) un processo dinamico di coinvolgimento della popolazione locale e dei gruppi di interesse, b) la moltiplicazione delle strategie affinché le comunità diventino direttamente responsabili della gestione della sostenibilità dei loro cambiamenti e dei rispettivi rischi c) la co-promozione responsabile e partecipativa del turismo sostenibile regolamentato.

**Parole Chiave:** Diversità Maya; Patrimonio Immateriale; Senso del luogo; Diritti Umani e Doveri Culturali; Sviluppo delle capacità.



## **Trocas Entre "Cultura-Natureza" vs "Comércio": Megaprojeto Turístico do Trem Transístmico Maia e seu Impacto Patrimonial e Urbano no Sudeste do México.**

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### **Resumo**

Este artigo propõe uma avaliação abrangente do mega Projeto do Trem Maia em Yucatán, México, com base em: 1) o impacto da construção e operação da linha ferroviária 2) o meio ambiente da vida maia 3) cultura, religião e arquitetura ancestrais Maias 4) a vida contemporânea 5) o megaprojeto do trem maia 6) A zona de conflito 7) os desafios entre o desenvolvimento econômico e o cotidiano indígena tradicional 8) perspectiva de proteção do patrimônio imaterial dos maias como alternativa às melhores práticas em seu conjunto: "trem", "comunidades" e "desenvolvimento urbano".

Com o desejo de prosperidade, justiça e diversidade, os efeitos marginais causados pelo trem, particularmente nas áreas críticas de sua seção, como paisagens de vida selvagem, estilo de vida diário maia e valores do patrimônio imaterial, afetarão o caráter, sua habitabilidade, visão de mundo e congruência com os estilos de vida que se concentram como um todo como memória coletiva, alimentação, governança tradicional e caráter associativo da paisagem cultural. Os efeitos da modernidade irão alterar significativamente o desenvolvimento do turismo em espaços naturais próximos à ferrovia, com efeitos indiretos sobre o espaço de vida, a compreensão tradicional do lugar e as novas demandas da vida urbana intensificadas pelo tráfego de veículos motorizados, mobilidade, equipamentos e infraestrutura. Na falta de métodos participativos rigorosos de consulta à população, a construção do caminho-de-ferro aumentou o infeliz confronto entre as decisões coletivas e a clarificação dos riscos entre "cultura-natureza", "economia-inovação" e "transferência de tecnologia".

Para evitar esses impactos, propomos a) um processo dinâmico de envolvimento da população local e grupos de interesse, b) a multiplicação de estratégias para que as comunidades se tornem diretamente responsáveis pela gestão da sustentabilidade de suas mudanças e respectivos riscos c) os co- promoção responsável e participativa do turismo sustentável regulamentado.

**Palavras-Chave:** Diversidade Maia; Patrimônio Imaterial; Senso de lugar; Direitos Humanos e Deveres Culturais; Desenvolvimento de capacidade.



## **Culture-Nature vs Commerce Disjunctives: Touristic Maya Train Trans-Isthmus Mega Project and its Cultural Heritage and Urban Impact in Mexico.**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Mayan territory, never conquered by the Aztecs, because previously the ancient Mayans were dissolved. Ledges the main transformation project of the Mexican southeast defined as one of the most inaccessible and marginalized areas of the country.

The overarching term "Maya" is a modern collective term that refers to the peoples of the region, however, the term was not used by the indigenous populations themselves since there never was a common sense of identity or political unity among the distinct populations (Elliot: 1994).

Today, the Maya peoples number well over 6 million people, speaking over thirty surviving Mayan languages and residing in nearly the same area as their ancestors. The Maya refers to both a modern-day people as well as their ancestors who built an ancient civilization (Vrdoljak, A.F.: 1964) that stretched throughout southeastern part of Mexico -including Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and Salvador in Central America- that reached its peak during the first millennium A.D.

Rather the ancient Mayans were dissolved; it consisted of numerous small states, ruled by kings, each apparently centered on a city but never unified as a unit. Sometimes, a stronger Maya state would dominate a weaker state and be able to exact tribute and labor from it (López Austin, A.: 1992:28).



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**\*Note:** MEC-EDUPAZ Journal No.19 appreciate and recognize the ICICH expert lecture of this Article, by Mrinalini, Arey PhD.

Maya culture adapted creatively to this diverse natural world that includes living zone areas with rainforests, savannas, semi-arid highland plateaus, semi-alpine peaks and swampy low areas. Such an array of landscapes is host to a rich diversity of wildlife and plants. This area encompasses the northern lowlands, central lowlands and southern highlands, rainforests, savannas, semi-arid highland plateaus, semi-alpine peaks and swampy low areas. Such an array of landscapes is host to a rich diversity of wildlife and plants.

Defined as one of the poorest inaccessible and marginalized regions of Mexico, including a cultural territory of more than seven national states. The trans-peninsular train represents a connectivity tourism project of the main transformation mega-project of the federal government for this region joined with an infrastructural system of railed roads ways and local stations conceived as a whole urban reorganization that promotes economy such as and sustainable tourism.

*Is tourism able of generating wealth by itself?*

*Which are the limits of a tourism project?*

*What kind of wealth are we talking about?*

*Tourism conceived as territorial forecast development, promotes cultural continuity without threatening the richness of biodiversity, culture and local values?*

*Is it legitimate to impose a forecast development project to generate wealth without a real participation of the involved population?*

*Which are the limits of the viability of human and cultural rights of local indigenous populations, mainly in a Post-COVID 19 future perspective sceneries?*

*Which will be the viability of the project in the next lustrum in the face of climate change and the reduced availability of water that it will imply?*

*Why economy if we are talking about Mayan intangible heritage?*

*¡A lot of questions, a lot of answers. Let's describe better possible worlds!*

The entire region where the Mayan Train will cross is populated by contexts where biodiversity, social identity, history, and community life are linked. For years, there has existed in Mexico, an ongoing program for the rehabilitation of the railway coming from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in the Oaxaca and Veracruz Region.

The Mayan Train will simply take advantage of said rehabilitation and If it is fully completed, the Trans-isthmus Corridor will connect the main tourist destinations in the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Tabasco, Yucatan, and Quintana Roo. (Figure 1).



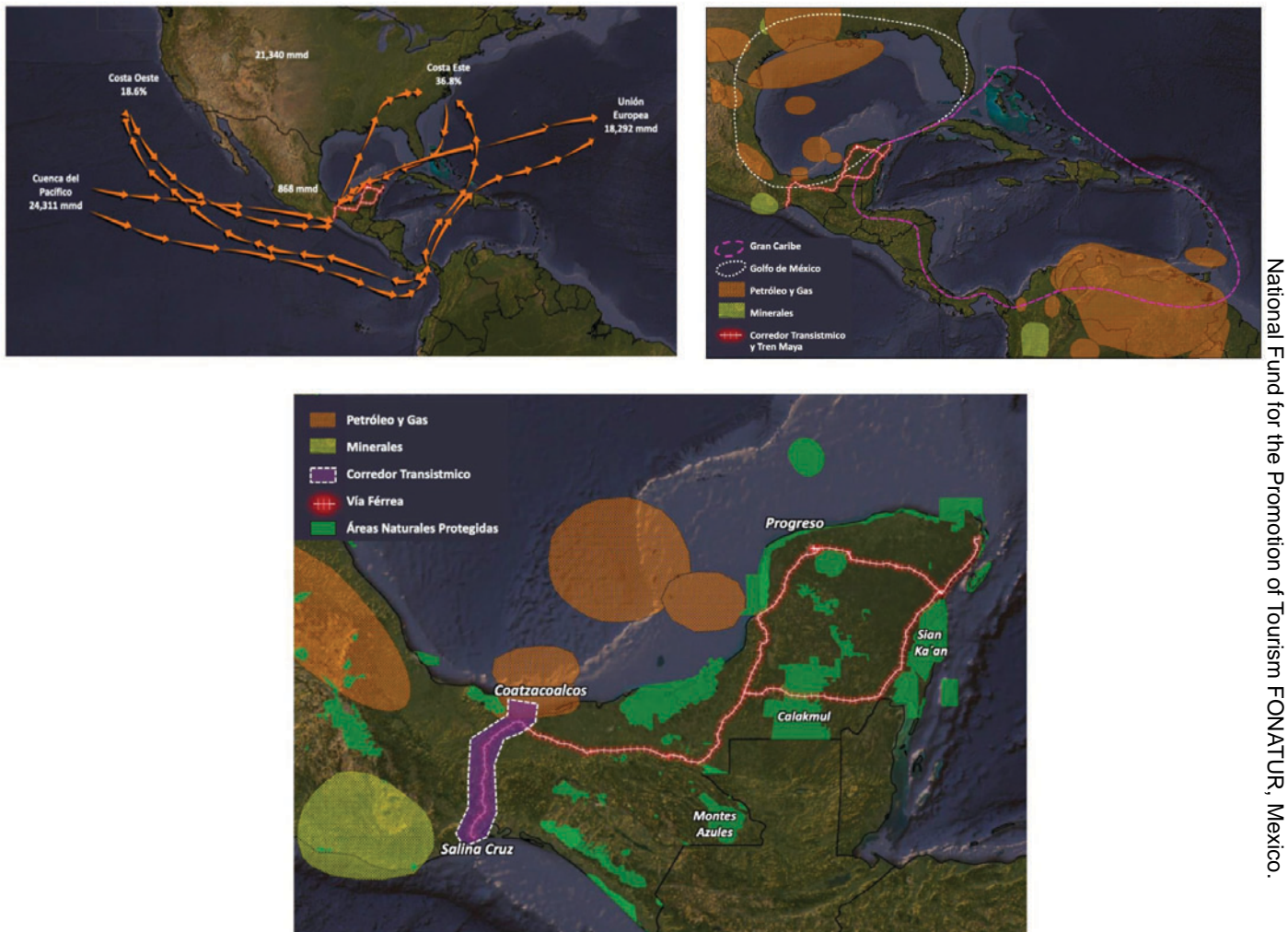


Figure 1

Mexican Southeast Mega-projects 2020,

By one hand The Mayan Train will help articulate the internal market in the southeast Mexico, lower the cost of transporting goods and supplies to tourist spots, allow local producers to expand their market, and considerably reduce travel time between the states and the region's municipalities. By the other hand, will contemplates the construction of development hubs, agro-industrial parks, poles stations, new cities and new tourism developments.

What about the viability of the project in the face of climate change and the reduced availability of water that it will imply?

Warning with respect to its environmental impact of the potentially devastating effects (ecological, social, cultural) of an infrastructural intervention like the one proposed by the Mayan Train-Trans-isthmus Corridor mega-project," based on a wealth of scientific multidisciplinary evidences the impact of this project will be much more than a transport connectivity link system. (Figure 2)



National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism FONATUR, Mexico.

Figure 2

At least, no one opposes development let alone the fight against poverty in Mexico. The train itself is not the most complicated part of the project, but rather what is behind it, which are several new towns and villages that are going to generate strong pressure on some areas that still have important biodiversity and a lot of other urban infrastructure demands.

It should be noted that the COVID-19 chaos is only the prelude to an environmental crisis whose outcome will likely be much more catastrophic unless the international community of States, businesses and humanity in general assume a more rational way of using natural resources. (IIE-UNAM: 2019: 8-9).

One of the ways to achieve this goal is to respect the ability of indigenous peoples to manage their territories and the natural resources therein autonomously.

Even more when International agreements (UNESCO-CIPDH: 2018) are leading roads of managing centered on people schemas and forecast planning must reinforce the idea of “changing minds not only design phases, program and activities” (Arie de Geus).. If the process does not directly involve society, they lose efficacy and interest. (Ragno, 2015: 93-107).

If more than 85% of Mexican people lives in urban cities, unfortunately getting poor each day. Why the development of southeastern poorer regions of the Mexican territory should destroy its natural and a sociocultural diversity? It doesn't necessarily have to feature steel and concrete; promote millions of tourists, overexploitation of natural resources, or a negative impact on biodiversity, in exchange of richest cultural landscape, heritage authenticity or integrity in the meaning sense and properties that since Nara ICOMOS document<sup>(1)</sup> as well as ONU-ODS<sup>(2)</sup> are looking for (ICOMOS, 1994). Why have approved such an important strategic regional development project, without any environmental, urban and heritage impact studies?

The facts describes that the coin is in the air. Without public studies of environmental, urban and patrimonial impact, it is impossible to foresee a plan that solves the treatment of waste, the discharge of wastewater and its necessary sanitation in the face of the exponential increase in tourism in the area. Far from that, both tangible and intangible heritage have been left unprotected since they represent by themselves a true conflict zone.

Questioning the criteria for bidding and affirming that new sources of work will be the main benefit for local communities is pertinent. To suppose that the workers of the new constructions will emanate from them, implies not recognize that the construction companies have their own more trained workers, as well as stop offsetting the relevance of the exchange of learning a reiterated ancestral productive and adaptive capacity they had demonstrated over the centuries; but also, rank in second place the continuity of their constructive knowledges derived from their social thinking is the worst risk.

Before the arrival of large-scale tourism, and intersectorial collaboration plan must be developed between the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources and the National Institute of Anthropology and History. The objective would be to preserve the biological, archeological, and cultural tangible and intangible heritage that the peninsula protects.

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(1) [https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara\\_f.pdf](https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara_f.pdf)

(2) [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020\\_Spanish.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020_Spanish.pdf)

## **The Mayan World: Tradition and Culture-Nature integrated Living Styles**

If we agree that indigenous peoples and communities are defined by their culture, their way of life, their traditions and their specific spiritual bond with the land as an element of cohesion that allows excluding those who are not part of its members. It is the cultural legacy, made up of its history, traditions, customs and cultural expressions that constitutes its element of own cohesion and allows it to include its members and exclude those who are not (Lixinski: 2010).

...“Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is an important aspect of cultural heritage in all societies around the world. Intangible and tangible heritage, are inextricably linked, as traditional social practices and knowledge provide understanding and give meaning, value and context to both objects and to physical spaces, whether built or natural. Both are central to a community’s connection with place. (ICICH-ICOMOS: 2020).

As well as Mayan geographical diversity horizons, the oral and mythological tradition has maintained until our days. The validity of their traditional system of governance and social thinking remains inalienable the intergenerational vigor of its legacy as an uninterrupted transmission of styles of rearing, feeding and agricultural productivity. All of them had favored the own community’s self-conception as “unique” and “different from the others” over centuries.

Mayas communities has projected its own laws on objects, animals, natural phenomena and imaginary beings all of them, located in certain changing living spaces, that present and at the same time conceal the content of their own social relations.

"... This thinking system is due to the fact that social relationships have managed to establish, persist and reproduce a process of “sacralization... (Godelier: 1969)".

"... With a marked tendency to modify and re-mean the experience sense of facts and living spaces, even to desecrate, the “sacred spaces of experiences”, while the “spaces of memory” remain, possibly, as marks of identity resistance... (Petrich: 2002: 168)".

The thirty linguistic nations that today make up the Mayans family -as might be expected- from more or less distant peoples that have undergone historical processes that are not always coincident. As well as they have their own cultural landscapes that make up the Mayan world characterized by their diversity and richness. It is a fact that the entire Mayan space, being the property of the divinities, is considered sacred. (Petrich, P: 2005: 161).



National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism FONATUR, Mexico.

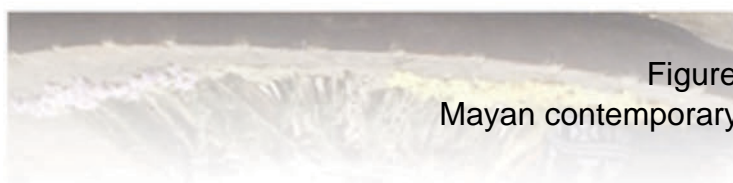


Figure 3  
Mayan contemporary Ritual Practices

Their oral tradition had been empowered through “the sacred spaces of memory” and “the sacred spaces of the living experiences” (Petrich, P: 2005: 163) that use to be distinguished, based on perfectly structured stories of a mythical nature that, without losing the framework of what we could define, as a kind of complexity matrix of mayan social thinking, that reproduces variants of the same holistic unit, which expresses diversity and its possible differences, always based on its constant changing transformation.

Daily Life in Maya Civilization throughout all these centuries, the Maya integrate a lot of ancient traditions such as original myths syncretical integrated with Judeo-Christian standpoints and festivities developed after the Spanish occupation in their lands.

Despite having transformed the meaning of its culture with syncretism’s that accompanied the impact of the conquest, the hegemony of the western culture during the Spanish period, independent era and contemporary modernity. All living spaces are possible receptacles to receive forces or avoid sacred forces.

The original and current daily habits reiterate the dynamism that Mayan culture has had and its variations from one community to another, as a common denominator that continue characterizing a kind of symbiosis between tangible and intangible elements in several of their expressions (Vrdoljak, A.F.: 2014).

This cultural legacy has made valid that the concept of community is the principle that has guaranteed the continuity of cultural elements, derived from a sacred conception of inhabiting the territory, as the same unit where the "beings of corn" heirs of the Gods converge.

Popol Vuh: As humans who live together to care for their environment, prioritizing the character of the community, over the individual interests of its members. Mayan communities and their nuclear family maintained their traditional day-to-day life (Sharer and Traxler: 2006: 9).

If we project to the oral tradition the distinction between "sacred spaces of memory" and "sacred spaces of the living experience", with respect to sacred spaces of memory, we find that a perfectly structured type of story is elaborated of a mythical character. In the case of sacred spaces of experiences, we limit ourselves to recent stories, testimonials and generally referred to one's own experience or that of the neighbor who also legitimate it (Petrich: 2002:163).



Figure 4

Maya Lacandona original survivors women  
and Totzil men, living in the jungle

Until today Maya beliefs currently governed all aspects of the world, both visible and invisible recording increasingly complex rituals that promote the living sense of building, hosting and governing until now, their living homes and social spaces, including calendrical cycles, that incorporated vernacular feasting and religious festivities. The belief in supernatural forces pervaded Maya life and influenced every aspect of it, from the simplest day-to-day activities such as food preparation, to trade, politics, and elite activities.

The spiritual association between heaven and earth, conceived as the "Casa Maya", has made the building's own and still current styles of housing constitute a principle of community organization respectful of its natural environment, which at the same time guards the safeguarding of their own cultural legacy, as a synonym of the authentic living intangible heritage that they hold.

As an example of the survival of ancient cosmological beliefs among present-day Mayan groups (obviously with formal changes) we will briefly mention the cosmology of the Tzotzil's collected by William Holland (1978: 68-98).

“Heaven is the abode of the good gods, the creators of life, while in the lower world lie the bad gods who seek destruction”.



Sacred book of the "Mayas Macehuales"

Figure 5

Aniceto May Tun expert reader, guardian and writer (escribano) of the "A" "AlmajTaan" Sacred book of the "Mayas Macehuales" died in August 2020 with 112 years old in the Ceremonial Center of Tixcacal

Will be the Aniceto May Tan dead, a prelude of the new kind of destruction?

The fact is that in exchange for their implicit self-exclusion, 6 000,000 million Mayans people have managed to preserve the traditional power of their ancient legacy to this day. By disrupting its territory and transforming it under the railway logic of technology, urbanization, connectivity and the impact of tourism to overcome just, its marginalization and poverty; how this authentic daily living cultural resistance style will be continue transforming by itself?

New economy will be the fact that lets Mayas became wealthy or less poor? The fact is the way new habits in a new environment and economy will transform all the Mayan culture. It's clear that the mayan wealth of this living intangible heritage certainly is at risk.

## Ancient Mayan Culture

***There was a lot who watched the facts that I tell fulfilled  
within information namely, so that those of my lineage are known  
and for my children and for those who come after,  
'until death takes place here on the earth  
(Nakuk Ah Pech, one of the writers of the  
Chronic and Hystory of Chac-Xulub-Chen.(3)***

Ancient Maya's were mainly influenced by a civilization to the west of them known as the Olmecs. (Mother Culture). As well as the city of Teotihuacan, located farther to the western part of Mexico. Maya people may have initially devised the famous long count calendar that the Maya would become famous that let them built numerous cities found throughout the Maya world each had their own individual wonders that made them unique.

Due to extensive trading networks, all Mesoamerican cultures influenced the others. While other Mesoamericans also had a form of pictographic writing, such as Mixtec's, Zapotecans in Oaxaca, Totonacs in Veracruz y Tabasco, Tlaxcaltecos in Tlaxcala and Puebla, or even Aztecs in Mexico Tenochtitlan. (López Austin, A.:2015). The Maya had the only fully developed writing system.

Unlike the others, the Maya, for example, had the only writing system that represented the spoken language of the Mayans, and was populated by a great variety of deities, supernatural entities and sacred forces. In fact, many aspects of Maya culture were more refined or perfected forms of art and architecture or the complex calendar shared among all Mesoamerican cultures.

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(3) ..."Y fueron muchos quienes miraron cumplidos los sucesos que cuento dentro de mi información a saber, para que sean conocidos los de mi linaje y por mis hijos, y por los que vengan detrás, hasta que tenga lugar la muerte aquí en la tierra...". (Nakuk Ah Pech, uno de los escritores de la época colonial Historia y crónica de Chac-Xulub-Chen)



The Maya had such a broad interpretation of the sacred that identifying distinct deities with specific functions is inaccurate.

The Maya interpretation of deities was closely tied to the calendar, astronomy, and their cosmology (Demarest 2004 p177-179).

The importance of a deity, its characteristics, and its associations varied according to the movement of celestial bodies. The priestly interpretation of astronomical records and books was therefore crucial, since the priest would understand which deity required ritual propitiation, when the correct ceremonies should be performed, and what would be an appropriate offering.



Board of the Palace of Palenque. K'inich Kan Joy Chitam II receives the royal diadem from his father Pakal el Grande, while his mother, Tz'akbu Ajam presents him with the insignia of war.



Figure 6

Maya stela known as Lakamba Classical period.

<https://es.123rf.com/photo/84344022-One-of-the-temples-of-palenque-was-a-pre-columbian-maya-civilization-of-mesoamerica-known-as-lakamba-big-water-unesco-world-heritage.html>

The 260-day tzolk'in (remove hyperlink) ritual calendar continues in use in modern Maya communities in the highlands of Guatemala and Chiapas (Zorich: 2012: 29) and millions of Mayan-language speakers inhabit the territory in which their ancestors developed their civilization (Sharer and Traxler 2006:11).

There are a variety of archeological, written, linguistic, ethnographic and artistic original sources of pre-Hispanic origin, which refer all those works made before the Spanish conquest that can provide us with some knowledge of Maya civilization noted for its logo syllabic script -the most sophisticated and highly developed writing system in pre-Columbian Americas- as well as its art, architecture, mathematics, calendar, and astronomical system.

There are also a great many examples of Maya text found on stelae and ceramics. The Maya developed a highly complex series of interlocking ritual calendars, and employed mathematics that included one of the earliest instances of the explicit zero in their world context.

Religious beliefs and practices before they began to be influenced by the European system. Cosmogonic and cosmological ideas as well as astronomical knowledge, which extraordinary advanced in the Mayan world, determines the construction of the sacred spaces on earth (De la Garza and Najera: 2002: 79-80).

The Mayans were a literary community, first in the ancient codices and hieroglyphs; after inheriting the teachings of the ancient friars, to leave the testimony of their religious beliefs, as well as their scientific and magical knowledge, which has allowed them to maintain their identity until today. Maya beliefs and language proved resistant to change, despite vigorous efforts by Catholic missionaries (Sharer and Traxler; 2006: 10).

The Maya civilization developed highly sophisticated artforms, and the Maya created art using both perishable and non-perishable materials, including wood, jade, obsidian, ceramics, sculpted stone monuments, stucco, and finely painted murals, that let them recorded their history and ritual knowledge in screenful books, of which only three uncontested examples remain, the rest having been destroyed by the Spanish.



Dashboard at the Dumbarton Oaks Museum, the escene shows K'inich Kan Joy Chitam II dancing while his parents watch him.



Board of the Palace of Palenque.

<http://www.mesoweb.com/palenque/monuments/PT/PT-Jorge2-esp.html>

Figure 7

Farming became more effective during this period, likely because of the breeding of more productive forms of maize and, perhaps more importantly, the introduction of the "nixtamal" process. In this process, the maize is soaked in lime, or something similar, and cooked, something that "enormously increased the nutritional value of corn".

Maize, complemented beans, squashes, chili peppers, and manioc (or cassava). At Joya de Cerén, a volcanic eruption preserved a record of foodstuffs stored in Maya homes, among them were chilies and tomatoes.

Cotton seeds were in the process of being ground, perhaps to produce cooking oil. In addition to basic foodstuffs, the Maya also cultivated prestige crops such as cotton, cacao and vanilla.

Cacao was especially prized by the elite, who consumed chocolate beverages. Cotton was spun, dyed, and woven into valuable textiles in order to be traded. The Maya had few domestic animals; dogs (tepezcuintles) were domesticated by 3000 BC, and the Muscovy duck by the Late Postclassic.

Turkeys (Guajolotes) were unsuitable for domestication, but were rounded up in the wild and penned for fattening. All of these used as food animals; dogs were additionally used for hunting. It is possible that deer were also penned and fattened (Foster 2002: 310-312).



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Figure 8  
Mayan Maiz Food: tortillas, chocolate, Mole and pozole

All of these variety of culinary resources were supplemented with a wide variety of other plants either cultivated in gardens or gathered in the forest which were already being used by the Maya, a 2014 Journal of Archaeological Science study shows where exhibited sophisticated food dishes for the high culinary live tradition diet Maya derived until our dates.

In 1511, a Spanish caravel was wrecked in the Caribbean, and about a dozen survivors made landfall on the coast of Yucatán. From 1517 to 1519, three separate Spanish expeditions explored the Yucatán coast, and engaged in a number of battles with the Maya inhabitants.

After the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan fell to the Spanish in 1521, Hernán Cortés dispatched Pedro Alvarado to Guatemala with 180 cavalry, 300 infantry, 4 cannons, and thousands of allied warriors from central Mexico; they arrived in Soconusco in 1523.

Good relations did not last, due to excessive Spanish demands for gold as tribute, and the city was abandoned a few months later (Shell and Mathews:1999:298). Francisco de Montejo and his son, launched a long series of campaigns against the polities of the Yucatán Peninsula in 1527, and finally completed the conquest of the northern portion of the peninsula in 1546.

At times, the colonial administration encouraged the traditional economy in order to extract tribute in the form of ceramics or cotton textiles, although these were usually made to European specifications. The arrival of the Spanish brought about a profound change in the Maya world.

The diseases they brought decimated the Maya and the Spaniards forced the Maya to convert to Christianity. Today, despite the devastation they experienced, the Maya people live on, numbering in the millions. The Spanish conquest stripped away most of the defining features of Maya civilization.

However, many Maya villages remained remote from Spanish colonial authority, and for the most part continued to manage their own affairs. The agents of the Catholic Church wrote detailed accounts of the Maya, in support of their efforts at evangelization, and absorption of the Maya into the Spanish Empire.

This was followed by various Spanish priests and colonial officials who left descriptions of ruins they visited in Yucatán and Central America.

Contrary to popular belief the Maya civilization did not vanish. Drought, deforestation, war and climate change have all been suggested as potential causes of this. Drought may have played a particularly important role as a recent study on minerals from an underwater cave in Belize (André Droxler)<sup>(4)</sup> shows that a drought ravaged parts of Central America between A.D. 800 and 900.

The Mayas continued, although agricultural output was improved by the introduction of steel tools. Traditional crafts such as weaving, ceramics, and basketry continued to be practiced a lot. Community markets and trade in local products continued long after the conquest.

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(4) <https://www.livescience.com/49255-drought-caused-maya-collapse.html>

War represents another essential element for the emergence and organization of Mayan society, its costumes, musical instruments and magical objects were promoted to get the victory. The warrior activity of the ancient Mayans, from the Spanish conquest, turned into rebellion, always stifled, but always rekindled, like an inextinguishable member.

The response of the various peoples and groups was very varied: some submitted passively, others joined, but still others actively rebelled by organizing all kinds of demonstrations, which even led to violent clashes against the imposed regime. In the rebellions, the old pre-Hispanic beliefs were essentially used, maintaining a certain independence from the official Catholic cult.

“The indigenous Mayan rebellions are events that are inscribed in the «long duration». (Valverde, VMC, 2002: 317).

They cannot be seen as isolated, unique and unrepeatable events, but rather as a series of movements that are part of a whole process of active resistance... they are inserted, just like the most important aspects of existence, in one of the community living cycles. When these come to light, they show that the identity and collective memory of a people are kept alive and claim their place in history".

A fact that reveals the indigenous reluctance to join an imposed order, by whoever it may be and therefore, they are part of a process of active resistance as a daily life style.

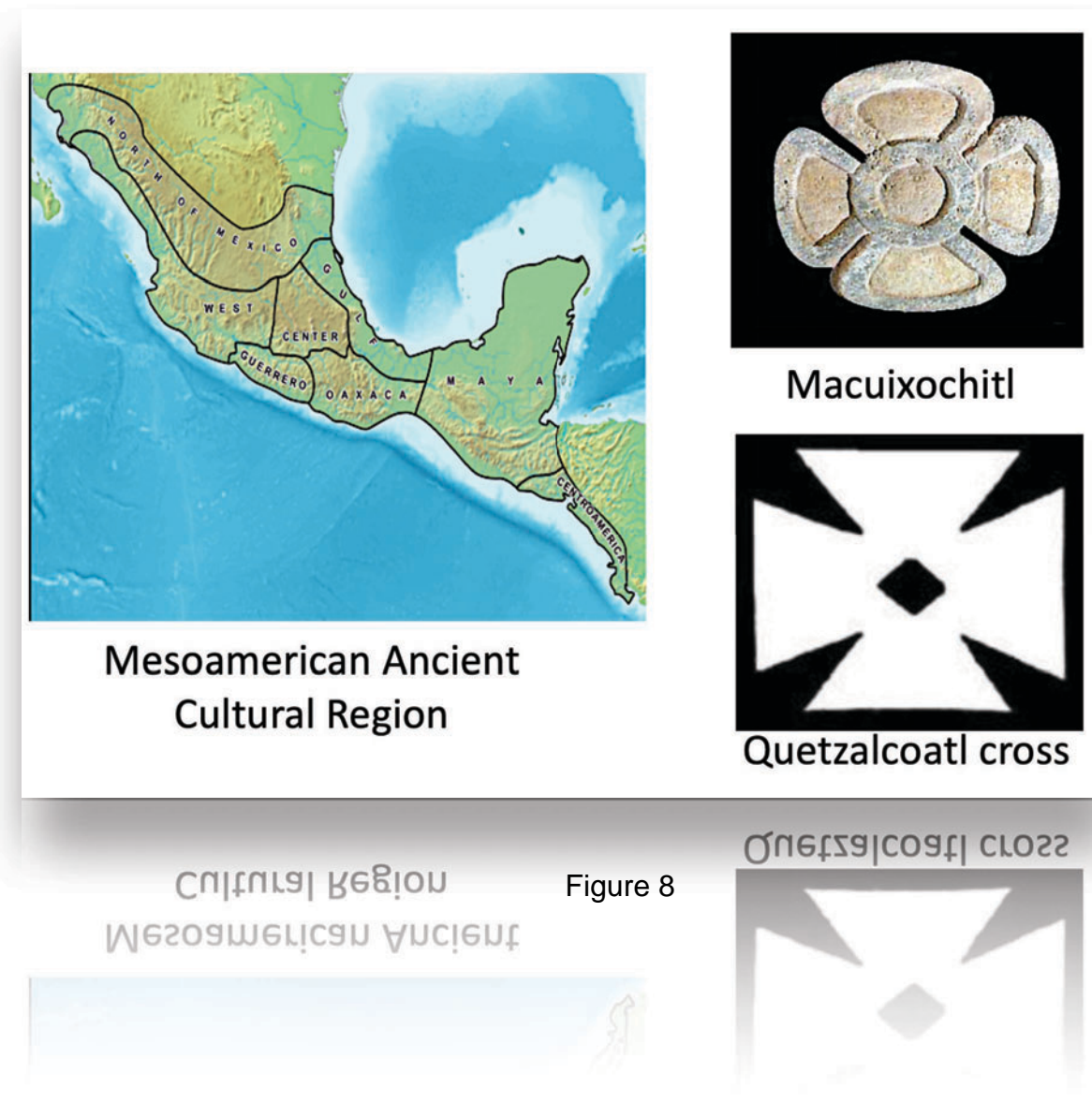
The post-conquest rebellions were the Cancuc rebellion in 1712, the Cisteil rebellion in 1761, and the 19th century war called Caste War, which includes both the one that occurred in Yucatán from 1847 to 1901, and the Tzotzil rebellion that lasted from 1867 to 1879. These movements were interpreted as struggles of faith against the infidels and, later, of civilization against barbarism. This peculiar historical phenomenon reaches our days embodied in the Zapatista movement in Chiapas.

## **Ancient Mayan Religion**

Religion permeated each and every aspect of Mayan life, and from their point of view, their religious architecture (Ciudad, R.A.:2002) was developed as a space correspondence between earth and cosmos where myths were reproduced and dramatized in their microcosm character multiplied spatially.

Maya culture shared many characteristics with other Mesoamerican cultures sustained on the original culture of Maize daily life styles, such as the Olmec, Zapotec, Toltec or Aztec ones sharing deities with different names, retaining some features purely Mayan.

The Mesoamerican symbols of the quadruplicity and the fifth direction or center of the cosmos are diverse and shared in all the several ancient cultures including the Maya. The glyph of the Sun stands out in the first place, which is a flower with four petals, since it is the who governs time and, furthermore, who determines the quadripartite division of space. Another glyph that geometrically represents the cosmos is the so-called “Quincuncen”. (Fig. 9)



The four sectors that make up the cosmos derive from the cross, so the sacred number “*par excellence*” is not four but five, which represents the confluence of the two lines of the cross, the center of the universe. The four sides cannot be considered out of their relation to the center or the point of intersection of the axes of the cross. And the center is the same for heaven as it is for earth and for the underworld, because it is the point of union and communication of the various cosmic spaces....

...Thus, each one of the sectors of the universe has its own religious significance, but the most Important, not only for the Mayans, but on a universal level, is the fifth direction or Center of the World. As Guénon emphasize, the center is not just a point, but an axis, which joins the two poles of the universe (Guénon, 1969: 57). And because it is the axis, the center is a threshold where a level break is made possible, a leap to the other worlds (De la Garza, M.: 2002).

This image of the *axis mundi* tree is one of the most common of the center's symbolism in several ancient cultures such as in Vedic India, China, Germanic mythology, and many other religions.

The Maya had such a broad interpretation of the sacred that identifying distinct deities with specific functions is inaccurate.

The Maya world was populated by a great variety of deities, supernatural entities and sacred forces. But the main symbol of the Center of the World in the Books of *Chilam Balam* is a great green ceiba tree, called “*Great Mother Ceiba*”, which crosses the three cosmic levels communicating them (Anonym: 1948).

In common with other Mesoamerican cultures, the Maya worshipped feathered serpent deities. Such worship was rare during the Classic period, but by the Postclassic the feathered serpent had spread to both the Yucatán Peninsula and the Guatemalan Highlands. In Yucatán, the feathered serpent deity was Kukulcan, among the K'iche' it was [Q'uq'umatz](#) (Miller and Taub:1993:142-150).

Kukulcan had his origins in the Classic period War Serpent, *Waxaklahun Ubah Kan*, and has also been identified as the Postclassic version of the [Vision Serpent](#) of Classic Maya art (Freidel, Schele and Parker:1993: 289, 325, 441n26).

Although the cult of Kukulcan had its origins in these earlier Maya traditions, the worship of Kukulcan was heavily influenced by the Quetzalcoatl cult of central Mexico (Sharer and Traxler: 2006: 582–83). Likewise, Q'uq'umatz had a composite origin, combining the attributes of Mexican Quetzalcoatl with aspects of the Classic period Itzamna (Fox: 2008: 60, 121, 220).



Other Maya main anonymous foundational text untitled *PopolVuh* was written in the Latin script in early colonial times, and was probably transcribed from a hieroglyphic book by an unknown K'iche' Maya nobleman. It is one of the most outstanding works of indigenous literature in the Americas (Miller and Taube: 1993:134).

The *Popul Vuh* recounts the mythical creation of the world, the legend of the Hero Twins, and the history of the Postclassic K'iche' kingdom. Testify that the forefather gods Tepew and Q'ukumatz" brought forth the earth from a watery void, and endowed it with animals and plants."

Creating sentient beings proved more difficult, but eventually humans were created, including the hero twins, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, who embark in a series of adventures, which included defeating the lords of the underworld. Their journey climaxed with the resurrection of their father, the maize god. "It seems clear that this whole mythic cycle was closely related to maize fertility".

Deities recorded in the *Popul Vuh* include Hun Hunahpu, the K'iche' maize god, and a triad of deities led by the K'iche' patron Tohil, and also including the moon goddess Awillix, and the mountain god Jacawitz (Sharer and Traxler:2006:729).

The Maya viewed the cosmos as highly structured. There were thirteen levels in the heavens and nine in the underworld, with the mortal world in between.

Each level had four cardinal directions subdivided into four sectors or «cardinal directions», whose corners would be in the northeast, northwest, southwest and southeast positions.

"The universe of the ancient Maya was composed of kab, or Earth (the visible domain of the Maya people), *kan*, or the sky above (the invisible realm of celestial deities), and *xibalba*, or the watery underworld below (the invisible realm of the underworld deities)"...

..."In his various aspects, Itzamnaaj was the lord over the most fundamental opposing forces in the universe -life and death, day and night, sky and earth-". Sharer wrote, noting that "as lord of the celestial realm". (Demarest, A. 2004:179).

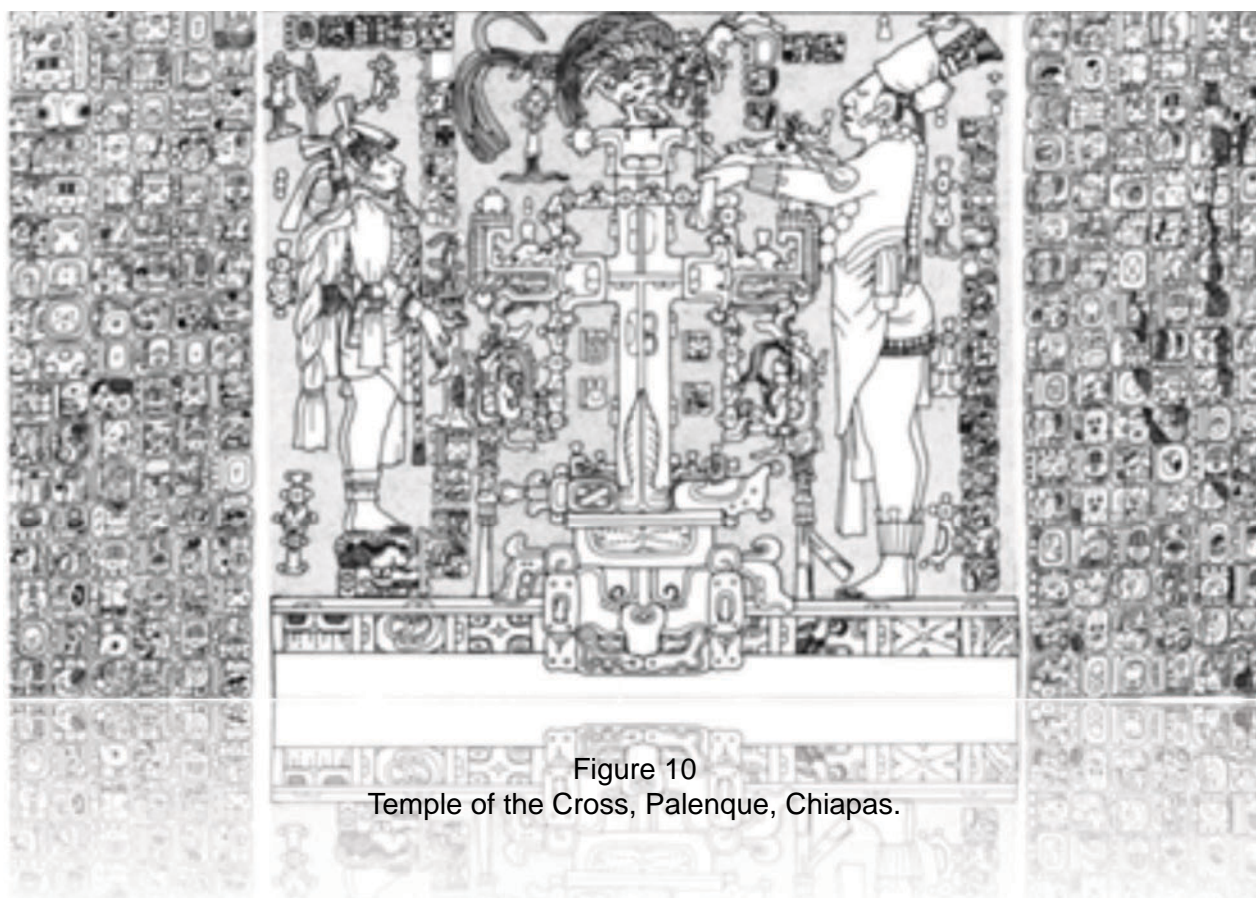


Figure 10  
Temple of the Cross, Palenque, Chiapas.

Other Maya deities included the sun god K'inichAjaw, the rain and storm god Chaak and the lightning deity K'awiil, among many others. The Maya believed that each person had a "life force".

It should be noted that the temples were always erected oriented according to the astral directions,... "fundamentally the equinoxes and the solstices, and were placed on pyramidal bases that represented both the sacred mountains and the celestial and infra-terrestrial spaces, in which they could only penetrate the priests and the initiates, while the people remained in the squares (built with a quadrangular scheme), symbols of the earthly level, during religious ceremonies... but... these sacred spaces were not only a symbolic representation of the cosmos, but their construction had the main purpose of achieving the communication of men with the sacred energies through ritual, to promote the descent or ascent of the gods to the earthly level, and the descent or ascent of some sacred men, the shamans, to the underworld and to heaven. And likewise, while the sacred spaces were the Center of the World, they undoubtedly served to revive the divine time of the origins, that is, to reproduce the cosmogonic myth, and periodically revitalize the cosmos... (De la Garza, Mercedes 2002 : 69)". Figure 11 shows the rise and fall of Quetzalcoatl.



Figure 11  
Ascent and descent of Kukulcan during the spring equinox and the summer solstice.

## Ancient Maya Architecture

Mesoamerican civilization developed by the Mayan Peoples build their temples oriented according to the astral directions. There's no doubt that the architecture of their impressive buildings is a testament to the technique, creativity, science, and world view of Maya culture, as well as their close relationship with the land.

The temple-pyramid of Mayan architecture was always linked to the plaza, since both constitute two intrinsically united architectural elements, whose symbolic meaning: represents the link of the quadrangular earth with the pyramidal sky, as a close relationship between the kingdom. of men and of the gods. (Andrews, 1995: 7).

It has been shown that the Mayan cities were built with astral orientations (Aveni, 1980), which permeates the spaces of the sacred energies emanated by the celestial beings in their trajectories.

It was in what archaeologists call the Pre-classic period (1800 B.C. to A.D. 250) that permanent village life really took off, leading to the creation of early Maya cities.

In 1839, American traveler and writer John Lloyd Stephens set out to visit a number of Maya sites with English architect and draftsman Frederick Cather Wood (Koch, P.:2013:1-105). Their illustrated accounts of the ruins sparked strong popular interest, and brought the Maya to the attention of the world. The later 19th century saw the recording and recovery of ethnohistoric accounts of the Maya, and the first steps in deciphering Maya hieroglyphs. (Demarest, 2004: 33-38).

In the 1960s, the distinguished Mayanist J. Eric S Thompson promoted the ideas that Maya cities were essentially vacant ceremonial centers serving a dispersed population in the forest, and that the Maya civilization was governed by peaceful astronomer-priests (Demarest: 2004: 44).

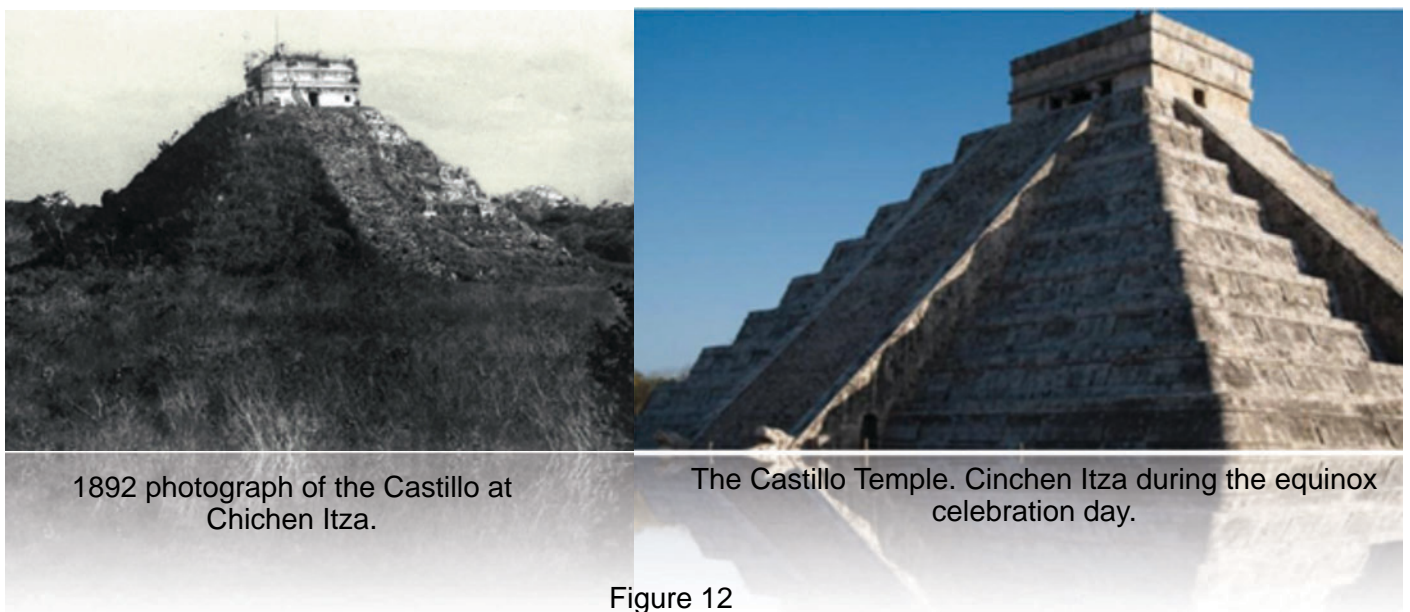


Figure 12

These ideas began to collapse with major advances in the decipherment of the script in the late 20th century, pioneered by Heinrich Berlin, Tatiana Proskouriakoff, and Yuri Knorozov (Demarest, A.2004: 44-45).

With breakthroughs in understanding of Maya script since the 1950s, the texts revealed the warlike activities of the Classic Maya kings, and the view of the Maya as peaceful could no longer be supported. (Foster, L:2002: 8).

A Maya city can be recognized from the stepped pyramids, huge plazas and expansive palaces built for kings and nobles. One religious ritual common to many Mesoamerican cultures was the sacred ball game, with a ball court built close to temples.

Carved stone monuments called stelae are found all over the Mayan areas. Stelae were carved in bas relief to celebrate the life and deeds of Maya rulers and nobles and can still be seen today. With the invention of the corbelled arch, Maya builders created light and airy rooms that lent their temples and palaces a decided gracefulness.

The temple-pyramid in Mayan architecture was always linked to the plaza. They are two architectural elements absolutely united, and this is due to their symbolic meaning: they represent the link of the quadrangular earth with the pyramidal sky, from the realm of men and that of the gods. In all sources it can be seen that the squares, which always obey a rectilinear budget (Andrews, 1995: 7).

The conception of quadrangularity derives from the observation of the annual transit of the Sun, which distinguishes both the four seasons and the four cardinal points. Thus, in Mayan thought, the land is subdivided into four sectors or «directions», whose corners would be in the northeast, northwest, southwest and southeast positions, has a color as symbols (Mercedes de la Garza, 2002: 69).



Figure 13  
Temples of Palenque and Arco Maya

Mainly the equinoxes and solstices, were placed on pyramidal bases that represented both the sacred relationship between mountains with the celestial and infraterrestrial spaces, in which only priests and initiates could penetrate in so much so that people stayed in the squares (built with a quadrangular scheme) symbols of the earthly level during religious ceremonies.

Ascending the pyramid meant, as in other ancient cultures, undertaking a sacred journey in the center of the world in a level break, as a sacred mountain represented by the temple, which symbolized the center of heaven transcending the space of men and penetrating that of the gods, until reaching the top of the world.

The squares, temples and pyramids, courts for the ball game, arches and paved roads, patios and other buildings, not only symbolize the primordial spaces of the origin of time and the great levels and directions of the universe, but also the routes of the celestial bodies.

These sacred spaces were not only a symbolic representation of the cosmos, but their construction had the main purpose of achieving the communication of men with the sacred energies through rituals that promote the descent or ascent of gods to the earthly level, and the descent or ascent of sacred men -*the shamans*- to the underworld and heaven. Likewise, while the sacred spaces were the Center of the World, they undoubtedly served to revive the divine time of the origins, that is, to reproduce the cosmogonic myth, and periodically revitalize the cosmos. (Mercedes de la Garza, 2002: 79-80).

The famous cities of Palenque and Yaxchilan were the most powerful cities in the Usumacinta region. Calakmul was one of the most important Classic period cities. The Maya city of Chichen Itzá considered as one of the New Seven Wonders of the World and recognized as the most important city in the northern Maya region as well as Uxmal integrate the Puuc Route, of archaeological sites that continued to be inhabited long after the cities of the southern lowlands ceased to raise monuments (Becker, M.J.:2004:134).

However, it is important to note that other Maya cities, such as Chichen Itzá, grew, at least for a time. In fact, this wonderful city has the largest ball court in the Americas, being longer than a modern-day American football field. The court's rings, through which competing teams tried to score, rose about 20 feet (6 meters) off the ground. Not even the rules for the Maya ball game are not well understood. Calling for fertility they are involved with the sacred sacrifice of the winners tea.

Maya cities were not formally planned, and were subject to irregular expansion, with the haphazard addition of palaces, temples and other buildings. The ceremonial centre of the Maya city was where the ruling elite lived, and where the administrative functions of the city were performed, together with religious ceremonies. It was also where the inhabitants of the city gathered for public activities (Olmedo Vera:1997:34).

Most Maya sacred cities tended to grow outwards from the core, and upwards as new structures were superimposed upon preceding architecture. (Miler: 1999:25).The centres of all Maya cities sometimes separated from nearby residential areas by walls (Schele and Mathews: 1999: 23) contained pyramid temples and other monumental architecture dedicated to elite activities, such as basal platforms that supported administrative or elite residential complexes.

City centres also featured plazas, sacred ball-courts and buildings used for marketplaces and schools. Sculpted monuments were raised to record the deeds of the ruling dynasty. Frequently causeways linked the centre to outlying areas of the city. Some of these classes of architecture formed lesser groups in the outlying areas of the city, which served as sacred centres for non-royal lineages.

The areas adjacent to these sacred compounds included residential complexes housing wealthy lineages. Elite residential complexes occupied the best land around the city centre, while commoners had their residences dispersed further away from the ceremonial plaza. Residential units were built on top of stone platforms to raise them above the level of the rain season floodwaters. The largest and richest of these elite compounds sometimes possessed sculpture and art of craftsmanship equal to that of royal art (Schele and Mathews 1999, op cit p. 23).

## **The Mayan Housing**

Mayans conceived the settlement or displacement of sacred forces as the basis of all their spatial demarcations. These imaginary limitations have a direct impact on their daily living styles and, to a large extent control the life of the group:

On one hand, they inhibit and tend to give rise to transgressive reactions. On the other, they provide security by causing consensual acceptance. The man confined in the allowed space protects himself from danger, he can project himself into the future.

The housing spaces are traced so that homes are strategically oriented according to the sun's path so that they can have a vegetable patch. In some cases, two or three houses are built one behind the other depending on the size of the family. Beyond pyramids and temples, the peninsular Mayan people possess a technique and a way to build their houses using efficiently the region's materials and knowledge. Maya house is the most important space for sporadic sacred experiences. There's the place where they cook, sleep, play, clean, weave, as well as they also pray and carry out domestic, propitiatory or mixed expiation rites.

The construction of the Maya house is ecological and not only involves botanic knowledge, but understanding of forestry as well (Sanchez Suarez Op cit: 2006). Bland and flexible woods, palms, and grass are used for the arcs. Vines are used to tie the structure of the house together without the need of a single nail, screw, or gram of cement. As if this wasn't enough, the soil and rock of the region (both in their natural states and mixed to make lime) are utilized for masonry.



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Figure 14  
Housing and Mayas Daily Life Styles

The Mayan house is also a refuge from the hot and humid weather of the peninsula, offering a cool and well-ventilated space. On the other hand, the palm roof gives the Maya house a smoke exit, making it possible to use a stove for cooking and to keep warm when it gets cold.



This fact explain the way Maya House has resisted centuries of change as well as climate conditions including hurricane seasons, droughts, and -in recent years- cold seasons known as “La Heladez”. (Sánchez Suárez, A.:2006:81-105).

The peninsular Maya have used a great variety of plant species in the construction of their homes. The roofing may be made out of Guano palm (“Kuum” in Maya) or out of grass on the coast (since it’s more resistant to the salty ocean breeze) or even a mix of both at the same time. Many trees used as posts (“Okom” in Maya) are hardwoods that are resistant and come from old trees. The rest of the wood used in the construction comes from abandoned Milpas, in some cases. There can be up to 100 different species of trees used in the construction of the Maya house. This is an example of ancestral Maya knowledge with regards to sustainable ecosystem management. By using small amounts of different types of wood, they can continue using the resources found in nature without causing deforestation.

This ecological house also tends to be concentrated as an extended and almost unlimited sound space created by the close relationship between men and nature. Howling of dogs or the squawking of certain birds that have omen value; as well as in colored spaces such as the ephemeral rainbow that is supposed to be caused by the breath of a gigantic snake that lives on the mountain. All of them used to reproduce a living experience of daily sporadic sacredness.



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Figure 15  
Mayas men settled in towns

Inclusive ancient Maya households interred their dead underneath the floors, with offerings appropriate to the social status of the family. There the dead could act as protective ancestors. Maya lineages were patrilineal, so the worship of a prominent male ancestor would be emphasized often with a household shrine.

We cannot ignore the dream place as sacred space in its entirety as a particular and permissive one, without limits and contours. In the dreaming space are always encounters and dialogues with the divinities, with the ancestors, with the soul of the dead and that without previous requirements, neither propitiatory or protective rites, nor intermediaries. Then the place of the dream becomes analogical to real space and makes sense the close relationship that exists between the living and the dead.



Figure 16  
Mayas women settled in towns

Finally, the sense of the own body is also one of the sporadic privileged spaces to incorporate all sorts of sacred forces, i.e. woman's body, in its menstrual state, is considered to be penetrated by impure forces and, consequently, is subject to a series of strict prohibitions such as not entering the cornfield, especially if it is harvest time.

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In this conspicuous and almost magic context sooner or later there's a clear metamorphosis in the meaning of culture and cultural legacy, now dimensioned as cultural rights, and entrenched in the vernacular by different groups and cultural communities, especially but not exclusively by indigenous communities.

Modernity, innovation and technological transfer will definitely impact the vernacular universe of a present time settled in the past, as well as its main intangible heritage. Focused in the middle of a conflict living zone the dispossession and plundering of the cultural legacy of indigenous peoples and communities will be more than evident.

## **The Maya Train Project**

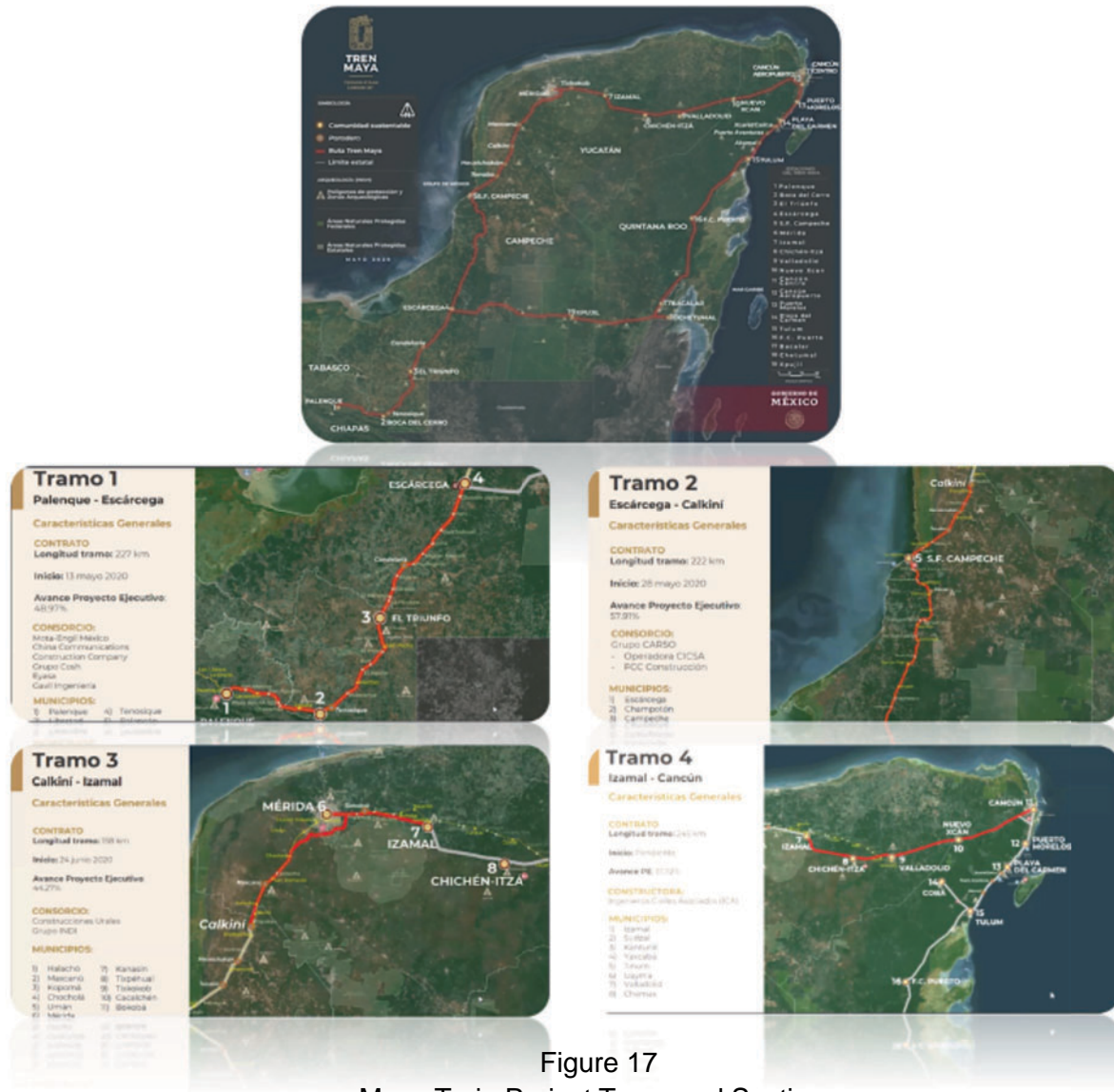
The Mayan Train without local Mayan people participation is a proposed 1,525-kilometre (948 mi) intercity railway in Mexico that would traverse the Yucatan Peninsula. The project aims to connect tourist destinations in the Yucatán, Campeche, Quintana Roo, Chiapas and Tabasco Mexican southeastern States, including the classical archeological Mayan sites from which it derives its name.

The first stone of its construction was laid on December 16, 2018 and the project is expected to be completed in 2024. The initial construction consisted of the rehabilitation of existing railways that have already been authorized for use.

Once they represent 60% of the project's entire railway line, authorities justify the reason why there will be no need to ask for new permits at this time. FONATUR, in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Transports, will retake this rehabilitation project, speed it up, and modify it so that the train transports both load and passengers".

The Train-Trans-isthmus Corridor mega-project is intended to offer three types of services: mass transport, tourist and commercial. The route includes 17 stations: Palenque, Tenosique, Balancan, Escárcega, San Francisco de Campeche, Mérida, Izamal, Chichén Itzá, Valladolid, Cobá, Cancún, Puerto Morelos, Playa del Carmen, Tulum, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Bacalar and Calakmul.

Not even this advanced progress, before the executive project is completed, the hole mega federal program has not yet been able to answer what its environmental impact will be since it has not yet been fully evaluated by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT). (V Figure No. 17)



National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism FONATUR, Mexico.

Figure 17  
 Maya Train Project Trace and Sections

With an hybrid diesel system of trains. This ambitious infrastructure project began since 2019 with different construction traces:

- 1.The first one consisted of repairing the railway lines that run from Palenque to Valladolid in 2019.
- 2.The second phase situated on the construction of la Selva (the jungle) and El Caribe II, began in 2020.
- 3.The Gulf route (*third construction trace*) coming out of Palenque, will go from Bacalar to Xpujil and Calakmul, in Campeche, continuing towards the Gulf route in Escárcega, Tenosique, and Palenque. continuing towards the north route in with stops in Maxcanú, Mérida, Izamal, Valladolid, and Cancún, where the Caribbean route will start. e executive project of the railway that will go from Escárcega to Chetumal, all the way to Cancun.

4. Coming down with the fourth trace situated in the Mayan Riviera, with stops in Puerto Morelos, Playa del Carmen, Tulum, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, and Bacalar.

The upcoming governments will rehabilitate the tracks and launch a competition for the upcoming local government administrations must have to rehabilitate the tracks and launch a competition for the executive project of the railway that will go from Escárcega to Chetumal, all the way to Cancun. After the contest, government authorities should issue the proper MIAs (Environmental Impact Studies) in all this deforestation screen of Peninsula de Yucatan.

Talking about Preservation of the Biodiversity and Cultural Landscape, Mayan Train maps indicate that the route will come into contact with 15 federal protected areas, 20 state protected areas, including the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve and regions rich in geological and hydrological resources.

Which will be the future of those areas include the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, that comprises 1,729,738 acres, a national park that is home to panthers, other iconic species, and the most emblematic Mayan ruins involved?

As Mayan train is not really a railroad project but a development plan for the southern part of Mexico. This great abundance region obviously will be in a high risk if there's a lack participation of local communities involved with conservation process of the ecological reserve -that also spreads through thousands of acres-.

Including Mayan intangible heritage ignored by itself, as well as the lot of endangered species extinction, both flora and fauna.

Even in the terms of the DADPI (American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) the Mexican State has the obligation to consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned before adopting and applying legislative or administrative measures that affect them, in order to obtain your free, prior and informed consent (art. XXIII 1 and 2)

It is very important that this whole work incorporates the environmental and sustainable heritage vision and points of view from the executive project [*design plans and written reports concerning the train*] so that these impacts can be mitigated..."<sup>(5)</sup>

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(5) <https://dialogochino.net/en/infrastructure/20628-new-mexican-presidents-mayan-train-meets-resistance/>



Photograph: Cuatrok77: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/cuatrok77/>

Figure 18  
Impact of the Maya Train in jaguar's natural habitat.

Even the socioeconomic and daily benefits that will come with the Mayan Train are indisputable for the entire peninsula. The imminent ecological and socio-cultural damages must be considered on time with enough quality as well as a real culturally responsible with the richness of the intangible resources of the all local settlements and traditional villages.

As well as with the transversality of human rights and cultural duties perspective. In order to preserve and warranty of the recreation and continuity of the richness of the traditional local intangible heritage resources.

At this moment, different research data demonstrate that the Mayan Train project will have an adverse impact on the environmental services provided by the affected ecosystems, particularly in areas critical to the recharge of groundwater aquifers in the Yucatan Peninsula (YP): such as: the ring of cenotes [natural water wells] designated in 2013 as a geo-hydrogeological reserve, and the forests of the Calakmul region, where harvested waters are transported and collected, eventually flowing into the main coastal systems of the Yucatan Peninsula and feeding six of the nine sub-basins located in the YP.

The capacity of these forest ecosystems to capture atmospheric carbon dioxide through photosynthesis, i.e., to serve as carbon sinks, will also be affected. It questions whether the "unique natural treasure" of cenotes and stromatolites will survive "the changes in land use, the mass tourism, and waste management that they will have to deal with. Even more so, when the Mayan Train project does not yet have a program aimed at preserving the biocultural heritage of the region.

More than a year after the project was announced, the official actions in this field had not sufficiently known or publicized; on the other hand, the main goal only describes that the train would attract 3 million people during the first years of operation that are currently going to Tulum, in the idea to distribute the tourist inflow in the region, so that they don't accumulate in a single place, as is the case in Tulum. There's any public information about the strategies to attract the capital that will be invested and to convince public opinion of the project's advantages is more notorious - and a priority".

"Calakmul to be the crown jewel. The right of way that will be use, according to the executive project, will pass through roads and high voltage lines. In both cases, there is no forest anymore, there are only bald patches".

... Government authorities justify they "had talk with local communities and the leaders of the natural reserve to see how we can help each other", because "there are several environmental groups involved that have helped a great deal and done a great job in protecting the reserve so far."

If we also talk about the Calakmul reserve there has been criticism surrounding the entry of the hydrogen train. His answer was: "... The company and the train are completely emission-free," in any case, a traditional diesel train is a hundred times less polluting than a highway. "It's pure logic".

The upcoming general director of the National Fund for Tourism Development (FONATUR), estimated that it would take a year for the executive project to be finished and claimed that the Mayan Train and all 932 miles of railroad that comprise it will be divided into three routes:

The Gulf route coming out of Palenque, with stops in Tenosique, Chiapas, Escárcega, and Campeche, continuing north with stops in Maxcanú, Mérida, Izamal, Valladolid, and Cancún, where the Caribbean route will start, coming down to the Mayan Riviera, with stops in Puerto Morelos, Playa del Carmen, Tulum, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, and Bacalar.

Within the circuit, the so-called “crown jewel,” will be Calakmul, a municipality located in Campeche that possesses an archaeological zone and an extremely important biosphere reserve he announced. Not even that, construction will include a second hydrogen train to enter the Calakmul ecological reserve”.(6)

In a visit to the city of Campeche, President López Obrador defended the train and pointed out that not only had the train received its greatest support in the state of Campeche, but also that more than half the route would run through the state-worth MXN \$60 billion of the \$130 billion the government plans to invest in total. He said the section from Escárcega to Cancún should be open for tourist, passenger, and freight traffic in 2023, but that the route will not pass through the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve.(7)



National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism FONATUR, Mexico.

Figure 19  
Calakmul Biosphere Reserv Project

(6) Varillas, Adriana (November 23, 2018). "Everything you need to know about the Mayan Train project". El Universal. Retrieved February 23, 2019. <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/english/everything-you-need-know-about-the-mayan-train-project>

(7) Rosa Santana (Feb 1, 2020). "[AMLO defiende el Tren Maya tras suspensión provisional ordenada por un tribunal](#)"[AMLO defends the Mayan Train after provisional injunction ordered by a court]. La Jornada (in Spanish).



Business leaders in Mérida, Yucatán, expressed their support on January 31, 2020, for building four kilometers of the railway underground as it passes through the city of Merida. In this way, the train will not threaten the city's historic center. They are also optimistic that the tourist train, in combination with improvements in energy, airports, and seaports, will make the region economically competitive with the North and the the Bajío.<sup>(8)</sup>

The construction companies are Mota-Engil México SAPI and China Communications Construction Company LTD for stretch one (Palenque-Escárcega), Operator CICSA and FCC Construction for stretch two (Escárcega-Calkiní), UralsConstructions and GAMI Engineering e Installations for stretch three (Calkiní-Izmal), and Grupo ICA for stretch four (Izmal –Cancún).<sup>(9)</sup>

The Fondo Nacional de Fomento Turístico (Fonatur) announced on September 8, 2020, that the proposal of investment firm Black Rock for the fifth stretch (125 kilometers (78 mi)) of the project, including improvements to the Tulum-Cancún highway, had been rejected.<sup>(10)</sup>

The Secretariat of Tourism will receive a 647.1% increase in its budget for 2021 (MXN \$38,613.4 million), of which 94% is destined for the Mayan Train.<sup>(11)</sup> In October 2020 the estimated total cost of the project not including electrification was about 321 billion pesos.<sup>(12)</sup>

## Interest Conflict Context

The conflict zone of this mega-project unfortunately as well as its risks had been increased. By one side, is the governmental discourse and facts. By the other, the way Mayan people, NGO's national and international, academic studies, practioneers and several collective actors are questioning the feasibility of timing and economy of this federal project as a whole public policy.

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(8) Juan Manuel Contreras (Feb 1, 2020).. ["Positivo que tramo del Tren Maya pase por debajo de Mérida: Concanaco"](#)[Positive that the Mayan Train section passes under Mérida: Concanaco]. La Jornada (in Spanish)..

(9) ["BlackRock, el gigante financiero acusado por corrupción y daño ambiental, es aliado en Tren Maya"](#). www.msn.com(in Spanish)... Sin Embargo. Sep 4, 2020. Retrieved September 8, 2020.

(10) ["Tramo 5 del Tren Maya, declarado desierto; rechazan propuesta de BlackRock"](#). www.msn.com. Forbes Mexico. Retrieved September 9, 2020.

(11) ["Turismo domina el PEF con presupuesto para Tren Maya; proyectan aumento de 641.7% en 2021"](#). www.msn.com. Excelsior. Retrieved September 9, 2020.

(12) ["El costo del Tren Maya, para arriba"](#) (in Spanish).. Diario de Yucatán. 5 October 2020.

When in August 28, September 3 and 4, 2020 press conference, the President of Mexico mentioned—complete with names, charts, and figures—the donations that some civil society organizations (CSOs) receive from international foundations, implying that our support for initiatives that question or oppose the “Mayan Train” mega-project is based not on a genuine desire to protect the human rights of potentially affected indigenous communities, the right of access to public information, or the environment, but on mere financial interests.

Government rejected the criticisms, arguing that the consultation met international standards and attacked "the light and biased disqualification or simple criticism, without support".(13)

While the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has been very precise: the viability of the protection of human rights is only possible if the culture of the community of individuals is safeguarded.



Figure 20  
Collective Protest against Maya Train Project

(13) Matieu Tourliere (Dec 23, 2019). ["El gobierno de AMLO reprocha críticas de la ONU-DH sobre consulta por Tren Maya"](#) [The AMLO government criticizes criticism of the UN-DH over consultation of Maya Train]. Proceso (in Spanish).

If we remember that intangible cultural heritage does not belong to the State; since it becomes alive and its dynamics respond to the particular needs of the communities and individuals directly concerned in the sense of Federico Lenzerini. And also, highlight the clear evidence of the fissure that prevails in the prerogatives reserved only to the States, but another and very different, to the cultural communities by themselves (Lenzerini: 2014).

We can understand why since December 2018 those are the conflictive local facts:

- a) The Zapatista Army of National Liberation announced that it would oppose the project.<sup>(14)</sup>
  - b) The weekend of December 2019, 15–16th, 92.3% of the people who participated in the consultation voted in favor, while 7.4% voted against the proposal.<sup>(15)</sup> 100,940 people voted,<sup>(16)</sup> just 2.36% of the 3,536,000 registered voters in the 84 municipalities affected.<sup>(17)</sup>
- The prior consultation of the indigenous communities affected by this mega-project was carried out only between November 15 and December 15, 2019 and did not meet the relevant international standards; in other words, it was not a process of prior, free, informed, and culturally appropriate consultation”.<sup>(18)</sup>
- c) The United Nations Human Rights Council sharply criticized the vote. They pointed out that voters were provided with only the positive effects of the project (improved attention to water supplies, health, education, employment, housing, environmental protection, and culture) but were not informed of the negative effects.<sup>(19)</sup>
  - d) The UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Human Rights Commission also criticized the indigenous consultation process on the Mayan Train carried out in 2019 failed to comply with every international standard relating to the rights of indigenous peoples. This includes the right to prior consultation. UNHCHR emphasized that neither the call for the project, the consultation process, nor the information that the government gave to the community had complete information on the potential impacts on the area.

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(14) [EZLN reitera rechazo a megaproyectos de AMLO](#) El Segundero, Jan 1, 2020

(15) ["En la consulta sobre el Tren Maya, 92.3% votó por el "Sí" y 7.4% por el "No"](#) [In the consultation on the Mayan Train, 92.3% voted "Yes" and 7.4% "No"], El Economista (in Spanish), Dec 16, 2019.

(16) Arturo Rodríguez García (Dec 16, 2019), ["A favor del Tren Maya el 92.3% de los consultados el fin de semana"](#) [92.3% of those consulted about the Maya Train over the weekend in favor], Proceso (in Spanish).

(17) Osvaldo Córdova (Dec 17, 2019).. ["Solo votó el 2.86% del padrón por Tren Maya"](#) [Only 2.86% of the registered voted for Maya Train]. Diario Contra Replica (in Spanish).

(18) See chapters XI (Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories), XII (International Trusteeship System) and XIII (Trusteeship Council) of the UN Charter.

(19) Alexis Ortiz (Dec 20, 2019).. <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/rechaza-onu-consulta-sobre-el-tren-maya> [UN rejects consultation on the Maya Train]. [El Universal](#) (in Spanish).

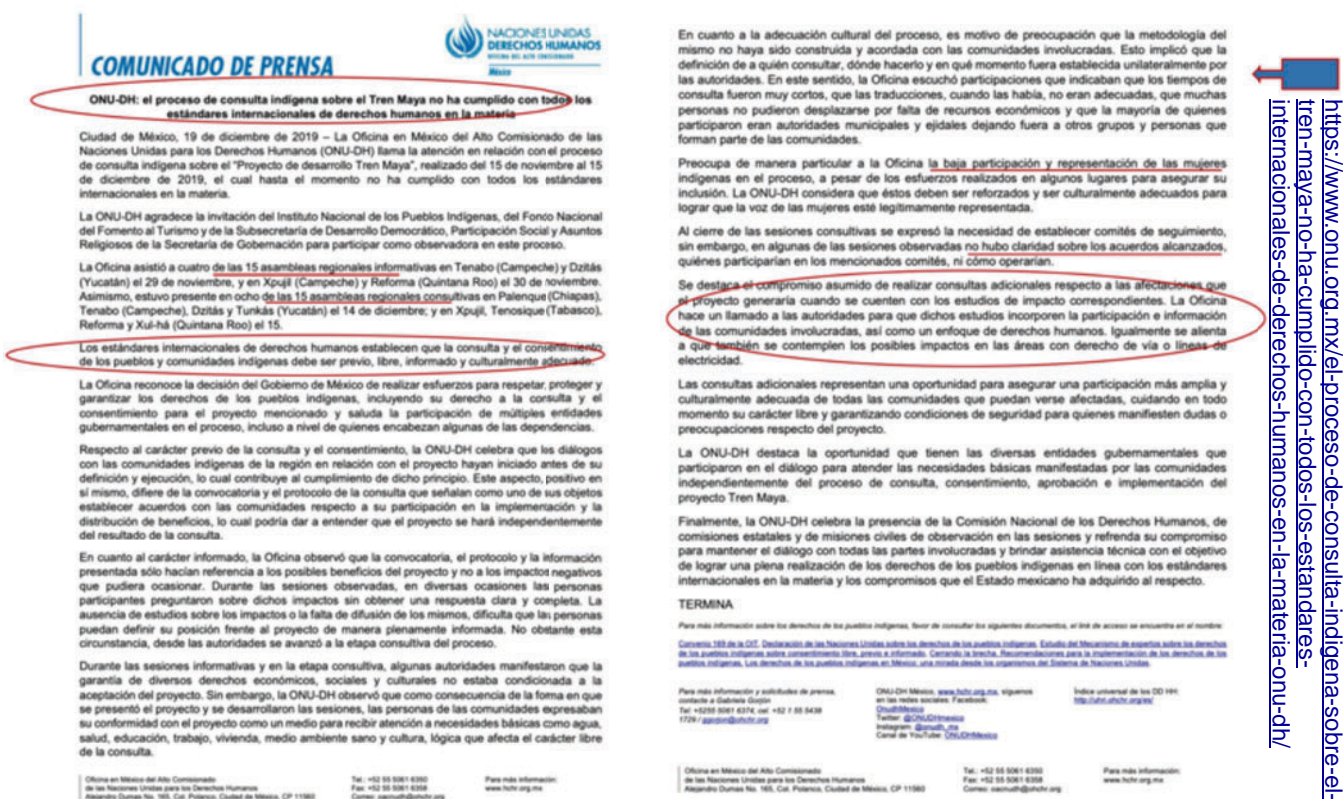


Figure 21  
ACNUDG-ONU press release

e) Human Rights Commission also criticized the translations of the material used, the short period of time for the election, and low turnout, particularly among indigenous women. They noted that many potential voters did not have the financial resources to travel to the voting locations, and that the majority of voters were municipal employees.(20) And the consultation process has so far failed to meet all international standards in this area.

f) On the 26th anniversary of its armed uprising, January 1, 2020, The Zapatista Army of National Liberation once again expressed its opposition to the project and declared that the consultation provided only positive information to voters prior to voting.(21)

g) Groups close to the National. Indigenous Congress plan to seek injunctions against the train project and other megaprojects in the region. The CNI is looking at three-pronged action: social awareness campaigns, media campaigns, and legal actions.(22)

(20) Ibid, opcit.

(21) [EZLN reitera rechazo a megaproyectos de AMLO](#) El Segundero, Jan 1, 2020.

(22) ["El CNI esboza estrategia contra el Tren Maya"](#) [The CNI lays out it strategy against the Maya Train]. Proceso (in Spanish). Jan 4, 2020.

- h) December 2019, immediate foreseeable impacts are already so historically severe that they will lead to ecological realignments that may even be impossible to predict. Both the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the Yucatan Peninsula are known sites for the crossing and diversification of species that would be “irreversibly damaged by the passage of the train...”<sup>(23)</sup>
- i) This mega-project has also not been particularly thorough with the Environmental Impact Studies or Statements (EIS).. Although nearly all the sections or phases of the train have been awarded at this point, the only known EIS is the one that FONATUR submitted to SEMARNAT (Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources) just last June 18, 2020, and only in relation to section or phase 1 of the project. <sup>(24)</sup>
- j) On January 28, 2020, a judge in Campeche issued a temporary injunction against construction of the railway because was approved in a "simulated consultation."<sup>(25)</sup>
- k) On August 21, 2020, various CSOs and environmentalists formally called on SEMARNAT to deny the environmental impact authorization “because it falls within the three clauses of the environmental law under which the requested authorization must be denied.”<sup>(26)</sup>
- l) From the beginning, the Mayan Train was shrouded in a veil of opacity that is unacceptable in a democratic society. When some CSO’s have filed requests for access to public information about this project with federal offices such as FONATUR (National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism), they have often been told in response that such information does not exist. This lack of transparency has been reflected, for example, in the months-long suppression by the CONACYT (National Council for Science and Technology) of a critical report commissioned from more than 30 scientists, “so as not to influence” the supposed prior consultation that took place in December 2019.<sup>(27)</sup>

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(23) Latin American Geopolitics Observatory (OLAG) and the Laboratory for Studies on Transnational Corporations (LET) and the Economic Research Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) published an advance summary of research on the Mayan Train in December 2019. <http://geopolitica.iiec.unam.mx/sites/default/files/2019-12/OLAG-2019-TrenMaya-Avancesdeinvestigación.pdf> p. 8-9.

(24) <file:///C:/Users/David%20Lovat%C3%B3n/Downloads/Extracto-TM-Fase-1-Espan%CC%83ol.pdf>

(25) Jose Raul Linares (Feb 1, 2020). "[Otorgan suspensión provisional contra el Tren Maya por "consulta simulada"](#)."

(26) <https://www.cemda.org.mx/piden-a-semarnat-negar-la-autorizacion-de-impacto-ambiental-al-proyecto-tren-maya/>

(27) <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/conacyt-oculto-informe-critico-con-el-tren-maya-ven-riesgo>

m) Mexico has had a mosaic of social organizations working to improve workers' conditions, combat violence and discrimination against women, improve the quality of life of children, fight poverty and hunger, defend freedom of expression, condemn serious and massive human rights violations, defend the rights of indigenous peoples, protect the environment, promote academic research, and so on. These CSO's have been receiving donations from prestigious international cooperation institutions from the United States, Canada, and Europe for decades, allowing them to pursue their institutional aims. Donations are not only received by civil associations, but also by unions, churches, and universities. All of this takes place in compliance with Mexican law, with total transparency and annual audits.

n) Urban Development poles and train stations will be accompanied by the dispossession of land from indigenous communities in the Yucatán Peninsula as the, director of the Mexican Civil Council for Sustainable Forestry (CCMSS), an institution that works with rural organizations in defense of their territory, said.(28)

## Conclusions

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on indigenous peoples, along with the context of violence and territorial dispossession to their detriment, forces us to think of solutions from the most varied legal and political spheres. 2020 has been a particularly tragic year for indigenous peoples around the world.

Train maya is not only a railroad train. This project represents a full and plain forecast strategic policy that support infrastructure, interconnection and strategic urban planning promoting commerce and territorial resources of a regional area that integrate by more than 7 national states. But we must understand that the lot of conflicts derived from this mega-project, is not only a local issue, is a global one.

Dilemmas between future and past, wealth and poverty, progress and tradition are in contradiction right now! Civilization or Barbarian are the both cross roads that let us access into a sustainable future horizon.

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(28) <https://dplfblog.com/2020/09/08/the-mayan-train-raises-a-new-leviathan-in-mexico/Sergio> Madrid. megaprojects in the Yucatán Peninsula have been accompanied by the <https://dialogochino.net/en/infrastructure/36609-mayan-train-advances-with-chinese-support/>

¿What about the foresight cultural scenery perspectives including local people values and daily life styles? ¿The future urban modernity will make up a better option of quality of their life? ¿The job offer really will allow Mayan people to overcome poverty? ¿What about the rights centered on local managing and own traditional governanza? ¿Which will be the future of the own traditions and rules of governance schemas? What about their PCI living safeguard as well as the lot of resources centered on Mayan people? ¿What about their own right to survive trying to rescue the sense of their own collective memory? ¿the way Maya's used to build their own relationship between own settlements and the meaning sense of vernacular Mayan House?

¡Who knows!

A lot of questions..., a lot of answers... The point is that unfortunately wealth, quality of life, housing, intergenerational transmission, Self-determination, collective memory, as well as natural and cultural heritage resources in Mayan region are an unpublished and unique resources that are really on risk.

The necessary measures must be adopted to carry out free, prior and informed consultations about the impact of the projects that affect their territories, in order not only to obtain the consent of the communities. Furthermore, they themselves are the ones who must be actively involved with a contributing role as collective actors to take advantage of the nature of this opportunity for change.

The right of the Mayan communities to prior consultation, culturally appropriate, informed and in good faith, was not only mandatory. But also, their participation in the way of carrying it out the changing process is even more, an essential requirement. Mayan people by themselves most promote the collective co-responsible way to adopt their own challenges and social dreams that also let them implies what they are really are able to wish and decide. We can agree this is just the time Mayan people must have their own challenge to "... build an equitable process of transformation based on the conservation and safeguarding of a living and changing heritage, both at a tangible and intangible level..." (ICOMOS-OCDI-HRBA perspective).(29)

Guaranteeing the right to indigenous self-determination means preserving a way of life that is more harmonious with nature. In this sense, the recognition of this right must be understood as an imperative not only to preserve the physical and cultural integrity of indigenous peoples and traditional communities, but also as a commitment to prevent and mitigate the effects of the climate crisis and the various environmental crises of our time.

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(29) <https://www.icomos.org/en/what-we-do/disseminating-knowledge/icomos-working-groups?start=1>

We must remember that the evolution of human rights law towards multi-cultural 'relativism' is not only maximizes the effectiveness of human rights standards, but is also necessary to improve the quality of community daily life, and to promote the stability of their collective inter-cultural relationships. Cultural expression of human rights has not only had to transfer the discourse of political freedoms to that of social, economic and cultural rights.

Looking for wealth in the face of the spirit of modernity and innovation. Alien to the future dispossession of lands that are close to the rights of way, coupled with the inevitable clash against culture with its increasingly diminished universe of knowledge. It will be necessary to work close with the communities and therefore, with the way to protect their active and participatory integration in the management of their own communities and territories.





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