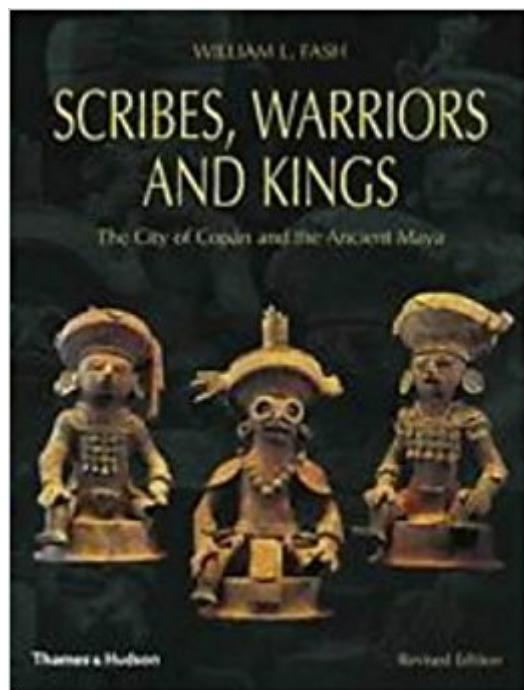


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Scribes, Warriors And Kings: The City Of Copan And The Ancient Maya (New Aspects Of Antiquity)



Synopsis

Traces the history of the city of Copan, and describes how new discoveries are shedding light on the city's collapse.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Written by an archaeologist for others in the profession, this book presents a short history of Copan, a well-excavated ruin in Honduras. Prevailing theory is that Mayan stelai commemorate real people and events. The researchers at Copan have recognized a dynasty of 16 kings beginning with K'inich Yax K'uk Mo' in 426 A.D. and ending with Yax Pac in 820 A.D. During those four centuries, the city-state of Copan rose, flourished, and declined. Fash, director of the Copan Mosaics Project, celebrates more than a century of work at this site: the reader learns as much about Mayan archaeological progress as about Copan. Magnificent photographs and drawings enliven a dry text. This excellent report from a major research site should be in all academic collections that support archaeology. - Ken St. Andre, Phoenix P.L. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Copán's role in the development of Maya archaeology is charted in lavishly illustrated detail. -- New Scientist Highly recommended. -- Choice Superb.... Fash is ideally suited to the taskhandsomely producedoutstanding. -- Science --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I confess that I was enamored of Copan (and other Mayan "lost cities") long before reading this book. I was privileged to visit five Classic Maya sites, beginning with Copan, in 1991; subsequent digs and research made possible this fascinating semi-popular book. I read it with sheer delight -- and great admiration for the scholarship of the authors (and that of their colleagues, whose revelations likewise were essential). If you are intellectually incurious, don't bother. But if you are intellectually curious, don't fail to read this wonderful book -- and then don't fail to visit Copan and the relatively new and grand museum, if you possibly can!

"Scribes" is a very good and highly illustrated book about the Mayan presence at Copán, perhaps the greatest Mayan city in terms of art and architecture. Fash's prose is well-written and lucid, though at times a little dry and academic, perhaps making some folks wish for the bouncy style offered by some magazines. Nevertheless, the book is well put together, has an adequate index and no obvious factual mistakes or typos. One could take a book such as this to Copán itself and use it to help illuminate the ancient city's magnificent ruins and museum replicas. Moreover, I'm sure the hardbound edition would make a very good coffee table book!

I will be visiting Copan at the end of the month so I picked up this book to get some information about the place. Overall the book is really good with lots of pictures which definitely is a plus with me. The explanations are very good although I found myself re-reading some of them often because the author uses a lot of technical terms. The book is too big so I will not carry it with me when I visit Copan. It would have been a plus if the book would have been smaller. One thing that I didn't like was the fact that the author spends too many pages explaining Copan's relationship with other cities in the area. I would have loved to read more about the people of Copan, their daily lives and their beliefs. But again, good introduction.

I saw, and quickly skimmed a bit, of this book at a museum shop in Philadelphia, and then searched for it online, where I found it at a much better price. Since I have a particular interest in Copan, which I have visited several times, I found it very interesting, and written in a very clear and accessible manner for the non-specialist. The illustrations are also very good, and important to understanding Maya writing, history and culture. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in this subject.

Good title.

William Fash and his wife have been working at Copan for decades and now are the overseers of the ruins. I am reviewing the 192 page (1994 edition) paperback here, although there is a 2001 revised edition now too. Fash covers the geographical environment, history, art, architecture, burials and all other vital aspects of Copan, rarely speculating and noting it is his opinion when he does, which is a refreshing change from the all-too-often "authoritative" opinions offered by both amateurs and experts in the archaeological field. He writes in a clear, easily-understandable style that I found very interesting and extremely informative. Included are maps, drawings and reconstructions, many b/w photos and a fair number of full-page color photos. This text doesn't dwell heavily on interpreting the glyphs, but when he is sure of a translation, he provides it. Recent discoveries (up to the time of this edition) are discussed at length, and examples are clearly shown. All-in-all, Fash provides a good overall view of the ruins, his and others' work there, and how theories about the site have evolved as new discoveries are made. Copan is one of the most excavated and explored Mayan cities to date, yet Fash points out that new finds are constantly being made that sometimes alter our interpretations of the society and religion. He also delves into the living conditions of the non-elite population that made the city possible. Gods and goddesses are discussed but not in great depth as he would then be speculating. It's obvious he and his wife love Copan and consider it their home. They are enthusiastic yet extremely careful and serious scientists who long to know as much about Copan as possible. This isn't a book that is just for experts, yet it goes far beyond the typical general overview I find so frustrating in other books. I highly recommend this book for anyone with more than just a passing fancy in Copan and/or the great accomplishments of the Maya.

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