

# Ceiba, Plaza, and the *Cruzo'ob* Towns of Quintana Roo

William V. Davidson







FRONT COVER

Plaza of Francisco May (*Cruzo'ob* general)  
with his statuary and ceiba, Felipe Carrillo Puerto



Escudo, Estado de Quintana Roo



**William V. Davidson**

**Ceiba, Plaza, and *Cruzo'ob* Towns,  
Quintana Roo, Mexico:  
A Settlement Geography**

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**AVISO**  
**Author's Note**

Because of the Corona Virus of 2019 and the inaccessibility of libraries, as of October 15, 2020 this study is suspended. Not much is left to do, but a few sources need consultation on critical matters, a serious editing remains, as does more formatting.

For the moment this will have to do.

\*\*\* \*\*



## Dedication

For Junius Edward Davidson III  
(Junie)

My older brother, a true gentleman,  
who, like the massive *Ceiba pentandra*,  
sheltered me, and played a dominating,  
positive role in my life.





**Junie, with his barracuda,  
Cozumel, 1966.**



**JED III, at  
daughter's  
wedding, 2011.**







## **Plaza, Ceiba, and the *Cruzo'ob* Towns**







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## **Preface/Acknowledgements**

Over the last four years Sharon and I have been in route seeking ceibas planted in cultural context. During 2017 and 2018, we visited much of Central America, wandering every country, with some extended focus on Belize, with geographer Craig Revels. In April 2019, we covered Nassau and vicinity, Bahamas, and during early 2019 our attention was on the State of Yucatán, México.

During early 2020 we focused on the State of Quintana Roo, México, the region of this report. It has been a pleasure to spend time again among the older Maya residents of the eastern peninsula. What a pleasant, hospitable, and humble group they are. In their genuineness and simplicity, they are role models for the World.

Sadly, none of our east coast friends and hosts from the mid-1960s live -- Juan Delgado of caleta Xcaret, Luis González of Boca Paila, Paul Bush of Akumal, Anibal de Iturbide of caleta Chakalal, Manuel Angulo Vivas of Cozumel, and Vicente Cárdenas of Cedral. Germán García Padilla, my diveshop “compa” de San Miguel, Cozumel, who also oversaw much of the adjacent coast as presidente de la municipalidad de Cozumel during the mid-1970s and again during the mid-1990s, passed away in December 2016. It would have been wonderful to see some of them, but I doubt they would appreciate the current activities, values, and life goals of the people swirling around the massive and overbearing tourism complex of the so-called “Maya Riviera.” The cruel joke of culture change brought by unbridled development of international tourism can probably best be seen here. What a shame!

A new group of supporters, experts on Caribbean Yucatán, emerged during this study and are hereby recognized. Tony Andrews, with his extensive knowledge of the region, was gracious in answering all my questions and provided hard to find materials. Younger scholars, working in the area during the last two decades, never failed to fulfill my requests for information. I appreciated the research of and attention from Crystal Sheedly, Ueli Hostettler, Ana Juárez, Maria Jensen, Armin Hinz, Olivier LeGuen, Brian Montes, and Amber O’Conner.

Also there is an impressive group of young professors and scholars from the universities in Mérida, Chetumal, and Mexico City from whom I have gained important insights. These include Professors Manuel Buenrostro-Alba, Erin Estrada, Raúl Pérez, and Héctor Favila, who was most gracious with his offer of assistance. Graduate students Daniela Sánchez, Elmer Ek Ek, Mariana Cedillo, Mauricio Tun D., Wilberth Ucan, Jaime Chi Pech, José Antonio Manzanilla, and Francisco Onnis produced very useful studies.



It was quite enlightening and I was so happy to learn of Macduff Everton and his remarkable life experiences in the Maya lands (see his 2012, *The Modern Maya*). His beautiful empathy for his Yucatecan friends is evident in his text and photographs.

Other Mayanists, friends from days past, also aided: colleague Jill Brody of LSU Anthropology, Matt Samson of Davidson Anthropology, David Freidel of Washington University Anthropology and his student at SMU, Tara Bond, who was also at LSU.

While they were recognized in the Yucatan ceiba volume, co-travelers from Memphis remain fondly in our minds: Mike Cody, Charlie Newman, godfather Lucius Burch, Angela Weems, Dorothy and Joe Weems, Beverly and Ed Dismuke, and Joe and Tommie Crevetti.

Finally, two others need mention: David L. Miller (1982, 1989), my academic brother, and our major professor at UWM, Clinton Edwards (1954, 1957, 1975, 1986), who was early on the peninsula, have always inspired, and, perhaps more importantly, know about the shared happiness, pleasure, contentment, that awaits those who spend time with *colegas* in the SENSUAL setting of the Western Caribbean shorelands. Leaning back in our hammocks as evening descends, we FEEL and SMELL the Trades blow onshore, we HEAR the surf breaking on the beach and the grackles making such a racket in the palm fronds overhead, we SEE the parrots (always an even number) returning to their mainland sleep from daily feedings on Cozumel, and we TASTE a bit of the salt spray, which goes very well with the rum on our tongue. Remembering those experiences will last a lifetime, always bringing a smile. Thanks to all who have shared those moments and supported my interests in this part of the world, especially Sharon, Andrew, and Chadwick.

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Unlike the ceiba study in the state of Yucatán (Davidson 2019) where we collected data and then categorized the material for presentation, for Quintana Roo we planned to look for ceibas in three settings. As in the Yucatán study, we wanted to find ceibas in cultural context according to locality. Next, we wanted to document the features of modern plazas, including ceibas. Finally, we sought to identify elements of the landscapes of the Chan Santa Cruz (*Cruzo'ob*) Maya towns as potentially the most “conservative” places and therefore, perhaps, locations of ceibas. We tried to find the largest ceibas and to measure them thinking that perhaps they would also be in the CSC towns. To leave a photographic record of our travels of January 2020 was also important to us.



## Introductory Note

Three place names are used so often herein that the following abbreviations are used in their stead: FPC = Felipe Carrillo Puerto, CSC = Chan Santa Cruz, and QR = State of Quintana Roo.

The eleven modern municipios of Quintana Roo are also abbreviated, here with cabeceras and dates of formation.

BAC = Bacalar, cabecera: same name (2011)  
BJ = Benito Juárez, cabecera: Cancún (1974)  
CZ = Cozumel, cabecera: San Miguel de Cozumel (1974)  
FCP = Felipe Carrillo Puerto, cabecera: same name (1974)  
IM = Isla Mujeres, cabecera Isla Mujeres (1974)  
JMM = José María Morelos, cabecera: same name (1974)  
LC = Lázaro Cárdenas, cabecera: Kantunikin (1974)  
OBP = Othón P. Blanco, cabecera: Chetumal (1974)  
PM = Puerto Morelos, cabecera: same name (2016)  
SOL = Solidaridad, cabecera: Playa del Carmen (1993)  
TUL = Tulum, cabecera: same name (2008)

Recurring toponyms in QR are defined:

**Cah.** The fundamental geographical unit of Maya society and culture. The place of Maya self-identity. The territory includes the core settlement, plus the surrounding used land, milpas and forest. (See Restall 1997: chapters 2-3, pp. 13-40)

**Chan.** "little."

**Chen.** "well," but also might refer to "cenote."

**Noh.** "large"

"X" and "Tix" serve as locative prefixes for "place of." For example, X-Cacal and Tixcacal mean "place of the cenote with two entrances." (Roy 1957: 135; Favila 2001: 74)

The plural form of Maya words ending with a consonant is *-o'ob*; the plural forms ending with vowels is *-'ob*. Therefore, followers of the Talking Cross are known herein as *cruzo'ob*, not *cruz'ob*, as is often written. Also, because "m" and "n" are often interchanged in Maya, places names come in variations, such as Chumpóm and Chumpón.



## Ceiba

“The tree was born in the center of the world. From its highest branches you see what your heart longs for. . . . This is the tree that lovingly cradles your childhood on its lap. With the light, silky cotton of its fruit, your people made the pillows on which they rest and shape their dreams. . . . This is the Mother Ceiba in whose swelling trunk your people honored birth and fertility. . . . From a single piece of its white, easily carved wood, they built a vessel that is their cradle when their journey begins and their coffin when they reach port. . . . **From this tree, humanity learned mercy and architecture, order and how to give with grace.**”

Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1987) *Siete Arboles contra el Atardecer y otros poemas*

## Plaza

“Rare is the village, town, or city in Latin America without a plaza. The Latin American central plaza has been an organic part of the community, the stage on which life in the society has been played out. The plaza has served diverse uses, and virtually all plazas have had simultaneous functions.”

Dan Gade (1978: 16, 22)

## Cross of the Chan Santa Cruz (*Cruzo'ob*)

“The cross is the most sacred symbol of the group. It acts as an intermediary between God and man, for wherever stands a cross, there are the eyes of God . . . The symbol of the cross is so deeply engraved on the mind of the native that he sees crosses everywhere he looks; in the intersections of the beams and poles which form the framework of his house, in the constellation of the Southern Cross, in the meeting of two paths, in the lines upon the plastron of the tortoise, in the natural formation of stones and trees. . . . And, **when man extends his arms it is clear that God has created him in the shape of a cross.**”

(Alfonso Villa-Rojas 1945:97)



## Introduction

No tree native to the Yucatán peninsula is of more cultural significance than the ceiba. Much has been written about its sacredness and role as the “world tree” of the Maya (Christenson 1997, 2011; Feidel *et al* 1993; Bassie-Sweet 2008; Schlesinger 2001: 111-113). At the top of the list of others trees important in the lives of Quintanarroenses are the ramón (*ox*, *yaxox*, breadnut, *Brosimum alicastrum*, see Puleson 1982; Schlesinger 2001: 132-35), the copal (*pom*, *poom*, *Protium copal*, see Schlesinger 2001: 119-21), and the chicle (*ya*, zapote, chicozapote, sapodilla, *Sapodilla maniltara*, see Pérez Aguilar 2014; Schlesinger 2001: 144-47). The coconut palm in cultivated coastal cocals and planted privately as an ornamental became of value late, but of course it is an introduced species (Dixon 1985). Our focus here is on *Ceiba pentandra* -- in its locational, cultural context.

The Yucatec Maya who still work the milpa and participate in the traditions of the ancients know of three trees that might be called a *ceiba*. The Mexican term *pochote* is occasionally used for the latter two. The following descriptions were collected in Xocén (ca. 1990) by Terán y Rasmussen (2009: 129-130, 170-171):

*Ceiba pentandra* (*ya'axche*, *yaxché*, *ceiba*): “La ceiba es la reina de la plaza. La ceiba es para la corrida. Así es en cada fiesta. El Xtabay es un demonio gentil grandote. Vive en la ceiba. Es malo. En el cenote de Xocén no hay [Xtabay]. Si el tronco de la ceiba es recto, no hay [Xtabay]. Si el tronco es globuliforme, si tiene [Xtabay].”

*Ceiba aesculifolia* (*pi'im*, *pochote*): “Es un árbol como ceiba que tiene flores blancas que dan miel y espinas. Su fruto lo comen las ardillas. Su raíz es como jícama y se come en épocas de hambre.”

*Ceiba schottii* (*k'inim*, *pochote*): “Es us árbol cuyos frutos se usan para alimentación. Es parecido a la ciruela. Se come endulzado. Unos no aguantan su sabor y les sale sangre de su boca. La madera es suavecita.”

Another forest tree, known as *yaxche' xtabay* (*Pithecoctenium crucigerum*), is feared as “casa del demonio Xtabay. Allí va a nacer el Anticristo. Es árbol de Wan Tul.” Wan Tul is god of the bulls, and therefore of importance in the annual fiesta ritual (Rosales 1977).

Once, it certainly was true that “ceibas were the queens of the plazas.” The bishop of Chiapas noted in 1690 that ceibas were in all town plazas and that beneath them elections were held (Nuñez de la Vega 1702: 9).

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## Demographic History of Quintana Roo

How appropriate was the title of Clinton Edwards' master's thesis at Berkeley Geography: "Quintana Roo: Mexico's Empty Quarter" (1957). He pointed out that "By any measure of population density, Quintana Roo is the most sparsely inhabited of Mexico's political divisions" (p. 79). At the time, with a 1950 population of just under 27,000, the density of QR was 1.67 people per square mile.

Until 1901 the eastern peninsula was part of Yucatán when the "territory of QR" was established. Statehood was granted in 1974, but until today a firm delimitation of its borders with Yucatán and Campeche states is unfinished.

Since Edwards' study, however, and since The Territory of Quintana Roo was granted statehood, and since Cancún, Playa del Carmen, Tulum, and the "Riviera Maya" have become prominent names in international tourism, population in the region has exploded. In the first decade following the construction of Cancún's airport in early 1970s, Cancún increased from 127 to 33,710 residents. In the decade after the coastal highway between Cancún and Chetumal was completed QR population jumped by 156%. During the next decade the new municipio of Benito Juárez around Cancún grew to 176,765 (+375%). For 2020 Cancún's population is estimated to be about a million. The Cancún airport would have seen over 25 million passengers this year had not Covid-19 arrived.

**Table 1. Population Change in Quintana Roo, 1910-2020.**

1910	9,109
1920	10,966
1930	10,620
1940	18,752
1950	26,967
1960	50,169
1970	88,150
1980	225,985
1990	493,277
2000	874,963
2010	1,325,578
2020	est. 1,900,000

The eastern portion of the peninsula was never occupied as densely as was the western side. The earliest records of settlement, from 1549 and 1579, the *Relaciones Geograficas* list only a few places within the borders of modern QR: Cacalac (Sacalaca),



Campocolche (Kampokolche Viejo), Cunchuchu (Chunkuku), and Zama (Tulum) (see Cline 1967: v 12/220, 223, 225; Edwards 1957: 140).

However, that changed when México began its concerted efforts to develop eastern Yucatán for international tourism. Planners recognized the physical environment of the western Caribbean, with its unusually clear water for SCUBA diving and clean white sandy coast for beachlife. Markets in the eastern and central US were much closer than Acapulco. Isla Mujeres and Cozumel had modest beginnings during the 1960s, but then Cancún, roads, and airports ! To service the tourists, migrants drawn by prospects of work began arriving during the 1970s. Elizabeth Paydar (1987:83) found that for 1980 in Cancún the largest proportions of migrants were from Yucatán 55%, D. F. 10%, Campeche 5%, and Veracruz 4%.

Of course almost all population increase has occurred in the larger places. In 2010, for example, the eleven municipio cabeceras account for 80% of the total population of the state. Of less consequence for demographics but of most importance to our study are the rural “localidades” occupied by the native people. When FCP was formed as a municipio its territory was intended to be “La Zona Maya” with the clear understanding that the “Maya” meant the *Cruzo’ob*, the towns followers of the cult of the Talking Cross of Caste War days.

**Table 2. Maya populations, proportions by municipio, Quintana Roo, 2010.**

% Maya	Municipio	Population Total	Population Maya
88.7	J. M. Morelos	36,179	32,110
86.7	F. C. Puerto	75,026	65,041
77.3	L. Cardenas	25,333	19,573
54.7	Tulum	28,263	15,474
30.5	QR State	1,325,578	404,292
29.8	Cozumel	79,535	23,697
25.7	I. Mujeres	16,203	4,161
23.8	Solidaridad	159,310	37,901
23.3	B. Juarez	661,176	153,816
21.5	O. P. Blanco	244,553	52,519

Source: *Catálogo de localidades indígenas, Yucatán, 2010*. México: 2012.



**Table 3. Indigenous densities, by settlement and municipio, Quintana Roo, 2010 census.**

**Largest concentrations:**

Cancún = 146,544 (23.3% of total pop.)

Playa del Carmen = 34,932 (23.3%)

Chetumal = 26,142 (17.3%)

FCP = 19,275 (74.9%)

JMM = 9,756 (83%)

Tulum = 7,587 (41.6%)

<b>Municipio</b>	<b>No. Places &gt; 100 pop. 100% indigenous</b>	<b>No. Places &gt; 100 pop. 90-99.9% indigenous</b>
FCP	28	26
JMM	13	23
LC	06	12
TUL	05	05
OPB	01	13
SOL	01	01
BJ	00	00

**Largest All - Maya Towns in QR:**

Huay Max, JMM 1,399

X-Pichil, FCP 1,340

Dzulá, FCP 1,223

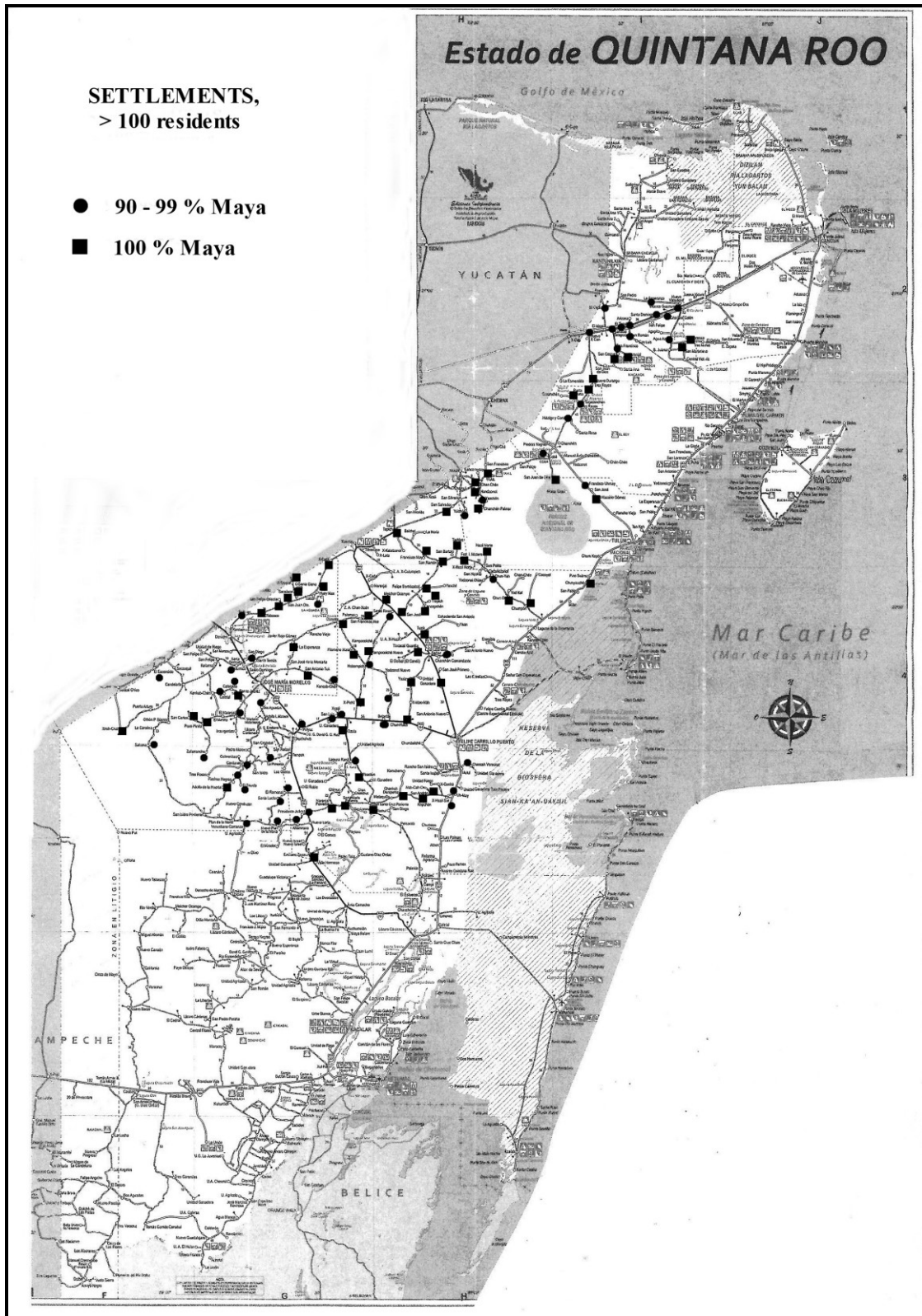
X-Cabil, JMM 1,087

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The absolute core of Maya Quintana Roo can be seen from the distribution of places with 100 or more residents where above 90% of the population is Maya. See map 1 and appendix II for complete list of settlements.



Map 1. Distribution of overwhelmingly-Maya settlements in Quintana Roo, 2010.





# Section One: The Distribution of Ceibas

## 1. Ceibas in Settlements

The final list of places considered for study (see appendix 1) includes 280 settlements, winnowed from the 1,151 “localidades” in Quintana Roo’s 2010 census. All places of at least 100 residents that could be visited are included (241 of 268), as well as 32 smaller sites along our routes. We also listed the thirteen localities with a “ceiba/yaxché/chunyaxché” toponym, although we lack information on seven of those. Within the 273 surveyed settlements we know of 1,269 ceibas planted in cultural context. About one-half of the places (135) have at least one ceiba and 79 settlements (29%) have a ceiba in their plaza. We did not see a ceiba in 138 towns (see appendix 1). Along national highway 307 between the entry to Río Secreto and just north of Puerto Morelos, some 40 km., we counted 1,108 ceibas in the median, along the roadsides, and at intersections. Further, from three transects along sections of paved highways, we counted 201 ceibas. The municipio/island of Isla Mujeres, the modern boom-towns such as Cancun and Alfredo V. Boneil, and the new resort complexes/settlements along the Caribbean coast were not surveyed (except for Tulum and Xcaret). The municipio island of Cozumel was studied in 2008, included in the 2019 Yucatán survey, and attached herein as appendix 3.

**Table 4. The number of ceibas in 273 mainland settlements, with number of occurrences, State of Quintana Roo, totaling 1,407 trees.**

trees	occurrences	trees	occurrences	trees	occurrences
0	137	7	06	38	01
1	44	8	03	43	01
2	23	9	02	45	01
3	19	10	01	86	01
4	17	12	01	96	01
5	05	13	01	248	01
6	06	29	01	289	01

In addition:

Noted in slight search in Cancun = 22

Ceibas on Hwy 307, medians and roadsides, Río Secreto -- Puerto Morelos = 1,108

Ceibas along three highway transects = 82 + 34 + 85 = 201

Isolated ceibas of roadways, glorietsas, ruins, ecotourism sites = 62 + 3 + 21 + 9 = 95

Ceibas on Cozumel Island, 2008 survey = 61

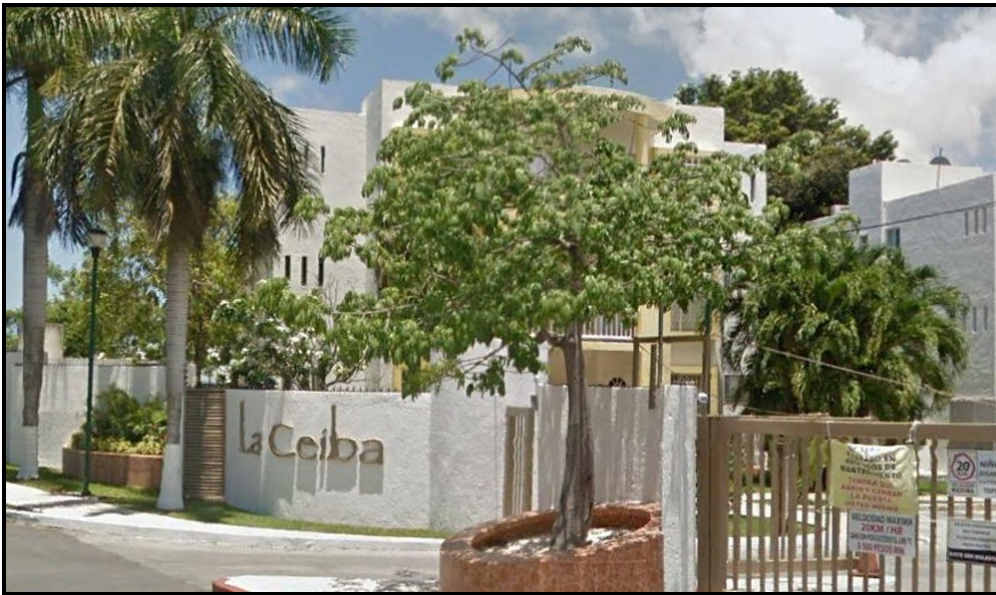
**Total ceibas known in State of Quintana Roo, Mexico = 2,894**



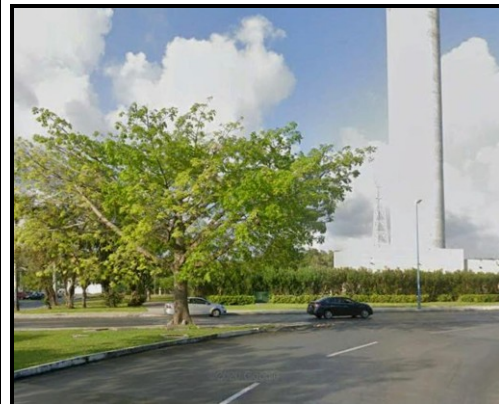
## 2. The Urban Ceibas

It is clear that the largest settlements have the greatest number of ceibas. **We did not survey Cancún** or its major suburbs. The largest city seemed a bit too overwhelming to do a complete job there. Glances in some of the parks found a few ceibas (Las Palapas has 15, Lima has 4, Rotario 1, glorieta La Licuadora has 1), but generally we saw few ceibas in most parques. Of course, we expected to find a ceiba at the entrance to the residential area known as “La Ceiba” (off Chichén Itzá between Kabah and Tikal).

**Figure 1. Entry ceiba at namesake residential development, Cancún.**



**Figures 2, 3. Ceiba at entrance to Cancún Country Club, south of airport, off highway 307, 2019; ceiba beneath Cancún airport tower, 2020.**





The nine cabeceras municipales, listed below, account for 766 ceibas, 55% of all settlement ceibas and about 26% of the ceibas in the entire state.

**Table 5. Quintana Roo, cabeceras municipales and ceiba locations.**

<b>Cabecera Municipal</b>	<b>Ceibas Total</b>	<b>Ceibas Main Plaza</b>	<b>Ceibas Other Parks</b>	<b>Church, Church/ Cemetery</b>	<b>Roadways Entries/ Medians</b>	<b>Govt., Education</b>	<b>Tourism, Business</b>	<b>Private Private?</b>
Playa Carmen	289	9	8	2, 0	228	5, 1	0, 4	32
Chetumal	248	1	11	0, 0	97	17, 87	30, 3	2
Bacalar	86	17	0	2, 0	56	0	6, 0	5
F C Puerto	45	3	1	4, 0	18	1, 2	12, 0	4
Tulum	43	6	1	3, 3	18	1, 5	1, 0	5
Pto Morelos	38	3	0	0, 0	28	0	2, 0	5
Kantunilkin	9	0	0	0, 0	7	0	0	2
San Miguel, Coz	5	1	0	1, 2	0	2, 0	0	0
J M Morelos	3	1	0	0, 0	1	0	0	1

**Not Surveyed:**

Cancún

Isla Mujeres

**Playa del Carmen.** The second largest city of QR, Playa del Carmen, has the most ceibas. A survey of the boulevards that have medians, the major parks, institutional spaces, and a few subdivisions discovered 289 trees.

The major north-south *avenidas* with number of ceibas are: 10<sup>th</sup> (15), 30<sup>th</sup> (24), 40<sup>th</sup> (3), 50<sup>th</sup> is the interstate Mexican national highway 307 that is elevated, and therefore without trees through the city, 60<sup>th</sup> (2), Chemuyil (2), and 115<sup>th</sup> [Petempich] (19), and 125<sup>th</sup> (5). The major east-west *calles*, with their ceibas, are: 8 sur (with 4 trees), Benito Juárez (14), Constituyentes (22), Andres Quintana Roo [c. 34<sup>th</sup>] (18), 38 norte (14), 46<sup>th</sup>/CTM (16), Luis Donaldo Colosio (51), and 106 norte (19).

Other locational categories include: Private subdivisions: Santa Fe del Carmen (6), Campestre (5), Las Palmas (2), Villas /norte/ (8); Government, education/business: Hospital General (5), zone of Palacio Municipal (4) [including Plaza de las Pelicanos (5)], church (2), FedEx (2), and Walmart (2), and Universidad de Quintana Roo (1). Parque de la Ceiba [southwest of corner av. 60<sup>th</sup> x c. 1 Sur] has 4 in the park, 4 adjacent, and 11 planted privately nearby.



Figures 4, 5. Ceibas at Walmart and FedEx/Bus Station, Playa del Carmen, 2019.



Figures 6, 7. Glorieta ceiba, Joya Real subdivision, southwest Playa del Carmen; Median ceiba, Constituyentes, Playa del Carmen, 2019.



Figures 8, 9. Ceiba on 5<sup>th</sup> Av.; Ceiba near Parque de la Ceiba, Playa del Carmen, 2019.

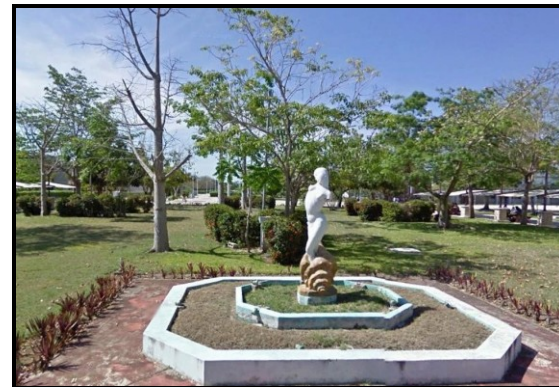




**Chetumal.** The capital and third largest city of the state of Quintana Roo, known as Payo Obispo before 1936, has the second largest number of trees with 248. The greatest concentration is at the Universidad de QR, in the east sector of town. Here 59 trees line the western boundary and cluster at the southwest entry. Within the campus center several trees front the library and are in the central plaza. At the Instituto Tecnológico de Chetumal are 23 more ceibas. A bit farther west along Insurgentes four more can be seen at a school. The Escuela Tecnológico del Mar on Blvd. Bahía has another.

Tourism and business are represented with 26 shade trees in the zoo parking lot, three more at the state tourism office on Bahía, one at the entrance to Hotel Hacienda Bahía, and three at Walmart. Near the centro two large trees can be seen in private solares. Government is represented in the prison, SEOP office, and La Zona Militar has fifteen. While the main plaza has a lone ceiba, eleven more trees can be seen in parques Renacimiento, Alameda, Caimanes, and Parque Central. The remaining 97 ceibas are to be found along main roadways within the city and in their medians, at glorietas and bus stops.

**Figures 10, 11, 12, 13. Ceibas at Universidad de Quintana Roo: southwest gate; western border on Ignacio Comonfort; central campus; library plaza, 2020.**





Figures 14, 15. Chetumal zoo parking lot; median ceibas on Insurgentes, 2020.



Figures 16, 17. Glorieta ceiba, E. P. Martínez east; SEOP office, Chetumal, 2020.



Figure 18. Median ceibas in Zona Militar, Chetumal, 2020.





**Figure 19. Calderitas (north of Chetumal): Sharon at 43 year old ceiba, planted by Sr. Poot, 2020.**

**Bacalar.** This historic city is distinctive for having the largest number of ceibas (17) in any plaza (here called *zócalo*) in the state. Down slope and next to fort San Felipe de Bacalar, the major fort that was constructed during the 1730s are two more large trees. Other large collections of ceibas can be seen on the roadways, especially at city entrances in the north (15 trees) and south (12 trees). Another cluster of 17 is aligned along the north-south southern boulevard Adolfo López Mateos. Four large ceibas have been planted along the highway by-pass. Along the coastal road (southern extension of Avenue 1), one is in the north, another in the south, and one can be found in the median just south of juncture with Calle 1. One block south of the fort along Av.3 are four large ceibas.

**Figures 20, 21. One of two ceibas beneath fort at plaza; ceibas a block south of the plaza, Bacalar, 2020.**





Figures a, b. Entry ceibas: south, and north, Bacalar, 2020.



San Joaquin church has two six-year olds at the 22nd street entrance, and there are two others at the Yaxché Centro Hostel & Camping site Av. 9 x C.22-24, one block west of the church. Three more trees have been planted at Green Monkey Hostel near the lagoon on Av. 1 x c. 16. Five ceibas can be seen in private solares, including two recently planted at c. 36 at the lagoon in extreme northeast Bacalar. Hotelito La Ceiba, on Av. 3, does not **now** have a ceiba on the grounds. In all, we know of 86 ceibas that have been planted in Bacalar.

**Felipe Carrillo Puerto.** The largest concentration of ceibas in FCP are the 12 planted on the grounds of Hotel La Ceiba (Diagonal 66 x c. 95). Three more are just across the street. Ceibas can be seen along the northeast entry highway from Tulum (6), the northwest entry arriving from José María Morelos (3), and the southern entry from Bacalar and Chetumal (3). Three median ceibas have been planted along Santiago Pacheco Cruz near c. 55. Four ceibas appear to be on private property along streets or on corners.



Figure 24. Ceibas on the grounds of Hotel La Ceiba, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 2020.



Ceibas are near religious features at the main plaza (3 young), in front of the chapel at the ceremonial center of the Talking Cross (3), and behind the Santa Cruz shrine (Benito Juárez x c.77). A lone tree is in the northwest corner of Parque Tres Reyes, where the statuary of General Francisco May is located (see cover). Institutional settings that host ceibas are Eastern Technical School (2) and Instituto Nacional de Los Pueblos Indigenas. Not counted among the 45 ceibas of FCP is the tree portrayed in the center of the mural at the main plaza.

**Figures 25, 26. Entry ceibas at the (INPI) Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indigenas and southern highway, FCP, 2020.**



**Tulum.** Tulum Pueblo has for many years been a very small but very important settlement, primarily because of its nearness and connection to the famous ruins at Tulum. (See below more on its position in the hierarchy of CSC ceremonial centers.)

We counted 43 ceibas in modern Tulum. Five have been planted recently within the main plaza and a much larger one is north across the street. Three more are adjacent at the church to the east; three more are at the nearby cemetery. The four largest ceibas, clearly relics of earlier days, are near the Maya church and ceremonial center, in the heart of the old hamlet. Along roadways are 18 (including 8 in medians and 5 at entries). Five have been planted at schools, one is at a hotel, and one is at a government water pump. Two are in private solares. The eight ceibas at Tulum Ruinas are counted elsewhere. (See Figures s, c. , below.

**Puerto Morelos** has 38 ceibas. Twelve are in the beach town: three in the plaza, three in private settings, two are across from the church, two are in medians just north of the centro, and two are at hotel entries at the south of town. In the mainland colonia adjacent (Joaquín Zetina Gasca) 26 trees have been planted in the medians. The ceibas planted at the nearby glorieta Santuario de la Esperanza on highway 307 just south of



Puerto Morelos are not included here. Those trees are counted elsewhere as roadway ceibas.

Figures 27, 28. North entry ceibas, Puerto Morelos; south exit ceibas at Santuario de la Esperanza, 2020.



Figure 29. Church, ceiba, and water purification in Colonia Joaquin Zetina Gasca, Puerto

Figures 30, 31. Entry ceibas at NOW hotel; at Yacht Club, Puerto Morelos south, 2020.





**Kantunilkin**, the northernmost municipal capital of QR, was established by “peacefuls” during the 1850s (Dumond 1997: 382). A few years, after residents allied with the Yucatecans, *cruzo’ob* from San Antonio Muyil attacked their former co-cultists (Sullivan 1989: 220; Perez A. 1914: 226; Gamboa G sin fecha: 3).

We found only nine ceibas in Kantunilkin, with none in the centro. Three were along the truck by-pass around the town and four were at three corners of the city, tho I do not suspect the corner ceibas were planted to pattern the Maya cosmos (Davidson 2019: 92-106). Two are in private solares.



**Figure 32. The northeast corner ceiba, Kantunilkin.**

**San Miguel, Cozumel.** We know of five ceibas in San Miguel. The two oldest are at the Capitania on the waterfront and another is just behind at the airbase. Two others are across the street and behind a wall at the cemetery. The final is a 10-year-old or so planted to the northeast in the old plaza off the dock. (See figures 50, 288, below.)

**José María Morelos.** Our quick and incomplete tour of JMM revealed only three ceibas. A young one has been planted in the plaza and another small tree is nearby in a median. The only other is in a private solar. Surely there are more.



### 3. The Yaxché/Ceiba/Chunyaxché settlements

Obvious places to seek ceibas are the locations that have “ceiba” or “yaxché” toponyms. “Chunyaxché” refers to a place of a ceiba trunk. The 2010 census has thirteen such sites, and a few earlier maps locate a few more, all very small sites. Of the thirteen listed in the 2010 census, we visited five, received informant information for another, and could not locate the other seven, which are very small.

**Table 6. “Ceiba/Yaxché” toponym places in the 2010 census of Quintana Roo.**

Settlement	Municipio	Total Pop.	Indigenous Pop.	Ceibas	Plaza Ceibas	Plaza Features
Chunyaxché	FCP	191	191	8	0	no plaza
La Ceiba	OPB	156	70	4	1	E,K,P,Pg,WT
[Lazaro Cardenas]						
Yaxché Chal	FCP	22	22	4	2	no visit
Yaxché	Tulum	335	320	1	0	C,GP,I,K,W
Yaxché	FCP	472	466	0	0	C,I,K
[Yaxchen]						
La Ceiba (hwy 307, km 175)		4	4	0	0	no plaza
<b>Not located:</b>						
La Ceiba	SOL	14	14			
Chun Yaxché	SOL	10	10			
Chunyaxché	LC	5	5			
La Ceibita	JMM	3	3			
La Ceiba	B J	2	2			
La Ceiba	SOL	2	2			
La Ceiba	Tulum	1	1			

By far the most interesting “Yaxché” place was the village south and west of Cobá. The road map we carried, from 2013, has it labeled “Yaxchen.” As we drove into town from Cobá, on the left side of the road just before the normal sign announcing the name of the locale (“YAXCHE”), at the boundary of the town, a three-branched yaxché was obvious . . . its trunk painted bright yellow. It was perhaps ten years old. It was the only ceiba in town.





Figure 33. Eastern entry into Yaxché, Tulum, QR, 2020.

At the plaza we encountered a group of men at the police station who told, with much nostalgia, “la historia” of the ancient yaxché, namesake of the town that was blown down during Hurricane Gilberto in 1988, the strongest storm to strike Yucatán. (See Dixon 1991; Meyer-Arendt 1991; Konrad 1996; Bosse *et al* 2003; Whighm *et al* 2003.)

At km 175 on highway 307, at the handwritten sign “La Ceiba,” we spoke with “el dueño del ranchito.” When asked if he had a ceiba on the property, he replied that he did not. When asked why his road sign said “La Ceiba,” he said he liked the name. No más. We also learned of Yaxché Chal (“Yaxché,” a few km east of Felipe Berriózabal) from a man in Trapich who said the road was unimproved, “una ramanal,” and not for our car.

Aside from the census “Yaxché” towns -- Tihosuco has a barrio “Yaxché,” a few ejidos have sitios known as yaxche. Several yaxche places have been abandoned and a few localities within ejidos share that name, see X-Pichil (INEGI 1995: 78).

#### 4. Ceibas of Coastal Highway 307

As is the case in Yucatán state (Davidson 2019: 53-66), ceibas are planted widely along roadways in QR. We know of 1,374 ceibas on roadsides, in medians, and at glorietas. The most significant plantings, 1,108 ceibas, can be seen between Puerto Morelos and Río Secreto on national highway Mexico 307. Beginning in front of the



CEMIX Puerto Morelos plant, some 1.5 miles north of Puerto Morelos (about 12 miles south of the Cancun airport) and heading south, until the west side entry into Residential Puntavista, 69 young trees (1 to 4 years old) can be seen in the median. Except for two mid-aged trees at a glorieta, none have been planted between Residential Puntavista and the Puerto Morelos exit. South of Puerto Morelos until the border with municipio Soledad are 104 ceibas, 55 young ones in the median, with 20 elders on both sides of the highway, 3 at the entrance road to the “Ruta de los Cenotes,” and 26 (11 old trees and 15 young ones) at the Santuario de la Esperanza glorieta just south of Puerto Morelos. After the municipio boundary until the exit to Maroma are 125 young ceibas in the median and 11 aside the roadway. Between the Maroma exit and the MayaCoba entry are 36 more ceibas.

**Figure 34. Typical ceiba scene along median, highway 307, between Puerto Morelos and Xcaret.**



**Figures 35, 36. Ceibas along highway 307.**

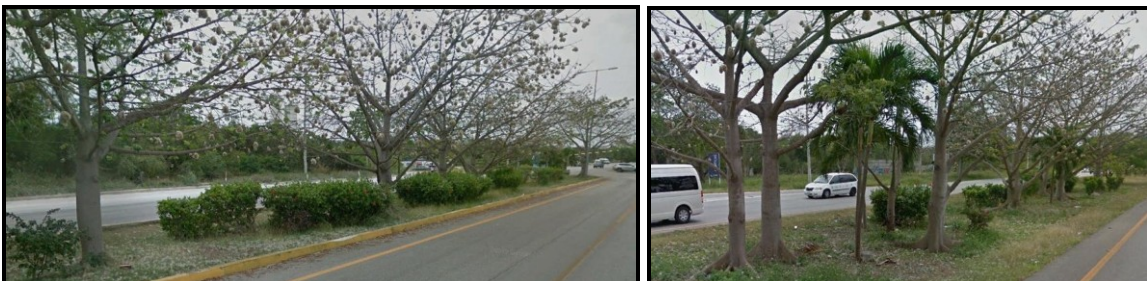




Figure 37. Highway 307 publicity for ‘La Ceiba’ sector of Ciudad Mayacoba residential development, 2020.

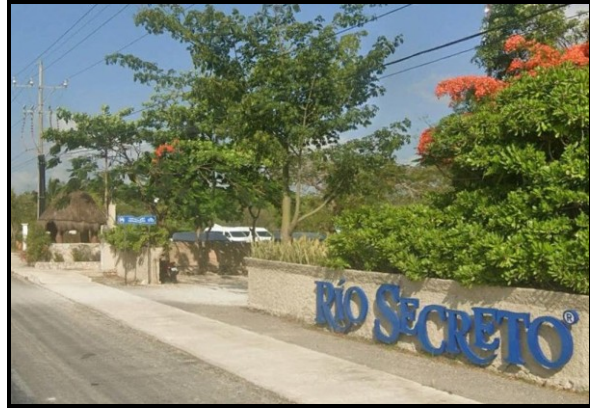


Figures 38, 39. Entry ceibas: Playa Magna and Akumal Bay, 2020.





Figures 40, 41, 42. Elevated entry ceibas along national highway 307, the coastal highway:  
Xcaret; Río Secreto; Dolphinius water park.





Density increases on the outskirts of Playa del Carmen. Along highway 307 through the northern suburbs the median has 92 ceibas. The southern suburb sector has 104. Of course, the elevated highway over the centro has no trees. In the 4 km south of the city 129 trees have been planted, often separated by rows of palms (coconut, royal, and African oil) and mimosas.

**The Xcaret complex is the epicenter of the ceiba landscape of Quintana Roo.** Surrounding the main entrance into Xcaret, for about 1,000 ft south and 2,000 ft north) 438 ceibas have been planted during the last 25 years: 220 in medians, 116 roadsides, and 102 along off-ramps and at interchanges. East of the highway within the Xcaret “adventure park,” alone (no surveys were taken at nearby sites Río Secreto, Xenses, Xplor, etc.) 96 ceibas can be seen in the glorietas and along streets and among the “fabricated” renditions of a “colonial” church, plaza, cemetery, and henequen plantation.

**Figures 43, 44. Ceibas in colonial church (3) and the make-believe Maya cemetery (4), Xcaret, QR.**



Combining the number of ceibas from Xcaret, Playa del Carmen, and Puerto Morelos with those along highway 307, the total figure is 1,505 – 52% of all ceibas in QR – in a 40 km stretch.

South of Tulum Pueblo roadside ceibas mark entries to Chunyaxché and rural restaurants.



Figures 45, 46. Entry ceibas along highway 307, at Chunyaxché, south; and north, 2020.



Figure 47. Entry ceiba at rural restaurant, south of Tulum, highway 307, 2020.





## 5. Other Highway Transects

**Tulum – Cobá, Highway 109.** This 42 km section of highway 109 has 85 ceibas planted near the roadway. At least one-half of the homesteads along the route have ceibas at their entries, numbering 55 trees. Within the grounds of homesteads nine more ceibas are visible. Eight ceibas mark entries to commercial and religious properties. Several cenotes open to tourists are marked with ceibas. Only three ceibas are roadside, isolated from structures. This section culminates in a three-ceiba glorieta at the Cobá cutoff.

**Figure 48.** Ceibas at entry to Saint Augustine Chapel, west of Tulum, hwy 109, 2020.



**Figures 49, 50.** Entry ceibas hwy 109 at: Paradiso “la Ceiba” (km 9.2); Villa Bamboo (km 19).





Figures 51, 52. Entry ceiba of Uh May at obvious location; roadside “Rancho La Ceiba,” 2020.



Figure 53. Three glorieta ceibas at Tulum-Cobá intersection, 2020.



Beyond the Tulum-Cobá highway headed southwest toward Tepich and Tihosuco, roadside ceibas are much fewer, but present.



Figures 54, 55. Approach to San Juan de Dios; road south of San Pedro, 2020.



**Bacalar Highway – La Ceiba [Lázaro Cárdenas, OBP] regional road.** Thirty-four ceibas have been planted near this highway along an 8 km section from highway 307 heading to the west. Much of the route passes through ranch lands. Seven trees are near ranch houses and seven are at entries to the ranchitos. Two are spared in pastures, two are at cattle pens, and one is on a fence row. Only one is alone aside the highway. The most unusual concentration – of 14 mid-sized trees – lines a wall parallel to the highway designed to enclose a new residential development. Why the ceibas were planted before the wall was constructed is unknown.

Figures 56, 57. A yet undeveloped residential area, planted with ceibas, 2013 and 2020.



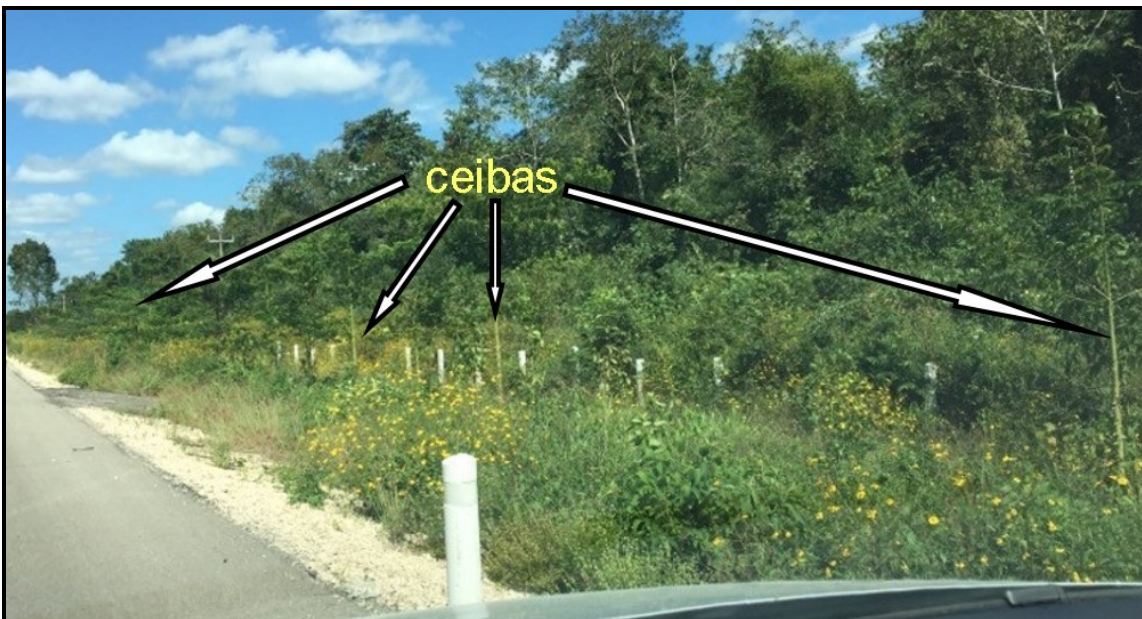


Figure 58. Sign indicating local name “La Ceiba” for comunidad Lázaro Cárdenas (OBP).



**Highway 293, Avila Camacho to Chunhuhub.** Sixty-two of the 82 ceibas along this route are in two lines parallel to the road: 32 are at km 79, 30 more are at km 85. They are all less than two years old. The other 20 are: 10 along the roadside, 8 at entries, 1 at an intersection, and another is spared in a pasture.

Figure 59. Recently planted roadside ceibas, km 79, highway 293, south of Chunhuhub, 2020.





## 6. Ceibas of the *Ha*: Cenotes, Rivers, Lagunas, Eco-tourism Sites

The close relationships of ceibas and water in the Yucatán have been recognized frequently over the years. Bishop de Landa, John Lloyd Stephens, and Augustus Le Plongeon are a few who mention especially ceiba-cenote sites (Davidson 2019: 18-21).

Informants in QR have mixed notions of why ceibas are planted at docks and other entry sites. The normal responses suggest that they are markers of welcome or for protection from strangers. **Figures 60, 61. Ceibas at Río Hondo docks, Ramonal (OPB); Sacxan, (OPB), 2020.**



Síijil Noh Ha, centro ecoturismo (FCP) has seven ceibas at entrance. A few examples of cenotes recently opened for tourism that have planted ceibas include Kancabzonot, Siete Bocas, Zacil-Ha, Aktun Ha, Kalimba, and Selva Latina. **Figures 62, 63. CSC shrine at cenote, Punta Laguna (mun. Solidaridad, QR); entry ceiba, cenote Siete Bocas.**

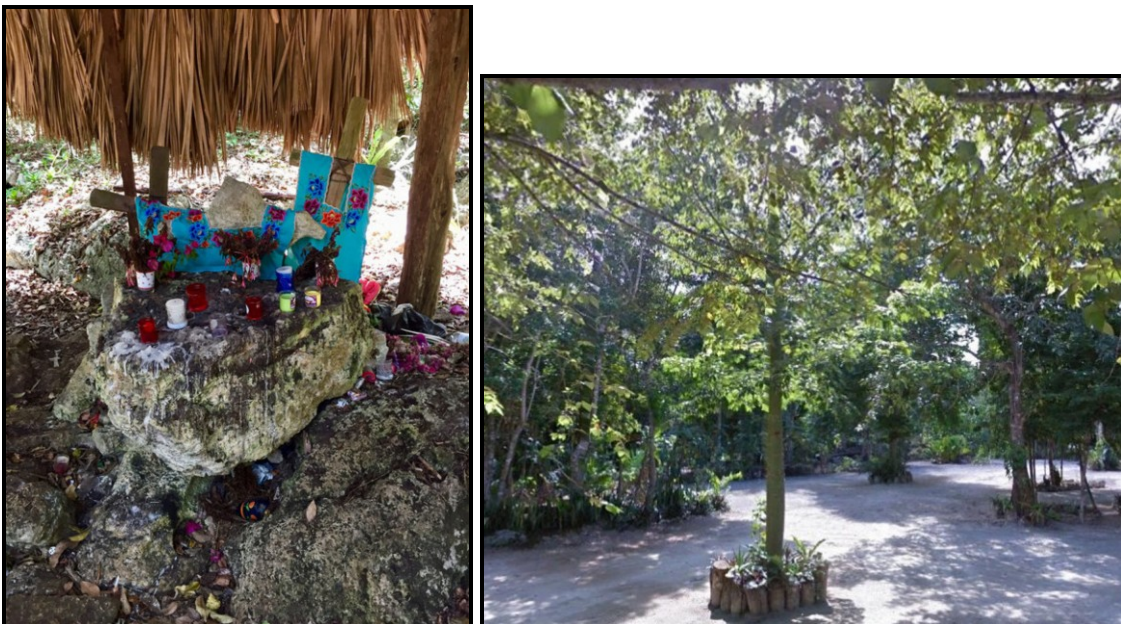




Figure 64. Entry ceibas at Laguna Xul-Ha, OPB.



## 7. Tourism Ceibas: Ruins and Hotels

Since the advent of massive tourism in QR, ceibas have become a regular feature of the tourism landscape. Places visited by travelers, such as ruins and hotels, are frequently planted, especially at entrances. Are they expected to welcome or protect the visitors? We illustrate with only a few of the cases we viewed while traveling through QR in January 2020.

**Coba.** Eight ceibas have been planted around the ruins at Cobá. Five are at the entrance, another is in the middle of the parking lot, and one is at the main gate to the lot. I know of only one within the ruins. In the town 21 more have been planted. Three are in the entry glorieta at highway 109 from Tulum, eight are near the Casa Cultural at the extreme west of the town, two are at the baseball field, three are at the cemetery gate, one is at Hotel Kaab Cobá. A few others are along the road through town.



Figure 65. Ceiba at entrance to ruins, Cobá 2020.



Figures 66, 67. Three cemetery ceibas, Cobá, 2020; ceiba within Cobá ruins, 1982.





Figures 68, 69. Median ceiba; entry ceiba south, at Casa de la Cultura, Cobá, 2020.



Tulum ruins. Six ceibas, including this shade ceiba, are just outside the main gate through the wall around the ruin. Two more ceibas are a km away in the parking area near highway 307. Figure 70.





Figures 71, 72. Ceibas at entries to ruins: Xel-Ha off highway 307; Dzibanché has two.



Figure 73. Two of five ceibas at ruinas Oxtanka, north of Chetumal, 2020.





Figure 74. Two ceibas planted to frame ruin at Los Limones, OPB, highway 307, 2020.



Throughout QR ceibas are the preferred tree at hotel entries to welcome visitors. Several hotels carry the name “La Ceiba.” Examples are La Ceiba Hotel (FCP), Hotelito La Ceiba (Bacalar), Ceiba del Mar (Riviera Maya), El Cid Ceiba Beach Hotel (Cozumel). Other hotels, without the “ceiba” name, also have entry ceibas with great frequency. Examples are: Hotel Kaab-Cobá (Cobá) and Hotel NOW (Puerto Morelos).

Figures 75, 76. Hacienda Bahía, Chetumal; Hotelito La Ceiba, Bacalar.





## Section Two: The Plaza Landscapes

A relatively large open public space in the middle of a settlement is an ancient and worldwide feature of settlement geography. Literature by geographers on these spaces is rich, including many contributions by some of the best known of Latin Americanists (Stanislawski 1946, 1947; Richardson 1974; Elbow 1975; Gade 1978; Bass 2005; Tillman 2008).

In his analysis of major plaza functions Gade (1978) found six types: 1) plaza as an unimproved site, 2) plaza as a marketplace, 3) plaza as a ceremonial center, with a church nearby and location of ritual processions, 4) plaza as a social concourse, 5) plaza as a garden park, and 6) plaza as a traffic hub. In QR all but the last example can be seen. Plaza as a ceremonial focus with nearby church is perhaps the most prominent type.

\*\*\* \*\*

In the New World, the Spanish Crown demanded regularity for new towns that eventually included plazas and a surrounding grid pattern of streets. In nearby Honduras, the earliest Spanish instructions on town planning were from 1526 (Celada): **"The new town was to be laid out in the following order: the church, the plaza, the hospital, the governor's house, the jail, the cabildo, and then the other houses."** For the Yucatec Maya such rules came in 1552 when Tomás López, the oidor of the Audiencia de Guatemala, came to Yucatán. He issued regulations (*ordenanzas*) that required natives to leave their forest homesteads and to congregate in towns, to build therein a church and school, to have space for a market, and to construct separate guest houses for visiting natives and Spaniards (Cogolludo 1688: lib v, cap. xvi).

The new town ordinances of 1573 (Nuttall 1922) were much more detailed when considering the plaza:

**"... the main plaza should be in the centre of the town and of an oblong shape, its length being equal to at least one and a half times its width, as this proportion is the best for festival ..."** **"The size of the plaza shall be in proportion to the number of residents ... not be smaller than two hundred feet wide and three hundred feet long ..."** **"After the plaza and streets have been laid out building lots are to be designated, in the first place, for the erection of the main church ..."**

Of course, some regions came late to have plazas. Eastern Yucatán was one of those areas. Until the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had passed, the natives here primarily lived in ephemeral and basically informal, irregular, non-conformal settlements. For



example, in 1936 when Villa-Rojas was living among the CSC in QR, he observed that “The huts, without exception, are built of palm leaves and bajareque, and are scattered around the public well or cenote. There are neither streets nor fences around domestic plots” (Villa Rojas 1969: 255). Redfield (1941: 55-6) reported no streets there in the late 1930s; Xyatil was without streets in 1926 (Shattuck 1933: 174). Streets arranged in a grid pattern arrived even later. The plazas of modern QR, especially in the smaller villages and towns, seem to have plazas about the size of a regular local block.

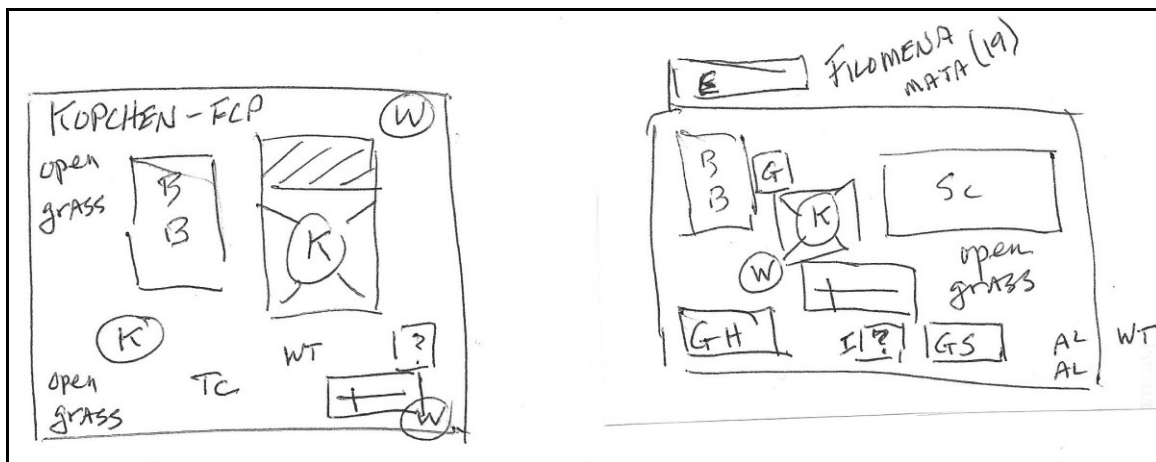
In our study of ceibas in the state of Yucatán we did not note those planted in plazas. We did however document the presence of ceibas near churches, which are almost always on plazas. Of the 514 churches we saw in Yucatán, 79 (15%) had ceibas nearby, totaling 121 trees (Davidson 2019: 28). Of the 268 plazas we saw in QR, 79 (29.5%) have ceibas, totaling 153 trees (see appendix I).

## Components of the plazas of QR

We have information from 268 plazas in QR. Seventy-nine plazas have ceibas (29.5%), totaling 153 trees (see appendix 1). Five places we visited have no plaza. Three of these are with very small populations, places along highway 307 south of Tulum in FCP. Tac-Chivo (FCP) has 180 residents, but never formed a plaza.

By far the most frequent feature of plazas in QR is the massive concrete *cancha* (basketball court). They can be seen in the most unlikely settlements, such as San José Primero (population 7) and San Antonio Segundo (population 34). Male residents in the latter, none under 65 years old, **with a twinkle in their eyes**, say they have never played on the canchas, “porque no tenemos pelotas.” (See figures 79-81).

Figures 77, 78. Examples of field sketches of QR plazas, 2020. North to top, no scale.





**Table 7. Prominent features in the plazas of Quintana Roo, México: of 268 plazas, symbols for our sketch mapping, descriptions, and frequencies.**

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
C = cancha	uncovered concrete basketball court, approx. 50 x 90 feet	194 (72.4)
K = kiosk	small roofed structure, normally in center, with playground and formal park features such as benches	116 (43.3)
Sc = soccer field	large grassy area, normally with temporary stick goals	103 (38.4)
I = iglesia	Catholic church, within plaza block or adjacent on east side	100 (37.3)
WT = water tower, tall, of concrete		81 (30.2)
<b>[79 plazas with ceibas, all planted]</b>		<b>79 (29.5)</b>
Pg = playground only, no kiosk		77 (28.7)
G = government building, unspecified use		74 (27.6)
D = domo	covered concrete basketball court	74 (27.6)
W = well		66 (24.6)
E = escuela	school, within plaza, but normally on adjacent street	41 (15.3)
FP = formal park	walkways, benches, landscaping, but without kiosk	34 (12.7)
GS = government, casa de salud		34 (12.7)
GD = government, casa ejidal or delegación		33 (12.3)
GH = government, hurricane shelter		25 (09.3)
TC = telecommunication station		23 (08.6)
GP = government, police station		8 (03.0)
P = pasture	grazing area within plaza for sheep, turkeys, horses, or goats	6 (02.2)
F = fountain	with flowing water within plaza	3 (01.1)

**Figures 79, 80, 81. Canchas at San José Primero, Chanchen Comandante, San Antonio Segundo.**







Seventy-four canchas have recently been covered with large metal domes (domos). The smallest places with domos are in municipio Tulum: San Juan de Dios (population 360) and Hondznot (population 368).

**Figure 82. Domo at San Juan de Dios (municipio Tulum), 2020.**





Government buildings are often constructed within the plaza or adjacent. Police stations, hurricane shelters, health clinics, and casas ejidales have fairly standardized forms. Frequently, ceibas are planted nearby.

Figures 83, 84. Police station, Chan Chen I (Tulum); hurricane shelter, Yaxley (FPC).



Figures 85, 86. Casa ejidal at Francisco Uh May (Tulum); health clinic at Miguel Aleman (OPB).





## The Urban Plazas

The formal urban plazas of QR are far more impressive than their rural counterparts, but both perform similar functions. During periods of twilight, morning and evening, residents enjoy the calming settings when not at work. On the other hand, judging from the structures present, the clientele, the users, are different. As might be expected, the urban plazas are larger than those in smaller towns. I have noticed that over Latin America the size of the main plaza is directly proportional to the population of the city. Just think of the Zócalo of México City, La Plaza de la Constitución in Guatemala City, and Plaza Morazán in Tegucigalpa. On the other hand, the smaller villages and towns seem to have plazas about the size of a regular local block.

Among the eleven cabeceras surveyed, all plazas except Kuntunilkin have ceibas. Six cities have clock towers. A few have distinctive features such as a windmill, Maya calendar, fort, and twin lighthouses. José María Morelos and Kantunilkin have the most plaza features, which reflect their daily uses by residents, rather than proclaiming their political importance or being adorned to please tourists.

**Table 8. Quintana Roo, cabeceras municipales and their plaza features.**

<b>Cabecera Municipal</b>	<b>Pop. Total 2010</b>	<b>Pop. Indígena 2010</b>	<b>Plaza Size Approx Ft</b>	<b>Ceibas Total</b>	<b>Ceibas Main Plaza(s)</b>	<b>Plaza Features</b>	<b>Special Features</b>
Chetumal	151,243	26,142	350x350	248	1 (11)	GD,K	clock tower
Playa Carmen	149,923	34,932	350x350	289	9	FP,GD	clock tower (low)
San Miguel, Cz	77,236	22,675	250x350	5	1	FP,GD	clock tower
F C Puerto	25,744	19,275	250x250	45	3 (1)	G,I,K	clock tower
Tulum	18,233	7,587	300x450	43	6 (1)	C,D,GD,I,K,Pg	Maya calendar
Jose M Morelos	11,750	9,756	250x300	3	1	C,G,I,Sc,TC,W,W,WT	clock tower, windmill, concha
Bacalar	11,048	3,848	310x400	86	17	G,K,Pg	fort
Pto Morelos	9,188	2,188	250x250	38	3 (2)	I,K	lighthouses (2)
Kantunilkin	7,150	5,265	250x340	9	0	D,G,GD,I,K,Pg	
<b>Not surveyed:</b>							
Cancun	628,306	146,544					clock tower (low)
Isla Mujeres	15,295	3,117					

**Chetumal.** The site of the main plaza of the capital of the state has a prime location on the main boulevard that parallels Chetumal Bay. The tall clock tower beside the bay looks down on a relatively open space, with virtually no amenities. Perhaps it assumes such



austere role as the major government space. Perhaps once it was the place for the military to muster the guard and to parade. Not to be littered with common folks. The main plaza has only one ceiba, a small one planted besides a building. However, among the other plazas in Chetumal are eleven ceibas.

Figure 87. Kiosk of the plaza central; clock tower in background, Chetumal, 2020.



Figures 88, 89. Clock towers of Chetumal waterfront, 1916 and 2020.



And what about those clock towers? San Miguel, Cozumel had one in 1910.

**Playa del Carmen.** The primary plaza (Pelicanos), with the adjacent space of the palacio municipal, covers two blocks northwest of c. 8 norte x av. 15. The plaza has five ceibas, but they have also been planted on three corners of the palacio, with another small one behind. In the surrounding vicinity ceibas have been planted at Walmart (2 trees, one



block west), FedEx (2, 1 block north), and the main church (2, 1 block northeast). Pelicanos is relatively austere and reflects its governmental and historical status with a bit of statuary (foto) and a Rotary plaque from 2015 celebrating ceibas: “Arbol de la Amistad Rotaria.”

**Figure 90. Plaza of Palacio Municipal, with ceiba in foreground, Playa del Carmen, 2020.**





Figure 91. Playa del Carmen plaza, east, ceiba planted in front of Andador Solidaridad, 2020.



Figure 92. Rotary Club plaque recognizing their ceiba in plaza, Playa del Carmen, 2020.





**Felipe Carrillo Puerto.** The main plaza is west of the famous church constructed in 1860. (See more later in section on CSC settlements.)

**Figure 93.** Main plaza, with kiosk and clock tower, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 2020.



**Puerto Morelos.** Puerto Morelos for years was a small chicle station and the departure dock for Cozumel. Centro focus was on the lighthouse. Plaza construction came late.

**Figures 94, 95 . Dock and lighthouses at Puerto Morelos, 1966 and 1967, after Hurricane Beulah.**





Figure 96. Ceibas and kiosk in modern plaza, Puerto Morelos, 2020.



**Tulum Pueblo.** Tulum Pueblo has plazas, old and new. The modern plaza exhibits features that combine better than any where else in QR uses by local residents, government officials, and tourists. Here is the palacio municipal, playgrounds and domo for locals, and an ornate Maya calendar for the tourists. The old plaza, a few blocks southwest of the modern one, hosts the remnants of the old Maya ceremonial center of Tulum Pueblo, with church, corral, barracks, casa ejidal, and old ceibas. (See old plaza photographs below, figures 82-85.)

Figure 97. Two ceibas guard entrance to modern plaza off highway 307, Tulum, 2020.





Figures 98, 99. Palacio municipal, 2020; Maya calendar with tourists, 2017, at modern plaza.



Figure 100. Ceibas guarding north entry into the modern plaza, Tulum Pueblo, 2020.





Figure 101. Ceiba, kiosk, and domo, modern plaza, Tulum Pueblo, 2020.



**Bacalar.** Bacalar has the largest number of ceibas (17) in any plaza (here called *zócalo*) in the Quintana Roo. Otherwise, it is a well-kept space with little except its kiosk, a very small playground, and small structure for tourism information. The major fort is adjacent to the east, just before the lagoon.

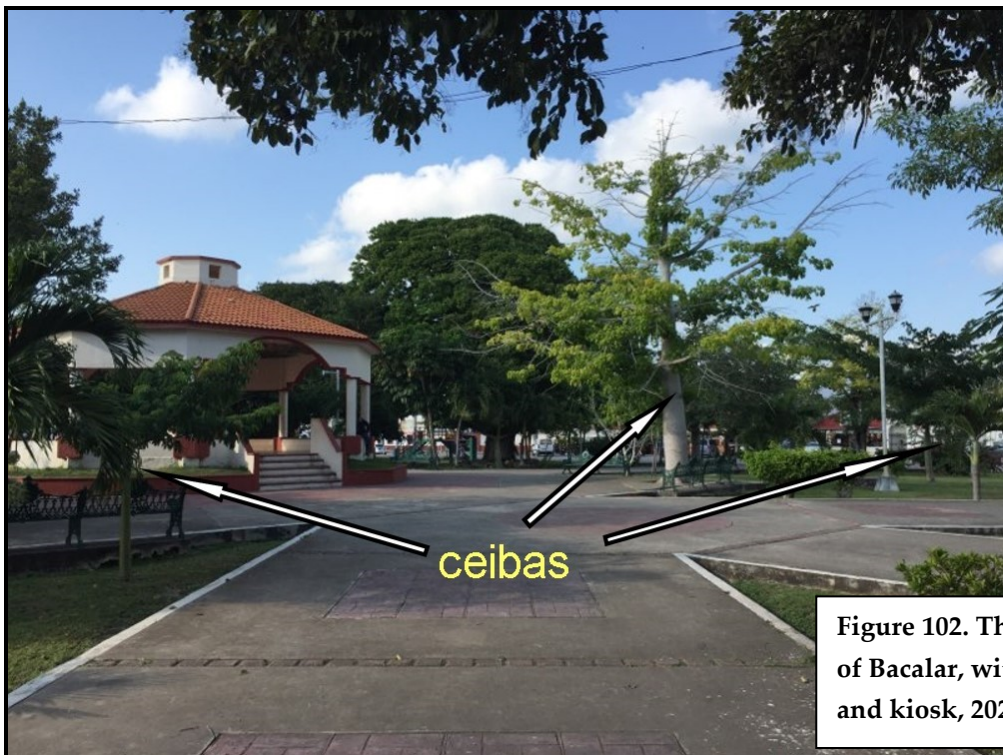


Figure 102. The zócalo of Bacalar, with ceibas and kiosk, 2020.



Figure 103. Colorful welcome sign, fort, and lagoon (in background), Bacalar plaza, 2020.



### José María Morelos.

This cabecera municipal has a plaza that is designed for high density local use. Within are wells and water tower, cancha and playground, church and school, telecommunication station and government building, plus a clock tower, bandstand and unique windmill. It is a cluttered landscape, but one clearly for the people.

Figure 104. Clock tower, windmill, bandstand, kiosk, José María Morelos.





## Kantunilkin.

Like José María Morelos, this settlement's plaza (locally called "parque") is a congested variety of features, clearly designed for local use.

Figure 105. Congested plaza, with kiosk, playground, domo in background, Kantunilkin.



## San Miguel, Cozumel.

San Miguel is similar to Tulum Pueblo in having two plazas--old and new. Like Tulum, when tourism overwhelmed the island and San Miguel grew from a few thousand residents to over 25,000, another plaza was included in the required infrastructure. The new plaza was constructed a few blocks to the south and hosts the municipal offices. The new plaza does have a small playground and bandstand, but neither plaza seems to be used by Cozumeleños. They are places for tourists to buy their trinkets. Today, the old plaza is quite confined by commercial establishment, large and small, that cater to the 5 million cruise line tourists who visit the island for one day.

When Sharon and I lived in San Miguel during the summers of 1965 and 1966, we spent many evenings, playing like Cozumeleños, sitting on benches in the plaza beneath the clock tower. Especially on Saturdays and Sundays, *los paseos* occurred, just like one reads about during older times in Latin America. The teenaged boys strolled clockwise around the plaza, the girls and their female companions (other girls or moms), holding onto each other dearly, ambled counterclockwise. Those were nice days in the old plaza. Regulars had their designated benches and if a newcomer took a local's seat,



several concentrated, coordinated, stares sent the unspoken message – “You are in someone else’s seat. You must sit elsewhere. You are out-of-place.” It always worked. Casually, the newcomers would look around, stand, maybe yawn and stretch, but inevitably wander off to another spot. Pretty cool, we thought. It happened to us. How proud we were, the only gringos in town, when the community granted us the status of “becoming one of them.” When we arrived a little late one evening and our bench was occupied, all faces turned to the interlopers who immediately rose and vacated their seats. After an appropriate delay, we sat down in their stead and all was right with the world. Proper order had been restored. In the moment we maintained our calm, but we could barely wait to get home to proclaim our great pleasure at being so accepted. Smiles at our neighbors the next days were bigger than ever. We were Cozumeleños. During our sojourns abroad people never have been able to resist Sharon’s pleasant genuineness.

Of all plazas in QR, the old plaza in San Miguel is the only place to observe sunsets, which were almost always spectacular. Facing westward, far beyond the dock, far on the horizon, you could see no land, only the daily cumulus buildup over the Yucatán mainland. As the sun lowered and the clouds dispersed, we were gifted with wonderful combinations of colors that we came to take for granted.

**Figure 106. A quite average Cozumel sunset, July, 1965.**





Figure 107. Clock tower and ceiba, old plaza, San Miguel de Cozumel.





## Section Three:

### Landscapes of the Chan Santa Cruz Settlements

The people known as “Chan Santa Cruz Maya” (CSC) came into being and still exist as those indigenous folk of the eastern Yucatán Peninsula who participate in the cult devoted to the worship and protection of their Holy Talking Crosses that descended from the original La Santísima (their major Holy Cross) of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Scholars and other outsiders often call them, “*cruzo’ob*” (crosses), I suppose to mean “people of the cross” or “followers of the Talking Cross.” They insisted on practicing their style of Maya-Catholic religion and having their own priests, dignitaries, and judicial system. The CSC Maya desired isolation and independence from their Spanish, Mexican, and Maya Yucatecan overlords to the west and were willing to fight for rights to their territory. The history of the so-called Caste War and consequences has been discussed by many scholars (Reed 1964, 1997; Bricker 1981: 87-118; Dumond 1985, 1997; Sullivan 1989; Rugeley 1996, 2001, 2009; Gabbert 2019).

It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss this history in detail, but it is generally accepted that the first CSC attack on the Yucatecans was at Tepich on July 30, 1847, led by Cecilio Chi (Reed 1964: 59). The unifying spark of the CSC cult occurred in 1850 with the sighting of small cross, some 3-4 inches high, carved in a mahogany tree near a small cenote in what is today Felipe Carrillo Puerto – the original “Little Holy Cross” (Chan Santa Cruz) (Reed 1964: 135-36). That place is now a shrine known as Santuario de la Cruz Parlante.

The indigenous folks of the eastern forests often referred to themselves as “mazahual,” (also, *mazehual*, *masewales*, *macehual*). Restall (1977: 421) traces the term to Nahuatl meaning “commoner.” According to Reed (1964: 46), most of them enjoyed the drink, because they think: “Alcohol brings a man closer to God, and help him see more clearly.”

The *mazahual/cruzo’ob* had their terms for “the others” as well -- especially “whites” and “educated” Yucatecans and other Mexicans. An “outsider,” a foreigner, a non-Maya, including Spanish Yucatecans was a “dzul” (Restall 1997: 420). Later they were called “*huaches*” (Bush R. 1964: 249), “*uaches* (Mexicans)” (Forero y Redclift 2005: 146) and “*huaches*” = Yucatecans (Pacheco Cruz 1934: 13), and “*uaches*” = those who do not speak Maya (Pacheco Cruz 1958: 266).



Natives from this region have defied outside political authority for centuries. Chamberlain (1948: 225-28) notes how the Maya of Cochuah (an indigenous province of eastern Yucatan) “resisted fanatically” in the 1543 era after Valladolid was subjugated.

According to Karl Sapper, the prolific German geographer who roamed widely over Central American and Yucatán, at the beginning of the rebellion the CSC population was approximately 40,000. By 1895 the rebels numbered 8–10,000 (Sapper 1904: 628). His maps (1894, Sapper) show CSC territory in a N-S strip between Bacalar and Ascension Bay, with Chan Santa Cruz (mid way) as the only settlement. To the west, before Peto and Valladolid, was an unoccupied barrier zone. The lead CSC chief lived at Chanquec, a bit northeast of Chan Santa Cruz.

West (1990: 166, 171) notes, however, that Sapper never reached QR. On his two trips in the region, he visited Corozal and Orange Walk in Belize. Therefore, his report was based on hearsay, mostly from British officials (Sapper 1904: 633).

### **The Major Cruzob Shrine Settlements and their Regional Affiliates**

CSC settlements are not easily identified and located through time because they have been founded, relocated or abandoned, and frequently misplaced on maps of the day. Perhaps nothing illustrates this better than the map by Hostettler (2001: 242; 2011: 49) “Xcocal Group and Surrounding Area 1993.” He locates 54 settlements, 24 inhabited and 30 abandoned. Since his map, four more have become abandoned. When Santiago Pacheco Cruz was working to incorporate eastern Yucatán into the republic (1933-1958) several of the prominent villages, he found Pom, Chumbalché, and Komchén as significant sites. None now exist. During the last fifty years, with the construction of roads, the implantation of a grid plan on settlements, establishment of schools and other infrastructure of regional government, settlements have finally become more permanent.

Further, the primary centers of the religious-militaristic movement, the most sacred settlements that housed a holy cross, have also changed through time -- as have the smaller villages that served them as sources of guards and pilgrims. Normally, a “Chan Santa Cruz” settlement displays in its church and shrines one to three crosses dressed in huipil to indicate its veneration of the Talking Cross of the Caste War.

Especially during the first decade of the revolution the Holy Talking Cross seemed to be on the move.

**“The first home of the Cross had been an open-air pole altar on the slope of a hill fifty paces east of the grotto; the second had been a two-room thatched hut, probably on the same site. But the steep little hollow had become too small for Cruzob assemblies and the**



surrounding hillocks proved inconvenient as building sites for an increasing population; and so it was decided to move the shrine to more level ground a quarter of a mile to the southeast, halfway to the other large cenote” (Reed 1964: 173).

By far the most exotic, “miraculous translocation” took place in 1851 when three crosses apparently left Kampocolche and went to heaven before appearing in Yalcobá, 115 km north (Reed 1964: 137). This celestial transposition is noted by Folan *et al* (2016: 301) as a recurring Maya mythical trait.

In 1866-67, the most holy of crosses was in the main church in Chan Santa Cruz, which then had about 7,000 residents (Rugeley 2001: 86, Dumond 1985:300).

More problematic is the case of Yodzonot Guardia (Dzonot Guardia, La Guardia), which was a site of the scared cross(es) preceding the founding of X-Cacal and Chanchah Veracruz. Hostettler (1996: 50) calculated its founding to 1896, but perhaps its occupancy has not been continuous. Census records show only a few residents in 1950 (5), 1940 (4), 1935 (14). Only the 1936 map of Villa Rojas (1945: 41, often reused by other authors) locates Dzonot Guardia: north of FCP and southeast of Yaxkax and Tzucun. By this time however, Favila (2001) believes that the crosses had gone to Xcacal and Chanchah Veracruz.

**Table 9. Locations of the Holy Crosses of the Cult of the CSC Masewal.**

1848	Xocén cross surfaced in Chan Santa Cruz (Montes 2009: 122).
1850	original cross carved in tree near cenote, Chan Santa Cruz; a larger one (or more) of wood erected nearby (Reed 1964: 135-6)
1851	original wooden cross (or two or three) at Chan Santa Cruz cenote taken by Yucatecan military to Kampocolché (Viejo), May 25 (Reed 1964: 137, Dumond 1997: 181)
1851	Yalcobá, Yucatán: three crosses arrived from heaven (Baquero, cited in Reed 1964: 137)
1852	Capt. Cámara y Zavala took crosses to Dzonotchel church, until 1854 or 1962 (Rugeley 2009: 121)
1864, 1866	Tulum (Dumond 1985: 299)
1866-7	Chan Santa Cruz (Rugeley 2001: 86, Dumond 1985:300)
1871	Tulum, Santa Cruz Tulum: with priestess (Gamboa s. f.; Dumond 1985: 300)
1872-1950	San Antonio Muyil (Dumond 1985: 300)
1901	Yodzonot Guardia (Dumond 1985: 302)
1915	to Yodzonot Guardia (Favila 2001: 78; Mendoza R. 2004: 227)
1929	Crosses from Yodzonot Guardia to Xcacal and Chan Cah Veracruz (Favila 2001: 78)
1936	Most Holy Cross at Xcacal (Tixcacal Guardia) (Villa Rojas 1945: 43)
1950	S. A Muyil cross taken to X-Can; later to X-Can Nuevo (Everton 2012: 257, 284)
1986-present	Tulum Pueblo ceremonial center (Juarez 2002: 55)
1988	Tulum’s sacred cross returned from Tixcacal Guardia (Everton 2012: 243, 280)



Apparently, the establishment of CSC ceremonial centers at Tixcacal Guardia, Chunpóm, and Chanchah Veracruz to some degree was pre-adapted by a government attempt to incorporate the Cruzo'ob into the state system by granting them access to local lands. Known as "*reservaciones*," three regional pre-ejido areas composed of associated settlements were delimited in 1929 (Mendoza 2004: 228-29).

[\* Places appearing on maps have an asterisk.]

In 1929, La Guardia\* was headquarters of a group of places ("una reservación") that included Chacchan [Chanchen?]\*, Chanchen Laz\*, Chunulché\*, San José\*, Señor\*, Tuzik\*, Xcacal\*, Xmaben\*, and Yaxkax\* (Mendoza R. 2004: 228-29). These places became the military-religious geographical structure that later centered on X-cacal.

Chunyaxché\* was the focus for fifteen places: Arco [Xarcos]\*, Chanchen\*, Chanchen Grande, Chumón\*, Cocoyol de Pom\*, Cruzchen, Dzintil\*, Haydzonot, Pixoy\*, Xcuil, Xula, Yaxchen, Yoactun, Yodzonot Chico, and Yodzonot Grande. This region fell under the leadership of Chunpóm.

A third region, to the south, was that of H-Hazil\*. The affiliated eight places were Chanchah\*, Damián Carmona, Felipe Carrillo Puerto\*, Juventud Rosas, Kopchen\*, San Andrés\*, Yaxché\*, and Yodzonot\*. This area, later enlarged, focuses on Chanchah (Veracruz).

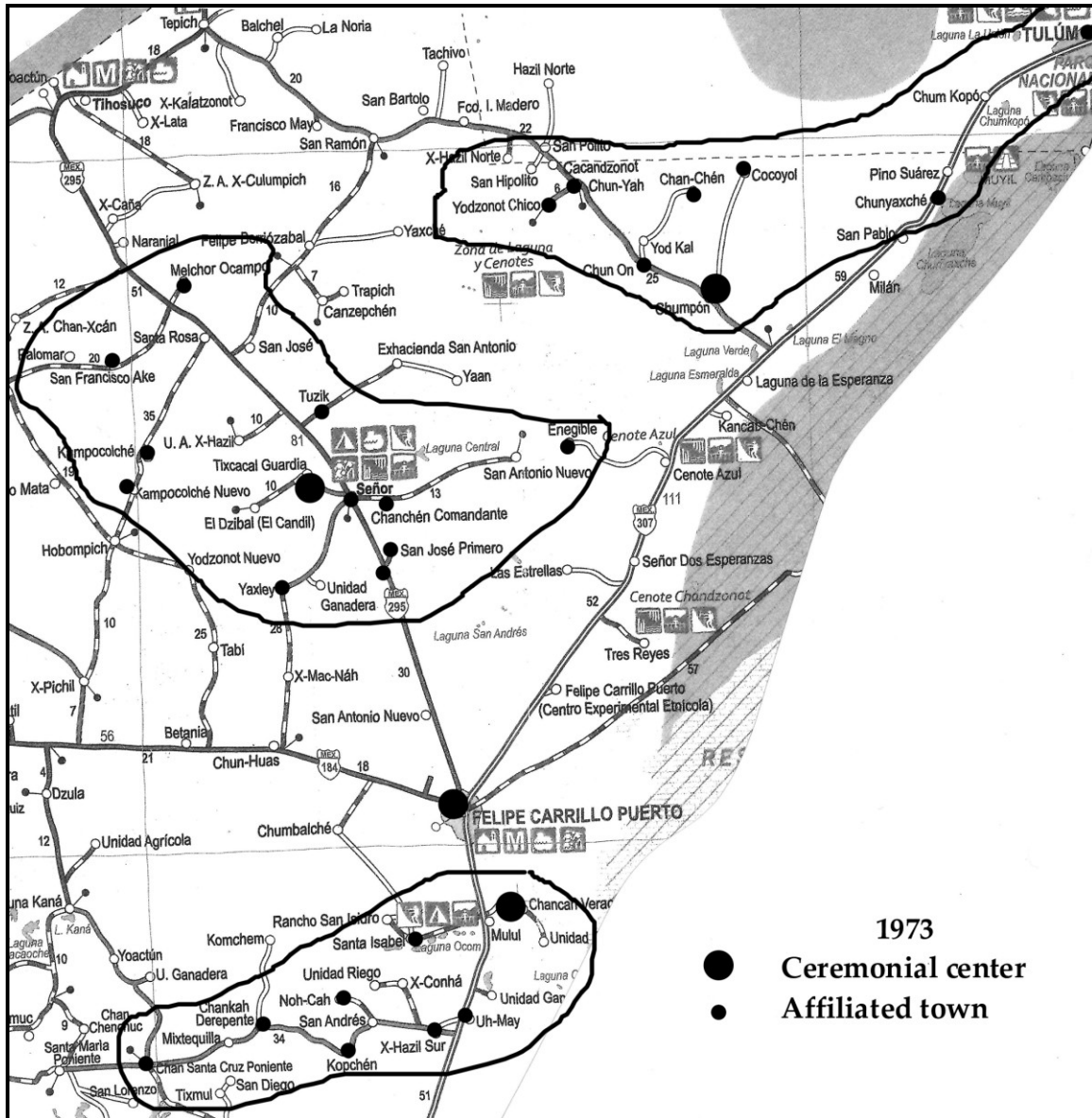
Nearby settlements that were devoted to support and to defend the talking crosses and their villages have been identified by several scholars thru the years. Perhaps the first list of CSC towns was that of Villa-Rojas from 1936 (1945: 43-44), who noted places of the X-Cacal subtribe. "The settlement of X-Cacal, the 'capital' of the subtribe, is isolated from all roads traveled by chicleros, merchants, and other foreigners. It is called "Santo-Cah" (Holy City) by the natives because here is kept La Santísima, the patron cross of the subtribe." The villages pledging allegiance to the cross of X-Cacal were eight: X-Maben, Tusik, Señor, Chuncunché, San José, Chanchen, Yaxkax, and Chanchen-Laz. (See his map p. 48, reproduced also in Hostettler (1996: 48)

In 1973 a larger list of 25 towns was published by (Bartolomé y Barabás 1977: 55-6; see Castro *et al* 1986: 86) that included "guard towns" that protected other centers of the cult of the Talking Cross. All ceremonial centers of the CSC then were in the municipio of FCP. The northern sector had seven communities that sent guards to **Chunpóm**: Yodzonot Chico, Chunyaxché, Chun-On, Chan Chen, Cocoyol, Chun-Ya, and Tulum. Tulum at the time was not considered a ceremonial center, but attached to Chunpóm. The largest region was that of **X-Cacal** (Tixcacal Guardia), which had eleven



supporting towns: Señor, Tusik, San Francisco Aké, Kampokolché Viejo, Kampokolché Nuevo, Chan Chen Comandante, San José Primero, Melchor Ocampo, Pino Suárez, Yaxley and Eneigible. The southern area surrounded **Chancah Veracruz**, with seven villages: Chancah Derrepente, Uh May, Noh Cah, Kopchén, X-Hazil (sur), Santa Isabel, and Yodzonot Poniente

**Map 2. CSC ceremonial centers, with affiliated towns, 1973. (After Bartolomé y Batabás 1977: 55-56)**



When Favila C. (2001: 74, 110-11) was conducting field work in X-Cacal in 1985-88, he learned that 36 villages were “integrated” with the four Cruzo’ob ceremonial



centers. Representatives from the following towns visited the shrine centers for major festivals.

Chunpóm, May 1-12: Chun-Ya, Chun-On, Yodzonot Chico, San Ramón, Trapich, Felipe Berriozabal, Chunyaxché, and Yaxley.

Tixcacal Guardia, April 24 – May 3: Chanchen Comandante, Chan Santa Cruz (FCP)[Poniente?], Dzulá, FCP, Hobompich, Kampocolché, Melchor Ocampo, San Francisco Aké, Señor, Tihosuco, Tuzik, X-Pichil, and Yaxley. To these he added elsewhere (p. 74) Pino Suarez, San Antonio Nuevo, and Yodzonot [Nuevo].

Tulum, March 7-14: Chunhuhub, Chun-On, Chunpóm, Chun-Yá, Chunyaxché, Santa María (Poniente?), Señor, Xokem [Xocén, Yucatán].

Chancah Veracruz, April 22-24: Chan Santa Cruz [Poniente], Kopchen, San Andrés, Santa María Poniente, Uh May, X-Hazil [Sur].

Tixcacal Guardia, always considered the most important of the ceremonial centers, in 1991 was “the sacred capital of a small cacicazgo that included Tusik, Señor, Pino Suárez, Yaxley, San Antonio, Xpichil, San José, Chanchen Comandante, Unidad de Riego, Campokolché, and Santo Domingo” (Manzanilla Hoy 1991: 92). (Why Unidad de Riego was included is problematic.)

During the early 1990s, while Hinz (2013:62-63) was conducting research in Tixcacal Guardia, fifteen villages occasionally contributed guards (Chanchén Comandante, Chun Kulche, San José Pino Suárez, Kampokolché Nuevo, Kampokolché Viejo, Melchor Ocampo, San Antonio II, San Francisco Aké, San José I, Santo Domingo, Señor, Tusik, Tzukum, Yaxley, Yodzonot Nuevo). By 2000, three of these had been abandoned (Chun Kulché, Kampokolché Viejo, Santo Domingo).

During her field research in 2000, Estrada (2005: 129) found 38 settlements with ties to four Cruzo’ob ceremonial centers: 14 places affiliate with Tixcacal Guardia, 7 places with Chanca Veracruz, 6 with Chunpóm, and two with Tulum. Nine other villages participate as pilgrims, but do not send residents to serve as “guardia.”

Tixcacal Guardia: Chanchen Comandante, Chan Santa Cruz (FCP?), Dzulá, Hobompich, Kampokolché Nuevo, Kampokolché Viejo, Melchor Ocampo, San Francisco Aké, Señor, Tepich, Tihosuco, Tuzik, X-Pishil, Yaxley.

Chanca Veracruz: Chancah Derrepente, Chan Santa Cruz Poniente, Kopchen, Santa Isabel, Santa María Poniente, Uh May, X-Hazil Sur.



Chunpóm: Chun-On, Chun-Yah, San Felipe Berriozabal, San Ramón, Trapich, Yodzonot Chico.

Tulum: Chunhuhub, Chun Yaxché.

Non-Guardia participating villages: Betania, Laguna Kana, Mixtequilla, Naranjal Poniente, Petcacab, Pino Suarez, San Andres, Santo Domingo, Yoactun.

In his 2005 dissertation, Montes (2009: 130) mentions an informant who told of the normal places that “guarded” Tixcacal: Tuzik, Señor, Yaxley, Chanchen Comandante, José María Morelos, Pino Suarez, X-Pichil, San Antonio, Tepich, and Santo Domingo.

In 2009, Ek Ek (2011: 30, 58) learned that thirteen neighboring communities within the “cacicazgo de Tixcacal Guardia,” placed guards at the ceremonial center (Chanchén Comandante, Filomena Mata, Hobompich, Kampokolché, Melchor Ocampo, Pino Suárez, San José II, Santa Rosa, Señor, Tusik, Tzukum, X-Pichil, Yaxley).

In 2015, after their survey of Cruz Parlante centers, Buenrostro-Alba *et al* named five ceremonial centers: Tixcacal, Chancá Veracruz, Chumpón, Tulum, and Cruz Parlante (in Felipe Carrillo Puerto). They also proclaimed X-Yatil “most representative of the cult of the Talking Cross.” The priest used to go from X-Yatil for guard duty at Tixcacal. In an interesting local variation, more important than Easter, is the fiesta for San Bernardino, the X-Yatil santo, who is draped in a huipil. (Buenrostro-A. 2015: 112-13).

In mid-April 2017 the patronal fiesta dedicated to the Virgen de la Concepción in Chanchah Veracruz included guards representing Uh-May, X-Hazil Sur, Kopchén, Chanchah Derrepente, Chan Santa Cruz, Santa María Poniente, Petcacab, and FCP (Pérez T. 2017).

In her dissertation of 2018, Daniela Sánchez reported that Chumpón, during its feria, was visited by folks from Tixcacal Guardia, Chanchah Veracruz, Señor, Tuzik, Xyatil, Tres Reyes, Chanchah Derrepente, Xpichil, Dzulá, Yaxley, and Tepich. At the festival of the *iglesia macehual* of Tulum pilgrims arrived from the other centers Chumpón, Tixcacal Guardia, and Chanchah Veracruz, plus Xpichil, Xyatil, Señor, and Yaxley.

\*\*\* \*\*



Within the CSC greater territory, aside from groupings based on source regions of the ceremonial centers, others that bind villages include hunting territories by Santos-Fita *et al* (2015), which include X-Pichil, X-Yatil, Hobompich, Kampokolché, Filomeno Mata, Dzulá, Yoactún, Laguna Kaná, and Yodznót Nuevo and the area bound when Kopchen takes its “Vara del Santo” to X-Hazil (Sur), San Andrés, Noh Cah, Chanchah de Repente, Mixtequilla, Yodzonot (Chan Santa Cruz Poniente), Santa María Poniente, Yoactún, Petcacab, Laguna K’ana, San Hermenegildo, and X-Conha -- all small communities that are also satellites of the Centro Ceremonial de Chanca Veracruz. (Estrada 2005: 127; Aviña C.2007: 112).

So, finally, after reviewing the literature, 56 communities can be identified as “CSC settlements,” that is, places affiliated with five Talking Cross ceremonial centers to which they have sent guards or made pilgrimages. Table 15 below arranges these Cruzob villages according to the shrine center of their primary allegiance. Eleven localities, many of them mere hamlets, have been abandoned, but in the remaining 45 locations, **we sought evidence of their CSC-ness in the cultural landscape**. The region demarcated by CSC landscapes is the modern “zona maya macehual,” to use Estrada’s (2005: 114) phrase. Our focus was on five visible features: roadside shrines of the Talking Cross, “Maya” churches, guard barracks, corrals for ritual bull fights, and large plaza ceibas. We noted an increased frequency of doors with light blue paint, but did not record that in detail.

One item of cultural patrimony that is not a fixed landscape feature was not included: the presence of diagnostic indigenous music known as “Maya Pax.” At all ceremonial centers and during annual saints’ day festivals throughout the CSC region where the standard rituals are held, the local music, “Maya Pax,” is performed. The sounds are delivered normally from two drums (large and small) and two violins. During 2017 the Quintana Roo legislature passed decree 154 that declared “Maya Pax” cultural patrimony of the state (Q. R. 2019). The inventory of 38 self-identified “Masewale” communities where the music is played includes the places linked to the ceremonial centers of the venerated CSC holy crosses: Tixcacal Guardia, Chanchah Veracruz, Chumpón, sanctuary at Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Tulum. All of these places are within municipio FCP, except for Tulum Pueblo.

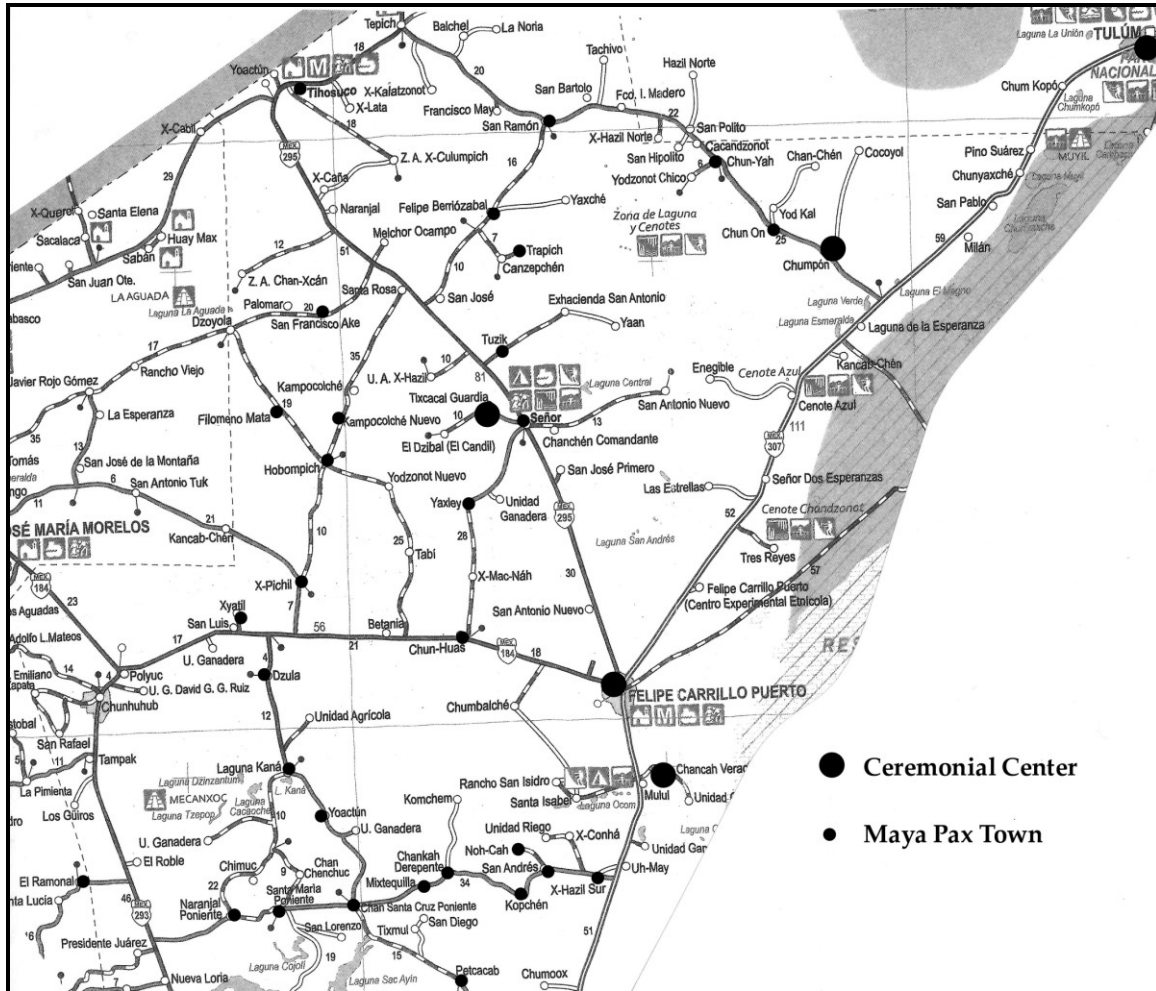
An early description of the Maya Pax music can be seen in Larsen 1936 (1964: 29):

**“The band of Xcacal is a thing never to be forgotten. Three homemade violins with strings of pig gut, the bows strung with henequén fibre, so the sound was not very melodious; three comettists who were sleeping most of the time and only woke up for a moment now and then, toodled a small tune that did not in any way seem connected with the other music, whereupon**



they immediately dropped off to sleep again. But the two drums made up for any other apparent lack in the orchestra. With unfaltering rhythm they reverberated throughout the entire fiesta sort of underlining every ceremony, every rite. A pure Indian rhythm that sang in our blood for days after. Boom-bom-bóm. Boom-bom-bóm. The tunes they were playing were very European and anything but religious. I asked the name of the music played for the mass and was told that it was Danza Polka.”

Map 3. Distribution of Chan Santa Cruz Maya settlements with Maya Pax music performers.



Two more criteria might be added to suggest a list of most traditional places in the “Zona Maya” – the locations of traditional Maya judges and sites of congressionally approved, “dignitarios maya.” Using these additional features, Yaxley and X-Yatil can be included as minor ceremonial centers of FCP (Buenrostro Alba 2012: 21). From the list below you can see that most of the traditional judges are from non-CSC sites. All of the places designated with Maya dignitaries are CSC settlements. Among the seventeen traditional judges the most prominent surnames are May (7) and Canúl (4).



The region of judicial traditionalism, as expressed by the presence of “traditional Maya judges,” includes the territory of the cult of the Talking Cross but extends beyond with Pozo Pirata, Agua Azul, San Martiniano, and San Francisco (in municipio José María Morelo), and Yalchen, San Silverio, Yaxché, Hondzonot, Sahcab-mucuy, Chan Chen I, and San Juan de Dios (in municipio Tulum). (Buenrostro-Alba 2012, 2013)

**Table 10. Locations of traditional Maya judges, Quintana Roo. (Buenrostro A. 2012: 17)**

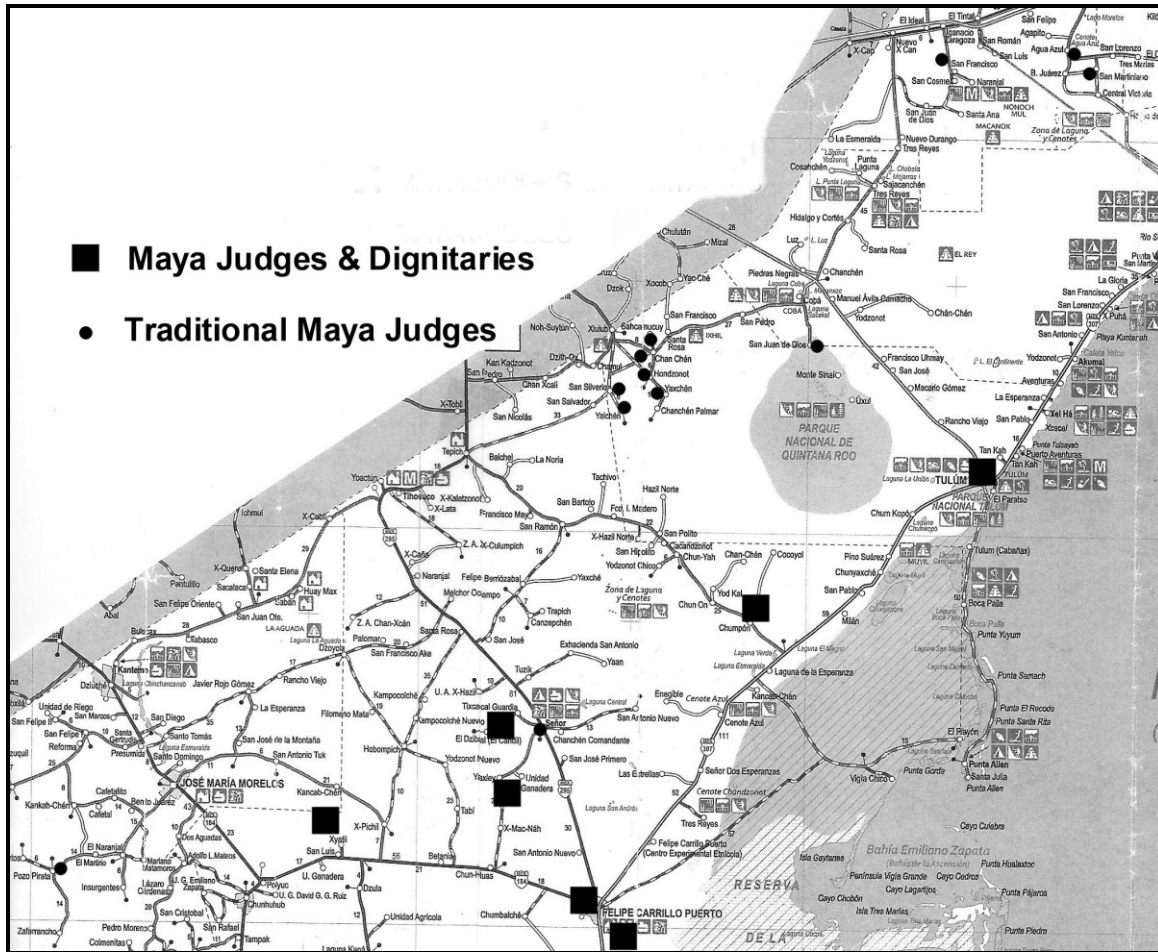
<b>Municipio/Place</b>	<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>% Maya</b>
<b>Felipe Carrillo Puerto</b>		
Chumpón	717	100
San Silverio	582	100
Señor	3,095	99
Tixcacal Guardia	659	100
X-Yatil	945	99
Yalcén	472	99
Yaxley	60	100
<b>Tulum</b>		
Chan Chen I	875	100
Hondzonot	368	100
Sahcab-Mucuy	456	100
San Juan	599	99
Tulum	18,233	42
Yaxché	472	99
<b>Lázaro Cárdenas</b>		
Agua Azul	446	95
San Francisco	767	99
San Martiniano	206	100
<b>José María Morelos</b>		
Pozo Pirata	175	100

**Table 11. Sites and number of “dignitarios mayas” in charge of operations at ceremonial centers. (Buenrostro A. 2012: 21)**

<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of Dignitaries</b>
Tixcacal Guardia	74
Cruz Parlante (in FCP)	66
Chancah Veracruz	63
Chumpón	60
Tulum	24
Yaxley	20
X-Yatil	18



Map 4. Distribution of Traditional Maya Judges and Maya Dignitaries. (Buenrostro A. 2012: 17, 21)



Finally, in 1997, by law 45 of the “Ley de Derechos, Cultura y Organización Indígena del Estado de Quintana Roo” five settlements were recognized officially as “ceremonial centers of the Talking Cross” (Buenrostro-Alba 2015: 115). In addition to the usual four centers, for obvious political reasons, FCP was included. However, it is clear that FCP shrine does not have an “indigenous,” natural, local regional following. The shrine there has no barracks for visiting guards. Medina and Quiñones (2006) in their classification of sanctuaries in the peninsula list only Tixcacal Guardia, Chunpóm, Chanchah Veracruz, and Tulum as the four “modern santuarios.”

During this project we directed our attention to five elements of the landscape that indicated a continued presence of the CSC practitioners.



## Roadside Shrines

Aside from the primary ceremonial centers dedicated to the Talking Cross, all of which have shrines that host major altars with three huipil-crosses, other sites (smaller shrines) can be seen along roads and at intersections in many SCS towns. Often these have replaced the crosses that separated villages from the surrounding wilderness. Historical notices of these are numerous (Reed 1964: 218, 228; Peissel 1963: 143, etc.).

When Sylvanus Morley and Alfonso Villa-Rojas visited Xcacal in March 1, 1936 they noticed that “Where trails leading to and from the outside world crossed the borders of the village, cruciform sentinels had been erected in small thatch-roof shrines.” (Sullivan 1989: 93) On that same trip, Larsen (1964: 17) wrote of the large cross on trail from Tusik that welcomed visitors to Xcacal.

For the most part, of the 30 roadside shrines noticed (Table 12), they are relatively small, thatched and poled structures, with open walls, some 3 x 4 feet in size. In three intersections with main highways (Tepich, Tusik, Melchor Ocampos) the shrines are larger. All have crosses, normally draped. Often, the Virgin of Guadalupe is also prominently displayed therein.

Olivier Le Guen (2005), a French-Swiss scholar who lived in Quintana Roo, 2002-04, during his doctoral research, primarily at Kopchen, knew these structures as *ho'kááh* (“puertas del pueblo”), spatial markers that protect villagers from the invisible *vientos malos* (*k'ak'as iik'*) that blow through villages (p. 58). The little structures are also called *jo'káaj* (“gates to the town”) that demarcate residential space from the bush. They are known to house the *báalam-káajob* (“jaguars of the village”) that protect the community (Vapnarsky and Le Gren 2011: 195). A Maya graduate student from Uh-May knew the little “casas outside the towns” as *jo'kah*, “a place to make offerings to the Gods” (Ucan Yeh 2008: 84).





**Figure 108.** The *jokiaj*, “gate of the village,” Kopchen, QR (Le Guen 2005: 58).

**Table 12.** Roadside shrines of Chan Santa Cruz settlements, Quintana Roo.

Place	Shrine Location	Orientation	Shrine	Date of	Other
	Direction from Town	to Roadway	Open to	Photograph	Shrine
<b>Felipe Carrillo Puerto</b>	N side, hwy 307	perpendicular	W	2020	
<b>Felipe Carrillo Puerto</b>	NW of centro, 500 m	in sanctuary	W		
<b>Tixcacal Guardia</b>	SE at entry sign, n side	perpendicular	W	2013, 2020	
<b>Tixcacal Guardia</b>	SE, south side, 2,500 m	parallel	NW	2013	
Chunhuas	E, at entry, south side	perpendicular	NE	2013	
Dzula	N, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Dzula	S, east side	parallel	N	2013	
Felipe Berriozabal	NE of plaza, in town	perpendicular	W	2020	V. Guadalupe
Kampocolche Nuevo	S, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Kampocolche	N, west side	parallel	S	2013	



Nuevo					
Melchor Ocampo	SW, at intersection	perpendicular	W	2020	
Tuzik	SW, at intersection	perpendicular	W	2013, 2020	V. Guadalupe
X-Yatil	in town, intersection	perpendicular	N	2013	V. Guadalupe
<b>Chumpon</b>	SE, north side	perpendicular	W	2020	
Chun-On	W edge, north side	parallel	W	2013	
Kankabdzonot	W, at intersection	perpendicular	NE	2013	
<b>Chancah Veracruz</b>	W edge, south side	perpendicular	W	2013, 2020	
Chan Santa Cruz Pte.	W, south side	perpendicular	N	2013	
Chan Santa Cruz Pte.	S, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Chancah Derrepente	W, south side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Kopchen	N, west side	parallel	S	2013	
Kopchen	W, north side	perpendicular	S	2013	
Naranjal Poniente	N, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Noh-Cah	N, west side	perpendicular	E	2013	
Noh-Cah	S, west side	perpendicular	E	2013	
Petcacab	SE, 1,110 m, east side	perpendicular	SW	2013	
Petcacab	NW, south side	parallel	NW	2013	
San Andres	N, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Santa Maria Poniente	W, south side	perpendicular	N	2013	
Santa Maria Poniente	E, north side	perpendicular	S	2013	
Uh-May	SW, 700 m, north side	perpendicular	SE	2013	
X-Hazil Sur	NE, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
X-Hazil Sur	W, south side	parallel	W	2013, 2020	
Yoactun	SE, entry, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
Yoactun	NW, entry, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
<b>Outliers</b>					
Tepich	N, east side	perpendicular	W	2013	
X-Cabil	SW, at intersection	parallel	E	2013	
Xocen, Yucatan	in town, west	parallel	W	2019	



## Santa Cruz “Maya” Churches

One major reason for the CSC rebellion against the Yucatecans was that Maya priests were not allowed to speak in their language while leading services in Catholic churches. Often Spanish-speaking priests resisted the ancient rituals of native fiestas. To maintain their ways the cruzo’ob sought their own “Maya” churches to honor the Day of the Cross the first week of May and include the Virgin whenever possible.

Normally, CSC “Maya” churches are thatched, open to the west, and are often **erected within the plaza**, contrary to early Spanish rules to place the church off the plaza to the east. Inside the churches you expect to see displayed three, or more, crosses clothed in huipils. Frequently the churches have blue doors or facades with three crosses. Informants offered only three explanations for the blue color: “who knows?,” “blue is the color of heaven,” and “blue is the color of the Virgin.” Many Mayanists scholars have also commented:

**“Blue was the color of sacrifice for the ancient Maya.” (Arnold 1993: xxi)**

**“The most sacred color to the ancient Maya is the color that is called “Maya Blue.” (Kane 2016)**

**“Blue is the color of the sky and water.” (Becom and Aberg 1997)**

Whether aboriginal residents of the eastern peninsula, or recent migrants from Central Mexico, modern Quintanaense simple love the Virgen of Guadalupe. She is the iconic symbol of religion in Mexico, but she seems especially revered in QR and is frequently shown on CSC “Maya” churches and on public and private altars.

## Guardia Barracks

For the most part these structures are found only in the main ceremonial centers. They are the largest Maya “houses” with an average size of 60 km<sup>2</sup> (Freidel and Sabloff 1984: 11). The first guardias were built in 1860 around the church in CSC to house guards who visited from surrounding towns (Reed 1964: 175), but those long ago were turned into other uses, such as a library or cultural center.

The most intense modern expression of guard or service barracks is at Tixcacal Guardia where perhaps 30, in varying state of condition, have been built near the shrine. They are fairly regular in appearance, of thatch roofs and pole walling, with a few bajareque walls. Chanchah Veracruz has 5 or 6, and Chunpóm has at least one. Tulum Pueblo has one more formal structure. There are none in the center in Felipe Carillo Puerto.



## Plaza Ceibas

It is perhaps no coincidence that almost all of the largest ceibas in Quintana Roo are public trees, planted in the plazas of CSC settlements. In the list below only the tree of Sahcah Mucuy and two in Chanchen Primero, both nearby in Tulum municipio, and the private tree in Calderitas north of Chetumal, are not in CSC place.

**Table 13. List of largest ceibas of Quintana Roo, measured at sholder height, above the buttresses, circumferences in feet and inches, 2020.**

1. 33' 1" Chancah Derrepente (FCP), plaza
2. 23' 4" Tixcacal Guardia (FCP), plaza
3. 23' 3" Tulum Pueblo, old plaza, corner Mercurio Pto. x Acuario Sur
4. 22' 1" Melchor Ocampo (FCP), plaza
5. 21' 10" Yaxley (FCP), plaza
6. 21' 4" Sahcah Mucuy (Tulum), plaza
7. 20' 3" Chun Póm (FCP), plaza center
8. 19' 9" Chanchen Primero (Tulum), plaza
9. 19' 8" San Jose Segundo (FCP), plaza
10. 19' 4" San Felipe Berriozábal (FCP), plaza north, shrine of Virgin of Guadalupe
11. 18' 6" San Hipolito (FCP), plaza
12. 16' 9" Chanchen Primero (Tulum), plaza
13. 15' 4" San Felipe Berriozábal (FCP), plaza south
14. 15' 3" Tuzik (FCP), plaza south
15. 15' 1" Tuzik (FCP), plaza north
16. 14' 6" Calderitas (OBP), private, planted 1976 by J. Francisco Poot

Other large ceibas, unmeasured, are in San Ramón plaza (FCP), Kankabdzonot plaza (FCP), three more in Tulum Pueblo (nearby old plaza), and Tixcacal Guardia (not in plaza).

## Corrals, Bull Rings

Bull rings (rodeo, ruedo, corral), are frequent landscape features of the Yucatán peninsula that are tied to ancient Maya rituals (Kennedy 1984; Rosales 1977). They are often associated with ceibas (Davidson 2019: 61-2). In Quintana Roo, the presence of the bull rings near churches is a firm indication of an annual Maya festival that follows a historic sequence of events. One of the most anticipated events of the annual village festival is the bull fight, real or fake, that occurs in the plaza in a corral adjacent to the church.

**“El sistema de guardias es la forma que asume la cofradía entre los mayas rebeldes, quienes se organizan en “compañías”, con sus grados militares, a partir de la “guerra de castas” que**



estalla en 1847 y continúa prácticamente hasta la tercera década del siglo veinte. Estos mayas son los que forman parte del estado de Quintana Roo y han desarrollado una tradición cultural que, en algunos aspectos, toma distancia de la del resto de los mayas peninsulares. En estas comunidades, adelantemos, la tradición de la corrida de toros tiene una fuerte presencia y adquiere formas mucho más ritualizadas, de tal suerte que para entender diversas particularidades presentes en las corridas de toros de las comunidades mayas peninsulares habrá que realizar comparaciones para reconocer variantes regionales, como la de los cruzoob o macehualoob.” (Medina H. *et al* 2010: 137)

With the exception of urban FCP all four SC ceremonial centers have permanent circular corrals where ritual “bull fights” (*baxal wakax*) occur. Red seems to be the favored color of the fences. The one non-center with a permanent *ruedo* is X-Pichil, with a white rectangular fence. At least eight other places construct circular corrals for temporary use during their festivals on patron saint days: Chankah Derepente, Chun-Huas, Dzula, Kopchen, Petcacab, San Luis, Señor, and Tusik,

In modern times, the tree cut to be set in middle of the ruedo, although called “yaxché” (ceiba), is in fact a zapote, the chicle tree. Substitution of a zapote for a ceiba perhaps goes back as far as 1860 when the tree planted in front of the new church at CSC was so labeled: “sapodilla” (Reed 1964: 174). Modern accounts of preparing the scene for the ritual bull fights during patronal fiestas note zapotes instead of ceibas because of “availability” (see for example, Estrada 2005: 188).

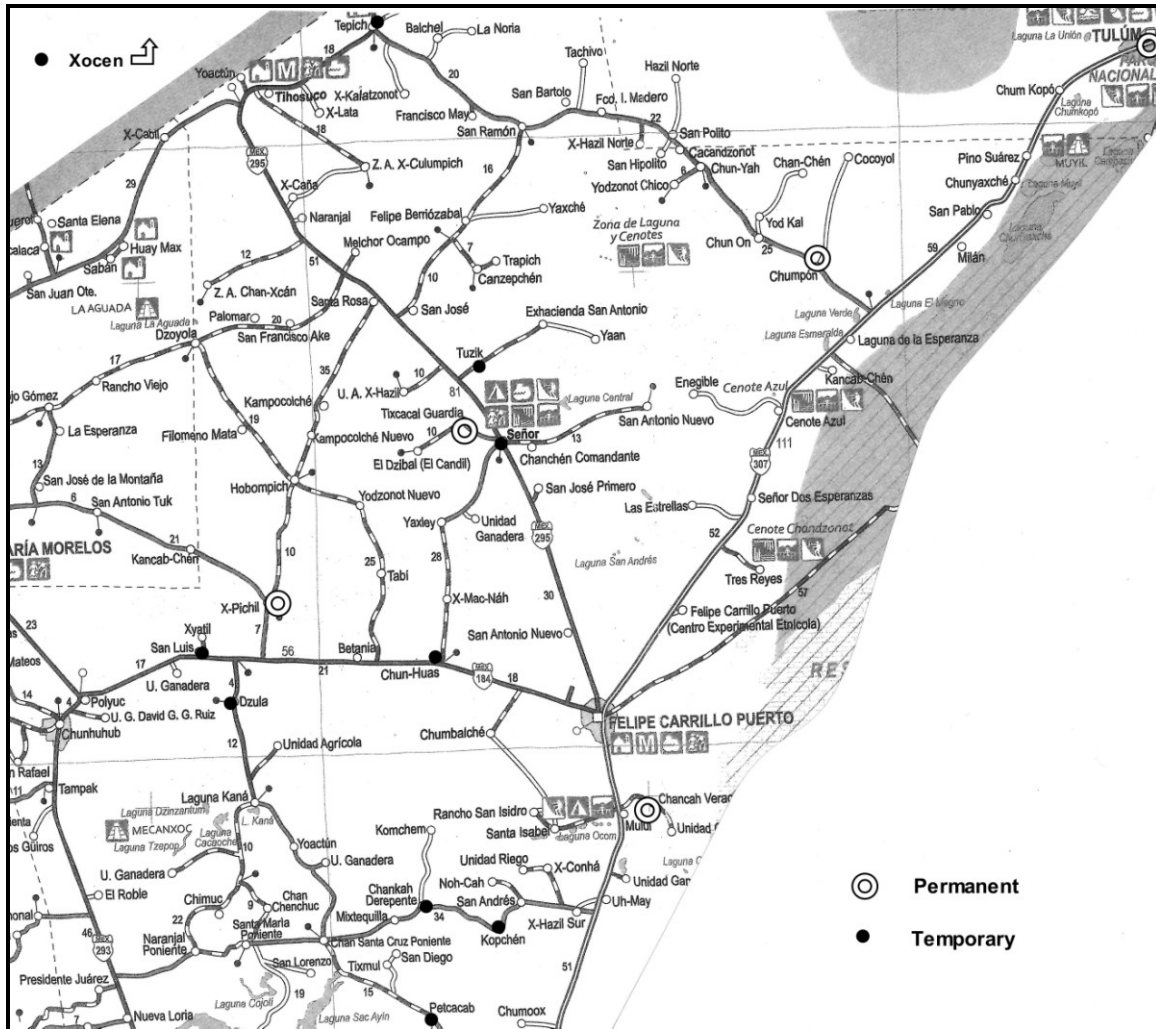
Of course, non-CSC towns also have rodeos. For one example, while El Ramonal, FCP, does not have a record of CSC participation, it does have a permanent corral for annual festivals.

**Figure 109. The church/rodeo complex at El Ramonal, FCP.**





Map 5. Distribution of corrals, permanent and temporary, in Chan Santa Cruz Maya settlements.



Descriptions of the annual fiestas/ rituals in SCS centers and major affiliates have remained consistent over time. The X-Cacal fiesta of February 29 to May 5, 1936 was reported in detail by Villa-Rojas 1945: 125-etc. and Larson 1964 (see below in section on Tixcacal Guardia). Many other descriptions can be seen in O'Conner (2014) from Señor, and for Chanchah Veracruz, see Pérez T. (2017) and Estrada (2005: 445-46). Pérez T.'s report on the *yaxché/chik/corral* ritual is typical: "the festival began with cutting a young ceiba (*yaxché*) on a Sunday afternoon and carrying it into the corral while the comical activities of the treed *chik* (pisote, coatimundi), proceed. The men with the tree are met at the village boundary by the cowgirls (*vaquerias*) who escort them to the corral. Aside there is a *pib*, underground oven. They party into the night. Late in the night there are prayers at the church then some dancing and Maya Pax music. Before the sun rises the ceiba will be planted in the middle of the Corral. Following more dancing and music a



bull fight near the tree will be enacted by men and boys playing roles of bull and matador.

As governments increasingly attempt to moderate the rituals that hark of the rebellious past of the CSC folk, they have increased their “sponsorship” of festivals by providing music and paying stipends to Maya leaders for provisions, food and drink. In some sites modernizations have corrupted the rituals completely.

**Table 14. Fiesta days of the major CSC ceremonial centers in Quintana Roo.**

Center	Fiesta Honoree	Dates
Tixacacal Guardia	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces) Virgen de la Concepción Tres Cruces (for crew from Tulum)	April 23 – May 3 December 6-13 August 23-30
Chunpóm	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces)	May 1-15
Chancah Veracruz Chancah Veracruz	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces) Virgen de la Concepción	April 15-20 December
Tulum	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces)	March 7-19
Tulum	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces)	August
Tulum	La Santisima Cruz (Tres Cruces)	7-? October
F. Carrillo Puerto	Santa Cruz (Cruz Parlante)	April 23 – May 3

**Table 15. Landscape features of CSC settlements.**

Ceremonial Centers (I-V) with affiliated towns	Roadside shrines	Cruzo'ob Churches within plaza^	Guardia Barracks	Large Plaza Ceibas Size rank	Ritual Corral P/T*
<b>I. Felipe Carrillo Puerto</b>	1	major shrine^	no longer	yes**	no
<b>II. Tixacacal Guardia</b>	2	major shrine^	30+/-	2nd	P, red
Chan Chen Comandante	no	yes	no	yes	no
Chan Chen Laz	abandoned ca. 1955				
Chuncunche	abandoned ca. 1995				
Chunhuas	1	yes	no	no	T
Dzula	2	yes^	no	no	T
Enegible	abandoned ca. 1988				
Felipe Berriozabal	1	yes	no	10th, 13th	no
Filomena Mata	no	yes^	no	no	no
Hobompich	no	yes^	no	no	no
Kampokolche Nuevo	2	yes	no	no	no ev



Kampokolche Viejo	abandoned ca. 1995				
Melchor Ocampo	1	yes^	no	4th	no ev
Pino Suarez	no	yes^	no	no	no ev
San Antonio II	no	no	no	no	no
San Francisco Ake	no	yes^	no	no	no
San Jose I	entry cross	no	no	yes	no
San Jose II	no	no^	no	9th	no ev
San Luis	no	yes	no	2 small	T
Santa Rosa	no	no	no	no	no ev
Santo Domingo	abandoned ca. 1995				
Senor	no	yes, <b>minor shrine</b> ^	1	no	T
Tuzik	1	yes^	no	14th, 15th	T
Tzukum	abandoned				
X-Maben	abandoned ca. 1949				
X-Pichil	no	yes^	no	no	P, white
X-Yatil	1 in town intersection	yes, <b>minor shrine</b>	no	no	T
Yaxkax	abandoned ca. 1945				
Yaxley	no	no, <b>minor shrine</b>	no	5th	no ev
Yodzonot Nuevo	no	no	no	no	no ev
<b>III. Chan Cah Veracruz</b>	1	<b>major shrine</b> ^	5-6	no	P, red
Chan Santa Cruz Pte	2	no	no	no	no
Chancah Derrepente	1	yes^	no	1st	T
Kopchen	2	yes^	no	no	T
Naranjal Poniente	1	no	no	no	no ev
Noh Cah	2	yes	no	no	no ev
Petcacab	2	not seen	no	no	T
San Andres	1	no	no	no	no ev
Santa Isabel	no	Protest.	no	no	no
Santa Maria Poniente	2	not seen	no	no	no ev
Uh May	1	yes	no	yes	no
X-Hazil (Sur)	2	no	no	no	no ev
Yoactun	2	no	no	no	T
<b>IV. Chun Pom</b>	1	<b>major shrine</b>	2	7th	P
Chan Chen	abandoned ca. 1950				
Chun-On	1	yes^	no	no	no
Chun-Yah	no	yes^	no	no	no ev
Chunyaxche	no	no	no	no	no
Cocoyol	abandoned ca. 1950				
Kankabdzonot	at intersection	no^	no	3 large	no
Tres Reyes	no	yes	no	no	no



Yodzonot Chico	no	yes <sup>^</sup>	no	yes	no
<b>V. Tulum</b>	no	<b>major shrine<sup>^</sup></b>	1	3rd	P, red
Akumal	no	no	no	no	no
<b>VI. San Antonio Muyil</b>	abandoned ca. 1950				
<b>Outliers</b>					
Tepich	at intersection	no	no	no	T
X-Cabil	at intersection	no	no	no	
Xocen, Yucatan	in town	<b>major shrine<sup>^</sup></b>	no	yes	T
<sup>^</sup> = church within plaza					
* P = Permanent; T = Temporary					
** In Plaza de General Francisco May (Tres Reyes), not the main plaza					

**Region I. Felipe Carrillo Puerto** (also: Noh Cah Santa Cruz X-Balam Nah Kampokolche Kaj [Gran Pueblo de la Santa Cruz Morada de Tigre Pueblo de Kampokolche, Great Town of the Dwelling Holy Cross of the Tiger Town of Kampokplche], Santa Cruz, Noh Cah Santa Cruz, Chan Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz de Bravo, “Carrillo” to locals)

Clearly, the CSC shrine of the municipal *cabecera* (capital) of Felipe Carrillo Puerto municipio is not today considered as one of the most important ceremonial centers. The so-called “Santuario del Cruz Parlante” gains whatever prominence it has because it was the site of the original cross and it is within the modern built-up area of the largest settlement in FCP.

The fame of the site can be traced to an event in 1850 when at a small, not so well-formed, cenote was found a small cross carved in a tree. Whether the tree was a mahogany or cedar is probably not important. It was said that the wood was so hard that when the Mexican forces seized the place in 1850 and tried to destroy the sacred tree, their axes were broken (Reed 1964: 144).

As anthropologist Alfonso Villa-Rojas (1945: 20) wrote of the originating event:

**“Toward the end of 1850 a small cross, carved on the trunk of a mahogany tree, appeared at a site later known as Chan Santa Cruz. Miraculously endowed with speech, the cross soon became famous among the Indians of its wonderful powers. It claimed to be the Trinity itself, sent to earth by God the father to help the Indians in their struggle against the whites and to protect them from the bullets of their enemies.”**







outsiders who set up shops, hotels, and other businesses fostered by the chicle industry. But almost all the Indians who had formerly lived there removed to communities less overrun by foreigners." (1945:32)

As might be expected FCP has the most elaborate shrine dedicated to the Talking Cross. **In a sense the CSC shrine of FCP is bi-nodal.** The original cross was a small, 3-4 inch carving in a mahogany tree next to a small cenote northwest some 500 meters from main plaza and church in centro FCP.

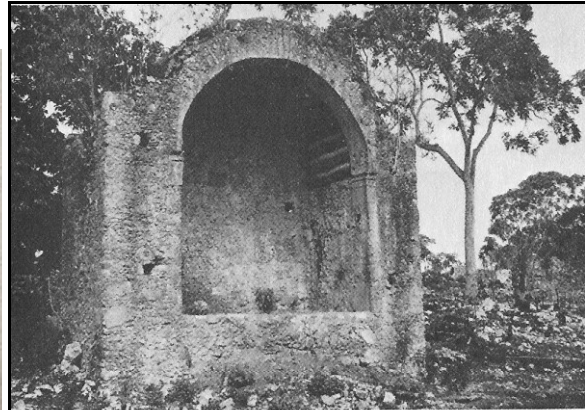
**Figure 110. Air photo of Felipe Carrillo Puerto centro, 2020. Arrow points to main church and plaza in the southeast, and to CSC ceremonial center to the northwest.**



The most formal of the CSC shrines is the Santuario de la Cruz Parlante, a park-like setting of about an acre northwest of the main plaza. For years the site was described as being outside the town or on its outskirts (Bricker 1981: 103) but with the growth of the city the site is well within the built up urban area. For the purposes of tourism, the place is apparently now under the control of the FCP and QR governments.



Figures 111, 112. Santuario de la Cruz Parlante, FCP: entry sign and chapel from 1971.



Ruins of the First Chapel of the Cult of the Talking Cross on the Outskirts of Carrillo Puerto (1971). Photo by Harvey M. Bricker.

Figures 113, 114. Cenote and chapel at CSC ceremonial center in Felipe Carrillo Puerto.



There are two entrances. One is a back entry off 60<sup>th</sup> and 69<sup>th</sup>, where the sign outside announces, “Noh Kah Santa Cruz Balan Naj K’ampocolche de la Cruz Parlante.” The sign also records names of the founders: José María Barrera, Manuel Nahuat, Juan de la Cruz Puc. It also says the original shrine was established on October 15, 1850. A second entrance, more open and ornate, begins along a paved walkway from Av. Lázaro



Cárdenas del Río. A six-foot tall concrete cross welcomes visitors before concrete steps lead down to the iglesia. The little chapel houses the early shrine that has been restored. Photographs of the early shrine before restorations were published from 1971 and 1990 in Bricker (1986: 103) and Dumond (1997: plate 5). A replica has been constructed on the northern entry of FCP at highway 307. (See figures 118, 119)

Three seems to be the favored number. Within the shrie area, there are three church bells, three cement crosses in the wall next to the cenote, three wooden crosses below the church with three ceibas planted nearby, and three more wooden crosses, adorned, within the chapel.

**Figure 115. Grounds below the chapel, with three wooden crosses and three ceibas, CSC ceremonial center, FCP.**



Another indication that this “Maya ceremonial center” is unlike the more traditional ones is that for the annual festival in May, the municipality hires outside performers to entertain tourists. In 2019, on May 3, FCP city officials imported the professional Aztec (!) dance troop from Tulum ruins to perform for tourists. Imagine!



**Figure 116. Sunset in the plaza central of Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 2020.**



To the north across the street from the plaza central a large mural documents aspects of the history, culture, and Chan Santa Cruz movement of the Maya. A ceiba is a highlighted in the lower center.

**Figure 117. Wall mural near central plaza, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 2020.**





**Roadside shrines.** The second FCP shrine to the Talking Cross and the most elaborate of all roadside shrines of the Chan Santa Cruz is at marker km 133, near the northern entrance of highway 307 from Tulum, just south of calle 79, eight blocks northeast of the Santuario. Clearly, it was modeled after the early shrine at the cenote, shown above. Constructed ca. 2010, a ceiba has been planted for companionship and shade at the Expo Maya of FCP.

Figures 118, 119. CSC shrine in FCP, entry highway 307 and calle 79<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and 2020, ceiba foliage overhanging in both images.



Figure 120. Detail of above shrine, 2020.





**“Maya” churches.** The first of the “Maya” churches, “the church of the cult of the Talking Cross” is today, the main cathedral of FCP. Once it was the grand “Balam Na” of the victorious, nationalistic Chan Santa Cruz erected in 1858 (Reed 1964: 291; Bricker 1981: 109) some 500 meters southeast of the original cenote site (Reed 1964: 173). Now the cathedral is clearly Roman Catholic, still dedicated to the Santa Cruz, but overseen now by the Benedictines.

**Guardia barracks.** Shortly after the founding of the new rebel capital, known s Santa Cruz, a sketch map from the time (Dumond 1997: 246) shows at least three structures around the plaza that housed six or more *cuarteles*. Reed (1964: 175) thought “at least seven barracks” surrounded the plaza. Later, the two barracks that flanked the main church have given way to more appropriate urban modern uses – a cultural center that displays paintings, library, and museum (Bricker (1981: 118, figure 5: Cruzob barracks next to church).

**Large plaza ceibas.** When the church was constructed the tree that was planted in front and served as “the hanging tree” was called “yaxché” (ceiba, in Maya), but was according to Reed (1964: 174) a sapodilla, the chicle tree. Today, the three ceibas in the main plaza, fronting the main church, are recently planted, less than ten years old. The one large plaza ceiba in FCP is, appropriately, in Parque Francisco May, south and east of the centro. See front cover.

**Figure 121. Two ceibas in plaza central, southwest corner, at ends of arrow, 2020.**





**Region II. Tixcocal Guardia** (“place of” [Roys 1957: 135] + “cenote con dos entradas” [Favila C. 2001: 74]; also, X-Cacal, Xca’kal Guardia, TixKakal)

It is generally accepted today that Tixcocal Guardia is the supreme CSC ceremonial center and host of the most sacred of the offspring of the original Talking Cross. If there is today the cross known as “La Santísima,” it is housed in the church of Tixcocal Guardia. It still maintains its long-held reputation as the most traditional, conservative CSC place. It broke from the X-Maben ejido only in 1935 and was allocated its own ejido in 1968. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

The date of the settlement’s founding needs more discussion. References in the literature point to first settlement in late 1929 or 1930 (Hostettler 1996: 71) when Maya leaders Zuluub and Cituk brought a holy cross from Dznot Guardia (La Guardia) (Sullivan 1989: 64; others). These two men were still the leaders of X-Cacal in 1936 when visited by anthropologists Morley, Larsen, and Villa Rojas (Larsen 1964: 21).

It is clear, however, that in 1928 Frans Blom spent a night in a place called “Xcacal Guardia.” While on his John Geddings Gray Memorial Expedition from Tulane, according to his diary, Blom spent the night of July 26, 1928 in Chan Santa Cruz and arrived in Chichén Itzá on August 5, 1928. His route was via Xcacal Guardia where he had difficulty because his mule ate some local bananas and the local militarized hosts were hostile. Because the trip to Chichén Itzá was normally of 3-4 days, Blom was probably in Xcacal around August 1, 1928. As reported by (Leifer, *et al* 2017:153):

**“On their way further north the expedition ran into the most dangerous situation since they had been stuck in the jungle looking for the pass to the Jatate River. When they stopped for the night in the small village of Xcacal Guardia one of their mules dined on a bunch of ripe bananas, which, despite the offer of a generous compensation, immediately led to death threats from the armed Maya soldiers of the village. To Frans and his companions the threat is so real that they take turns keeping watch throughout the night – loaded weapons in hand. Frans knows the stories about the ruthless Maya army all too well, and at the break of dawn they quietly mount their horses and sneak out of town, hearts in their throats. After the frightening experience in Xcacal Guardia the tiny group of weary travelers hurries on. Because of water shortages they must ride as quickly as possible through an area rich in unexplored ruins, and on August 5 they see Chichen Itza’s El Castillo temple hovering above the trees in the distance. After 200 days and more than 1240 miles on horseback, the members of the John Geddings Gray Memorial Expedition have reached their final destination, and Frans’s old boss, Sylvanus Morley, is there to welcome them, eager to hear about their new discoveries.”**



As far as we know, Blom left no description of the local setting, but it is clear that the “village” of armed Maya soldiers was in existence before 1929-30 as normally suggested.

**Figure 122. Blom and his burro that probably ate the bananas, 1928. (Leifer, *et al* 2017: plate 10)**



The core of the settlement of Tixcacal Guardia, the “capital” of the CSC subtribe, has changed little since its inception. The first descriptions of the scene were probably those of Alfonso Villa-Rojas (1945: 43) and Helga Larsen (1964: 23) who were on site with Sylvanus Morley in 1936. Redfield (1941: 56) offers a slightly later perspective, but probably based primarily on Villa-Rojas. Drawings of the ceremonial center have come from Barabás in 1970 (Bartolomé y Barabás 1973), Favila in 1986 (2001: 80), and in 2006 by Hinz (2013: 87). (See figures below)

Villa Rojas:

“The settlement of X-Cacal . . . is isolated from all roads traveled by chicleros, merchants, and other foreigners. It is called “Santo-Cah” (Holy City) by the natives because here is kept La Santísima, the patron cross of the subtribe.

The church differs from the churches of the other settlements in that it is constructed with greater care, its floor is of cement, and its walls of whitewash and clay. . . . Hardly two paces from its front entrance is the community building (corridor), which has a palm-thatched roof, a dirt floor, and walls made of simple railing of sticks. . . . Around these two buildings, on small stone mounds, stand four crosses, set in the inter-cardinal points of the compass and



separated from one another by a distance of about 50 m. The quadrilateral area so bounded is protected by the crosses from evil winds and other dangerous influences. Arranged in a circle outside this sacred precinct, are five cuarteles (barracks) structurally identical with the corridor."

Helga Larsen (1964: 23-7) made the following observations:

"In Xcacal the church or santuario was in the center of the village with another large hut right next to it and which was called the corredor (Landa mentions exactly that same position of temples and "corredores") and which served as a place of recreation for the people. The church was the only hut that had a sascab floor and its walls were white-washed while all other huts were just made of wattle. Around these two buildings were many trees and the so-called "cuarteles" where the Indians lived while attending the fiesta. Each *compañía* had a cuartel. A little further away were the huts of the officers who lived in Xcacal, as for instance don Eb [Sulúb] did. Then came the one and only well of Xcacal and further on the houses of "la gente más baja." Each *compañía* had to spend two weeks in Xcacal "de guardia," so that every 10 weeks a *compañía* had to move to Xcacal with their families, pigs, chickens and everything to guard the "Santísima Cruz" for two weeks. Even in the short span of five days it was clearly seen that a burning and unfaltering faith had nourished and become the very life of these Indians. Their religion mastered them to the extent of abandoning their milpas and chicle so as to stand guard over the Santísima Cruz or *cichcelem yum* as it is also called and which means the "young, strong and beautiful señor."

An ancient recognition of the four cardinal points was found in four small altars at the four corners of the plaza each one having a *cichcelem yum* dressed in a huipil. This combined with the dual chieftainship of priest and military chief was very ancient and pure Maya.

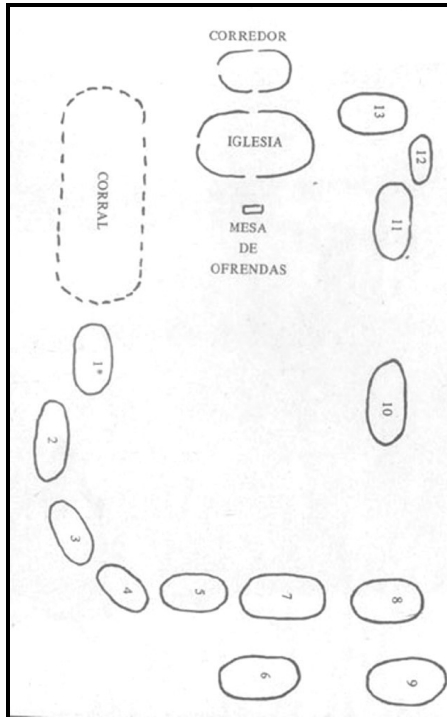
Nothing but the Cross has any significance in the religion of the Xcacal Indians—the Cross and La Virgen de la Concepción. Beyond those two powers rules Nature."

In the late afternoon we heard shouting and bursts of merry laughter from the village and made our way down to the plaza. A flock of youngsters and older men came running through the village carrying the sacred yaxché (ceiba), which had just been cut. Among its branches a young boy, the pisóte, was holding on for dear life, as they were trying very hard to shake him off, but he managed to stick and with many pranks and crazy jumps acted the part of the pisóte very effectfully. For this role they always select a boy with a talent for playing the clown and our pisóte or Santos as his real name was, was a born actor. The tree was placed inside a fence surrounding part of the plaza like the ring for a jaripeo in a Mexican village. The ceremony of "planting" the yaxché was to take place the next morning at daybreak."

"At the crack of dawn the shouting and yelling of boys carrying the yaxché tree were renewed and we went over to the enclosure. They were again carrying the tree around the village and the pisóte was clinging to its branches. Presently they entered the enclosure and with many pranks and mischief raised it up and let it slide into its hole. A deep silence fell suddenly on the crowd, as the age-old ceremony commenced. The yaxché in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel is the sacred tree of life—the tree which grows in the center of the universe—the tree of fructification. And so it was here."



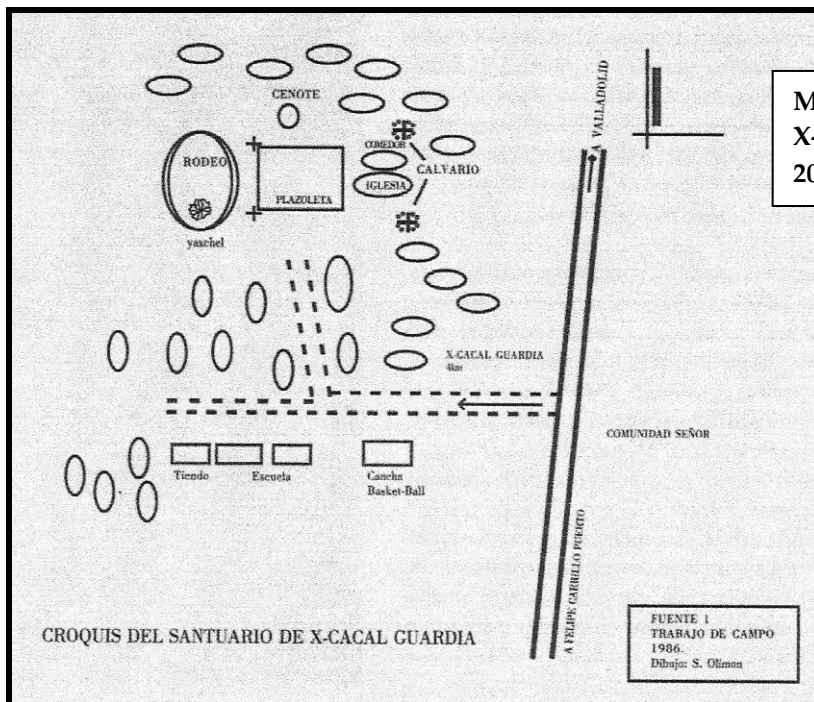
Plans of the ceremonial center, with surrounding guard barracks, was drafted by Alicia Barabás in 1970, Favila in 1986, and Hinz in 2006. Hinz was also allowed the very rare opportunity to draw a floor plan of the interior of the church.



**Map 7. Croquis of ceremonial center of Tixcacal Guardia, including 13 guard barracks, 1970. North to the left.**

(Bartolomé y Barabás 1973)

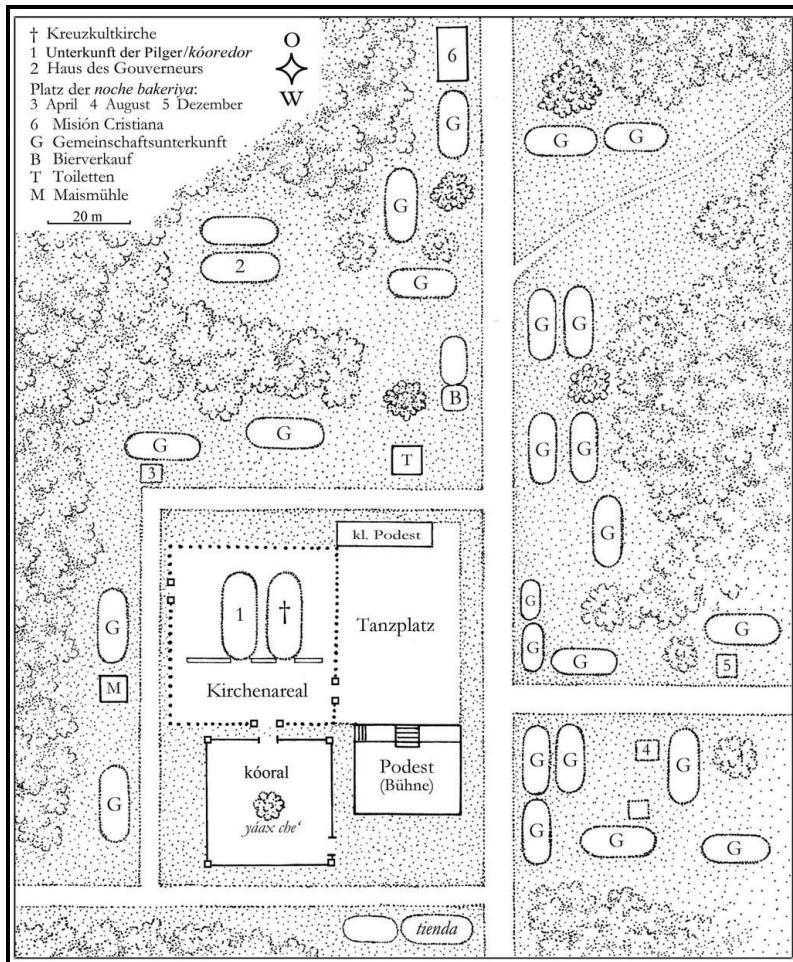
Favila's rendering from 1986 shows more structures.



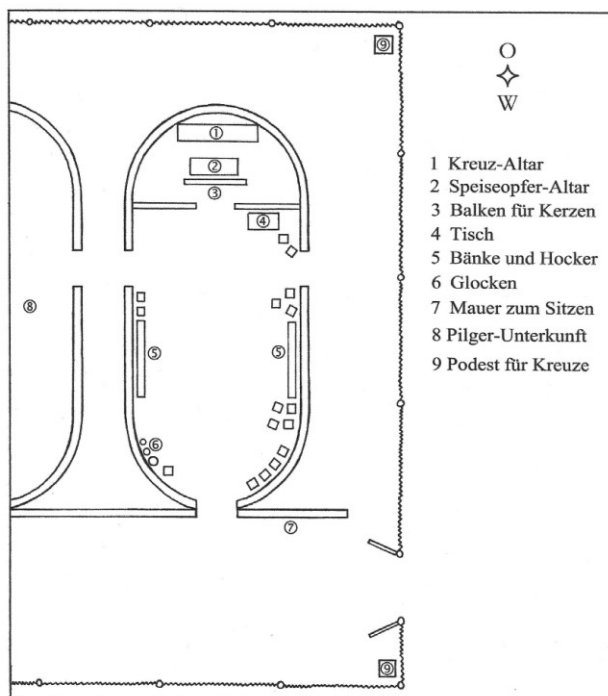
**Map 8. Ceremonial center, X-Cacal, QR, 1986. (Favila 2001: 80) North to top.**

FUENTE 1  
TRABAJO DE CAMPO  
1986.  
Dibujar: S. Ollimen





**Map 9. Plan of ceremonial center area, with 24 barracks, Tixcacal Guardia, 2006. North is to left. (Hinz 2013: 87)**



**Map 10. Floor plan of the church in the ceremonial center, Tixcacal Guardia, 2006. (Hinz 2013: 89).**



Over the years while the core of the ceremonial center has changed little, adding the permanent corral and losing the cross mounds at the corners, the number of barracks has increased. At the same time, the cuartels and surrounding areas seem to be in less use, and the landscape less cared for, the grasses unruly and much of the thatch in need of repair.

When Everton (2012: 227) visited in March 1974 on a newly opened road, no streets had been organized. He has several photographs of the site for that time (p. 232, 273), 1988 (p.250) and 2004 (p. 253).

**Figure 123. Entry sign, Tixcacal Guardia ceremonial center, facing north, 2016.**



**Figure 124. Rodeo, church, and cuartels of CSC ceremonial center, facing east, Tixcacal Guardia.**





Figure 125. Ritual bull fighters in corral of Tixcacal Guardia, 2013.



#### Guardia barracks.

“Arranged in circle outside this sacred precinct, are five cuarteles (barracks) structurally identical with the corridor. In these buildings are lodged the various companies or military guards guarding the temple in rotation; here also travelers or occasional visitors are given shelter. . . . To see a cuartel at night is quite something. It looked like a woven mesh of hammocks. I counted 37 comfortable hammocks criss-crossing the enormous hut, which was at least twice as large as ours, like the strands in a gigantic cobweb, and still they were so cleverly hung that their occupants had plenty of space to move about and even to swing back and forth as Indians do” (Larsen 1964: 26).

Our visit of January 2020 coincided with the most recent air photography. At that time there were some 30 guard barracks, all closed and in varying states of care. Maintenance of the grounds was lacking, with grasses overgrown, but some young ceibas were still being planted within the barracks compound. The cuarteles of Tixcacal Guardia have been reported to be the largest Maya houses, some 60 m<sup>2</sup> (Freidel and Sabloff 1984: 11). We measured one that was 6 x 12 meters, or 72 m<sup>2</sup>.



Figures 126-131. Cuartel sector, with ceibas, large and small, Tixcacal Guardia, 2020.







The modernization of the village outside the ceremonial center is obvious. As one enters town on the paved highway from Señor an oversized welcome marker has been constructed directly in front of the ancient CSC boundary shrine (Figure 134). Soon afterwards the modern plaza appears on the left, with giant covered domo, playgrounds, cancha, and benches (Figure 132). The large, ancient ceiba in the plaza has been overwhelmed by the modern features (Figure 138).



**Figure 132. Modern village plaza of Tixcacal Guardia, with domo and cancha, 2020.**



Figure 133. Air photograph of Tixcacal Guardia, January 2020. Note northerly location of the ceremonial center with ritual corral, largest ceiba on south side of town plaza, large domo and cement soccer field/basketball court in modern plaza.



### Roadside shrines.

In the times of Villa-Rojas (1945: 43), entry shrines were present.

“At one side of each of the principal entrances to the settlement there is a small oratory containing its own cross where visitors customarily pause a moment to pray and cross themselves before entering the Holy Village.” Also, “where trails leading to and from the outside world crossed the borders of the village, cruciform sentinels had been erected in small thatch-roof shrines.” (Sullivan 1989: 93)

Two can now be seen along the highway southeast to Señor. One is at the entrance into town, the other is some 1,700 m farther towards Señor.



Figure 134. Modern and ancient village boundary markers, Tixcacal Guardia, 2020.



Figures 135, 136. Details of old entry roadside CSC shrine, Tixcacal Guardia, 2020.





Figure 137. Roadside CSC shrine, southeast of Tixcacal Guardia, on road toward Señor.



**Large plaza ceibas.** Two large old ceibas are in the village. The largest is on the south side of the modern municipal plaza. It is the second largest in the state we measured with a girth of 23 '4". The other large ceiba is just southwest of the barracks compound of the ceremonial center. A few other ceibas have been planted over the last few years among the barracks.

Figure 138. The plaza ceiba of Tixcacal Guardia, 2020.





Twenty-one viable settlements and eight abandoned sites comprise the region that has supported the ceremonial shrine of Tixcacal Guardia.

**Chan Chen Comandante** (“small cenote or well of the commander;” also, C.C. Hidalgo, Chanchhem Eul)

According to Pacheco Cruz (1934: 9), who visited the village to aid the organization of a school, “Chanchhem Eul” was named for its founder CSC Comandante Eulalio Can. It was renamed Chanchen Hidalgo in 1936/7 when the settlements came under the protection of the government of Yucatán, but the residents did not accept the new name. Since, the surname has been dropped, leaving only “Comandante.”

In 1936, Villa Rojas (1945: 4) wrote:

**“Chanchen contains 42 inhabitants, 7 houses, and a church. It is located on the constantly traveled trail from Santa Cruz to Valladolid. Owing to its contact with outsiders, the characteristic hostility of the inhabitants has been somewhat modified – even to the extent of permitting, for a time, the presence of school teachers.”**

The small settlement is some 3 km east of Señor along the unimproved road to San Antonio II. Today it is a rich scene of about 30 houses, half traditional, half cement block. The “Maya” church is a relatively new, well-constructed thatch-oval structure that is roadside, outside the “plaza.” The plaza is not well demarcated, but can be seen in the presence of a cancha, well, and large ceiba next to a well.

**Figures 139, 140. Entry ceiba (south); ceiba and well (southwest), Chanchen Comandante, 2020.**





Figure 141. Maya church at Chanchen Comandante, 2020.



Figures 142, 143. Plaza with cancha and well; nearby ceiba at well, CC Comandante, 2020.



Chanchen Comandante is eight km from Tixcocal Guardia and lies on the ancient pilgrimage route from Tulum and Chupóm to Señor and then on to Tixcocal Guardia (Hinz 2013: 112). There are no **visible roadside shrines**. (See map 1901 Hostettler for Chanchen location on prominent trail.) Hostettler (1996: 50) suggests its origins between 1896 and 1907.



**Chan Chen Laz.** (“small cenote of Lázaro;” also, Chan Chen Las, Chanchen Allende)

According to Pacheco Cruz (1934: 9), the now abandoned site of Chanchen Laz was named for its founder Lázaro Tzuc. As was the case of Chan Chen Comandante, this site was renamed Chanchen Allende in 193/ when the settlements came under the protection of the government of Yucatán. The new name was not accepted in either place.

“Chanchen-Laz” is first described, by Villa-Rojas (1945: 44), as the least of the nine settlements in the subtribe of X-Cacal in 1936.

**“... made up of twenty inhabitants, six houses, and a church. The non-conformity, and even opposition, of its inhabitants to decisions taken by the rest of the subtribe have given them a bad reputation among the other natives.”**

The hamlet never consisted of much more than a few houses, with a population ranging from 18 to 26 between 1935 and 1950. Hostettler (1996: 50) believes it was settled between 1903 and 1918 and abandoned about 1955. It appears to be located about six km east beyond Chan Chen Comandante (map: 1993 Hostettler) and 12 km from Tixcacal Guardia.

**Chunkulché.** (“trunk of the cedar tree;” also, Chuncunché).

According to the research of Hostettler (1996: 50), Chunkulché was founded between 1904 and 1911. He places it about half way along the road between Yaxley and Señor. It is now abandoned, the last census being from 1990 when 21 residents were still there. The village was in 1936 within the realm of Xcacal Guardia, 7 km away, and described by Villa Rojas (1945: 43):

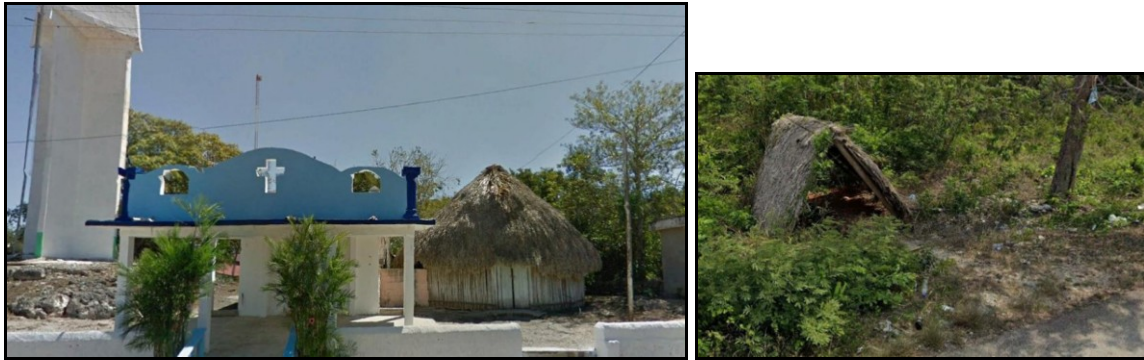
**“Chuncunche is a settlement of 54 inhabitants and 8 houses, with one principal church and one private oratory. The most characteristic feature of this place is the specialized skill of some of its members in the manufacture of straw boxes (*baax*).”**

**Chunhuás.** (“trunk of the jícaro”)

This settlement is west of FCP 18 km along highway 184. It is easily accessible to Tixcacal Guardia 26 km to the north via the Yaxley road. A Maya church with blue trim and adjacent ceiba is just off the plaza, and evidence of a temporary corral is present. Further, a roadside CSC shrine (in poor condition) is at the eastern entry to the village, on the south side of the highway. Chunhuás was allocated its ejido in 1942. (Hostettler 1996: 142)



Figures 144, 145. Water tower and church at plaza, with ceiba to right rear; roadside shrine, Chunhuás.



**Dzulá.** (name of flowering forest plant, P. Cruz 1953: 90)

Dzulá was a place of about 180 residents during the late 1920s. The U. S. medical team led by George Shattuck (1933: 175) did not investigate there because it was known as a village that was too dangerous for outsiders.

Dzulá has history as a town aligned with CSC centers at Chanchah Veracruz (44 km) and Tixcacal Guardia (38 km) (Estrada 2005: 129). Residents from Dzulá moved to the latter site in April 1933 after their village was burned by Mexican forces (Reed 1964: 255). The 158 residents remained in Xcacal Guardia until 1937 when they return home to Dzulá (Hostettler 1996: 100).

The CSC landscape of Dzulá is flavorful. The Maya church is within the old plaza, and with a blue door, but is unique in its orientation – at a diagonal, open to the north. This difference is probably because the church conforms to the direction of the limestone uplift upon which the church sits. Nearby a temporary corral is constructed in the plaza for the annual fiestas (San Ramón, 10-15 April; San Antonio 10-14 June ). Dzulá has CSC roadside shrines on both approaches to town. That the village retains its contact with the past is not surprising given its reputation: “es una aldea que se mantiene independiente.” (Ramos D. 2001: 106)

Dzulá was allocated its ejido in 1968. (Hostettler 1996: 142)



Figures 146, 147. Plaza (oriented to north) showing cancha, indication of temporary circular corral in northwest, and church; church on hillock within plaza, Dzúlá.



Figures 148, 149. Roadside shrines of Dzúlá.



### Enegible.

While the place does not appear in census records after 1960 (when it had 38 residents) and 1980 (when 24 people were recorded), Hinz (2013: 112) reports that as late as 2008 Enegible was on the pilgrim route that connected Tulum and Chupón, via Chanchén Comandante and Señor, with Tixcacal Guardia, 24 km away. The entire walk from Tulum to Tixcacal Guardia is about 110 km on forest trails.

“Enegible” and “Serdon Enegible” appear on the map of 1986 by Favila C. (2001: 76-77). Trails (*brechas*) connect Enegible with Chupón (to the northeast) and with San Antonio-Chan Chen Comandante-Señor (to the southwest). Serdon Enegible connects by trail to the coastal highway, perhaps four km to the southeast. Enegible also remains on a map from 2013. The site is shown at the end of an unimproved road 10 km west of highway 307 at Cenote Azul. It does not appear on the INEGI 1/50,000 maps of 1987 and 2002.



**Felipe Berriózabal.** (San Felipe Berriózabal)

The landscape of this settlement is distinctive for its two large ceibas, a Maya church, and a unique shrine dedicated to the natural image of Guadalupe in the bark of a ceiba. It is 21 km from Tixcacal Guardia and without evidence of a corral or roadside shrines.

**Figure 150. Church and ceibas in the “plaza” of San Felipe Berriózabal, 2020.**



**Figure 151. Chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, beneath ceiba, north of church, 2020.**



Figures 152, 153. Chapel and nearby ceiba with image of Virgin of Guadalupe, 2020.



Figures 154-156. Details of ceiba limb with Guadalupe bark (center), another example from Trapich QR (right), and iconic prototype (left).





**Filomena Mata.** (also, Santa María)

Except for the presence of a Maya church within the plaza, Filomena Mata has no landscape indications of CSC connections. The church has a blue bell tower and blue cross at its entrance. It affiliates with Tixcacal Guardia 23 km to the east. The village was allocated its ejido in 1937. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

**Figure 157. Structures of plaza, Filomena Mata: from left, church, old church, hurricane shelter.**



**Hobompich.** The settlement is relatively old for CSC places. “Hobompicht” was on the main route between Santa Cruz Bravo and Peto via Ichmul (maps 1903, 1904). Like its neighbor noted just above, Hobompich has only a Maya church within the plaza to connect it to CSC ways. Tixcacal Guardia is only 19 km to the northeast.

**Figures 158, 159. “Maya” church in plaza, with Catholic church across street.**





**Kampokolché Nuevo.** (“new cedar field”; also, Campokolché)

The modern town was established about 1950 four km south of the earlier village of the same name. It is 17 km from Tixcacal Guardia. The place has two roadside shrines and a Maya church, but is without other CSC landscape features. Kampokolché Nuevo was allocated its ejido in 1961. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

**Figures 160, 161. Church and roadside shrine north of town.**



**Kampokolché Viejo.** (“old cedar tree field;” also, Campocolché, Kampocolché, Kanpocolché)

This now-abandoned site, 16 km from Tixcacal Guardia, was one of the earliest settlements in eastern Yucatán peninsula. “Campocolché” appears in the *Relaciones Geograficas* of 1579 (1900: 176-95) as a major place in the ancient province of “Cochoach.” At the time it was cabecera of twelve surrounding towns and on the camino real that ran between Valladolid and Bacalar.

On the 1878 map of Berendt “Kampocolché” was one of the most important transportation hubs of the territory. Six routes approached the town, including the major road between Chan Santa Cruz and Peto via Ichmul. About 1950, the residents left the site and moved south some five km and established the new Kampocolché (Host 1996: 50?). According to Roys (1957: 141), “Kanpocolché” is named for the flowering shrub *Duranta repens*. Others believe kolché refers to the cedar tree.

In 1851, after Yucatecan forces took the rebel sanctuary at Chan Santa Cruz, the two huipuled crosses worshipped there were taken to Kampocolché (Dumond 1997: 181-2).



## **Melchor Ocampo.**

This is a fine example of a CSC settlement. The Maya church is within the plaza that has the fourth largest ceiba nearby. The tree has few leaves, a bark that is falling off, and much epiphyte growth. Informants explained sadly that the tree was “secando.” Residents planted a small ceiba beneath the dying tree few years ago, but in 2020 it was gone. Melchor is toward the outer range of villages affiliated with Tixcacal Guardia, 21 km away. At the intersection with the main highway (295) a large CSC shrine has been constructed.

**Figure 162. Church within plaza, dying ceiba behind, Melchor Ocampo, 2020.**





**Figures 163, 164. Old plaza ceiba with young planted beneath; roadside shrine, Melchor Ocampo.**



**Pino Suárez.** (José María Pino Suárez)

This village of some 227 residents, although on the main highway (295) between FCP and Valladolid, is not normally shown on maps. It seems to be a relatively new place, but is within the realm of Tixcacal Guardia being only 11 km away, via Señor. The only landscape evidence of its CSC connection is the Maya church that is within the plaza.

**Figure 165. Church in plaza of Pino Suárez.**



**San Antonio Segundo.** (also, San Antonio Nuevo)

This hamlet, 20 km from Tixcacal Guardia, continues connection with CSC activities primarily because it is on the ancient pilgrim route between Tulum, via Eneigible, Chanchen Comandante, and Señor. Its 34 residents have no church, ceiba, or other indication of CSC landscape, but do have a never-used concrete basketball court (see figure 81).



### **San Francisco Aké.**

During the late 1940s a considerable proportion of Tusik's residents left to found San Francisco Aké, some 20 km to the northwest (Hostettler 1996: 140). It has grown to have almost 400 inhabitants. Aside from the Maya church within the plaza, it has no landscape evidence of CSC connections. Aké is 22 km from Tixcacal Guardia. San Francisco Aké was allocated its ejido in 1968. (Hostettler 1996: 142)



**Figure 166. Maya church within the plaza, San Francisco Aké.**

### **San José I. (also, San José Primero)**

San José is the smallest of the CSC places. Two elderly families of very hospitable people greeted us in 2020 and were delighted to chat about their hamlet. One pair had been married 56 years (like us) and had lived in the same house the entire time. Although they live only 10 km from Tixcacal, none had visited in years. They are proud of the southern entry cross and ceibas around their site. The men laughed when I asked the last time they played on the hard, large concrete basketball court (see figure 79). Hostettler (1996: 51) suggests a founding date of 1886 to 1911.

**Figures 167, 168. Entry cross and ceiba, San José Primero, 2020.**





To show the reach of Pop Culture, during our visit the piano version of “Lady in Red,” a U.S. favorite from 1986, was playing on their radio. Sharon and I danced a few seconds. Our hosts lowered their heads and smiled shyly without comment.

\*\*\* \*\*

**San José II.** (also, San José Segundo)

San José Segundo is located just off the main highway (295) 14 km north of Tixcacal Guardia. Its 254 residents love their plaza ceiba, the ninth largest in the municipio. The church is within the plaza, but it not considered a “Maya” church. San José II was allocated its ejido in 1968. (Hostettler 1996: 143)

**Figure 169.** The ninth largest ceiba in QR in the plaza, San José II, 2020.





Figure 170. The church in the plaza of San José II, 2020.



### San Luis.

San Luis is a small village on highway 184 that exhibits CSC features, perhaps in part because of the neighboring settlements, X-Pichil and X-Yatil, which are strong CSC places. San Luis hosts a significant fiesta, with large temporary bull ring. It is 37 km from Tixcacal Guardia and only 1.5 km from its sister city X-Yatil.

Figures 171, 172. Air photo showing bullring with center ceiba; blue fronted church, San Luis.





### **Santo Domingo.**

This abandoned hamlet was a localidad in the ejido of X-Maben (INEGI 1995: 77). It does not appear on any map in my possession, but was probably southeast of Yaxley and northwest of FCP, perhaps near X-Macnah, about 14 km from Tixcacal Guardia. It had populations reported only in the censuses of 1980 (25 residents) and 1990 (21 people). Estrada (2005: 129) claims that in 2000 a few from Santa Domingo in Tixcacal Guardia were only pilgrims; Montes (2009: 130) was informed in 2005 that people from Santo Domingo served as guardia.

### **Santa Rosa** (also, Santa Rosa Segunda)

Santa Rosa de Lima is the patron of the little village up the highway 15 km from Tixcacal Guardia. Santa Rosa was allocated its ejido in 1968 (Hostettler 1996: 143). The sole reason it is considered a CSC affiliate is that on occasion it sends guards to Tixcacal Guardia (Ek Ek 2011: 35).

**Figure 173. The church across from the plaza, Santa Rosa.**



### **Señor.** (also, Nohseñor)

The date of first settlement here is not known with precision, but Hostettler (1996: 51) calculated the dates of between 1896 and 1906. Informants told Onnis (2017: 57) that it was settled in 1915 and included some Chinese who formerly lived in Belize. The map of 1878 (Berendt) shows “Nohseñor” in the appropriate location.



The 1936 description of Villa Rojas (1945: 43) follows:

**“Señor has 71 inhabitants, 13 houses, a principal church, and two private oratories. The inhabitants, although industrious and faithful to their group, are considered by the other natives as grasping and inclined to speak ill of others and to hold grudges. In Tusik the phrase “he comes from Señor” marks anyone who is greedy or a talebearer. Señor is much like Tusik in general appearance.”**

Over the years Señor has grown in population, especially since national highway 295 was paved and re-routed through to village. By 1973 the main road from Felipe Carrillo Puerto to Valladolid had been constructed and ran through Señor. The population increased from 547 in 1980 to 1,844 (1990), 2,362 (2000) and 3,095 in 2010.

Señor is of unusual importance in the CSC story because it is from here that Tixcacal Guardia is normally accessed, only five km away. Señor has become something of secondary ceremonial center, with a cuartel, and temporary bull ring for its elaborate annual festival in late July – early August. They “rent” a saint from Chupón that arrives by foot through the forest (O’Conner 2014: 66-7, 73) and thereafter normal CSC festival events ensue: procession de la Santa Cruz, Maya Pax music, construction of the corrida and fake bull fights, dances in front of the church, and dance of the “cabeza de cochino” (Onnis 2017: 67-8).

**Figure 174. “Maya” church in barrio San Cristobal away from major plaza area, Señor.**





Although Señor has no large ceibas and residents often say there are none in the town, there are three in the village. Still called **yaxché**, the tree planted in corral for fiesta in July-August is a zapota, because ceibas are “not available” (O’Conner 2014: 81).

With the demise of X-Maben settlement, Señor became the lead village of the ejido that includes 23 sites, including Chanchen Comandante, Pino Suarez, Punab, San Antonio Nuevo, and Tuzik (Onnis 2017: 71).

**Tusik.** (“wind that lies, false wind” [P. Cruz 1953: 209]; also, Tuzik)

This settlement is probably the best known in the region because it was the study site of Alfonso Villa-Rojas, the famous Maya anthropologist trained at the University of Chicago who wrote the classic “The Maya of east central Quintana Roo (1945). (See his obituary by Bricker and Vogt 1998.) Tusik was also selected as the representative of the “tribal villages” category and as such is the smallest of four settlement types studied by Robert Redfield in his classic *The Folk Cultures of Yucatan* (1941). It was within the sub-tribe of X-Cacal during the early studies of Villa Rojas and remains so until today -- 6 km away (map: 1996 Hostettler: 48). Several dates have been suggested for the origins of Tusik. Hostettler (1996: 51) offers 1891 and 1906 and Sanchez A. (2018: 288) suggests founding dates of between 1915 and 1925.

The 1936 description of Villa Rojas (1945: 43):

**“Tusik has 116 inhabitants, 23 houses, a church, and 5 private oratories. Here the public cenote has been improved with a curbstone of concrete. Among all the villages of the subtribe, Tusik is outstanding for the industry, piety, and temperance of its people, and above all for their strong feeling of group solidarity and dislike for outsiders. . . This settlement is more attractive and picturesque than the others because the yards around the houses are swept and weeded frequently; the herb gardens are always green and there is an abundance of such fruits as oranges, bananas, custard apples, plums, and tamarinds.”**

Redfield (1941: 55-6) adds a bit more description:

**“The space around the cenote in Tusik is kept clear of weeds, forming a rude public park, no attempt has been made to lay off a square plaza, to establish streets, to build masonry structures, or to arrange the houses in any regular order. These are distributed haphazard among the overshadowing trees. Near the cenote stands the village church, a large structure of poles and thatch. Scattered among the twenty-three houses are five smaller buildings used as familial oratories.”**

Tusik continues to value its CSC traditional heritage and the annual festival displays a planting of the “yaxché” in the bull ring and Maya pax music at the bull fight.



Impressive roadside shrines at the highway intersection honor CSC and Guadalupe. Old ceibas mark the plaza, north and south, and the Maya church with blue door faces west within the plaza. However, municipio and state contributions have modernized the scene with domo, water towers,

**Figures 175, 176. Annual festival activities in Tusik: early morning arrival of the ceiba, with pisote (*chik*) riding atop; Maya pax musicians at the bull ring.**



**Figures 177, 178. Plaza features of Tusik: (2013) and (2020), Maya church, cancha, domo, and ceiba.**



**Figure 179. Temporary rodeo in plaza between the ceibas and in front of the church, Tusik.**



Two large ceibas guard the Tusik plaza, north and south. They are the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> largest ceibas in the state.

**Figures 180, 181. Southern, and northern, ceibas in the plaza of Tusik, 2020.**





Figure 182. Beneath the southern tree, evidence of an offering: a pile of unconsolidated stones and burned remains, 2020.



Figure 183. The complex of roadside shrines is at the highway 295 intersection, 2013. Entry ceiba in foreground, blue chapel for Guadalupe, and CSC shrine at right.





**Tzukum.** (also Tzucum)

This now abandoned place first appears on maps from 1878 (Berendt), just east of Yaxley. Census records exist between 1935 and 1990. It was a locality in the ejido of X-Maben in 1995 (INEGI 1995: 77). Before its demise, residents attended events in Tixcacal Guardia, about 10 km away, via Yaxley.

**X-Maben.** (also, Xmaben)

There is evidence that X-Maben was established between 1896 and 1914 (Hostettler 1996: 51). When Villa-Rojas passed through X-Maben in 1932 on his first trip to Quintana Roo he described the folks there “as a rough lot” (Sullivan 1898: 124). Four years later (Villa Rojas 1945: 43) he noted:

**“X-Maben consists of 140 inhabitants and 18 houses. The village includes also a principal church and two private oratories. Like all the other settlements of the region the villagers here draw water from public cenotes. In general the inhabitants of the settlement do not have a reputation for industry or temperance; the traveling merchants say that it is here that rum has the best market.”**

Before its abandonment about 1949, this settlement once was very important and in 1938 received the largest ejido grant in Quintana Roo, some 73,400 hectares (Hostettler 1996: 142). The territory included the lands around Tixcacal Guardia (8 km away) and Señor (7 km away). Most of the residents, upon leaving their village, resettled in Yaxley, one km south.

**X-Pichil.** (“place of the guayabal” [P. Cruz 1953: 238]; also, X-Pishil)

“Xpichil” was, when visited by George Shattuck in June 1926, a “Santa Cruz Indian” village of about 100 residents, led by Comandante Angelino Balam, a devotee of General Francisco May (1933: 175). It was a preferred place because of its two cenotes.

X-Pichil can easily be considered a minor CSC ceremonial center. It has a traditional Maya church within the plaza, with a barracks, and a permanent corral for its well attended annual festival. Over the years its primary allegiance and guard duty has been with Tixcacal Guardia, which is by direct trail 31 km to the northeast (Estrada 2005: 129; Ek Ek 2011: 30-1). Its military-religious structure is not as organized as Tixcacal Guardia (Coot Chay 2002: 66), but it does have many similarities ---etc. Before X-Pichil had its own festival residents visited Tulum and Dzulá (Coot 2002: 44-5). Later X-Pichil on its fiestas of Santa Cruz (25 April – 3 May) and Virgen de la Concepción (7-15 August) hosted revelers from nearby villages of X-Yatil, Dzulá, Kampocolché and



Hobompich (p. 40). Nearly every family in X-Pichil has its own shrine (Lorenzin 2005). They received their ejido in 1942 (Hostettler 1996: 142).

**Figure 184. Maya church and permanent corral, X-Pichil.**



To highlight the importance of the annual ritual planting of the yaxché in the corral -- for 2020, when the coronavirus was of concern and while the dances, such as the vaquería, were cancelled and visitors from other towns were not allowed, X-Pichil still ritually planted the yaxché (Chan 2020).

**Figure 185. Planting the “yaxché” in the corral, X-Pichil, 2020.**





**X-Yatil.** (“place of the zapotal” [P. Cruz 1953: 240])

When George Shattuck’s team of medical researchers visited in June 1926 Xyatil was described as a small, struggling “Santa Cruz” village without a plaza, streets, stone walls, or masonry (1933: 174). The six families, totaling about forty people, lived in palm-thatched huts. Each family had a chapel (“with rude altar”) similar in size and materials to their dwelling.

A case can be made that modern X-Yatil is a minor ceremonial CSC center. Its “Maya” church is not within the plaza proper, but it is just across the street and has one cuartel adjacent. Eighteen residents have been declared “dignitaries mayas” and the building for the traditional Maya judge is also a part of the church complex (Buenrostro A. 2012: 21, 156-7). The annual festival, during mid-May, is in honor of the patron saint, San Bernardino, who is considered a talking cross (p. 136). I have seen no evidence of a corral, but traditional dances during the festival are performed on a cement patio directly in front of the church. It may be that residents of X-Yatil use the temporary corrals that are built in San Luis, only 1.5 km to the south.

X-Yatil residents have over the years participated in CSC trips to several ceremonial centers. Tixcacal Guardia, 36 km to the northeast, is the primary site, with a visit of 1915 reported (p. 160), although that date is several years before the accepted year of Tixcacal Guardia’s founding. Visits to the FCP shrine, Tulum, and Chumpón are also common (p. 161-2). Before Tixcacal Guardia, folks from X-Yatil went to Dzono (p. 160). Unusual landscape features, both unrelated to the CSC cultural complex, are a large crossroad rock painting of the Virgin of Guadalupe and an old aqueduct. X-Yatil was allocated its ejido in 1942. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

**Figure 186.** X-Yatil Maya church, cuartel, and office of the “traditional Maya judge” (on right).





Figure 187. Altar of X-Yatil church, featuring three crosses and huipiled cross.

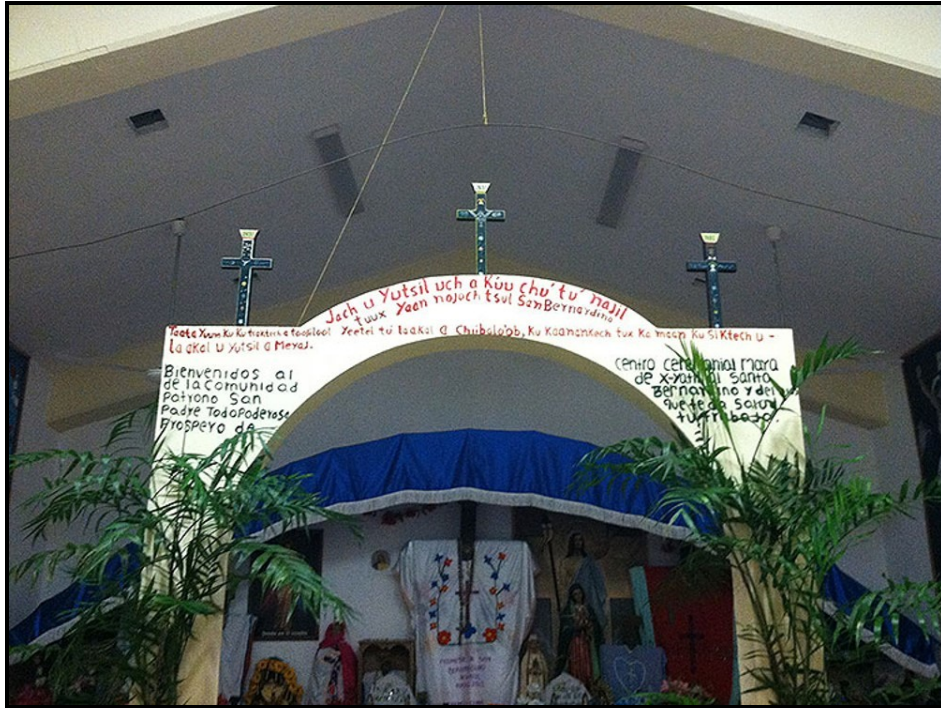


Figure 188. Carved rock of iconic Guadalupe figure, at northwest intersection, X-Yatil.





Figure 189. Remnants of aquaduct, southwest X-Yatil.



Figures 190, 191. X-Yatil scenes.



### Yaxkax.

Hostettler (1996: 52) suggests the site was settled between 1898 and 1924. It was reported in censuses 1935-1940 only. We learn of Yaxkax first from Villa Rojas (1945: 44) and his description of the Tixcacal Guardia subtribe for 1936:

**"Yaxkax has 26 inhabitants, 4 houses, and a church. This is the most retired and poverty-stricken village of the whole subtribe."**

Apparently, Yaxkax was abandoned at about the time Yaxley was established. Last censused in 1940 with a population of 31, Yaxkax is shown on maps to be nearby just to the east of Yaxley, which was first censused in 1950. One might assume that the folks from Yaxkax went to Yaxley?

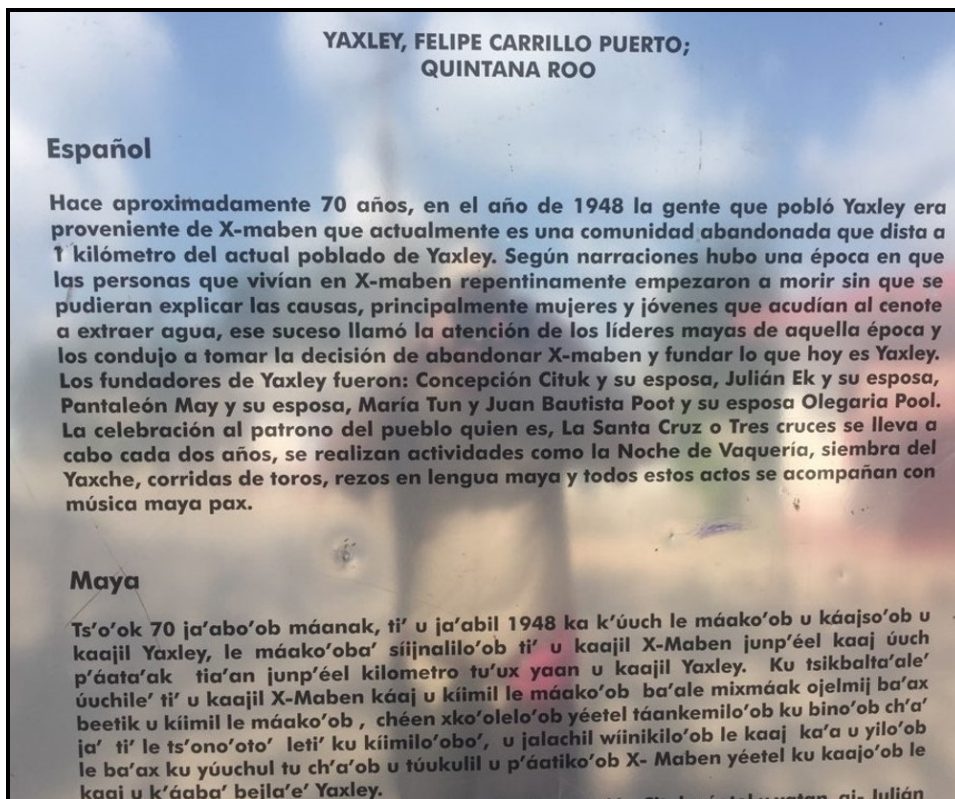


## Yaxley.

In the plaza a plaque from 2018 describes a bit of local history. The story presented is that about 70 years ago, in 1948, X-Maben, a once very important village about one km to the north, was abandoned when its water supply became contaminated. The residents moved south and established Yaxley. It is clear, however, that the site had been occupied previously. A place called “Yaxlé” is in that location on the 1878 map of Berendt.

While Yaxley makes no claim of being a ceremonial center, it ranks just below that status and expresses its Maya traditionalism by being one of two non-ceremonial CSC centers with “dignitaries mayas” and home of a “traditional” Maya judge (Buenrostro 2012: 17, 21). The church, with blue door, is adjacent to the plaza and a structure nearby might serve as a cuartel. The plaza does host the 5<sup>th</sup> largest ceiba in QR. I have no evidence of a ritual corral. Perhaps Yaxley residents enjoy their festivals mostly in Señor and Tixcacal Guardia, which is only 11 km by a direct forest trail. Señor is visited regularly on a hard road of five km. A detailed plan of the village was drawn in 1993 by Hostettler (1996: 155). Yaxley was allocated its ejido in 1961. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

Figure 192. History plaque in the Yaxley plaza, 2020.





Figures 193, 194. Church, and plaza features of Yaxley, including large ceiba and domo, 2020.



**Yodzonot Nuevo.** ("at the foot of the cenote" P. Cruz 1953: 253)

This is the latest settlement (of many) known as "Yodzonot." It appears first in a census in 1980. Today there are only 90 residents and is without a church. It is connected with Tixcacal Guardia, 15 km away, by a forest trail via Dzibal (now uninhabited).

Yodzonot Nuevo was allocated its ejido in 1979. (Hostettler 1996: 143)



**Region III. Chanchah Veracruz** (“little town of the true cross;” also, Chan Cah Veracruz, Chan Ka, Chankah Veracruz, Chancá Veracruz, Chankaj)

As with most settlements in forested Quintana Roo, before roads were constructed, the small sites were ephemeral, often relocating quickly and frequently, especially if attacked by the military opposition. Chanchah Veracruz might have been one of those places. In 1895, a village with that name was located “slightly northwest of Santa Cruz” (Dumond 1985: 302). By 1915, it had been relocated to its current site, “within three leagues (three hours by mule on a forest trail)” southeast of FCP (Reed 1964: 276). In 1959 when Nelson Reed (1964: 276) made a nostalgic trip to Chanchah, as he emerged from the forest he saw “a thatched shrine, and beyond lay the village.” Today, the scene remains similar: arriving on the paved trunk road from highway 307 at the boundary of the town is a small, thatched shrine next to the first street intersection. Within is a small wood cross, dressed in a bright orange shirt. In 1966 it was a place of 66 houses without a street grid (Estrada 2005: 150).

**Figure 195. Air photo of Chanchah Veracruz, with bull ring in front of church, domo, 2020. Only large ceiba is just off view to southeast.**





Figures 196, 197. The western entry shrine at Chancah Veracruz; detail of the clothed cross within, 2020.



**The “Maya” church.** During his survey of “the four Maya sacred villages that worshipped the Talking Cross” in 1974 Everton (2012: 234-5, 239) was so struck by the Maya church in Chancah Veracruz he proclaimed “It was the largest and most beautiful Maya church I’d seen . . . the interior was cavernous compared to other Maya churches, and the roof, containing more than 30,000 guanos, sailed into the heaven” (p. 231). On his return in 1998, after Hurricane Gilbert, he found a new church built in 1977 “more like a cement-block fortress, squat and ugly” (p. 249). The setting of the church in 1959 was described as “A stone church with a thatched roof [that] stood on an outcropping of rock in the middle of a large irregular clearing” (Reed 1964: 276).

**Guardia barracks.** When visited in 1959 by Nelson Reed (1964: 276-7) the four “Guardia huts” that surrounded the church were “each on its own hillock, their fence-like paling walls only four feet high, leaving an open space beneath the thatch. Three of the huts belonged to Chancah, Kopchen and “Chasil” (X-Hazil Sur), the fourth being shared by other villages.” In 2013 there were five, on the block adjacent to the northwest, constructed much as described above. For the festival of April 2017, Pérez T. (2017) saw, in addition to the four local “companies,” guards visiting from eight towns (Uh-May, X-Hazil [Sur], Kopchén, Chancah Derrepente, Chan Santa Cruz, Santa María Poniente, Petacacab, and FCP. In 2020, we counted six structures that were used as guard barracks for the twelve towns now within the realm of ChancahVeracruz.



Figure 198. Guard barracks of Chanchah Veracruz.



**Large plaza ceiba.** Except for the ephemeral ceibas planted for festivals, I have no indication of a permanent ceiba ever being in the plaza of Chanchah Veracruz. When Reed (1964: 277) visited in 1959 the so-called “plaza” was east of the church in a hollow. Today the only large ceiba can be seen in a private solar approximately two blocks southeast of the plaza.



Figure 199. Lone large ceiba in a solar in Chanchah Veracruz, 2020.



**Corral.** Today, a permanent red circular corral has been placed directly in front of the church. Remnant of a tree (unspecified species) is in the middle. In 1959 there was no mention of a corral structure in the plaza, but it “had a post to which the bull is tied for the local style of bullfighting during fiestas” (Reed 1964: 277).

**Figure 200. The permanent red rodeo, with “ceiba,” in the plaza of Chanchah Veracruz, 2020.**



The CSC region focusing on the ceremonial center at Chanchah Veracruz is composed of twelve towns arranged in an elongated zone stretching between Uh-May at highway 307 and Naranjal Poniente at highway 293.

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**Chanchah Derrepente.** (“little town, suddenly(?),” also, Chan Cah de Repente)

The first notice of “De Repente” is from August of 1861 when there, at the farm of Bernardino Cen,” CSC rebels slaughtered 310 prisoners (Rugeley 2001: 80; Gabbert 2019: 227). It was then thought to be eight leagues from Chan Santa Cruz.

During the 1890s the town was important in the trade with British to the south (Dumond 1985: 301) and that it has retained its position as a special CSC settlement is confirmed in the modern cultural landscape. To the west is a protective roadside shrine; the thatched Maya church is within the main plaza, faces west, and with blue doors; a temporary corral is erected for their patronal festival of early April (Santo Cristo de



Amor), and above all, **the plaza ceiba is by far the largest we measured in Quintana Roo – over 33 feet in girth.** The village of 425 people remains one of the major contributors to the guardia of Chanchah Veracruz, 26 km to the east. Chanchah de Repente was allocated its ejido in 1961 (Hostettler 1996: 142).

**Figures 201, 202. Plaza view of Chanchah Derrepente: ceiba, temporary bull ring, church; roadside shrine west of town.**



**Figure 203. Probably the largest ceiba in Quintana Roo, with church and well, Chanchah Derrepente plaza, 2020.**





**Chan Santa Cruz Poniente.** (“little Holy Cross, west”)

The only landscape feature diagnostic of the CSC cult are the roadside shrines west and south of the village. Chan Santa Cruz, 37 km from Chanchah Veracruz, was allocated its ejido in 1955. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

**Figures 204, 205. CSC roadside shrines, west and south, Chan Santa Cruz Poniente.**



**Kopchén.** (“place of flooding well/cenote” [P. Cruz 1953: 134]; also, X-kopchen)

Kopchén is something of a tertiary CSC center in the realm of Chanchah Veracruz, some 21 km away. The Maya church of Kopchén lies within the plaza and next to the temporary corral that is erected for the annual feria. In preparation for the annual festival, to acquire food for the event, residents of Kopchén have, for over five decades, taken respected objects from the church on tour to nearby villages. Descriptions vary on the artifact taken on tour.

In 1963, Zimmermann (1965: 154) learned that the “four foot [high] statue of St. John the Baptist which is closely guarded in the Church (a thatched hut) and which is famous for miles around for doing miracles” is taken by “his owner” to all the little villages in a wide circumference of Kopchen to beg for money or gifts. On July 24, the feast day, those who have promised contributions place their offerings on the altar. After a religious ceremony all present partake of the food.

Estrada’s (2005: 127) account has the patron saint of Kopchen (La Cruz de San Juan), which is one of the most respected saints in the area southwest of Chanchah Veracruz, taken in procession for a few weeks, beginning around May 22, into surrounding communities asking for support for their feria.

According to a third account (Aviña C. 2007: 111), “La Vara del Santo,” a ceremonial artifact from the church, is taken not only to all of the communities in the



realm of Chancah Veracruz (X-Hazil Sur, San Andrés, Noh Cah, Chancah de Repente, Mixtequilla, Yodzonot, Santa María Poniente), but also to Yoactún, Petcacab, Laguna K'ana, and even San Hermenegildo in OPB and the rancheria of Xconha.

The town has no ceibas, but does have roadside shrines, west and north of town. Kopchen was allocated its ejido in 1968. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

**Figure 206. Maya church within plaza, with blue door, and nearby ramp for ritual bull fights and small “ceiba” trunk remaining in the bull ring, Kopchén.**



**Figures 207, 208. Roadside shrine west of Kopchén, old (2013) and new (2020). Note same tin top.**





Figure 209. Detail inside of the shrine above, Kopchén, 2020.



Figure 210. The northern roadside shrine, Kopchén.



## Naranjal Poniente.

The farthest village within the Chanchah Veracruz CSC region is 50 km to the west. Landscape evidence of CSC connection in Naranjal Poniente is limited to one decaying roadside shrine north of town and a Maya church with blue door that is aside the plaza.

**Figures 211, 212. The roadside shrine and church of Naranja Poniente.**



## Noh Cah. (“big town”)

This small village (pop. 75) considers its church a “Maya” church. It is with blue door, next to the water tower. The roadside shrines here are north and south of town. Distance to Chanchah Veracruz: 18 km. Noh Cah was allocated its ejido in 1968 (Hostettler 1996: 142).

**Figure 213, 214. Roadside shrines of Noh Cah: east of town in decay, with collapsed mesa, but small wooden cross remaining on central post, 2020.**





Figures 215, 216. Decaying shrine of west exit corner; church, Noh Cah, 2020.



**Petcacab.** (“round bowls/calabazos of honey,” P. Cruz 1953: 171)

Petcacab is one of the oldest CSC settlements. Because it was on an early route between Bacalar and Tihosuco it appears on several maps (“Petacá” on map 1861 Fremont, “Petcacab” on map: 1885 BAE). Petcacab was only one of four settlements located on Sapper’s map of 1894, and by 1904 (map) “Petacab” was connected to a road directly to Santa Cruz Bravo.

The CSC landscape includes two guard shrines on each side of town and a temporary corral constructed for the annual feria. Petcacab was allocated its ejido in 1935 (Hostettler 1996: 142). It is 32 km from Chanchah Veracruz.

Figures 217, 218. Roadside shrines of Petcacab, northwest, and southeast of town.



**San Andrés.**

The sole CSC feature in San Andrés is the roadside shrine on the north of the village. Distance to Chanchah Veracruz: 17 km.





**Figure 219. Roadside shrine north of San Andrés.**

### **Santa Isabel.**

Among all places listed within the region of Chanchah Veracruz, Santa Isabel is the only one that has no remaining evidence of CSC participation. The reasons include its small population of 48 (probably too small to provide guardias), its isolation at the end of a single lane unpaved road, and its predominately Presbyterian population. No ceibas are present. Although it is within 10 km of Chanchah Veracruz, it should no longer be considered a CSC town. Santa Isabel was allocated its ejido in 1976 (Hostettler 1996: 143).

### **Santa María Poniente.**

The only landscape evidence of CSC status is the presence of roadside shrines, west and east of town. Distance to Chanchah Veracruz is 45 km.

**Figures 220, 221. Roadside shrines of Santa María Poniente, west, and east of town.**





**Uh May.** (named after a Cruzob general)

Uh May lies on the main highway due south of Chanchah Veracruz, 11 km. It was founded when the highway from FCP to Chetumal was opened in 1957 (Estrada 2005: 153). Settlers came from Yodzonot Sur, six km away. The place has a roadside shrine on the old road to X-Hazil, a Maya church (Cedillo L. 2017: 13), and a plaza ceiba. Residents participate in the festival at Chanchah. The ceiba planted next to the water tower at the plaza bus stop was removed when it grew so large.

**Figure 222. Maya church compound on highway at plaza of Uh May.**



**Figures 223, 234. Water tower and small ceibas at bus stop on highway 307, 2012 and 2016, Uh May.**







**Figure 225. The roadside shrine of Uh May, southwest.**

**X-Hazil (Sur).** (“place of many plátanos,” P. Cruz 1953: 233)

This village was founded when smallpox hit from the south (Estrada 2005: 151). It was one of the first in FCP to receive an ejido, in 1935, and it has progressed well (Hostettler 1996: 142). Perhaps because it is only 14 km from Chanchah Veracruz it did not develop its own CSC infrastructure. Only the two roadside shrines indicate the CSC presence.

**Figures 226, 227. X-Hazil Sur: roadside shrine west of town, detail of double wooden crosses,**





Figures 228, 229. Roadside shrine under construction northeast of X-Hazil Sur on old road to Uh May; detail of mesa and single wooden cross within.



**Yoactún.** (“atop the rocks or cave, P. Cruz 1953: 251), also, Tohactum)

In 1926 “Tohactum” was described as being 10-12 leagues from Xyatil with about 110 residents (Shattuck 1933: 175). Today it is 38 km from Chanchah Veracruz. Its primary claims to CSC status come from its two roadside shrines and temporary ritual corral that is constructed for annual festival. Yoactún was allocated its ejido in 1942. (Hostettler 1996: 142)

Figures 230, 231. The roadside shrines of Yoactún: appropriately at the southeast village limits and northwest of town.





**Region IV. Chunpóm** (“trunk of the copal tree;” also, Chun Póm, Chunpón, Chumpón, Chumpóm)

Over the years, Chunpóm has been one of the most important CSC ceremonial shrine sites. Its role in the “central Maya zone” of QR apparently has been up and down in the eyes of commentators. In modern days its relative importance has declined. Pacheco Cruz (1958: 271) considered it to have once been the “capital of the Mayas.” Perhaps the earliest cartographical indication is the “Chumpon” that appears southwest of Chunyaxche and Muyil on the 1878 map of Berendt, but it was prominent enough as a CSC site to be attacked by Mexican forces in January 1871 (Perez A. 1914: 225). During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chunpóm and Tulum were frequently supportive of each other in securing their territory against outsiders. Maya priests and crosses were often exchanged.

When the German chicle contractor H. Adrian (1924: 241) passed thru in the summer of 1922, he noticed that “Chumpon itself is small: the church and the *Wachthaus* (cuarteles) are the most important buildings there. The dwellings are quite large; the walls of the houses are made of vertical poles with intertwined vines in between; the whole wall has been plastered with clay. The narrow side of the house is rounded. The roof is covered with guano palm leaf.” The early church of the shrine center was not much different from the average eastern forest Maya church (figure 232). By 1988 the church had not changed. Hanson (1995: 18) “observed a pole-and-thatch structure as chapel in the Caste War village of Chun Pom.” In 1958 a resident told Peissel (1963: 214) that the church walls in Chumpóm were painted blue “as a votive offering.” **Figure 232. Church of Chumbalche, 1933 (Pacheco Cruz 1934: 44).**





Santiago Pacheco Cruz (1934, 1958) **walked** into the village a few times over the years and in 1934 interviewed the “Secretario del Santo” Juan Bautista Vega. Vega was quite an anomaly for *cruzo’ob* leadership. He was ladino and spoke Spanish. From the interview we learn that the “General” was born on Cozumel in 1886 and at 11 years was the sole survivor of an attack by *cruzo’ob* on visitors from Cozumel in Tulum ruins. After being held in Tulum pueblo for a few days he was taken to Santa Cruz Chumpón, where eventually he became the supreme leader of the northern *cruzo’ob* region.

At the time, Pacheco Cruz noted the town to be “almost depopulated and in decline” (p.90). Its only subject towns were “Chunoon, Yocdzonot, y Cocoyal” (p. 9). Today six settlements are active within the formal realm of Chumpón and many more CSC villages are represented in annual pilgrimages.

As late as 1970, when it was still reached only by walking trails, it was considered the “centro politico” of the region (García S. 1971: 52-3). Everton (2012: 227) walked there from Tulum in 1971 for a feria; returned on “a very rough road” in 1974 on April 30 for their feria (p. 233). On the last trip he found “The plaza was a large unarticulated open field of red earth and rock dominated by a great ceiba tree – the village really was a rustic forest outpost.” (p. 236) Beneath the ceiba women drew water from a well. At the north end of the plaza (as now) was the Maya church and its guardhouse. There were no streets, only “lanes.”

The modern landscape reeks of an active Chan Santa Cruz ceremonial shrine center. The Maya church complex includes a couple of cuartels for visiting guards and pilgrims who come from as far away as Chanchah Derrepente, X-pichil, Dzúlá, and Tepich (Sánchez 2018: 336). A permanent ritual corral is adjacent to the north. Two large, old ceibas grace the plaza of Chumpón. The largest, 7<sup>th</sup> largest in the state measuring 20’ 3” in girth, is near the center of the plaza. The second ceiba was barely saved when the domo (large covered basketball court) was constructed just to the northeast. Sánchez A. (2018: 333) mistakes the plaza ceiba for a “founding tree, a copal.”



Figure 233. Air photograph of Main plaza and CSC ceremonial compound, Chumpón, 2020.

☆ = large ceiba, ⊙ = corral, B = guardia barracks, ⊕ = church, ↗ "Ceiba Maya" mural





Figure 234. Plaza ceiba with playground, Chunpóm, 2020. See the CSC ceremonial center complex in background.



The photographs of Everton (2012: 252-3) from 1988 and 2004 indicate much of the landscape is the same as today. A 2004 sign placed by the state government at the “Centro Ceremonial Maya de Chunpom” maps locations of “iglesia, rodeo, cuarteles de guardia, and oficina del juez tradicional” (p. 282). Today, east just across the street from the plaza is a large mural entitled “Ceiba Maya.” On the road east, at the edge of town, is a small roadside shrine.



Figure 235. "Ceiba Maya" mural near plaza, Chunpóm, 2020.



Figure 236. Roadside shrine east of Chunpóm, 2020.







**Figure 237. Chunpóm CSC compound: Church with blue door, corral, and office.**

When visited in 1962 by Pablo Bush Romero (1964) the church was guarded night and day by armed men who allowed no outside access to the church, primarily because it had three special sacred books that had first appeared miraculously rolled in velas in a small house at the entrance to the town (pp. 240, 243, 252). The structure, *el templo de la Santa Cruz*, at the time was located next to the school and was the only building in town of mampostería, thatched with guano (p. 250). Bush went to Chunpóm to evacuate the longtime leader, Juan Bautista Vega to Mexico City for medical treatment.

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Today, eight settlements are known to have been closely aligned with Chunpóm.

**Chan-Chen.** (“small well/cenote”)

The site, now abandoned, was once known as “Chanchhem del Norte” to distinguish it from other nearby Chan Chens (Comandante and Laz) (Pacheco Cruz 1934: 9). It was located 10 km due north of Chunpóm and west of Tulum pueblo. (Map 1958 Pacheco Cruz) Last evidence of its viability is from 1990 when the census recorded 27 inhabitants.

**Chun-On.** (“trunk of the aguacate;” also, Chuun Oox)

Chun-On is the closest affiliated town of Chunpóm, being only seven km to the northwest along the paved highway. The Maya church of Chun-On is quite CSC classical in being within the plaza proper, opening to the west, having a thatched-roofed, with vertical pole walls, and with three crosses painted on the west end door. Because of slightly sloping land, the adjacent cancha (basketball court) was leveled with an unusually thick deposit of concrete on the south side.



Figures 238, 239. Maya church and cancha, Chun-On, 2020.



Figure 240. The only roadside CSC shrine is west of Chun-On along the highway toward Tepich and Valladolid.

**Chun-Yah.** (“trunk of the chicle zapote tree;” also, Chun-Ya, Chun Yá)

Sixteen km along the highway northwest of Chunpóm is Chun-Yah. Its major CSC feature in the Maya church that is within the plaza. The recently constructed domo now dominates the plaza, once organized around the church. **Figures 241, 242. Plaza with domo (left), and church (right) of Chun-Yah.**





### **Chunyaxché.** (“trunk of the ceiba”)

Chunyaxché was most prominent during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It appears on the map of 1878 (Berendt) on the major route (trail or cart road) between Bacalar, Tulum, and San Antonio Muxil. It is the same in 1893 (Macías 2004: 93). Apparently, it was within the military-religious realm of Tulum in 1870 (Gamboa G. sin fecha). In 1929 Chunyaxché was selected as the central settlement for the fifteen northern places comprising a pre-ejido “reservation” (Mendoza R. 2004: 228). (Later, this region was led by Chunpóm.) This led to the first allocation of ejidos in Quintana Roo – to Chunyaxché and its anexos -- in 1935 (Hostettler 1996: 142).

Today, the town of some 120 residents seems to exist solely to service the tourist industry of nearby Muxil ruins. A few people work in Tulum. This old settlement has been overwhelmed by the modern tourism of the Riviera Maya. It sits at the entrance to the popular Muxil ruin along Mexican national highway 307, just south of Tulum. While it has no diagnostic features of CSC towns, nor plaza, it has been connected with Chunpóm ceremonial center for years and lies along the Tulum - Chunpóm pilgrimage route that has existed for years. The distance to Chun Póm is 22 km.



**Figure 243. The only ceiba (“Yaxché”) in town, Chunyaxché, 2020.**

### **Cocoyol.** (“the coyol palm,” also, Cocoyol de Póm)

The hamlet has long been abandoned, but lingers on maps such as the 2013, connected by a road north of Chunpóm (12 km) and west of Chunyaxché/Muxil (17 km, without road). The place was undoubtedly named for the very useful spiny palm (*Acrocomia* sp.). Coyol wine is consumed widely in Yucatan and Central America. E. G. Squier (1858: 379-80) has a nice description of the plant:

**“The [nut] shell is thick, hard, black, and capable of being finely carved and polished. It is frequently worked into rings and other ornaments by the Indians. The kernel resembles wax, but is harder, and rich in oil, which is used for domestic purposes in some parts of**



Central America. It is excellent for burning, and there is no reason why it should not be extensively produced as an article of commerce. The trunk of the coyol palm is saturated with juice, which the natives obtain by cutting down the tree, plastering over the severed end with clay, and cutting little reservoirs in the pulp, into which the juice rapidly distills. It is agreeable to the taste, and, when allowed to ferment, produces an intoxicating drink, called *chicha*, or *vino de coyol*."

**Kankabdzonot.** ("cenote of red earth;" also Kancabzonot, Cancabdzonot)

This small place (pop. 93) is just north off the highway, 19 km northwest of Chunpóm. Quaint is the word for the colorful chapel, large shade ceibas, and easily-accessed cenote. A roadside shrine at the village entrance is the lone indicator of CSC connection.

**Figure 244.** The "plaza" of Kankabdzonot with yellow chapel, ceibas, and namesake walled cenote (foreground lower left), 2020.







**Figure 245. Roadside shrine at highway intersection, Kancabzonot, 2020.**

### **Tres Reyes.**

South along highway 307, some 22 km from Chunpóm, is Tres Reyes. It is terribly mislocated on the highway map of 2013. Its small church is known as a “Maya” church and its membership provides a few pilgrims annually to the feria in Chunpóm. Tres Reyes was allocated its ejido in 1983 (Hostettler 1996: 143).

**Figure 246. The Maya church of Tres Reyes, 2020.**



### **Yodzonot Chico.** (“a newer, smaller settlement than an older Yodzonot”)

We did not visit this small hamlet (pop. 78) that is reachable to the south from Chun-Ya. We were told however that it had a “Maya church” and a few large ceibas. The distance to Chun Póm is 18 km.



**Region V. Tulum.** (also, Tuluum, Tuloom, Tulum Pueblo, X-Tulum, Santo Cah de Xtulum)

Modern Tulum Pueblo seems an unlikely place for a Chan Santa Cruz shrine center. Undoubtedly, when it first developed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was because of the nearby coastal ruins of Tulum. Centuries after the large Maya centers, including Tulum, were abandoned they retained their special reverence and were visited by the natives.

Tulum ruins are deep in the ethos of Maya. Among the mythological tales surrounding the travels of Quetzalcoatl/Kukulcan, Tulum was connected to other cities via an underground *sacbe* (Folan *et al* 2016: 304). Villa-Rojas (1945) saw folks from Tusik and X-Cacal Guardia bring offerings to El Castillo at Tulum (p. 5) and sea shells from Tulum spread throughout regional altars (p. 107). He noted in 1935-36 (p. 45) that

**“Tulum is considered a religious retreat because it is believed that within its borders still reside the spirits of the great ancient Maya. Catholic rites are celebrated in front of a small wooden cross placed on the altar of an old temple. There are no special occasions for making such pilgrimages, but they take place whenever the chiefs think it advisable.”**

Today, one matter is certain . . . of all CSC ceremonial centers, Tulum Pueblo is the most altered. Still, while it has been absolutely overwhelmed by tourism developments of the “Maya Riviera,” landscape evidence of the older times can be seen.

Official censuses give an incomplete record of population at the site. In 1921 Tulum was reported as a “chicle station” of 201 inhabitants. In 1930 only 14 people were recorded. Other years and figures are 1960 (92 residents), 1970 (ca. 400), 1980 (540), 1990 (2,111), 2000 (6,733) and 2010 (18,233).

Whatever connections the ruins and town had with the CSC are explored below.

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Judging from the description in the “Relacion del Pueblo de Çama” of 1579 (Relación de Yucatán, 1900: II, 196-7; Edwards 1975) the encomienda known as “çama” was at, or very near, the ruins of Tulum. It was a coastal place of less than fifty tributarios fisherfolk who were not very good farmers. Its location was two leagues from the “Muyil” [Muyil] lagoon, which ran about two leagues to the interior, and fourteen leagues from Bahía de Asunción. The village itself was without streets, unorganized, and the houses seem to be wattle-and-daub (*lodo texido*, [*bajareque* ?]) and thatched with guano (as today). “Çama” in the language of the natives meant *manaña* (p. 176).



Some who have used the same reference believe that “Zama” refers to Tankah, not Tulum (Hanson 1995: 19). Other writers have suggested that Tulum was in ancient times known as “Zama,” meaning “salida de” or “amanecer” (Careaga V. y Higuera B. 2010: 19), because it is here that the first rays of the sun strike mainland Yucatán.

Another group thinks “Tulum” must refer to its wall: “enclosure” (Roys (1957: 146), and “walled in” (Acuña 1993). “Tulum” means “cerco” and by extension “muralla” according to the INAH (1979: 5). Aviña C. (2007: 127) likes the translation of “Tulum: de tul, (peste) y luum (tierra) = tierra pestilente.” P. Cruz (1953: 209) “su tierra.” Morley (1917: 191) fused Spanish and Maya terms: “tu” + “luum” = “in his or its land.”

However, when I have been on the scene there, several times, everyone I asked told me that that “Tulum” meant “rocky land,” which it certainly is. This definition makes sense to me, from the Maya, *tu[nich]* = rocky + *luum* = tierra, land.

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Historically, the most important places of Caribbean Yucatán are Cozumel Island and the ruin site of Tulum. Since ancient days, the island (just 11 miles offshore) and the coastal site have been intertwined. Before the arrival of the Europeans, Cozumel was famous as a pilgrimage destination, especially for females. According to the most famous early observer of the Yucatecan scene, Bishop Diego de Landa (1973: 48, 115), “Cuzmil” had a venerated sanctuary and pilgrimage status like Jerusalem and Rome in the Old World. As many as 50,000 pregnant pilgrims visited the island each year. The island was the home shrine of Ixchel, the goddess of childbirth (also weaving, medicine and healing, and the moon (Morley 1946: 230). As viewed from the mainland, to see a full moon rising over the island to the east is truly awe-inspiring. It is easy to understand how the illusion of a much, much larger moon rising over the island would lead the Maya to locate the moon goddess’s shrine on Cozumel (see Davidson 1975: 59).

The friar Diego López de Cogolludo (1688: lib. I, cap. VI, p. 21) mentions that “Cozumel was the greatest sanctuary for the Indians of this kingdom of Yucatan, and to where many went in pilgrimage by roads that crossed everything, and today vestiges of them may still be seen, including great *kues*, shrines with idols.” Other visitors were attracted by a mysterious oracle who spoke to believing pilgrims (Freidel 1975).

The site of Tulum attracted early attention because of its construction atop a coastal cliff. The site was first noticed by Spaniards in 1518 during their second voyage west from Cuba – the trip of Juan de Grijalva (Morley 1946: 101; Chamberlain 1948: 13). From the sea, the coastal sight of towers and El Castillo so impressed the Europeans that



padre Juan Diaz wrote that the town must have been as large as Seville. That was an obvious exaggeration, but Tulum did have something of an “urban” plan. Tulum probably did have a sort of “plaza” space. The open area between the Castillo and House of the Diving God was probably used as are the plazas in modern villages.

One might suspect that the basic local physical geography played an important role in linking Cozumel and Tulum. Tulum might have been selected as a departure port because of the coincidence of 1) its adjacent sandy beach (for launching watercraft) (see figure v), 2) a rare opening in the barrier reef, and 3) a strong northward flowing current just offshore. If a paddled watercraft heading for Cozumel, loaded with pilgrims, proceeded directly into the sea to the east, it would receive the benefit of a swift current that would help carry the boat to the island. The same current would aid a returning vessel paddling westward to a disembarkation port to the northwest of the island. Polé might be suggested as a receiving port. From there a well-known *sacbe* (formal road) ran to the interior (Fowler 2001). Chamberlain (1948: 227-28) and Roys (1957: 148) mention Polé as an embarkation site for Cozumel, but that seems unlikely to me. Why would navigators without sails or motors attempt to paddle against one of the strongest ocean currents in the world?

**Figure 247. Embarkation beach at Tulum, just north, below El Castillo, 1980.**

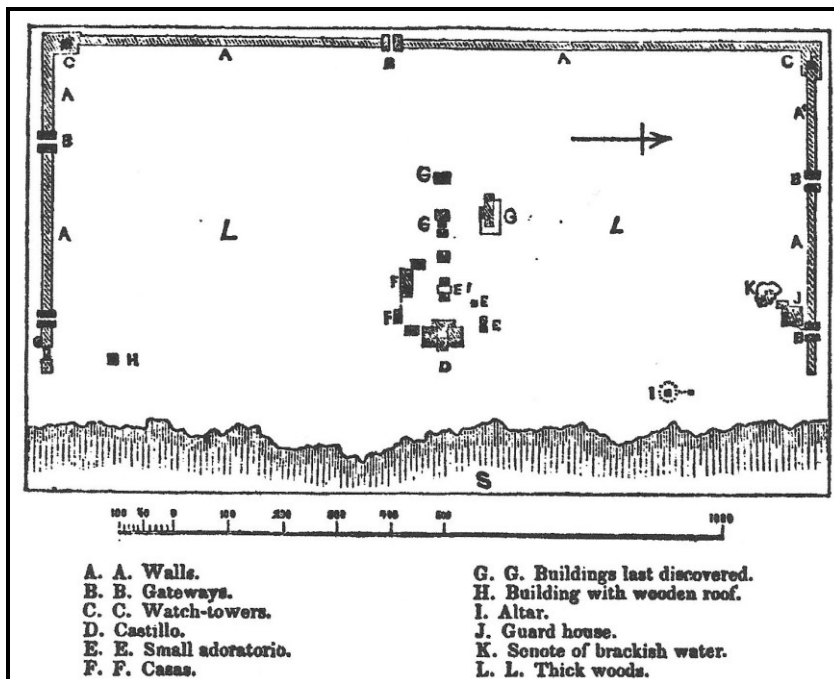




John Lloyd Stephens (1843, II: 390-6) visited "Tuloom" in March 1842 for four days and three nights of mosquitoes and found it over grown with ramón. He did not mention a village near the ruins. His companion Frederick Catherwood's lithograph of El Castillo is well-circulated (Catherwood 1844, plate xxii; Myers 1972). They also produced the first map of the site (Stephens 1843: II, 396). **Figure 248.**



Map 11. Tulum by E. G. Squier, 1842.





Of interest to this current story, Tulum, by 1864, was an active CSC shrine center (Gabbert 2019: 171) and perhaps by 1868 (p. 189), was a competitor of, and perhaps more important than, CSC (Gabbert 2019: 189-90). By 1870 (Gamboa G. sin fecha: 2), Tulum had become recognized as one of the most important religious center of the Cruzo'ob. In the latter year, and a couple of years later, warriors from Tulum were joined by those from San Antonio Muyil and Chunpóm to attack and to repel forces from Kuntunilkin. A Talking Cross was said to exist at Tulum as late as 1888 (Miller 1889: 26). This Cross's oracle interviewed all visitors, appointed all chiefs, and ordered occasional assassinations. Tulum in this era was also quite unusual because the high priest was female, María Uicab, and because she oversaw and spoke for three holy crosses (Villa Rojas 1945: 24; Gabbert 2019: 189). Gamboa G. (sin fecha) has elaborated her story.

In 1884 a man from Cozumel kidnapped the daughter of Santiago Pech, the CSC rebel chief of Tulum. When Pech threatened to destroy the island, his daughter was hastily returned (Rugeley 2009: 311-12). The CSC of Tulum were obviously continuing their aggressiveness.

Alice LePlongeon (1886: 63-6) wrote that "Three miles from the ancient city is a new village, Tulum Pueblo, whose inhabitants come regularly to the old castle to burn copal, incense, and wax candles." The new village was known once as a small "very hostile" village. I know of no clear evidence that she was actually at the village site. She gives no indication that she knew of the Chan Santa Cruz revolt. For certain her geography was a bit cluttered; she thought the "Tulum ruins are three miles north of Tancah."

From professor Santiago Pacheco Cruz (1934, 1953) we learned that Juan Bautista Vega, who later became the supreme leader of the northern cruzo'ob region based in Chunpóm, was was the sole survivor of an attack by cruzo'ob on vistors from Cozumel in Tulum ruins in 1897. After being held in Tulum pueblo for a few days, he was taken to Santa Cruz Chumpón, where eventually he assumed the top position of "Secretario del Santo."

The 1898 Field Columbian Expedition planned by William H. Holmes aboard the "*Ituna*" never reached the shore (Morley 1917: 192). Another commentator who was never ashore at Tulum is Channing Arnold (1909: 157), who wrote that "Tuloom" was a place that the CSC Indians were "concentrated." The Mexicans had taken the town three times and three times they were "obligated to evacuate." Tulum was a place where Indians shoot white men on sight (p. 183).



In 1911 George Howe and William Parmelee of Peabody Museum, Harvard, were at the ruins for 3-4 days, but left after they “saw reason to fear an Indian attack and reluctantly decided to leave.” As evidence that the “extremely hostile” Indians who lived nearby used the ruins, Howe saw an altar full of “old ashes (probably copal).” A white flag was seen to the northwest where they had heard the Indian village was located (Howe 1911: 547-48).

In April 1913, Sylvanus Morley and J. L. Nusbaum were ashore in the ruins for five hours after their small boat capsized (Morley 1917:193). Part of Morley’s report was printed by Hewett (1936: 160 -165) who sponsored their trip through his School of American Archaeology.

The trip of 1916 by Morley, Gann and Lothrop spent four nights in the ruins, without their boat crew, which feared going ashore. The archeologists were without danger from Indians, but did find evidence of Indian visits with “meat-slings, broken turtle-eggs, and candle drippings being found in several buildings”(Morley 1917: 202).

In February 1922 Morley visited again and reported seeing in El Castillo “on a bench at back stood a small wooden cross, perhaps 16 or 18 inches high, painted blue, with some figures on it.” The cross was dressed in a miniature huipil (Sullivan 1989: 22-5). During the same trip Lothrop (1924: 24) reported that the CIW group at Tulum made contact with Santa Cruz Indians from Tulum Pueblo, Chun Pom, and Acomal. The folks from Chumpón worshipped before a miniature cross and candles that had been placed on a bench in room B of the Castillo at Tulum (p. 32). Morley (1946: 219) only remarks more generally that copal was used by “the eastern independent Indians” as “incense in the sanctuary of the Castillo, or principal temple at the ruins of Tulum.”

Thomas Gann (1924: 133), who was with Morley in 1916, thought the nearest Santa Cruz village to Tulum ruins was “believed to be about nine miles to the interior.”

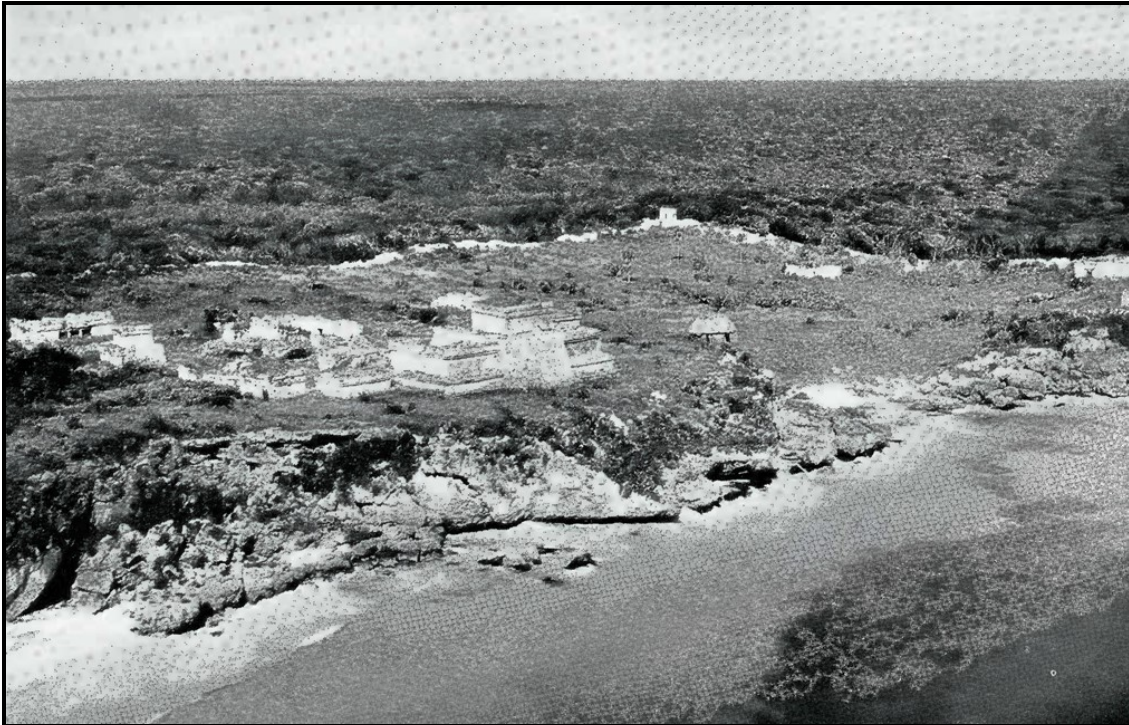


**Figure 249. Altar of Chan Santa Cruz, with huipiled wooden cross (Gann 1918: 27).**



Air photography of Tulum ruins began with Charles Lindbergh in October 1929. He and Alfred Kidder flew the Yucatán for the Carnegie Institution of Washington (Ricketson, Jr., Oliver and A. V. Kidder, 1930). In 1930 Alfred and Gregory Mason were with Percy Madeira for a second flyover of Tulum (Madeira 1930).

**Figure 250. Air photo of Tulum ruins, facing to northwest, 1930 (Madeira 1930: plate 10).**



After the early archeological interest in Tulum ruins, only a few writers passed through the area. Doris Heyden (1967) visited briefly ca. 1945 and located the village “3 leagues west” of the ruins. She heard the village was founded after the Caste War in 1853. Michael Coe claims to have seen “a Talking Cross inside the Castillo at Tulum as late as 1948” (Everston 2012: 270, quoting Coe 2005: 250). Descriptions of the setting include those of Peissel from 1958 (1963: 142-44, 154, 165), Luxton and Balam from 1970-71 (1981: 127-8), and Everton over the years (Everton 2012).

In 1958, when Michel Peissel (1963: 134) visited, he reported that “Pueblo Tulum” was a Chan Santa Cruz village four leagues from the ruins. He walked the trail for three hours before seeing ten fan-palm roofed oval huts on a square, and two larger huts, one a temple. The well was in the center of the square. At the moment of his visit, a priest from Chupóm was visiting Tulum, which had four shrines surrounding the town at trails to milpas (pp. 142-4). Chupóm residents came to Chupaxché and Tulum Pueblo on their way to the ruins.



The author's own experiences at Tulum began during a diving trip to Cozumel in January 1965. I flew to the ruins for a day trip with friends from Memphis. When I returned during the summer of 1965, to conduct research for my M.A. thesis on Cozumel, my uncle Thayne Muller, with Memphis attorney Charlie Newman, flew me over in his plane and dropped me off at the Tulum airstrip. The ruins were absolutely deserted. I put up my WWII jungle hammock between two trees adjacent west of Structure 20.

**Figure 251. Author camping at structure 20, Tulum ruins, El Castillo in background, July 1965.**



I did not see another soul in the ruins for the few days I remained and do not recall any indication of ritual offerings in the structures. On Cozumel I was told that a lighthouse keeper was nearby to the south, but I never attempted to visit. A woman from Tankah showed me the trail to the little indigenous settlement called Tulum, which seemed about an hour's walk away to the southwest. During my brief visit, primarily in search of food, I recall very little except that they offered no food, but did allowed me to pull up water from their well. I never considered that they might be overly unfriendly to outsiders because of their cruzo'ob heritage. No one on Cozumel suggested I should beware.

The location of Tulum Pueblo and its distance from the ruins have never been clear in the literature, but it seems obvious from the irregular street pattern of a few



blocks that are now southeast of the main modern plaza that that area was the site of the old village. This part of town is not consistent with the grid pattern of the modern city. It is also where the largest ceibas are concentrated and the old Maya church and ceremonial center are located.

Luxton (1981: 64, 79, 85) who lived in Tulum village around 1970-71, just after the coastal highway was built to connect Tulum and Chetumal in 1968, wrote that the village, of about 400 souls, was three miles southwest from the ruins, a 40-minute walk on a forest trail.

His description (127-28):

“Tulum was set around a grass-covered plaza with four paths leading away, one at each corner. Along these paths and facing the plaza itself the villagers had prepared their respective compounds. They had built wooden and stone houses in clearings, erected low walls, and built shelters for their pigs, chickens and turkeys. The compounds were shaded by a great abundance of orange and lemon trees, bananas, papayas and scented *turuhuy nicté*, cream-coloured candelabras of petals falling all about amidst the loud humming of thousands of bees. A deep sense of peace pervaded the village from dawn to dusk, the great variety of bird song in the fruit trees and forest much louder than the conversation of the people. The rich fragrance of ripe honey, of wood burning in numerous households, drifted across on the breezes that blew periodically through the ventilated, cool houses.

In the center of the plaza, shaded by row of tall trees, the church of Tulum was guarded and attended night and day by *h-menob* and prayer-makers. Until recently it had been a simple wooden thatch building painted with geometric white and blue patterns. It had been there at the centre without advertisement, continually attended. Now it had been rebuilt with modern blocks and a cement floor added. It was still thatched, painted carefully in white and blue, and guarded. It looked as simple and devout as before.

The four paths from the plaza led to the forest, the coast and distant milpas . . . Running along the north-south side of the village, the road from Can Cun to Chetumal had imposed a new space upon this once enclosed world. . . Next to the church there was a basketball court and, a little further back, a low, empty water tower.

The buses and travelers introduced a new rhythm to Tulum. It was no longer a back country Mayan village but a relatively affluent community of four hundred souls.”

By 1971, when Everton (2012: 224-26) was there, he found the Maya church was aligned “so that the priest and supplicants faced east when they stood in front of the altar. The main doors opened to the west end facing the guardhouse.” “A large wooden



cross stood at the center of the altar; its arms were covered with a sudario in deference to its feminine gender.”

By March 1976, “the Maya plaza and church were no longer the center of Tulum. The government was bulldozing a new grid of roads to create Tulum Nuevo, which would have its own separate plaza and church. They were already becoming a Maya barrio in a Mexican town” (Everton 2012: 241).

Fig. 252. Air photograph of Tulum, with Maya church ✧, largest ceiba ⊕, and cemetery ☆. Arrow separates CSC ceremonial center from modern plaza to the northeast, 2020.



**Roadside shrines.** None were seen near Tulum. Of course, since national highway 307 was constructed on the western margins of the old village 1968-70 urban development dominates the roadsides and has destroyed almost all ancient landmarks away from the ruins. The old village’s boundary markers have long been destroyed.

In 2001 and 2004 when photographed by Everton (2012: 251, 282) the “Centro Ceremonial Maya de Tulum Pueblo” was composed of “iglesia, rodeo, cuarteles de guardia, plaza principal, casa del sacerdote, y oficina del juez tradicional.” The few remaining artifacts of the pre-tourism landscape surround the “**Maya**” church a few blocks southwest of the central plaza. Now, the complex is also called the “Centro



Comunitario La Ceiba” and still includes an “iglesia maya, plaza, corral, guard house, and ejido office.” In 2004 it was known as “Centro ceremonial Maya de Tulum Pueblo.”

Figure 253. Sign explaining infrastructure components of the ceremonial center at Tulum Pueblo, 2004 (Everton 2012: 282).



Figure 254. Rodeo and “yaxché,” church, and cuartel in Maya ceremonial complex, Tulum Pueblo.





**Guardia barracks.** In 1958 when Peissel passed through, and in 1970 or so, when Luxton lived there, they present evidence of a guardia structure next to the church. In 1971, Everton (2012: 224-26) saw a guardhouse just west of the church. Today, there is still a building that houses important visitors during ritual fiestas.

**Large plaza ceibas.** Perhaps the most impressive relic of days past is the largest ceiba in Tulum Pueblo, over 23 feet in girth, at the corner of calles Mercurio Pte. and Acuario Sur -- across the street diagonally from the Maya church. Within a block toward the west are three more large trees (unmeasured, in private solares).

Given the history of hurricanes over Tulum, it seems a bit remarkable that these largest ceibas remain. The largest tree did lose its upper trunk in a storm, but it regenerated wonderfully. While it does lack a normal canopy and does have an enormous hollow in its trunk, it is revered by the neighborhood. Children play in the hole and restaurant clients love to eat outside beneath its branches. They all comment on how it will survive the next storm.

**Figure 255. The largest ceiba in Tulum Pueblo, 2020.**





Figure 256. Largest ceiba shades outdoor restaurant, across from Maya church, Tulum, 2020.  
Three more large ceibas in background.



Figure 257. Kids look into hollow trunk of largest ceiba, Tulum, 2020.





Figures 258, 259. Ceiba at church on modern plaza; cemetery ceiba with colorful mural base, Tulum, 2020.



**Akumal.** (“place of sea turtles,” also, Acomal, Acumal)

If Tulum had an affiliated CSC settlement, it was Akumal. This site, 25 km north of Tulum Pueblo, was considered by Gann (1924: 41, 135) and Lothrop (1924: 32) as the **northernmost town of the Santa Cruz Indians**. At the time it was a hamlet of perhaps 10 people. Akumal was too small for a school in 1950s (Pacheco C. 1958: 221; Host 1996: 140). I have no other evidence that the place was ever recognized as a subject town of Chumpón or even Tulum.

During the mid-1960s owner Pablo Bush Romero began developing his cocal and rancho into a resort. Modern Akumal has two major components divided by national highway 307. To the seaward the former ranch of don Paul has become the major resort community – with tennis courts, condominiums, beach, etc. West of the highway a new grid plan town of some 1,000 residents has a typical plaza with ceiba, cancha, kiosk, and government building. Perhaps the only indication of Akumal’s connection with the CSC past is the large crucifix in front of the small yellow church across the street from the plaza. On occasion the cross is draped with a covering reminiscence of the huipiled crosses of the CSC.

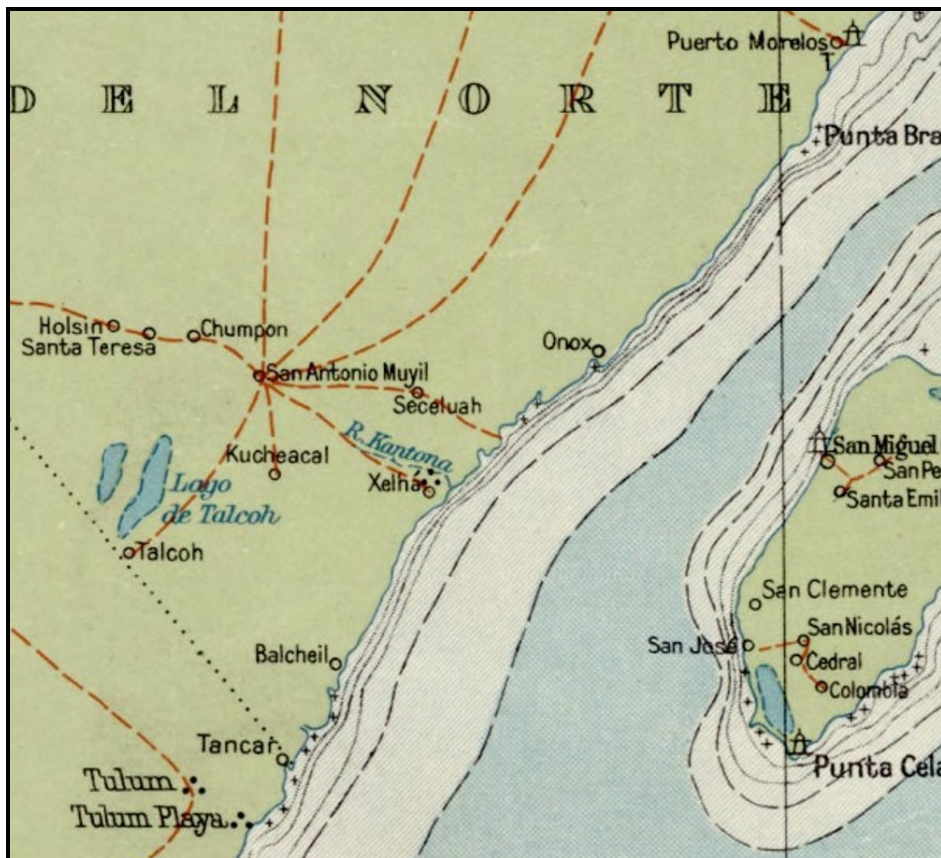


## VI. San Antonio Muyil

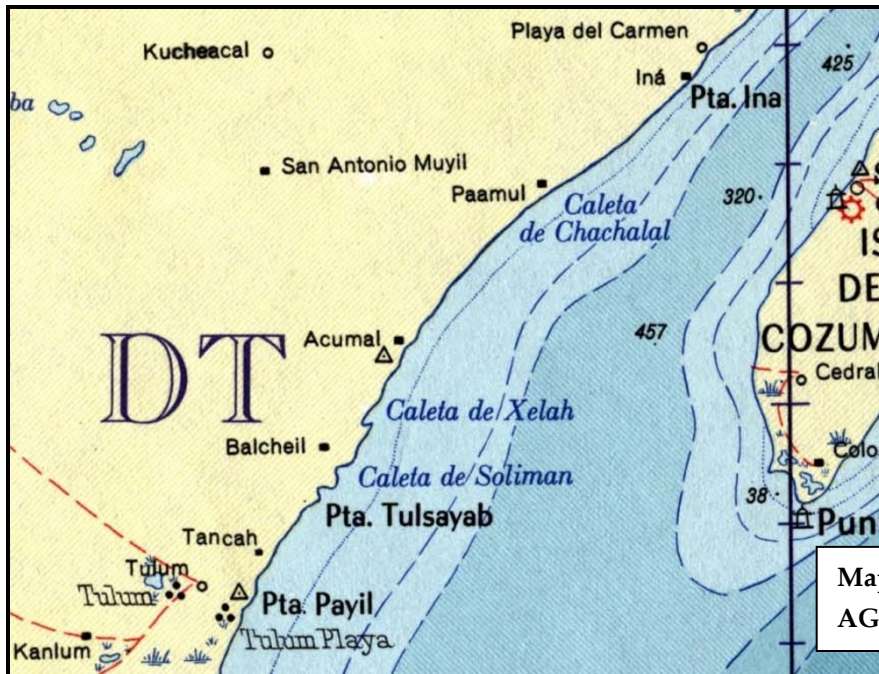
The most isolated and unusual of the CSC shrine sites was San Antonio Muyil, a northern outpost town that was temporarily important as an aggressive rebel site that hosted a holy cross. Its location has been in dispute for a while. It first appeared on maps, the 1878 Berendt, connected by trail with the coastal site of Xelhá. It has also been described as being a little west and north from Akumal (Everton 2012: 257) and inland from caleta Chacalal (Gamboa G.: 2). On maps of Pacheco Cruz (1934: 8) S. A. Muyil was connected by a domesticated animal trail (bridal path, camino de herradura) to the coastal village of Pamul. It is also located on his 1958 map of federal schools (1958: 213).

On editions of the famous American Geographical Society map of Hispanic America compiled between 1920 and 1943 (AGS 1943: 125) the site is clearly located (see maps s and c.). It is the center of a network of trails in 1927 and is connected with Xelha on maps from 1943? (AGS) and 1936 (U.S. Army). I have never seen the town listed in census records.

Map 12. San Antonio Muyil location, AGS NF16, 1927.







Judging simply by its name one must assume that original settlers came from the area around Muyil, the ruin site just south of Tulum. It probably began as a subsidiary town of Tulum, which is some 30 km to the south. Apparently, S. A. Muyil began as a “wartime” shrine center (Sullivan 1989: 220) and with warriors from Tulum and Chunpóm attacked to the north, even to the major town Kuntunilkin, 70 km away in 1870 and on July 5, 1872 (Perez A. 1914: 226; Gamboa G sin fecha: 3).

From the diary of a participant in counter-raid on San Antonio Muyil from Tizimin in August (Perez A. 1914: 228) and as explained by Dumond (1985: 300), S. A. Muyil contained “80 houses, with a church about 25 varas in length, and over the principal altar of were thirty-nine crosses; . . . at one and the other side of the church there were two houses . . . 20 varas in length . . . in which could be counted about sixty hammocks’.” These structures were undoubtedly *cruzo’ob* guard barracks.

The place was prominent enough at the turn of the century to be considered as the node of the railroad planned for eastern Yucatan (BAR 1900: 33). As the Caste War raged, La Compañía de los Ferrocarriles Sur-Orientales de Yucatán was organized in May 1899 to “open up vast uncultivated regions in the old Maya peninsula and carry civilization and peace to the Indian tribes now in revolt.” The proposed route went from Bahía Ascensión on the Caribbean to San Antonio Muyil and on to Valladolid, with another spur connecting San Antonio Muyil with Tihosuco, Ichmul, Peto, and Mérida.



Its demise is problematic. Dumond (1985: 300) has suggested that it lasted until the final Mexican conquest in 1901, when it was abandoned, but others think it lasted at least until about 1930 (INAH 1979: 9) . . . or even later. The whereabouts of the “sacred Talking Cross of San Antonio Muyil” was unknown until Everton (2012: 257, 284) learned from his primary informant (in 2005) the movement of the cross first to X-Can (52 km northwest of S. A. Muyil) and then down the highway to Nuevo X-Can in 1953. Devotees from X-Can, Yucatán, went to San Antonio Muyil about 1950 and returned with the cross. Everton’s photographs from 2005 show the large holy cross at Nuevo X-Can as well as three others, smaller ones also clothed in embroidered sudarios/huipiles (pp. 262-3, 285).

For a couple of decades, the site, now well-known about 11 km west of Akumal and accessible by an unimproved road, has been developed as Uxuxubi, an “ecotourism” center that has a tower with zipline, crocodile farm, rustic cabins, and local guides. It is understandable why the warriors of San Antonio Muyil would select the site: it is a beautiful setting, surrounding an unusually clean and accessible cenote. The one ceiba on site was planted about 12 years ago, obviously so guides can speak of this special Maya tree during their “spiel” before quawking tourists.

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## VII. Outlier Cruzo'ob Landscapes

Around the edges of the core CSC region a few places exhibit in their landscapes continuing ties to the cult. They deserve a mention here. Tepich, Tihosuco , and X-Cabil, are from FCP municipio; Xocén and Cozumel are a bit farther away.

**Tepich.** (“at the ear tree,” Guanacaste, *Enterolobium ciclocarpum* )(Roys 1957: 139; Anon. 1999: 1)

In the ancient province of Cochuah, Tepich was one of the largest early eastern encomiendas reported for 1549 with 340 tributarios and 1579 (Roys 1957: 139). By 1562 it was attached to Valladolid (Clendinnen 2003: 60). Its fame in the CSC story comes because Tepich was the site of the initial Caste War event – the attack by Maya cacique Cecilio Chi, on July 30, 1847 (Reed 1964: 59). Like other Maya leaders revolutionaries, Chi was from the Yucatecan frontier area. He was from Ichmul, Jacinto Pat was from Tihosuco, and Manuel Antonio Ay was from Chichimila (Reed 1964: 55).

When asked about modern CSC activities most of our ten informants from Tepich claimed their town was not a “major player” in the CSC “drama.” On the other hand, “guards” from Tepich were in Tixcacal Guardia in during the early 2000s (Montes 2005: 130, Aviña C. 2007: 111) and pilgrims visited the festival in Chunpóm (Sanchez 2018: 336). Also, roadway CSC shrines have been placed at the highway entry and at the north exit of the town, headed toward Tihosuco. Ceibas are prominent in the center of the plaza, which is overlooked by the church, and at the cemetery.

Figures 260, 261. Roadside CSC shrines near Tepich.





Figure 262. Tepich: church and plaza with planted central ceiba.



The annual festival, for San José de la Montaña, occurs in March and while it is labeled a “traditional Maya” feria, it features one week of only 1) daily formal bull fights with professional toreadors and 2) public dances with paid musical groups and mariachis normally from Yucatán. The bull ring erected in the plaza is enormous given its temporary tenure. The planted central ceiba remains and is growing *in situ*.

Figure 263. Air photograph of Tepich, with rodeo and church, during March festival, 2017.







**Figure 264. Ceibas prominent in schoolhouse mural, at plaza, Tepich.**

**Tihosuco.** This so-called “capital maya olvidada” (Zanier 2010: 237) is not here included as a CSC settlement, but perhaps can be considered an outlier. Tihosuco lacks the landscape elements I considered as diagnostic of the CSC and it is rarely included among the towns that supply guards or pilgrims to CSC shrine centers. However, as the site of the Museo de la Guerra de Castas it attracts many tourists and some consider it as the “point of the spear” in “resistance” to cultural change (p. 238).

Tihosuco was an early settlement during the colonial era, perhaps founded in 1559 (Roys 1957: 137). By 1579 leaders of the region lived there as the “capital” of the pre-Spanish province of Cochuah (Roys 1957: 137, 140). It is the only interior site in our study region on the 1843 map of John Lloyd Stephens. Like Ichmul just across the border in Yucatán, Tihosuco is a relatively important tourist attraction because of its colonial relics.

### **X-Cabil.**

The town of about 1,000 residents, which is very near the border with Yucatán, is often included among the CSC settlements because of a few landscape features and because on occasion a few pilgrims and guards visit the shrine at Tixcacal Guardia, some 43 km to the southeast. At the intersection with the highway that passes nearby is a large shrine dedicated to the CSC. Within are three huipiled-crosses. Also, the town’s colonial church, which also houses numerous CSC crosses, is important enough for preservation for tourism – one of three in the state that got funds in 2016.



Figures 265, 266. Roadside CSC shrine, with details, X-Cabil.



### Xocén, Yucatán.

This settlement of some 2,400 residents is 11 km south-southeast of Valladolid, 6 km southeast of Chichimila, some 85 km from Tixcacal Guardia, and 120 km from the Cruz Parlante in FCP. It gained fame as a center of resistance against early Spanish *entradas* and during the Caste War of the mid-1800s and a setting for one of the “Talking Crosses” (Reed 1964, Terán C. y Rassmussen 2005). It was burned by the Yucatecan Mexicans as late as 1908 in the lingering CSC conflict (Arnold 1909: 86).

It is considered part of the CSC settlement complex primarily because some think it was the home of Juan de la Cruz, one of the “cross-talkers” (Zimmermann 1963: 61), and *cruzo’ob* from QR make regular visits as “pilgrims.” In fact, Xocén lore recalls that years before the Caste War a talking stone cross, worshipped by the residents, was buried in a very deep hole when the cross became too demanding, requiring too much from the devotees. In response, to strike back at the devotees, the cross went farther underground, left Xocén, and eventually surfaced in Chan Santa Cruz in 1848 (Montes 2009: 122). Folan *et al* (2016: 301) discusses the Maya myths of such underground routes.

Today the village is frequently described as “the center of the modern Maya world” (Góngora B. y González M. 1995; Dzib May 1999; Terán C. y Rassmussen 2005). Each year on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Day of the Cross, many pilgrims trek to the Sanctuary of the Santísima Cruz Tún south of Xocén in search of miracles needed for the difficulties of their lives: to make their milpas more productive, to cure an infirm relative, to secure their *solares* from the harmful “winds.” At Tún, theater/dance performances have become famous since 1989. Public performances attract Yucatecans as well as increasing numbers of international tourists. This is the most elaborate expression of the traditional Yucatecan *vaquería* dance.



Aside from the huipiled-crosses of the Sanctuary south of town, near the entrance of the old trail between Xocén and Chichimila, west of the plaza, is a three-cross CSC shrine.

**Figure 267. CSC shrine and well on the trail to Chichimila, in west Xocén, 2019.**



As part of the local lore passed on by the residents, God has designated that Xocén will be the last place on Earth, in part because the seven cenotes of Xocén provide the best water in the world. The main cenote is thought to be connected underground with those at Cobá and Chichén Itzá. Other traditions practiced include an annual “staged” bull fight, with implantation of a young ceiba in the bull ring to protect the event from “los males vientos” and a recognition of Wan Thul as “dueño del Ganado.” The *cuch* ritual, with dancing pig heads, is also a part of the festival (Pohl 1981; Loewe 2003; Terán C. y Rassamussen 2005: 34, 51, 87, 168). Xocén is one of a very few places that plants a ceiba, not a zapote, in the rodeo.





Figure 268. Raising the ceiba in Xocén, 2019. (Courtesy, Dr. Crystal Sheedly.)

The town has at least eleven ceibas: five around the church/centro, one at the main cenote (away from the church), two at wells in the southwest corner, one at the well at the northeast corner, and two in the forest south of the comisaria. Three more trees are at the sanctuary south of town. We were told that a large tree on the southwest corner of town died some 20 years ago. (see Davidson 2019: 98-102)

In modern times maya dignitaries from CSC towns in QR make regular visits to Xocén (Aviña C. 2007: 105). In May 2020, a representative of Tuzik traveled to Xocén requesting aid in determining why a whirlwind struck down the “ceiba” (actually a zapote) planted 1.5 m deep in the Tusik plaza during the annual corrida. Residents took this as a “sign of mal vientos” and halted the festival. Three religious from Xocén were asked to visit the site to explain the cause and suggest the proper response (Canul N. 2004: 293).



Figures 269, 270. Sanctuary with entry ceiba on right; (right) Dancers in front of ceiba during May 3<sup>rd</sup> festival, Sanctuary of the Holy Cross Tún, south of Xocén (Valladolid).



### Cozumel Island, and the recent landscape nods to Caste War history.

At the outset of the Caste War on the mainland, during the summer of 1848, Cozumel Island became a haven for Hispanics and Maya from the mainland. By 1850 it was recognized as a “refugee station” of 314 adults, 2/3 rds “whites” and 1/3 rd Maya, with a few mestizos (Rugeley 2009: 138). According to local lore (recent) from El Cedral, the southern settlement of Cozumel, the village was founded by a few refugees from Sabán, Yucatán (see plaque photograph below). Supposedly, the Cárdenas family arrived first (Sabloff 1977: 39). The January 1851 tithe list for the island written by the resident priest, Father Doroteo Rejon (Sabloff 1977: 328-29), counts 85 “vecinos” and 33 “indigenas,” including the Cárdenas surname, which is still quite prominent in the settlement.

While Cozumel was never CSC territory, the romanticism of the Caste War is apparently deemed of value to the modern tourism and has resulted in a few landscape additions. When I was a frequent visitor in Cedral during the summer of 1965 and 1966, no one ever mentioned the CSC during discussions of their history. The plaque noting village origins seems to have originated in 1995.

Likewise, San Miguel, the main settlement on the island, has only since “tourist times” taken on the heritage of the Chan Santa Cruz. Previous celebrations included pan-Yucatecan events such as the dance of the pig’s head (*cuch* ritual, Loewe 2003), but only recently have CSC features been added to church altars.

Southeast of Cedral at Punta Sur, just north of the lighthouse at Celarain, a monument recognizing the history of the Chan Santa Cruz was erected in 2012. It was



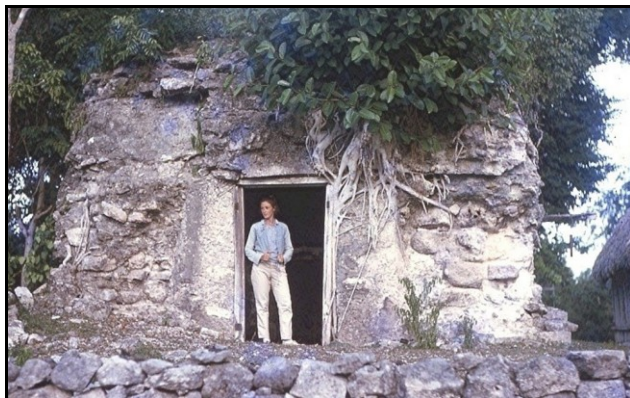
probably constructed to add to the allure of the island's past and give tourists another place to visit while on shore from the cruise liners.



Figures 271, 272. Modern history plaque in Cedral; house and family of don Cristino Cárdenas, Cedral, 1965.



Figures 273, 274. Cedral: Sharon at ruin and edge of thatched church to right, 1966; Altar with three CSC huipiled crosses, in new church, 2008.





Figures 275 276. Sharon and German Garcia at ritual of the pig head, feria of San Miguel, Cozumel, July 29, 1965; modern altar in San Miguel with three CSC huipiled crosses.



Figure 277. Chan Santa Cruz monument, Punta Sur, Cozumel Island.



## Concluding Remarks.

What is the future of the ceiba in Quintana Roo? Will they continue to be planted in plazas in QR? What of the followers of the Little Holy Cross(es), their ceremonial centers, and their allied CSC villages? Over fifty years ago, in 1963, Charlotte Zimmermann (1965: 155) concluded that “the Cult is dying a slow death.” “The end of the Cult is thus imminent,” she wrote (p. 156). On the other hand, Montes (2009: 131) has noted that since the days of Villa Rojas, some 85 years ago, at least at Tixcacal Guardia, the number of devoted shrine guards of the major cross has increased from 700 to 1,000 and they come from more places (8 to 11).

During the last fifty years, change in Quintana Roo has been driven by the incredible growth of international tourism. It has been an overwhelming force with numerous consequences, including an impact on the activities and landscapes of the cult of the Chan Santa Cruz Maya. To enhance tourism, the government at national, state, and municipal levels has developed infrastructure, supported in-migration from across Mexico, and involved themselves in traditional activities of the CSC. Places such as Tulum Pueblo, Puerto Morelos, and Playa Carmen have been transformed from small traditional villages into urban centers catering to the tastes of modern tourists.

Of the almost 2,900 ceibas known in QR during this study, 50 % are in mainland settlements and 46% are along roadways. **Combining the number of ceibas from Xcaret, Playa del Carmen, and Puerto Morelos with those along highway 307, the total figure is 1,505 – 52% of all ceibas in QR – in a 40 km stretch. This must be one of the greatest concentrations of ceibas in the world! And all were planted in the name of impressing tourists.**

Well-meaning government bureaucrats have also recognized that to grow revenue from international (and national) tourism, the exotic history and rituals of the CSC ceremonial centers might be of value. As a result, Turismo has increasingly inserted itself into CSC territory. The agency provides financial support for annual cruzo'ob festivals, pays for advertisements and outside entertainment to attract tourists, builds new infrastructure (roads, schools, government buildings, plaza improvements, etc.) and even makes cash payouts to Maya leaders in CSC villages to guarantee compliance. Of course, these interventions result in culture loss and accompanying landscape alterations. All because of the **the onslaught of tourism of the Maya Riviera !**



As young people move out of their cruzo'ob villages to serve tourists in urban settings, as they gain more education and seek occupations other than milpa agriculture, as they married a non-Yucatecan spouse and visits home become infrequent, as they disconnect from their families and lose the ways of the ancients, the ritual events of the annual festival (including yaxché planting and fake bull fights) will lose its following, the small protective roadside shrine will be left to decay, and the "Maya" temples will give way to green Protestant churches.

**"How you gonna keep 'em down on the milpa, after they've seen Cancún?"**

**It just might be that about the time**

**we see the last old plaza ceiba in Cruzo'ob settlements die, and**

**we see the last thatched roadside shrine decay,**

**we are also seeing the last of the cult, culture, and landscapes of the**

**Talking Cross of Quintana Roo.**

**\*\*\* \*\***



## Appendix I. Settlements studied in Quintana Roo, 2020.

Locality	Municipio	Pop.	Pop.	Ceibas	Plaza	Plaza	Notes
		Total	Indigena		Ceibas	Features	
ADOLFO DE LA HUERTA	JMM	107	107	0	0	C, I, Sc, TC	
ADOLFO LÓPEZ MATEOS	JMM	309	212	2	1	C,G, I, Pg,Sc,TC	
AGUA AZUL	LC	446	422	1	1	C,G,GS,K,Sc,W,WT	plaza cenote
AKUMAL	TULUM	1,310	849	5	1	C,G,I,K,WT	
ALLENDE	OPB	868	63	7	2	D,E,GD	
ALTOS DE SEVILLA	OPB	605	555	0	0	C,D,E,FP,G,GD,Pg,TC,W,WT	
ÁLVARO OBREGÓN (Un.Agricola)	OPB	2,869	320	0	0	D,FP,GD,I,K,Pg	
ÁLVARO OBREGÓN VIEJO	OPB	169	31	0	0	C,Sc	
ANDRÉS QUINTANA ROO	OPB	96	55	1	0	C,FP,G,Pg,Sc,WT	
ANDRÉS QUINTANA ROO	FCP	346	295	1	1	GS,I,K,Sc,WT	big plaza hwy
BACALAR	OPB	11,048	3,848	86	17	G,K,Pg	fort
BENITO JUÁREZ	JMM	110	110	0	0	C,GH,I,Pg,TC	
BETANIA	FCP	584	581	4	1	D,I,Pg,Sc,WT	
BLANCA FLOR	OPB	632	574	0	0	D,I,K,Pg,W	
BUENA ESPERANZA	OPB	398	393	1	1	C,E,GS,I,Sc,TC,WT	
BUENAVISTA	OPB	585	52	0	0	C	
BULUKAX	JMM	558	542	0	0	C,FP,W	
CAAN LUMIL	OPB	364	242	0	0	C,FP,I, K,TC,WT	
CAANÁN	OPB	111	41	1	0	C,E,I,Sc,WT	
CACAO	OPB	2,056	173	0	0	C,E,GD,K,Pg,Sc	
CAFETAL (GRANDE)	JMM	334	302	0	0	C,K	
CAFETALITO	JMM	252	247	0	0	C	
CALDERITAS	OPB	5,326	1,028	8	1	C,Pg	
CANDELARIA	JMM	963	920	0	0	C,FP,Sc	
CANZEPCHÉN	FCP	227	227	3	2	C,I,W,WT	1 entry NW
CAOBAS	OPB	1,412	433	1	0	C,PG,WT	
CARLOS A. MADRAZO	OPB	1,825	66	0	0	C,D,E,K, WT	
CECILIO CHÍ (Hwy 309, Km 196.5)	FCP	70	70	3	0	NO PLAZA	
CHACCHOBEN	OPB	728	408	5	1	D,I,K,	1 entry East
CHAN CHEN CHUC	FCP	63	63	1	1	W	no cancha
CHAN SANTA CRUZ (Yodzonot Pte)	FCP	571	570	2	1	C,K,WT	cenote plaza
CHANCAH DERREPENTE	FCP	425	425	1	1	C,GH,I,Sc,W,WT	cenote, corral
CHANCAH VERACRUZ	FCP	416	413	2	0	C,D,I,TC	red corral
CHANCHÉN COMANDANTE	FCP	98	98	5	1	C,GH,I,Sc,W,WT	cenote
CHANCHÉN PALMAR	TULUM	469	469	0	0	C,GP,I,K,W	
CHANCHEN PRIMERO	TULUM	875	874	7	3	D,GD,I,K	
CHETUMAL	OPB	151,243	26,142	248	1	G,K	clock tower
CHIQUILÁ	LC	1,466	298	1	0	D,K,Pg	
CHUMPÓN	FCP	717	714	6	2	D,G,G,GH,I,TC,W	corral
CHUN ON	FCP	269	269	1	1	C,FP,GH,W,W	
CHUNHUÁS	FCP	568	568	0	0	C,GD,I,K,Sc,W,WT	corral
CHUNHUHUB	FCP	4,644	4,145	1	1	C,D,G,I,K,Pg	
CHUN-YAH	FCP	780	771	1	0	D,G,GS,Sc,W	
CHUNYAXCHÉ	LC	5	5			NO VISIT	
CHUNYAXCHÉ	SOL	10	10			NO VISIT	



CHUNYAXCHÉ	FCP	191	191	8	0	NO PLAZA	
CINCO DE MAYO	OPB	92	45	1	1	C,G	
CIUDAD CHEMUYIL	TULUM	1,377	730	12	1	D,GD,Sc	307 entry
COBÁ	TULUM	1,278	1,214	29	0	D,G,GS,Sc,W	
COCOYOL	OPB	1,019	93	0	0	C,D,E,GD,K,Pg,Sc,TC	
CRISTÓBAL COLÓN	LC	341	326	7	0	C,FP,G,Sc	5 roadside
DAVID G GUTIÉRREZ RUIZ	OPB	384	54	0	0	C,E,Sc	
DIECIOCHO DE MARZO	OPB	239	8	0	0	C,GD,K,WT	
DOS AGUADAS	OPB	188	1	0	0	C,Pg,Sc	
DOS AGUADAS	JMM	202	200	0	0	C,Sc,WT	1 breadfruit
DZIUCHÉ	JMM	2,870	2,248	1	1	C,D,I,K,Pg	
DZOYOLA	FCP	461	460	5	0	C,E,W,WT	
DZULÁ	FCP	1,223	1,223	0	0	C,I,K,Pg,Sc	
EL CEDRAL	OPB	284	15	0	0	FP,I,Pg,Sc,TC	no cancha
EL CEDRAL	LC	752	748	4	0	C,GS,I,K,Pg,W	4 entry
EL CEDRALITO	OPB	236	232	1	0	C,E,Sc,WT	
EL GALLITO	OPB	69	67	0	0	C,FP,G,Pg,Sc,WT	
EL IDEAL	LC	818	722	0	0	D,I	
EL MARTIRIO	JMM	69	67	0	0	C,I,Sc	
EL NARANJAL	LC	118	118	4	4	C	museo
EL NARANJAL	JMM	662	644	0	0	C,GS,K,Sc,WT	
EL PARAÍSO	OPB	122	104	0	0	G,Sc,WT	no cancha
EL PROGRESO	OPB	161	49	1	0	FP	no cancha
EL TINTAL	LC	1,074	1,053	3	0	C,D,G,K,Pg,Sc	
EL TRIUNFO	JMM	141	136	0	0	C,Sc	
EMILIANO ZAPATA	FCP	483	20	3	0	D,I,K,Sc,WT	
ESPERANZA	LC	367	359	0	0	C,E,G,GS,K,Pg,TC,WT	
FELIPE CARRILLO PUERTO	FCP	25,744	19,275	45	4	G,K	clock tower
FILOMENO MATA	FCP	636	633	0	0	C,G,GH,GS,I,K,Sc,W	
FRANCISCO I. MADERO	FCP	287	287	2	1	C,GH,GS,K,W,WT	
FRANCISCO J. MÚJICA	OPB	129	38	0	0	C,E,FP,Sc	
FRANCISCO MAY	FCP	184	184	4	3	C,GH,GS,W	
FRANCISCO UH MAY	TULUM	655	545	6	2	D,GD,GS,K,Pg,Sc,TC	
FRANCISCO VILLA	OPB	882	176	0	0	D,E,I	
GAVILANES	JMM	299	294	1	1	C,D,GS,K	
GUADALUPE VICTORIA	OPB	415	411	0	0	C,P,Sc,W	sheep
HOBOMPICH	FCP	126	123	0	0	C,E,G,GS,I,Sc,WT	
HONDZONOT	TULUM	368	368	3	1	D,GP,K,Sc	
HUATUSCO	OPB	435	106	2	0	GD,GS,K,Pg,Sc WT	no cancha
HUAY MAX	JMM	1,399	1,399	0	0	C,FP,I,Pg,Sc,W,WT	
HUAY-PIX	OPB	1,649	574	3	2	D,FP,Pg,Sc	
IGNACIO MANUEL ALTAMIRANO	FCP	574	566	2	0	C,GD,I,K	
IGNACIO ZARAGOZA	LC	2,213	1,990	0	0	C,D,GP,K,Pg	
INSURGENTES	JMM	69	46	0	0	Sc,WT	no cancha
ISIDRO FABEL	OPB	83	18	0	0	C,E,G	
ITURBIDE	OPB	102	45	1	1	E,G,Sc,W,WT	no cancha
JAVIER ROJO GÓMEZ	JMM	48	48	0	0	C,G,W	
JAVIER ROJO GÓMEZ	OPB	2,911	197	0	0	E,K,Pg	no cancha
JESÚS GONZÁLEZ ORTEGA	OPB	620	114	2	0	C,E,Pg	
JESÚS MARTÍNEZ ROSS	OPB	140	138	1	0	C,E,G,K	
JOSÉ MARÍA MORELOS	JMM	11,750	9,756	1	1	C,G,I,Sc,TC,W,W,WT	
JOSÉ MARÍA PINO SUÁREZ	FCP	227	227	2	0	C,G,I,Sc,TC,WT	corral
JOSÉ NARCISO ROVIROSA	OPB	1,107	113	0	0	D,G,I,K	



JUAN SARABIA	OPB	1,093	88	0	0	C,Sc,WT	corral
KAMPOKOLCHÉ (Nuevo)	FCP	552	552	0	0	C,I,K,Sc,W	
KANCABCHÉN	JMM	1,083	1,012	1	0	C,I,K	
KANKABDZONOT	FCP	93	93	10	3	I,Sc	cenote, no cancha
KANTEMÓ	JMM	229	193	0	0	C,Pg,WT	
KANTUNILKÍN	LC	7,150	5,265	9	0	D,G,GD,I,K,Pg	4 corners?
KOPCHEN	FCP	513	513	0	0	C,GD,I,K,K,TC,W,WT	shrine west
KUCHUMATÁN	OPB	1,019	898	9	0	D,E,GD,GH,GS,I,K	
LA BUENA FE	OPB	237	208	0	0	C,E,G,I,K,Pg,Sc,W,WT	
LA CAROLINA	JMM	88	50	1	1	C,Sc	
LA CEIBA	TULUM	1	1			NO VISIT	
LA CEIBA	BJ	2	2			NO VISIT	
LA CEIBA	SOL	2	2			NO VISIT	
LA CEIBA	SOL	14	14			NO VISIT	
LA CEIBA (Hwy 307, km 175)	FCP	4	4	0	0	NO PLAZA	
LA CEIBA (Lazaro Cardenas)	OPB	156	70	4	1	E,K,P,Pg,Sc,WT	horses
LA CEIBITA	JMM	3	3			NO VISIT	
LA ESPERANZA	JMM	636	636	0	0	C,GS,I,K,Pg,W	
LA LIBERTAD	OPB	421	19	1	1	E,G,G,Sc,WT	no cancha
LA PANTERA	OPB	865	676	2	0	C,D,G,Pg	corral
LA PIMIENTITA	JMM	260	255	0	0	C,K,Sc,TC,WT	
LA PRESUMIDA	JMM	1,357	1,155	0	0	C,D,G,K	
LA UNIÓN	OPB	1,099	51	0	0	C,G,G,GP,K,Pg	
LAGUNA GUERRERO	OPB	654	62	0	0	C,FP,G,I,W,WT	corral
LAGUNA KANÁ	FCP	914	899	0	0	G,GS,I,K,W,WT	no cancha
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS	JMM	152	104	0	0	C,G,K	circular village
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS (Hwy 184)	OPB	539	26	3	1	C,D,GD,I	
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS SEGUNDO	OPB	699	84	0	0	C,D	
LEONA VICARIO	BJ	6,517	3,054	6	3	C	
LIMONAR	OPB	176	13	3	0	C,E,WT	
LIMONES	OPB	2,535	873	0	0	C,D,GS,K Pg	
LOS DIVORCIADOS	OPB	1,118	1,067	0	0	D,G,GD,K,Pg	
LUIS ECHEVERRÍA ÁLVAREZ	OPB	899	51	0	0	C,FP,G,G,I	corral
MACARIO GÓMEZ	TULUM	510	465	7	1	D,GD,K,Pg	
MAHAHUAL	OPB	920	144	0	0	GS,Sc	no cancha
MANUEL ANTONIO AY	TULUM	407	365	4	1	D,GD,K,Pg	
MANUEL ÁVILA CAMACHO	OPB	716	356	1	0	C,D,G,GS,I,K,Pg,Sc	
MARGARITA MAZA DE JUÁREZ	OPB	222	199	4	1	C,W,WT	corral
MAYA BALAM	OPB	2,018	1,899	4	3	C,D,E,G,GS,I,K,Sc	
MELCHOR OCAMPO	FCP	137	137	2	2	C,G,GH,I,Pg,W	hwy shrine
MELCHOR OCAMPO	OPB	382	38	0	0	C,E	
MIGUEL ALEMÁN	OPB	688	61	2	1	D,GS,Sc	corral
MIGUEL HIDALGO Y COSTILLA	OPB	676	316	2	2	D,GD,Sc,WT	
MIXTEQUILLA	FCP	82	82	2	0	C,FP,G,Sc,WT	
MOROCOY	OPB	1,293	119	0	0	C,K	
NACHI COCOM	OPB	833	177	0	0	C	



NARANJAL PONIENTE	FCP	754	754	0	0	C,I,K,Sc,W	
NICOLÁS BRAVO	OPB	4,011	1,307	2	0	C,E,FP,I,W	
NOH-BEC	FCP	2,045	647	1	0	C,GD,K,Pg	corral
NOH-CAH	FCP	75	74	1	1	C,GH,I,Sc,W, WT	
NUEVA LORÍA	FCP	225	168	7	0	C,GH,P,Sc,W	sheep
NUEVA REFORMA	JMM	321	319	0	0	C,I,Sc	
NUEVO BÉCAR	OPB	557	382	0	0	C,C,G,K,Pg,Sc	
NUEVO CAANÁN (California)	OPB	221	119	4	3	E,G,Pg	no cancha
NUEVO DURANGO	LC	225	225	1	0	C,K	
NUEVO ISRAEL	FCP	409	360	2	0	C,K,Sc,WT	
NUEVO JERUSALÉN	OPB	433	397	0	0	C,FP,Pg,Sc	
NUEVO PLAN DE LA NORIA	JMM	268	254	0	0	C,Sc	big plaza
NUEVO TABASCO	OPB	176	19	0	0	D,GD,GS,Sc	
NUEVO VALLADOLID	LC	1,294	1,150	1	0	C,C,D,G,I,K,Pg,WT	
NUEVO XCÁN	LC	1,130	1,056	1	0	C,D	boundary ceiba
OTHÓN P. BLANCO	JMM	551	482	0	0	D,FP,GD	
OTILIO MONTAÑO	OPB	350	14	0	0	C,E,I,Pg	
PACCHEN	LC	131	131	0	0	C	
PALMAR	OPB	950	109	5	2	C,D,GD,GP,GS,K,Pg	
PAYO OBISPO	OPB	120	31	0	0	G,Pg,Sc,TC,WT	no cancha
PEDRO ANTONIO SANTOS	OPB	497	64	0	0	D	
PEDRO MORENO	JMM	80	80	0	0	C,GD,K,Pg,WT	
PETCACAB	FCP	812	792	0	0	C,I,K,Pg,WT	
PIEDRAS NEGRAS	JMM	116	114	0	0	C,Sc	
PIMIENTA	JMM	260	255	0	0	C,Sc,TC,WT	
PLAN DE LA NORIA PONIENTE	JMM	233	181	3	1	C,Sc	
PLAYA DEL CARMEN	SOL	149,923	34,932	289	9	GD,FP	clock tower (low)
POLINKÍN	FCP	200	154	0	0	C,K,Pg	
POLYUC	FCP	1,226	1,115	0	0	C,I,K,Pg	
POZO PIRATA	JMM	175	175	0	0	C,Pg,WT	large plaza
PRESIDENTE JUÁREZ	FCP	1,004	976	0	0	D,G,K	
PUCTÉ	OPB	1,861	78	0	0	D,I	
PUERTO ARTURO	JMM	606	379	0	0	C,K,Sc	
PUERTO MORELOS	BJ	9,188	2,188	38	3	D,G,I,K,Pg	2 lighthouses
PUNTA LAGUNA	SOL	138	138	0	0	C,TC	cenote CSC shrine
RAMONAL	OPB	901	87	6	3	C,Sc	
RAMONAL, EI	FCP	417	404	0	2	C,GH,GS,I,K,P,Sc,WT	corral, horses
RAUDALES	OPB	245	19	1	0	C,K,Sc	
REFORMA	OPB	992	744	0	0	C,G,I,K,Sc	giant plaza
REFORMA AGRARIA	FCP	314	9	0	0	C,G,GH,Sc,WT	
RÍO ESCONDIDO	OPB	290	91	0	0	E,K,Pg	no cancha
RÍO VERDE	OPB	462	12	0	0	D,E,GH,K,Pg,WT	
SABÁN	JMM	2,167	2,150	0	0	C,FP,GD,Pg	
SABANA SAN FRANCISCO	JMM	154	151	2	2	C,W,WT	
SABIDOS	OPB	1,342	133	0	0	D,GD,K,Pg	
SACALACA	JMM	1,010	1,006	1	0	C,D,FP,G,GS,I, Pg,W	
SACXÁN	OPB	837	66	2	1	C,K	
SACZUQUIL	JMM	414	397	0	0	C,G,I	
SAHCAB MUCUY	TULUM	456	456	1	1	C,GP,I,K,Sc	



SAHCABCHÉN	FCP	40	40	3	2	W	no cancha
SAN ANDRÉS	FCP	347	347	1	0	C,GH,K,WT	
SAN ÁNGEL	LC	1,041	788	0	0	C	
SAN ANTONIO	LC	61	61	0	0	C	
SAN ANTONIO NUEVO	FCP	66	66	4	0	C,Sc,W	
SAN ANTONIO NUEVO (Hwy 295)	FCP	71	47	0	0	C,TC	
SAN ANTONIO SEGUNDO (Senor)	FCP	34	34	0	0	C	
SAN ANTONIO TUK	JMM	165	165	0	0	C,I,K	Black Locust
SAN BARTOLO	FCP	26	26	0	0	W	no cancha
SAN COSME	LC	361	361	0	0	C,GD,GS,I,K	
SAN DIEGO	JMM	581	568	0	0	C,FP,GS,I	
SAN FELIPE BERRIOZÁBAL	FCP	394	394	3	2	C,I,P,Sc,W	Guadalupe shrine
SAN FELIPE ORIENTE	JMM	207	207	0	0	C,FP,Sc,W	
SAN FELIPE PRIMERO	JMM	703	687	0	0	C,E,FP	
SAN FELIPE SEGUNDO	JMM	223	223	0	0	C,FP,G,Pg	
SAN FERNANDO	OPB	245	241	3	0	C,E,K,Pg	
SAN FRANCISCO	LC	767	757	0	0	D,I,K,Pg,W	
SAN FRANCISCO AKÉ	FCP	392	392	0	0	C,G,I,K,Pg,W,WT	
SAN FRANCISCO BOTES	OPB	580	153	0	0	C,K,Pg,WT	
SAN HIPÓLITO	FCP	45	45	4	3	E,W	no cancha
SAN ISIDRO LA LAGUNA	OPB	860	820	1	0	D,E,G,K,WT	
SAN ISIDRO PONIENTE	JMM	225	79	2	0	C,G,WT	wooden tower
SAN JOSÉ PRIMERO	FCP	7	7	4	2	C	cenote
SAN JOSÉ SEGUNDO	FCP	254	254	2	1	C,GS,K,Sc	
SAN JUAN DE DIOS	TULUM	360	360	2	0	D,GD,K	
SAN JUAN ORIENTE	JMM	147	147	0	0	C,P,Sc	sheep
SAN LORENZO	LC	177	177	0	0	C	
SAN LUIS	FCP	190	180	8	2	C,C,I,Sc,W	corral
SAN MARCOS	JMM	203	42	1	1	I	no cancha
SAN MARTINIANO	LC	206	206	0	0	C	
SAN PEDRO	FCP	61	61	4	0	C,G	s tulum
SAN PEDRO PERALTA	OPB	766	58	0	0	FP,Sc	no cancha
SAN RAMÓN	FCP	482	482	4	1	D,FP,GH,I,TC	
SAN ROMÁN	LC	110	103	0	0	C,K,W	
SAN ROMÁN	OPB	530	509	0	0	C,E,GS,Sc	
SAN SILVERIO	FCP	582	580	1	1	C,GP,GS,I,K,Sc,W	
SANTA AMALIA	FCP	68	65	7	0	I,W	no cancha
SANTA GERTRUDIS	JMM	899	826	0	0	C,E,F,G,I,Pg	
SANTA ISABEL	FCP	46	46	0	0	Sc,W	no cancha
SANTA LUCÍA	FCP	139	136	0	0	C,GH,Sc,W,WT	
SANTA MARÍA PONIENTE	FCP	752	752	0	0	C,E,G,GH,Sc	
SANTA ROSA SEGUNDO	FCP	1,068	1,061	6	1	C,E,G,GH,I,K,Sc	
SANTO DOMINGO	LC	297	291	0	0	C,GS,WT	
SEÑOR	FCP	3,095	3,073	3	0	D,I,K,WT	
SERGIO BUTRÓN CASAS	OPB	2,235	55	2	0	D,I,K,Pg,WT	
SOLFERINO	LC	799	328	0	0	D,D,I	
SUBTENIENTE LÓPEZ	OPB	1,915	198	0	0	C,D,K	
TABASCO	JMM	263	262	0	0	C,G,I,W	
TABI	FCP	334	326	0	0	C,G,I,K,TC,W,WT	
TAC-CHIVO	FCP	180	180	0	0	NO PLAZA	
TEPICH	FCP	2,753	2,741	1	1	D,G,G,I,K	Sr. Tila, C. Chi
TIERRAS NEGRAS	OPB	212	212	2	1	C,G,Sc	



TIHOSUCO	FCP	4,994	4,931	0	0	C,D,I,K	
TIXCACAL GUARDIA	FCP	659	659	13	1	D,GH,GS,I,K	red corral
TOMÁS GARRIDO CANABAL	OPB	338	5	0	0	FP,Pg	no cancha
TRAPICH	FCP	197	197	0	0	C,G,K,Sc,W,WT	
TRES GARANTÍAS	OPB	790	197	1	0	C,E,FP,Sc	
TRES REYES	FCP	82	82	3	1	C,GH,I,W,W	
TRES REYES	LC	386	366	0	0	C,D,E,G,I,K,Pg	
TULUM	TULUM	18,233	7,587	43	8	C,D,GD,I,K,Pg	red corral
TUZI	FCP	699	699	4	2	C,D,I,Pg,Sc,TC,W	
UCUM	OPB	1,495	55	3	1	C,I,K	
UH MAY	FCP	480	466	4	2	D,F,K,Sc,WT	
UXUXUBI	SOL	15	8	1	0	NO PLAZA	ecotourism
VALLEHERMOSO	OPB	545	80	1	0	D,FP,G,GD,I	
VERACRUZ	OPB	148	27	2	0	G,WT	no cancha
VICENTE GUERRERO	LC	552	523	6	0	D,I,K,Sc,WT	6 @ intersection
X-CABIL	JMM	1,087	1,087	3	0	C,D,K,Pg,WT	
XCALAK	OPB	375	10	0	0	C,Sc,WT	
XCARET	SOL			96	3	Artificial Plaza	tourism park
X-HAZIL NORTE	FCP	161	161	0	0	C,E,GS,TC,WT	
X-HAZIL SUR	FCP	1,422	1,413	1	0	D,G,I,K,Pg	
X-KONHA	FCP	107	66	1	0	C,GH,P,Sc	turkeys
XNOH CRUZ	JMM	169	169	0	0	C,FP,WT	
X-PICHIL	FCP	1,340	1,340	0	0	C,GD,I,K,W,WT	
X-QUEROL	JMM	102	102	1	0	C,FP,I,Pg,WT	
XUL-HA	OPB	2,037	441	3	1	C,D,G,K,Pg,Sc	
X-YATIL	FCP	945	935	0	0	C,G,I,K	Guadalupe shrine
YALCHÉ (Yaxchen)	FCP	472	466	0	0	C,I,K	
YAXCHÉ	TULUM	335	320	1	0	C,GP,I,K,W	Gilberto 1988
YAXCHÉ CHAL	FCP	22	22	4	2	NO VISIT	informants
YAXLEY	FCP	600	600	3	1	C,C,GH,I W	
YOACTÚN	FCP	476	476	0	0	C,K,Sc,W	
YODZONOT CHICO	FCP	78	78	0	0	Sc	no cancha
YODZONOT NUEVO	FCP	90	84	0	0	C,W,WT	
ZAFARRANCHO	JMM	328	320	0	0	C,I,Sc,WT	big plaza
ZAMORA	OPB	434	170	0	0	C,D,I,K,WT	



**Appendix II. Localities in Quintana Roo, with over 100 residents, and their proportions of Maya population, 2010.**

Locality	Municipio	Pop. Total	Pop. Indígena	% Indígena
ADOLFO DE LA HUERTA	José María Morelos	107	107	100.0%
ADOLFO LÓPEZ MATEOS	José María Morelos	309	212	68.6%
AGUA AZUL	Lázaro Cárdenas	446	422	94.6%
AKUMAL	Tulum	1,310	849	64.8%
ALLENDE	Othón P. Blanco	868	63	7.3%
ALTOS DE SEVILLA	Othón P. Blanco	605	555	91.7%
ÁLVARO OBREGÓN	Othón P. Blanco	2,869	320	11.2%
ÁLVARO OBREGÓN VIEJO	Othón P. Blanco	169	31	18.3%
ANDRÉS QUINTANA ROO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	346	295	85.3%
BACALAR	Othón P. Blanco	11,048	3,848	34.8%
BENITO JUÁREZ	José María Morelos	110	110	100.0%
BETANIA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	584	581	99.5%
BLANCA FLOR	Othón P. Blanco	632	574	90.8%
BUENA ESPERANZA	Othón P. Blanco	398	393	98.7%
BUENAVISTA	Othón P. Blanco	585	52	8.9%
BULUKAX	José María Morelos	558	542	97.1%
CAAN LUMIL	Othón P. Blanco	364	242	66.5%
CAANÁN	Othón P. Blanco	111	41	36.9%
CACAO	Othón P. Blanco	2,056	173	8.4%
CAFETAL GRANDE	José María Morelos	334	302	90.4%
CAFETALITO	José María Morelos	252	247	98.0%
CALDERITAS	Othón P. Blanco	5,326	1,028	19.3%
CANCÚN	Benito Juárez	628,306	146,544	23.3%
CANDELARIA	José María Morelos	963	920	95.5%
CANZEPCHÉN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	227	227	100.0%
CAOBAS	Othón P. Blanco	1,412	433	30.7%
CARLOS A. MADRAZO	Othón P. Blanco	1,825	66	3.6%
CECILIO CHI	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	70	70	100.0%
CHACCHOBEN	Othón P. Blanco	728	408	56.0%
CHAN SANTA CRUZ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	571	570	99.8%
CHANCAH DERREPENTE	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	425	425	100.0%
CHANCAH VERACRUZ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	416	413	99.3%
CHANCHÉN COMANDANTE	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	98	98	100.0%
CHANCHÉN PALMAR	Tulum	469	469	100.0%
CHANCHEN PRIMERO	Tulum	875	874	99.9%
CHETUMAL	Othón P. Blanco	151,243	26,142	17.3%
CHIKUILÁ	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,466	298	20.3%
CHUMPÓN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	717	714	99.6%
CHUN ON	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	269	269	100.0%
CHUNYAXCHÉ	Solidaridad	10	10	100.0%
CHUNHUÁS	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	568	568	100.0%
CHUNHUHUB	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	4,644	4,145	89.3%
CHUN-YAH	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	780	771	98.8%



CHUNYAXCHÉ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	191	191	100.0%
CHUNYAXCHÉ	Lázaro Cárdenas	5	5	100.0%
CIUDAD CHEMUYIL	Tulum	1,377	730	53.0%
COBÁ	Tulum	1,278	1,214	95.0%
COCOYOL	Othón P. Blanco	1,019	93	9.1%
COZUMEL	Cozumel	77,236	22,675	29.4%
CRISTÓBAL COLÓN	Lázaro Cárdenas	341	326	95.6%
DAVID G. GUTIÉRREZ RUIZ	Othón P. Blanco	384	54	14.1%
DIECIOCHO DE MARZO	Othón P. Blanco	239	8	3.3%
DOS AGUADAS	José María Morelos	202	200	99.0%
DOS AGUADAS	Othón P. Blanco	188	1	0.5%
DZIUCHÉ	José María Morelos	2,870	2,248	78.3%
DZOYOLA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	461	460	99.8%
DZULÁ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,223	1,223	100.0%
EL CEDRAL	Lázaro Cárdenas	752	748	99.5%
EL CEDRAL	Othón P. Blanco	284	15	5.3%
EL CEDRALITO	Othón P. Blanco	236	232	98.3%
EL IDEAL	Lázaro Cárdenas	818	722	88.3%
EL NARANJAL	José María Morelos	662	644	97.3%
EL NARANJAL	Lázaro Cárdenas	118	118	100.0%
EL PARAÍSO	Othón P. Blanco	122	104	85.2%
EL POCITO	Lázaro Cárdenas	159	148	93.1%
EL PROGRESO	Othón P. Blanco	161	49	30.4%
EL TINTAL	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,074	1,053	98.0%
EL TRIUNFO	José María Morelos	141	136	96.5%
EMILIANO ZAPATA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	483	20	4.1%
ESPERANZA	Lázaro Cárdenas	367	359	97.8%
ESTEBAN BACA CALDERÓN	Othón P. Blanco	222	24	10.8%
FELIPE CARRILLO PUERTO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	25,744	19,275	74.9%
FILOMENO MATA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	636	633	99.5%
FRANCISCO I. MADERO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	287	287	100.0%
FRANCISCO J. MÚJICA	Othón P. Blanco	129	38	29.5%
FRANCISCO MAY	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	184	184	100.0%
FRANCISCO UH MAY	Tulum	655	545	83.2%
FRANCISCO VILLA	Othón P. Blanco	882	176	20.0%
GAVILANES	José María Morelos	299	294	98.3%
GUADALUPE VICTORIA	Othón P. Blanco	415	411	99.0%
HIDALGO Y CORTEZ	Solidaridad	128	125	97.7%
HOBOMPICH	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	126	123	97.6%
HOLBOX	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,486	338	22.7%
HONDZONOT	Tulum	368	368	100.0%
HUATUSCO	Othón P. Blanco	435	106	24.4%
HUAY MAX	José María Morelos	1,399	1,399	100.0%
HUAY-PIX	Othón P. Blanco	1,649	574	34.8%
ICAICHÉ	Othón P. Blanco	172	11	6.4%
IGNACIO MANUEL ALTAMIRANO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	574	566	98.6%
IGNACIO ZARAGOZA	Lázaro Cárdenas	2,213	1,990	89.9%



ITURBIDE	Othón P. Blanco	102	45	44.1%
JAVIER ROJO GÓMEZ	Othón P. Blanco	2,911	197	6.8%
JAVIER ROJO GÓMEZ (PTA ALLEN)	Tulum	469	164	35.0%
JESÚS GONZÁLEZ ORTEGA	Othón P. Blanco	620	114	18.4%
JESÚS MARTÍNEZ ROSS	Othón P. Blanco	140	138	98.6%
JOSÉ MARÍA MORELOS	José María Morelos	11,750	9,756	83.0%
JOSÉ MARÍA PINO SUÁREZ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	227	227	100.0%
JOSÉ NARCISO ROVIROSA	Othón P. Blanco	1,107	113	10.2%
JUAN SARABIA	Othón P. Blanco	1,093	88	8.1%
JUÁREZ	Lázaro Cárdenas	199	176	88.4%
KAMPOKOLCHÉ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	552	552	100.0%
KANCABCHÉN	José María Morelos	1,083	1,012	93.4%
KANKABDZONOT	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	93	93	100.0%
KANTEMÓ	José María Morelos	229	193	84.3%
KANTUNILKÍN	Lázaro Cárdenas	7,150	5,265	73.6%
KOPCHEN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	513	513	100.0%
KUCHUMATÁN	Othón P. Blanco	1,019	898	88.1%
LA BUENA FE	Othón P. Blanco	237	208	87.8%
LA CEIBA	Benito Juárez	2	2	100.0%
LA CEIBA	Othón P. Blanco	156	70	44.9%
LA CEIBA	Solidaridad	14	14	100.0%
LA CEIBA	Solidaridad	2	2	100.0%
LA CEIBA	Tulum	1	1	100.0%
LA CEIBITA	José María Morelos	3	3	100.0%
LA ESPERANZA	José María Morelos	636	636	100.0%
LA LIBERTAD	Othón P. Blanco	421	19	4.5%
LA PANTERA	Othón P. Blanco	865	676	78.2%
LA PIMIENTITA	José María Morelos	260	255	98.1%
LA PRESUMIDA	José María Morelos	1,357	1,155	85.1%
LA UNIÓN	Othón P. Blanco	1,099	51	4.6%
LAGUNA GUERRERO	Othón P. Blanco	654	62	9.5%
LAGUNA KANÁ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	914	899	98.4%
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS	José María Morelos	152	104	68.4%
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS	Othón P. Blanco	539	26	4.8%
L. CÁRDENAS DEL RÍO TERCERO	Othón P. Blanco	217	199	91.7%
LÁZARO CÁRDENAS SEGUNDO	Othón P. Blanco	699	84	12.0%
LEONA VICARIO	Benito Juárez	6,517	3,054	46.9%
LIMONAR	Othón P. Blanco	176	13	7.4%
LIMONES	Othón P. Blanco	2,535	873	34.4%
LOS DIVORCIADOS	Othón P. Blanco	1,118	1,067	95.4%
LUIS ECHEVERRÍA ÁLVAREZ	Othón P. Blanco	899	51	5.7%
MACARIO GÓMEZ	Tulum	510	465	91.2%
MAHAHUAL	Othón P. Blanco	920	144	15.7%



MANUEL ANTONIO AY	Tulum	407	365	89.7%
MANUEL ÁVILA CAMACHO	Othón P. Blanco	716	356	49.7%
MARGARITA MAZA DE JUÁREZ	Othón P. Blanco	222	199	89.6%
MAYA BALAM	Othón P. Blanco	2,018	1,899	94.1%
MELCHOR OCAMPO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	137	137	100.0%
MELCHOR OCAMPO	Othón P. Blanco	382	38	9.9%
MIGUEL ALEMÁN	Othón P. Blanco	688	61	8.9%
MIGUEL HIDALGO Y COSTILLA	Othón P. Blanco	676	316	46.7%
MIXTEQUILLA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	82	82	100.0%
MOROCOY	Othón P. Blanco	1,293	119	9.2%
NACHI COCOM	Othón P. Blanco	833	177	21.2%
NARANJAL PONIENTE	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	754	754	100.0%
NICOLÁS BRAVO	Othón P. Blanco	4,011	1,307	32.6%
NOH-BEC	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	2,045	647	31.6%
NOH-CAH	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	75	74	98.7%
NUEVA LORÍA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	225	168	74.7%
NUEVA REFORMA	José María Morelos	321	319	99.4%
NUEVO BÉCAR	Othón P. Blanco	557	382	68.6%
NUEVO CAANÁN	Othón P. Blanco	221	119	53.8%
NUEVO DURANGO	Lázaro Cárdenas	225	225	100.0%
NUEVO ISRAEL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	409	360	88.0%
NUEVO JERUSALÉN	Othón P. Blanco	433	397	91.7%
NUEVO PLAN DE LA NORIA	José María Morelos	268	254	94.8%
NUEVO SAN MARCOS	José María Morelos	203	142	70.0%
NUEVO TABASCO	Othón P. Blanco	176	19	10.8%
NUEVO VALLADOLID	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,294	1,150	88.9%
NUEVO XCÁN	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,130	1,056	93.5%
OTHÓN P. BLANCO	José María Morelos	551	482	87.5%
OTILIO MONTAÑO	Othón P. Blanco	350	14	4.0%
PACCHEN	Lázaro Cárdenas	131	131	100.0%
PALMAR	Othón P. Blanco	950	109	11.5%
PAYO OBISPO	Othón P. Blanco	120	31	25.8%
PEDRO ANTONIO SANTOS	Othón P. Blanco	497	64	12.9%
PEDRO JOAQUÍN COLDWELL	Othón P. Blanco	786	76	9.7%
PETCACAB	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	812	792	97.5%
PIEDRAS NEGRAS	José María Morelos	116	114	98.3%
PLAN DE LA NORIA PONIENTE	José María Morelos	233	181	77.7%
PLAYA DEL CARMEN	Solidaridad	149,923	34,932	23.3%
POLINKÍN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	200	154	77.0%
POLYUC	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,226	1,115	90.9%
POZO PIRATA	José María Morelos	175	175	100.0%
PRESIDENTE JUÁREZ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,004	976	97.2%
PUCTÉ	Othón P. Blanco	1,861	78	4.2%



PUERTO ARTURO	José María Morelos	606	379	62.5%
PUERTO AVENTURAS	Solidaridad	5,979	1,485	24.8%
PUERTO MORELOS	Benito Juárez	9,188	2,188	23.8%
PUNTA LAGUNA	Solidaridad	138	138	100.0%
RAMONAL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	417	404	96.9%
RAMONAL	Othón P. Blanco	901	87	9.7%
RAUDALES	Othón P. Blanco	245	19	7.8%
REFORMA	Othón P. Blanco	992	744	75.0%
REFORMA AGRARIA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	314	9	2.9%
RÍO ESCONDIDO	Othón P. Blanco	290	91	31.4%
RÍO VERDE	Othón P. Blanco	462	12	2.6%
SABÁN	José María Morelos	2,167	2,150	99.2%
SABANA SAN FRANCISCO	José María Morelos	154	151	98.1%
SABIDOS	Othón P. Blanco	1,342	133	9.9%
SACALACA	José María Morelos	1,010	1,006	99.6%
SACXÁN	Othón P. Blanco	837	66	7.9%
SACZUQUIL	José María Morelos	414	397	95.9%
SAHCAB MUCUY	Tulum	456	456	100.0%
SAHCABCHÉN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	40	40	100.0%
SAN ANDRÉS	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	347	347	100.0%
SAN ÁNGEL	Lázaro Cárdenas	1,041	788	75.7%
SAN ANTONIO NUEVO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	66	66	100.0%
SAN ANTONIO NUEVO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	71	47	66.2%
SAN ANTONIO TUK	José María Morelos	165	165	100.0%
SAN BARTOLO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	26	26	100.0%
SAN CARLOS	José María Morelos	104	104	100.0%
SAN COSME	Lázaro Cárdenas	361	361	100.0%
SAN DIEGO	José María Morelos	581	568	97.8%
SAN FELIPE BERRIOZÁBAL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	394	394	100.0%
SAN FELIPE ORIENTE	José María Morelos	207	207	100.0%
SAN FELIPE PRIMERO	José María Morelos	703	687	97.7%
SAN FELIPE SEGUNDO	José María Morelos	223	223	100.0%
SAN FERNANDO	Othón P. Blanco	245	241	98.4%
SAN FRANCISCO	Lázaro Cárdenas	767	757	98.7%
SAN FRANCISCO AKÉ	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	392	392	100.0%
SAN FRANCISCO BOTES	Othón P. Blanco	580	153	26.4%
SAN HIPÓLITO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	45	45	100.0%
SAN ISIDRO LA LAGUNA	Othón P. Blanco	860	820	95.3%
SAN ISIDRO PONIENTE	José María Morelos	225	79	35.1%
SAN JOSÉ DE LA MONTAÑA	Othón P. Blanco	195	45	23.1%
SAN JOSE PRIMERO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	7	7	100.0%
SAN JOSÉ SEGUNDO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	254	254	100.0%
SAN JUAN	Tulum	599	592	98.8%



SAN JUAN DE DIOS	Tulum	360	360	100.0%
SAN JUAN ORIENTE	José María Morelos	147	147	100.0%
SAN LORENZO	Lázaro Cárdenas	177	177	100.0%
SAN LUIS	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	190	180	94.7%
SAN MARTINIANO	Lázaro Cárdenas	206	206	100.0%
SAN PEDRO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	61	61	100.0%
SAN PEDRO PERALTA	Othón P. Blanco	766	58	7.6%
SAN RAMÓN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	482	482	100.0%
SAN ROMÁN	Lázaro Cárdenas	110	103	93.6%
SAN ROMÁN	Othón P. Blanco	530	509	96.0%
SAN SILVERIO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	582	580	99.7%
SANTA AMALIA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	68	65	95.6%
SANTA GERTRUDIS	José María Morelos	899	826	91.9%
SANTA ISABEL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	46	46	100.0%
SANTA LUCÍA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	139	136	97.8%
SANTA MARÍA PONIENTE	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	752	752	100.0%
SANTA ROSA	Othón P. Blanco	163	26	16.0%
SANTA ROSA SEGUNDO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,068	1,061	99.3%
SANTO DOMINGO	Lázaro Cárdenas	297	291	98.0%
SEÑOR	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	3,095	3,073	99.3%
SERGIO BUTRÓN CASAS	Othón P. Blanco	2,235	55	2.5%
SOLFERINO	Lázaro Cárdenas	799	328	41.1%
SUBTENIENTE LÓPEZ	Othón P. Blanco	1,915	198	10.3%
TABASCO	José María Morelos	263	262	99.6%
TABI	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	334	326	97.6%
TAC-CHIVO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	180	180	100.0%
TEPICH	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	2,753	2,741	99.6%
TIERRA NEGRA	Othón P. Blanco	212	212	100.0%
TIHOSUCO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	4,994	4,931	98.7%
TIXCACAL GUARDIA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	659	659	100.0%
TOMÁS GARRIDO CANABAL	Othón P. Blanco	338	5	1.5%
TRAPICH	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	197	197	100.0%
TRES GARANTÍAS	Othón P. Blanco	790	197	24.9%
TRES REYES	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	82	82	100.0%
TRES REYES	Lázaro Cárdenas	386	366	94.8%
TULUM	Tulum	18,233	7,587	41.6%
TUZI	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	699	699	100.0%
TZUKUM	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	39	39	100.0%
UCUM	Othón P. Blanco	1,495	55	3.7%
UH MAY	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	480	466	97.1%
UXUXUBI	Solidaridad	15	8	53.3%
VALLEHERMOSO	Othón P. Blanco	545	80	14.7%
VENUSTIANO CARRANZA	José María Morelos	184	180	97.8%



VERACRUZ	Othón P. Blanco	148	27	18.2%
VICENTE GUERRERO	Lázaro Cárdenas	552	523	94.7%
VILLAHERMOSA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	189	189	100.0%
X-CABIL	José María Morelos	1,087	1,087	100.0%
XCALAK	Othón P. Blanco	375	10	2.7%
X-HAZIL NORTE	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	161	161	100.0%
X-HAZIL PRIMERO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	43	43	100.0%
X-HAZIL SUR	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,422	1,413	99.4%
X-KONHA	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	107	66	61.7%
XNOH CRUZ	José María Morelos	169	169	100.0%
X-PICHIL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	1,340	1,340	100.0%
X-QUEROL	José María Morelos	102	102	100.0%
XUL-HA	Othón P. Blanco	2,037	441	21.6%
X-YATIL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	945	935	98.9%
YALCHÉN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	472	466	98.7%
YAXCHÉ	Tulum	335	320	95.5%
YAXCHÉ CHAL	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	22	22	100.0%
YAXLEY	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	600	600	100.0%
YOACTÚN	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	476	476	100.0%
YODZONOT CHICO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	78	78	100.0%
YODZONOT NUEVO	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	90	84	93.3%
ZAFARRANCHO	José María Morelos	328	320	97.6%
ZAMORA	Othón P. Blanco	434	170	39.2%



### **Appendix III. The *Yaxche-ob* of Cozumel Island, 2008.**

Sharon and I lived on Cozumel during the summers of 1965 and 1966. The little sleepy village of San Miguel was home base during research for my master's thesis on the historical settlement patterns of the island. We rented a house from the banker Carlos Namur and I roamed the island, on trails and off, in search of cenotes, aboriginal ruins, and evidence of economic activities that impacted the landscape, such as the low walls that partitioned sections of the abandoned henequen industry (Davidson 1967, 1975). Although I was keenly aware of the ceiba tree (in Maya: *yaxché*, plural: *yaxché-ob*), I remember seeing only one while we lived there – the one behind the Capitanía on the main street (*malecón*) of the town that ran along the waterfront. Now that I look back, over fifty years ago, I think I would have expected to see more ceibas on the island. After all, shouldn't we expect to see the sacred tree of the Maya growing on the sacred island of the Maya?

Over the years we made a few very brief stops at the island to see friends and dive in the clear sea, but had a chance for a more extended stay when our younger son, Chadwick, married in 2008. Parissa decided on a "destination wedding" and we were pleased to think they selected Cozumel because the island was where his parents had enjoyed living during the first years of their marriage. Of course, Parissa admitted she didn't know we had ever lived there. Still, we loved their wedding and gained an opportunity to check out the ceibas of the island.

#### **The Ceiba Survey of December 2008**

Evidence that the tree was present some years in the past is difficult to find. The ruin named *Yaxché*, located in the north central portion of the island was, supposedly, named by local guide Manuel Angulo Vivas in the early 1960s because of the presence of a large ceiba. This site might be the same as rancho "Santo Tomás," mentioned by Rosado Iturralde (1949: 32). He also reports that at rancho "San Gervasio," in 1949 before the now-famous ruin was restored, a two meter high wood cross with "1858" was nailed to an old ceiba. There is also a local, unconfirmed legend that a large ceiba was once aside the original cenote that probably watered early San Miguel -- on the east side of Av. 8 de Octubre, south of calle 29. The historical records I am familiar with do not mention other ceibas on the island, aside from the above mentions.

To my knowledge, the modern *yax.ché.ob* of Cozumel number 61. Essentially all are in cultural context – planted at ruins, hotels, the country club, a tourist shop, two across the street from the urban cemetery, in the old plaza, and the one mentioned before at the Capitanía. The one isolate, perhaps 30 years old, can be seen along the southern highway between km markers 20 and 21.



## 1. Ruinas (13)

Cedral, the small village in the south founded by the grandfather of don Cristino Cardenas Serrano in 1848 has three ceibas along its southern street and three at the ancient ruin site immediately behind the “campo” house of the late German Garcia Padilla (1941-December 2016), “Flaco” to his friends of older days. When we lived on the island “Flaco” worked in a dive shop. His dream was, he said, “to make five dollars a day and to marry his girlfriend.” He did both, and much more. He was the first Presidente de la Municipalidad de Cozumel (1975) and Jefe de la Policia Nacional del Estado de Quintana Roo. Our first children were born on the same day (April 4, 1968). He was *mi compadre* and I will miss him.

**Figure 278. Largest ceiba of Cedral, 2008. Sharon with German Garcia and grandson.**



San Gervasio, in the north central sector of the island, is the primary tourist attraction. Three recently planted ceibas are along the roadway entering the ruin and another has been planted in the parking lot. All are less than three years old.



At an unnamed site inland from Playa Palancar, at the 27 km marker on the southern highway, is a large tree, perhaps 80-90 years old. It and two smaller ceibas are located between the old and new paved highways that bisect the ruin. Apparently, the old tree was carefully spared during the construction of the new road.



**Figure 279. Three ceibas on Southern Coastal Highway, km marker 27, 2008.**

## 2. Hotels (23)

With the expansion of major hotels along the southern highway, ceibas have been planted at some entrances. Hotel El Cid La Ceiba, which has seven trees visible on entry, incorporates the name of the tree in its formal title.



**Figure 280. Ceibas at entrance of Hotel El Cid La Ceiba.**

The Occidental Cozumel and Occidental Allegro Cozumel hotels have six more among their royal palms and coconuts.



North of San Miguel, heading to the older hotel area known as San Juan, somewhat hidden among the coconut palms and mimosas along the median of the highway can be seen several ceibas. Two are in front of the Puerto del Sol condos, four are at the Westin Cozumel, and two are near the entrance of El Cozumeleño. Just north of the country club where the paved road ends there are two crossroad ceibas.

**Figure 281. Ceiba in the median near the Westin Hotel north of San Miguel.**



### 3. Cozumel Country Club (18)

The largest concentration of ceibas is on the grounds of the country club and golf course north of San Miguel. Eighteen can be seen at the entrance (1) (Figure 5), along the roadway (7) among the royal palms, at the parking lot (4), and on the course (6). On their maturity all of these will project an impressive landscape.



Figure 282. Ceiba at the entrance to Cozumel Country Club, 2008.



Figure 283. Ceiba on golf course of country club, 2008 (photo taken from El Cozumeleño).





#### 4. Governmental (4)

Just behind the Capitanía building along the northern *malecón* (Av. Rafael Melgar norte) in San Miguel is a ceiba that is said to be 120 years old. It was large in 1965 when we lived in San Miguel. Although no one can determine its age with certainty, it seems to be the oldest ceiba on the island. Another very large ceiba, not available for photography, is in the military complex at the airport.

**Figures 284, 285. (left) Old ceiba behind La Capitanía, San Miguel, 2008; (right) two ceibas on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Miguel, across from the municipal cemetery. (also, see addendum 2020)**



#### 5. Mayaluum tourist shop (2)

At the 11 kilometer marker on the transversal highway (the extension of Avenida Benito Juárez that originates at the San Miguel dock) a migrant from Baca, Yucatán planted three trees in front of *Mayaluum*, his artifact store, on May 3, 2005. Traditional Mayans know that the ceiba represents the Christian cross and it would be appropriate for the trees to be planted on *Día de la Cruz* (Day of the Cross in the Christian calendar). By coincidence, the discovery name of Cozumel, “Isla de la Santa Cruz,” was so placed because of the May 3<sup>rd</sup> date in 1518 when Grijalva landed.

When I photographed the trees in December 2008 only two remained. The April 2014 street view of Google Earth indicates how much they had grown (photos 286 and 287).



Figure 286. Ceibas at Mayaluum tourist shop, December 2008.



Figure 287. Ceibas at Mayaluum tourist shop, April 2014.



To conclude, given the ages of the 61 ceibas known on the island and their locations in medians, at new hotels, and the new country club, it is obvious that all ceibas on Cozumel, except for the two at the Capitanía and at Playa Palancar ruin, and two at the old cemetery, have been planted in support of the recent development of tourism on the island.



**Addendum, April 2020.**

Via Goggle Earth, street view, I just found a ceiba, the 61<sup>st</sup> on the island, perhaps planted about the time of the 2008 study, in the old plaza of San Miguel, just interior from the old dock.

**Figure 288: Ceiba in the old plaza of San Miguel, March, 2018, facing south.**



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**“Yaxché”**

a quilling

By Diana Rund Davidson, June 10, 2020



**BACK COVER**, counterclockwise order

Entry to first *Cruzo'ob* shrine of the Talking Cross, at cenote, Felipe Carrillo Puerto

Ceibas in parking lot, Chetumal zoo

Plaza of Yaxley, with ceiba, playground, and *domo* (covered basketball court)

Raising the *yaxché* (ceiba) in ritual corral during festival of Tixcacal Guardia

Chan Santa Cruz shrine at north entry to Felipe Carrillo Puerto

Plaza of Melchor Ocampo, with church and dying ceiba

Ceibas in median, highway 307, near Playa del Carmen





Based primarily on field observations of almost 2,900 ceibas in Quintana Roo, this study documents geographical patterns of the tree 1) in settlements and along highways; 2) as part of the modern plaza landscape; and 3) as diagnostic markers in the 45 settlements occupied by the *cruzo'ob*, the followers of the Holy Talking Cross of the Caste War (1847-1901). Special attention is given to the five ceremonial shrine centers.

In Caribbean Yucatán, today overwhelmed by international tourism, ceibas are now less likely to be planted in traditional locations and are instead planted to appeal to visitors seeking ephemeral reflections of ancient Maya heritage.

