

Yucatan Before and After the Conquest (Native American)

By Diego de Landa



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These people also used certain characters or letters, with which they wrote in their books about the antiquities and their sciences. We found a great number of books in these letters and since they contained nothing but superstitions and falsehoods of the devil we burned them all, which they took most grievously, and which gave them great pain.

So writes Friar Diego de Landa in his Relación De las cosas de Yucatan of 1566, the basic book in Maya studies. Landa did all he could to wipe out Maya culture and civilization. In the famous auto da fé of July 1562 at Maní, as he tells us, he destroyed 5,000 "idols" and burned 27 hieroglyphic rolls. And yet paradoxically Landa's book, written in Spain to defend himself against charges of despotic mismanagement, is the only significant account of Yucatan done in the early post-Conquest era. As the distinguished Maya scholar William Gates states in his introduction, "ninety-nine percent of what we today know of the Mayas, we know as the result either of what Landa has told us in the pages that follow, or have learned in the use and study of what he told." Yucatan Before and After the *Conquest* is the first English translation of this very important work. Landa's book gives us a full account of Maya customs, daily activities, history, ceremonial festivals, and the many social and communal functions in which their life was expressed. Included here are the geography and natural history of Yucatan, the history of the Conquest, indigenous architecture and other aspects of Maya civilization (sciences, books, religion, etc.), native historical traditions, the Inquisition instituted by the Spanish clergy, Maya clothing, food, commerce, agriculture, human sacrifices, calendrical lore, and much more.



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Editorial Review

Review

Only significant account done of Yucatan In post-Conquest era. Describes geography and natural history of the peninsula, gives brief history of Mayan life, discusses Spanish conquest and its effects and provides a long summary of Maya civilization.

Language Notes

Text: English, Spanish (translation)

About the Author

Diego de Landa (Cifuentes, 1524-Yucat n, 1579). Espa a. Ingres en al monasterio de San Juan de los Reyes de Toledo a los diecisiete a os y fue uno de los primeros frailes franciscanos que viaj a Yucat n para evangelizar a los mayas. Durante su primera etapa en el Nuevo mundo inciner numerosos documentos de la antigua civilizaci n maya. Tuvo que responder ante sus superiores de algunos desafueros.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jose Murry:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important action, like looking for your favorite e-book and reading a publication. Beside you can solve your short lived problem; you can add your knowledge by the reserve entitled Yucatan Before and After the Conquest (Native American). Try to the actual book Yucatan Before and After the Conquest (Native American) as your good friend. It means that it can for being your friend when you feel alone and beside that of course make you smarter than in the past. Yeah, it is very fortuned for yourself. The book makes you more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So, let me make new experience in addition to knowledge with this book.

Debra Rubino:

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Daniel Rogers:

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Carla Floyd:

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