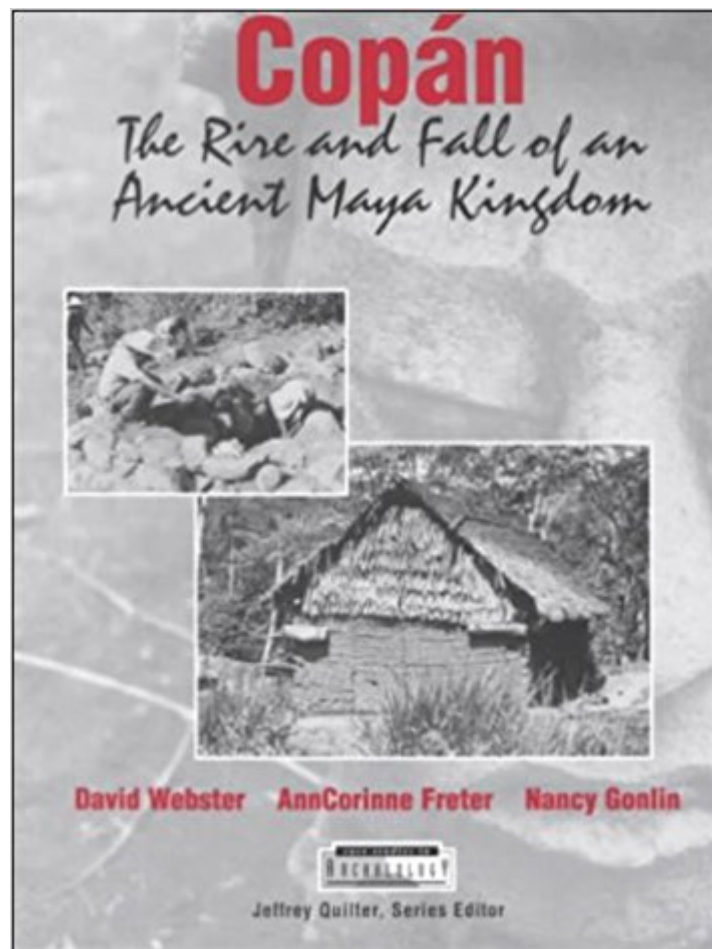




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Copan: The Rise And Fall Of An Ancient Maya Kingdom (Case Studies In Archeology)



Synopsis

Webster's case study reconstructs and evaluates the sociopolitical system and culture history of a world-famous Classic Maya Center in the highlands of Western Honduras, whose great temples, palaces, and carved monuments have been investigated since the 1830's. Using material from a series of archaeological excavations begun in 1975 that focused on reconstructing the entire Copán Kingdom, this book presents for the first time an interpretation of the political, demographic, and agricultural history of the entire region. Providing an extensive review of the methods used to reconstruct Copán's history, the book helps students develop a basic understanding of how archaeologists reconstruct ancient social systems.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Copan is one of the great cities of the ancient Maya world, now in Honduras, and its spectacular 3D sculpture and colorful architecture is easily visited. The authors here focus on what is not so easily seen, the former growth and life of the metropolis and its mountain valley. Their Penn State project has been investigating the outlying community and households in a series of suburban and rural studies summarized here. These supplement, extend, and counter-check the Harvard-linked studies of the other half, the central "downtown" core with its famous statues and buildings (like the perfectly preserved "Rosalilla" temple) (go to books by Newsome or Fash for what you will not see here). This is an intriguing, if somewhat technical, book. It is a very nice summary of the workings of the Copan city-state. It reports on the material underpinnings of ancient Maya society and the "dirt archaeology" side of what is usually on view as the elite and fantastical Maya. It is for people

seriously interested in the ancient Maya and not just the flashy and bloodthirsty kings. And also for those seeking studies of civilizations/cities or a Case Study for students of course. The text is clearly and directly written, especially if you are already familiar with American archaeological terminology. You will find here almost nothing of the spectacular finds, and no color images, but a good selection of maps and charts in black and white. To mention only a few points, instead of the expected chronology based on the reigns of kings and changes in pottery, the authors present a chapter on Freter's controversial obsidian hydration dating method (depth of water adsorption since the last chipping of volcanic glass tools correlates with time).

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