

Empire on Edge

How does Empire operate in frontiers and borderlands during times of conflict? *Empire on Edge* reveals how, during the second half of the nineteenth century, British officials attempted to understand and impose order on northern Belize, an area that was both a frontier of colonial power and the locus of a disputed border with Mexico. Their efforts were complicated by the local ramifications of Yucatán's Caste War (1847–1901), a long-lasting, violent struggle between segments of the indigenous Maya in southeast Mexico and the Mexican state. The book also illuminates how people subject to these efforts, especially the Hispanic and various Maya groups, sought to thwart them by building alliances across seemingly firm lines of racial and ethnic division. Along the way, important questions are raised about the dissonance between colonial and imperial projects, the nature of frontiers and borderlands, and the local effects of disputes between bordering countries.

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*The British Struggle for Order in Belize during
Yucatán's Caste War, 1847–1901*

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For Varun, with love

*Let Rome in the Tiber melt, and the wide Arch
Of the rang'd Empire fall: Here is my space,
Kingdoms are clay.*

William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>List of Maps</i>	ix
<i>List of Tables</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction	I
1 Business as Usual: Mayas and Merchants on the Yucatán-Belize Border at the Onset of the Caste War	23
2 Ungoverned Passions: Mayas and Hispanic Refugees in Belize, 1853–1861	51
3 Costs of Protection: Securing Belizean Borders during Maximilian’s Empire in Mexico, 1864–1867	71
4 Uneasy Alliances: British Officials and the Santa Cruz Maya during the Maximilian Years, 1863–1867	91
5 The Enemy Within: Hispanics and the Threat of Maya Raids, 1867–1880	109
6 Loyal Subjects: Hispanics in the Vision of a Belizean Colonial Nation, 1882–1898	137
Conclusion	161
<i>References</i>	171
<i>Index</i>	178

Figures

I.1	Annotated photograph of the meeting between Santa Cruz leaders and Governor Moloney, January 8, 1892 included in Moloney's dispatch.	<i>page 3</i>
2.1	Domestic export of principal commodities (1860 prices).	65
5.1	Major Johnstown's plan of Orange Walk showing the position of barracks and other buildings burnt and the positions taken by the Icaiche during the attack.	130
5.2	Proposed defenses of Orange Walk, October 1872.	132
5.3	Proposed defenses of Corozal, October 1872.	133
6.1	Postage stamp commemorating the Battle of St George's Caye.	156
6.2	Numbers in prison from 1836 to 1902.	157

Maps

I.1	Map of the location of the Santa Cruz Maya enclosed with Governor Moloney's dispatch.	<i>page 2</i>
I.2	Map of the Belize-Yucatán border and surrounding area in the nineteenth century.	5
3.1	Map sent by John Carmichael showing the movement of Indians, 1866.	89
4.1	Map of Belize showing positions of different Maya tribes, 1863.	93
C.1	Map showing different Maya groups occupying the frontier adjoining Belize, 1886.	162
C.2	Map showing possible connections between the Hondo River and the vertex of the boundaries of Belize, Guatemala and Mexico, 1886.	166

Tables

2.1 Racial and ethnic categorization in the 1861 census.	<i>page 68</i>
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Abbreviations

ABH	Sir John Alder Burdon, <i>Archives of British Honduras, Volume 3</i> (London: Sifton Praed and Co., 1935)
AGEY	Archivo General del Estado de Yucatán, Mérida (Mexico)
BARS	Belize Archives and Records Service, Belmopan (Belize)
CAIHY	Centro de Apoyo a la Investigación Histórica de Yucatán, Mérida (Mexico)
CO	Colonial Office records at The National Archives, Kew (UK)
PE	Poder Ejecutivo
vol.	volumen (volume)
exp.	expediente (file)

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