
Maya Cities: Placemaking and Urbanization is an architectural study of building complexes at major Maya Lowlands sites, complete with good maps and copious illustrations. The book provides a wealth of descriptive detail of obvious importance to Maya specialists, but it will also prove of interest to the non-specialist who wants really complete information about Maya sites. For the latter, it would serve far better as a tour guide than any of the numerous "picture books" now on the market.

George F. Andrews, an architect who also boasts considerable photographic skills, has eschewed traditional questions of architectural style in his approach. Instead, his analysis focuses on the positioning and organization of buildings and building complexes, in a manner that reveals pan-Maya features of architectural arrangement, but no overall principles of total site organization. With laudable caution, Andrews avoids firm conclusions about the uses of structural complexes.

The first eighty-two pages of the book deal with general concepts and include useful sections on the classification of types of structures and groupings. Most of the terms used are familiar, but archaeologists will profit from the more precise definitions offered by Andrews. Another useful point is the emphasis Andrews places upon open spaces, such as plazas and courtyards, features which are often neglected in archaeological reports of structures.

The remainder of the book is devoted to detailed analysis and illustration of twenty Maya sites. The examples include the major Classic sites of the Southern Lowlands and the familiar Yucatecan sites. Zaculeu is added as a contrasting example from the Guatemalan Highlands. Site maps, mostly derived from published sources but checked by field visits, are of excellent quality and bring together in one volume maps previously available only in a variety of obscure sources. A number of new building restoration drawings are offered, all of them accurate and without unnecessary embellishment. The nearly 300 photographs provide good clarity and detail that will be of great utility to the archaeologist.

Maya Cities: Placemaking and Urbanization will be an indispensable source book for specialists and a worth-while investment for anyone with a deep interest in the ancient Maya.

University of Arizona T. PATRICK CULBERT