

Maya Archaeology and Ethnohistory (Texas Pan American)



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Embracing a wide range of research, this book offers various views on the intellectual history of Maya archaeology and ethnohistory and the processes operating in the rise and fall of Maya civilization.

The fourteen studies were selected from those presented at the Second Cambridge Symposium on Recent Research in Mesoamerican Archaeology and are presented in three major sections.

The first of these deals with the application of theory, both anthropological and historical, to the great civilization of the Classic Maya, which flourished in the Yucatan, Guatemala, and Belize during the first millennium A.D. The structural remains of the Classic Period have impressed travelers and archaeologists for over a century, and aspects of the development and decline of this strange and brilliant tropical forest culture are examined here in the light of archaeological research.

The second section presents the results of field research ranging from the Highlands of Mexico east to Honduras and north into the Lowland heart of Maya civilization, and iconographic study of excavated material.

The third section covers the ethnohistoric approach to archaeology, the conjunction of material and documentary evidence. Early European documents are used to illuminate historic Maya culture. This section includes transcriptions of previously unpublished archival material.

Although not formally linked beyond their common field of inquiry, the essays here offer a conspectus of late-twentieth century Maya research and a series of case histories of the work of some of the leading scholars in the field.

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