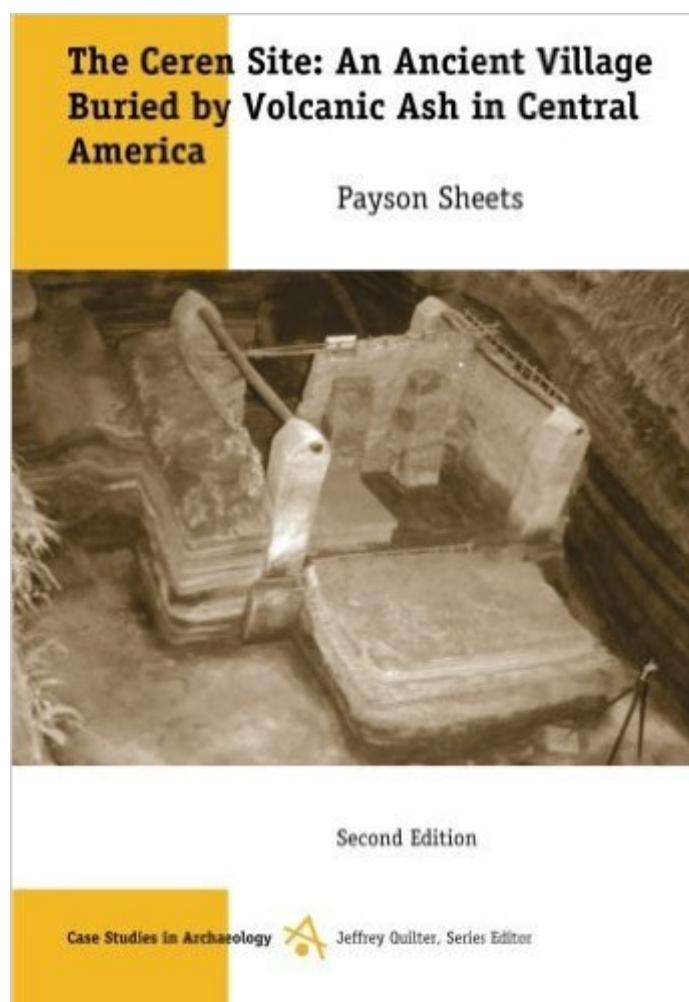


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The Ceren Site: An Ancient Village Buried By Volcanic Ash In Central America (Case Studies In Archaeology)



Synopsis

Discovered in 1976 by Sheets, and under continuous excavation and study since, the spectacular Ceren site provides us with an unusually clear window into the ancient past with which to view family activities on the frontier of the Mayan civilization. Since volcanic ash did not allow people to selectively remove artifacts, the site is well-preserved and it also largely stopped natural processes of decomposition offering this rare opportunity to study the Mayan past through household archaeology. Known as the New World Pompeii, this study provides a detailed portrait of the life, houses, artifacts, and activity areas of the people who supported the elites with labor, food and goods. As Sheets says, "With any civilization that's being studied, if the households of commoners aren't being investigated, you've eliminated the bulk of the population. How can you understand the society if you ignore most of the people? It's like an ethnography. Only we can't interview people, so their possessions have to speak for them." Art and images from the author's own collection help illuminate the discussions and bring them to life, while the author's discussion of his personal trials and triumphs add a more human dimension to working in the field.

Book Information

Series: Case Studies in Archaeology

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Cengage Learning; 2 edition (June 2, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0495006068

ISBN-13: 978-0495006060

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 0.4 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,209,561 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 inÂ Books > History > Americas > Central America > El Salvador #215 inÂ Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Mayan #1066 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Latin America

Customer Reviews

Though I purchased this book because it was assigned reading for a course in school...I would recommend it to anyone interested in the Maya. Ceren is a Classic site and since it was preserved in time by the volcano it is a good (but not perfect) example of what life was like for Maya in the subsequent centuries. Since household archaeology in the Maya is not exactly rare, but is truthfully

difficult to find intact, Cerén is a great example to look to in that context. Sheets is an excellent anthropologist with a love of the Maya and the subject, which makes this book all the more interesting to read.

The book came as fast as they promised and I enjoyed getting it so quickly for school. I have browsed through the book and enjoyed its contents.

My husband thoroughly enjoyed this book. He liked it so much that he described it to several of his friends.

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