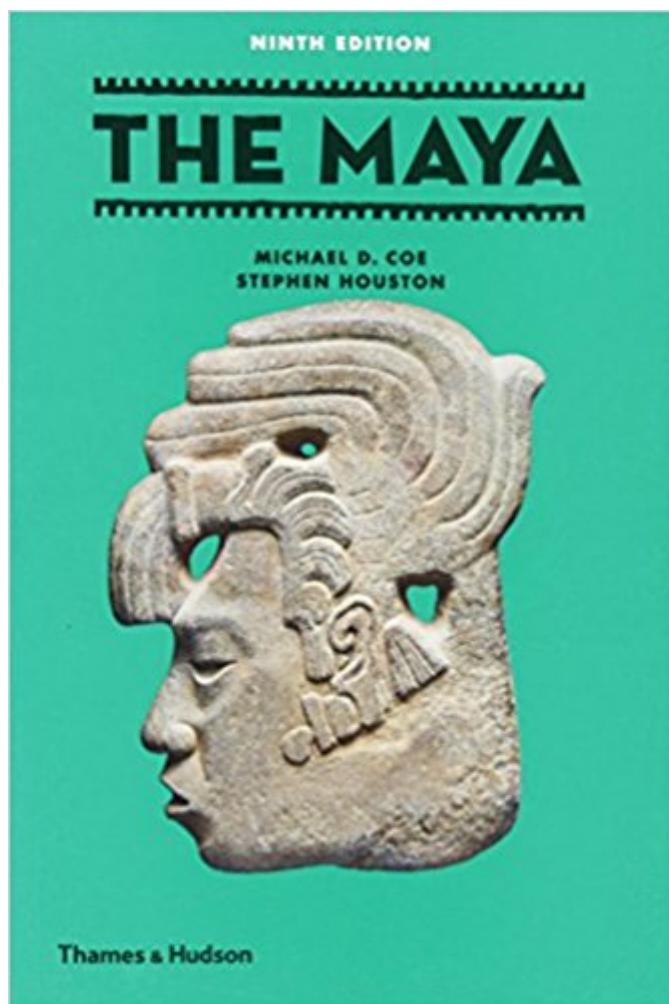


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The Maya (Ninth Edition) (Ancient Peoples And Places)



Synopsis

"The gold standard of introductory books on the ancient Maya." *Expedition* The Maya has long been established as the best, most readable introduction to the New World's greatest ancient civilization. Coe and Houston update this classic by distilling the latest scholarship for the general reader and student. This new edition incorporates the most recent archaeological and epigraphic research, which continues to proceed at a fast pace. Among the finest new discoveries are spectacular stucco sculptures at El Zoz and Holmul, which reveal surprising aspects of Maya royalty and the founding of dynasties. Dramatic refinements in our understanding of the pace of developments of the Maya civilization have led scholars to perceive a pattern of rapid bursts of building and political formation. Other finds include the discovery of the earliest known occupant of the region, the Hoyo Negro girl, recovered from an underwater cavern in the Yucatan peninsula, along with new evidence for the first architecture at Ceibal. 213 illustrations, 28 in color

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Michael D. Coe is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Yale University. His books include *The Maya*, *Mexico*, *Breaking the Maya Code*, *Angkor and the Khmer Civilization*, and *Reading the Maya Glyphs*. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut. Stephen D. Houston is Dupee Family Professor of Social Sciences at Brown University. His most recent book is *The Life Within: Classic Maya and the Matter of Permanence*.

This 9th Edition of Coe's *The Maya*, now co-authored with eminent Maya scholar Stephen Houston, is a major improvement over the last several additions. Houston's expertise in Maya writing means that the book is up-to-the-minute on many issues relating to Classic Maya religion and courtly life, and the chapter on "Maya Thought and Culture" has been almost completely re-written to reflect Houston's expertise on the subject. Similarly, this edition rolls in some major recent discoveries about Preclassic Maya civilization which are most welcome, and an appendix has been added listing the names of significant Maya rulers and the dates known for their reigns, which will be helpful for those trying to puzzle through references to specific characters in Maya history. Houston's contributions are also noteworthy for incorporating bite-size summaries of the ideas laid out in his own books for specialists, including brief treatments of morality and personhood, gender roles/norms, and the material world that will be familiar to readers of, say, *The Memory of Bones*, *The Classic Maya*, or *The Life Within*. The illustrations are wonderful, and there are even more of them than in previous editions. Some images that are exceedingly hard to find have been worked into the present edition, which alone are worth the cost of the book. My only real gripe is that the style of the prose is, at times, distractingly dated. In part this is because portions of the text are unchanged (or barely changed) from the original 1966 edition, at which time the book's target audience would presumably have understood the references to Pilgrim's Progress and been comfortable with the occasional Latinate stylistic flourishes. These days, however, a typical college-aged (or even college-educated) reader is unlikely to find such flourishes helpful or accessible. Some of these, such as a reference to a goddess that is "easy with her virtue" (p. 255) and "dwarves and other malformed people" who comprise "the most bizarre courtiers (at least from our vantage)" (p. 93), are likely to distract or alienate, rather than engage, a younger readership. That being said, this is still the best book going for someone who wants to do some basic "reading up" on the Maya before visiting ruins or wading into a more detailed treatment like Sharer and Traxler's *The Ancient Maya*. The 9th edition is a major step forward in terms of its content, and I look forward to following *The Maya* through many editions into the future.

Coe and Houston have made this edition the best ever. (We have the 7th edition and have read others over the years). Succinct, clear and comprehensive; a must for any Mesoamerican library!

Well-written, informative and, most importantly, reasonably up-to-date. It gives a thorough overview of the Maya civilization, illustrated with photos, drawings and maps for each period of its development. A 'must-read' for Maya lovers, interesting not only for beginners in this field.

Together with Time Among the Mayas, this book The Maya is a must, specially if traveling in Mesoamerica. Gives a concise idea of the development of the cultures in that area. A text book feel but written with excellence and very easy to understand.

You sort of expect a 9th edition to be lethal, and this one did not disappoint. Well ordered, detailed, a good mix of an approachable academic text on a complicated subject and a travel guide for those seeking an adventure, and despite the length you will zip right through it. I've recently returned from visiting some of these sites and this book is an excellent read before, during or even after the experience.

Scholarly update to current research and interpretation on the archaeology, anthropology and history of the Maya world. It is widely renowned as the best review on the subject, and I have no doubt about it. It is also very well written, so it is a joy to read.

I'm now much better informed, but on the other hand, I'm not an archaeologist, so I would have liked something geared more to a lay person..

The Gold Standard of introductory books about all things Mayan. Coe writes with knowledge and authority and does a great job in conveying the depth and breadth of the Mayan civilization. He is especially strong in guiding the reader through various interpretations by historians as well as explaining the ever-evolving scholarship and research about Mayan history. Not a quick read, but rewarding to the committed reader who wants to get a solid introduction to The Maya.

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