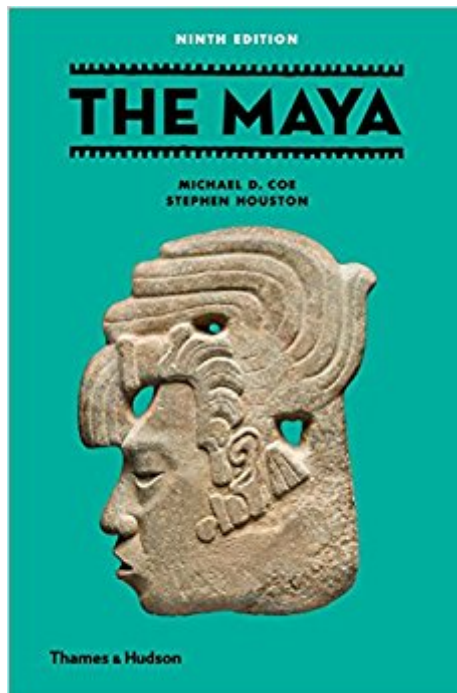


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# The Maya (Ancient Peoples And Places)



## Synopsis

Coe and Houston update this classic account of the New World's greatest ancient civilization, incorporating the most recent research in a fast-changing field. New discoveries of spectacular stucco sculptures at El Zotz and Holmul reveal surprising aspects of Maya royalty; the 'Classic' Maya themselves can be understood as occupants of royal courts, full of Machiavellian intrigue yet operating in close communion with gods and cosmos. Just-discovered texts at Xultun show a strong concern with astronomy and numerology, as well as evidence of lost books. Other finds include the discovery in an underwater cavern of the earliest known occupant of the region, the Hoyo Negro girl, and new evidence for the first architecture at Ceibal. The Maya highlights the vitality of current scholarship into this brilliant civilization.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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 archeology, anthropology and history of the Maya world. It is widely reknown 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 write 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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