

CORE AND PERIPHERY RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAYA

Stephanie M. Teixeira
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
North Carolina State University
Stephanie_Teixeira@ncsu.edu

Keri E. Iyall Smith
Department of Sociology
Suffolk University
kiyallsmith@suffolk.edu

ABSTRACT

How do indigenous peoples relate to the core over the longue duree? In this paper, we explore the implications of colonialism from a world-systems perspective, examining interactions in the economic and political structures in addition to the effects of landlessness for indigenous peoples in one case: the Maya. After reviewing world-systems theory and applying it to indigenusness, we discuss Ragin's (1992) conceptualization of cases and the comparative historical method. Then we introduce the relational concept, a tool that allows us to employ both the comparative historical method and world-systems theory in our analysis of the Maya and their relationship to the state of Mexico. We then present our data, which consist of the economic and political conditions, along with the cultural implications of landholding across time among the Maya and in Mexico. We analyze these data using the relational concept to understand the consequences of colonialism and globalization for the Maya people.