

The MAYA

use your up/down arrow keys and/or your space bar to advance the slides

Orientation to Ancient Middle America

Michael D. Coe

University of Minnesota Duluth

Tim Roufs

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FROM THE OLMECS
TO THE AZTECS
Michael D. Coe & Rex Koontz
SEVENTH EDITION
MEXICO



Orientation to Ancient Middle America

University of Minnesota Duluth

Tim Roufs

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one item you will see often

(and often repeated)

**is that American Anthropology
traditionally has a four-fold
approach to the study of humans
and closely related species**

these four fields include . . .

American Anthropology

- **cultural / social**
- **physical**
- **archaeology**
- **linguistics**

so why study

Ancient Middle America?

**for most,
it's mainly to find out about many
fascinating prehistoric topics
relating to people like the ancient
Mayans and the Aztecs . . .**

**and you already know about a lot
of those sorts of things . . .**

**just have a look at the little
pictures on the web class
materials,
for e.g., . . .**

(N.T. [Haines and Hudson, 2005](#))

(N.T. [Haines and Hudson, 2005](#))



8-Deer, Mixtec Leader
[Tula, Hidalgo, Toltec Capital](#)



Olmec, Mexico



[Tikal, Guatemala](#)



[Copán, Honduras](#)



[Tula, Hidalgo, Toltec Capital](#)



Aztec Sunstone

[↑ to top of page / A-Z index](#)



Spirits of the Jaguar



Clovis point

Welcome to Ancient Middle America



Copán, Honduras



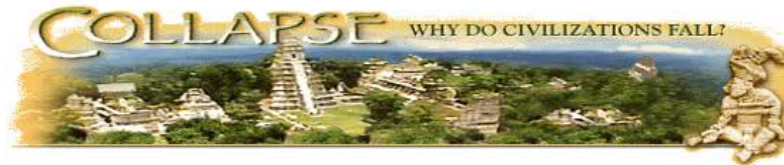
Danzante
Monte Albán



Mayan World



Copán Jade
Honduras



Find: inca

Next Previous Highlight all Match case

**and lots of people find these
topics interesting . . .**

There have been close to 2 million
page views of the UMD
Ancient Middle America
WebPages . . .

**and lots of people find these
topics interesting . . .**

**there have been over 2 million
page views of the UMD**

**Ancient Middle America
WebPages . . .**



[Pyramid of the Sun](#)
[Teotihuacán, Mexico](#)

[↑ to top of page / A-Z index](#)



2,153,824

**but Middle America is also a
wonderful place to explore all four
of the disciplines of American
Anthropology . . .**

American Anthropology

- **cultural / social**
- **physical**
- **archaeology**
- **linguistics**

so . . .

we're going to have a look at . . .

so . . . we're going to have a look at . . .

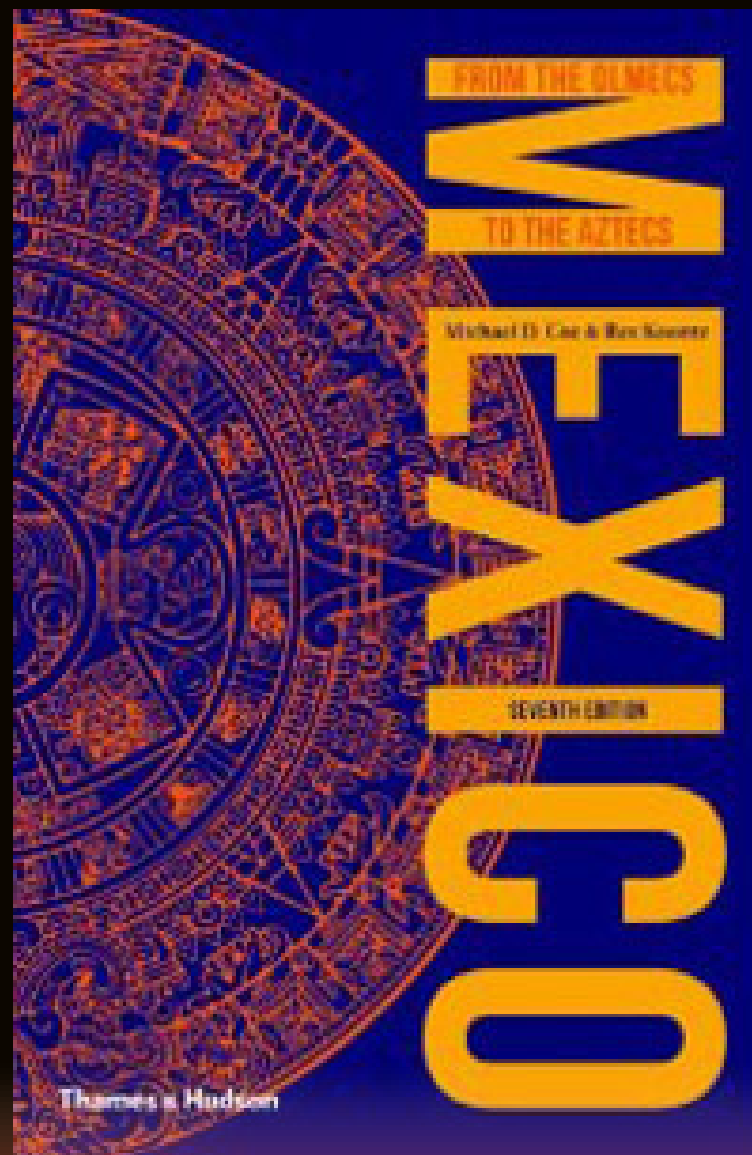
Ancient Middle America

and its . . .

- **cultural / social**
- **physical**
- **archaeology**
- **linguistics**

aspects

**and you'll visit these same fields
as you go through your texts . . .**



**and you'll visit these same fields
and you go through your and
other class materials . . .**

Settings

- Course administration
 - Turn editing on
 - Edit settings
 - Users
 - Filters
 - Grades
 - Outcomes
 - Backup
 - Restore
 - Import
 - Question bank
 - Course files
- Switch role to...
- My profile settings

Online users

(last 5 minutes)

Tim Roufs

Search forums

Go

Advanced search

Quick links for students

- Watch online orientation
- User guides
- Student support forums
- Email: moodle@umn.edu

Calendar

Subject Index: [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

Please do not copy/paste text directly from Microsoft Word. See explanation here
Use Notepad with Windows and TextEdit with Macs

Ancient Middle America — Anth 3618

Fall 2013, 3 Credit Hours

14062-001 LEC, 04:00 P.M. - 05:15 P.M., Tu,Th (09/03/2013 - 12/13/2013), Cina 214

Tim Roufs

Please get acquainted with the course site; review the course information materials and other links.

If you have not used Moodle course management system before, please view the Orientation tutorial.



Cabeza Colosal n°1 del Museo Xalapa
San Lorenzo
Wikipedia

Navigation

Section links

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16

Jump to current week

Course Resources

- Video Schedule
- Class Slides (PowerPoints)
- Participation Guidelines
- Technology Requirements
- On-line Study Tips
- Accessibility Support
- Library
- Food of Countries/Cultures
- UMD Workshops

Additional Learner Support Resources

- Archaeological Periods in American Archaeology
- Timeline & Stages
- Student Support Resources
- Online Study Tips
- Glossary of Terms
- Recommended Articles
- "Helen's How to" Guides

**and to study Middle America in
this tradition there are a few basic
characteristics of anthropology to
keep in mind . . .**

Main Characteristics

1. the ***four fields*** of general anthropology
2. ***culture*** as a primary *concept*
3. ***comparative method*** as major *approach* to the study of human behavior
4. ***holism*** or the study of "humankind" as a whole, as a *primary theoretical goal*
5. ***fieldwork*** as a primary research technique, involving "*participant observation*"

Main Characteristics

1. the **four fields** of general anthropology
2. **culture** as a primary *concept*
3. **comparative method** as major

more on this later . . .

4. **holism** of the study of humankind as a whole, as a *primary theoretical goal*
5. **fieldwork** as a primary research technique, involving “*participant observation*”

**finally, to round off our theoretical
perspectives, we'll have
a brief look at . . .**

a few

“Other Important Terms”

a few

“Other Important Terms”

including . . .

- 1. ethnocentrism**
- 2. cultural relativism**
 - absolute cultural relativism**
 - critical cultural relativism**
- 3. “multiple cultural worlds”**

a few

“Other Important Terms”

including . . .

1. ethnocentrism

more on this later . . .

- absolute cultural relativism
- critical cultural relativism

3. “multiple cultural worlds”

and
“Units of Analysis”

“units of analysis” may include:

- one person**
- the family**
- the community**
- a region**
- a “culture area”**
- a culture / “subculture”**
- a nation**
- an item or action itself**
- a “cultural metaphor”**

“units of analysis” may include:

- one person**
- the family**
- the community**
- a region**

more on this later . . .

- a culture / “subculture”**
- a nation**
- an item or action itself**
- a “cultural metaphor”**

and we'll have a brief look at

Three Major Perennial Debates

three major contemporary debates

1. *Biological Determinism*

vs. Cultural Constructionism

2. *Ideationism vs. Cultural Materialism*

3. *Individual Agency vs. Structuralism*

(“free will” vs. “power structures”)

three major contemporary debates

1. *Biological Determinism*

vs. Cultural Constructionism

2. *Ideationism vs. Cultural Materialism*

more on this later . . .

3. *Individual Agency vs. Structuralism*

(“free will” vs. “power structures”)

**and so, to study Middle America in
the American Anthropological
tradition we'll further consider the
items you see listed in the
Week 1 "Topics" . . .**

Week 1 — Introduction to Anthropology / Orientation to Middle America

Reminder: All initial introductions should be done by the end of week one. You may reply to each others introductions throughout the course

Please read the [course overview](#) and go through the general course information in the first block.

And if you have not used Moodle before please view the [orientation tutorial](#).

(PLEASE NOTE: The orientation tutorial is a UM Technology Training Center tutorial. The content of the tutorial has nothing to do with this course. -- Tim Roufs)



Week 1 Welcome Memo

 [Viewing .PDFs and PowerPoints](#)

~

Week 1 Topics

 [Topics for Week 1](#)

~

Week 1 Reading Assignments

topics . . .

-  [Introduce Yourself \(Due by Friday, 7 September 2012\)](#)
-  [Complete or Update Your Moodle Profile as Part of Your Introduction](#)
-  [Information on Points for Forum Posts](#)
-  [Pre Assessing Yourself \(Due by Friday, 7 September 2012\)](#)
-  [Forum: Archaeological Ethics \(Due by Friday, 7 September 2012\)](#)

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- **Main Characteristics of Anthropology**

slides: (.pdf) (.pptx)

[\(Download PowerPoint Viewer Free\)](#) [\(Download Adobe .pdf Reader Free\)](#)

[see note on slide formats]

(NOTE: This is a long slide set as it covers some very important background information that will be referred to often as we go through the semester. Please bear with it to the end. And it will take a little longer to load, so please bear with that also. There is no video presentation scheduled for this and next week as the base slide sets tend to be a little longer than "normal.")

- the **four fields** of general anthropology
- **culture** as a primary concept
- **comparative method** as major approach
- **holism** as a primary theoretical goal
- **fieldwork** as a primary research technique

[WebPage Summary](#)

["Anthropology and . . . It's Parts" chart](#)

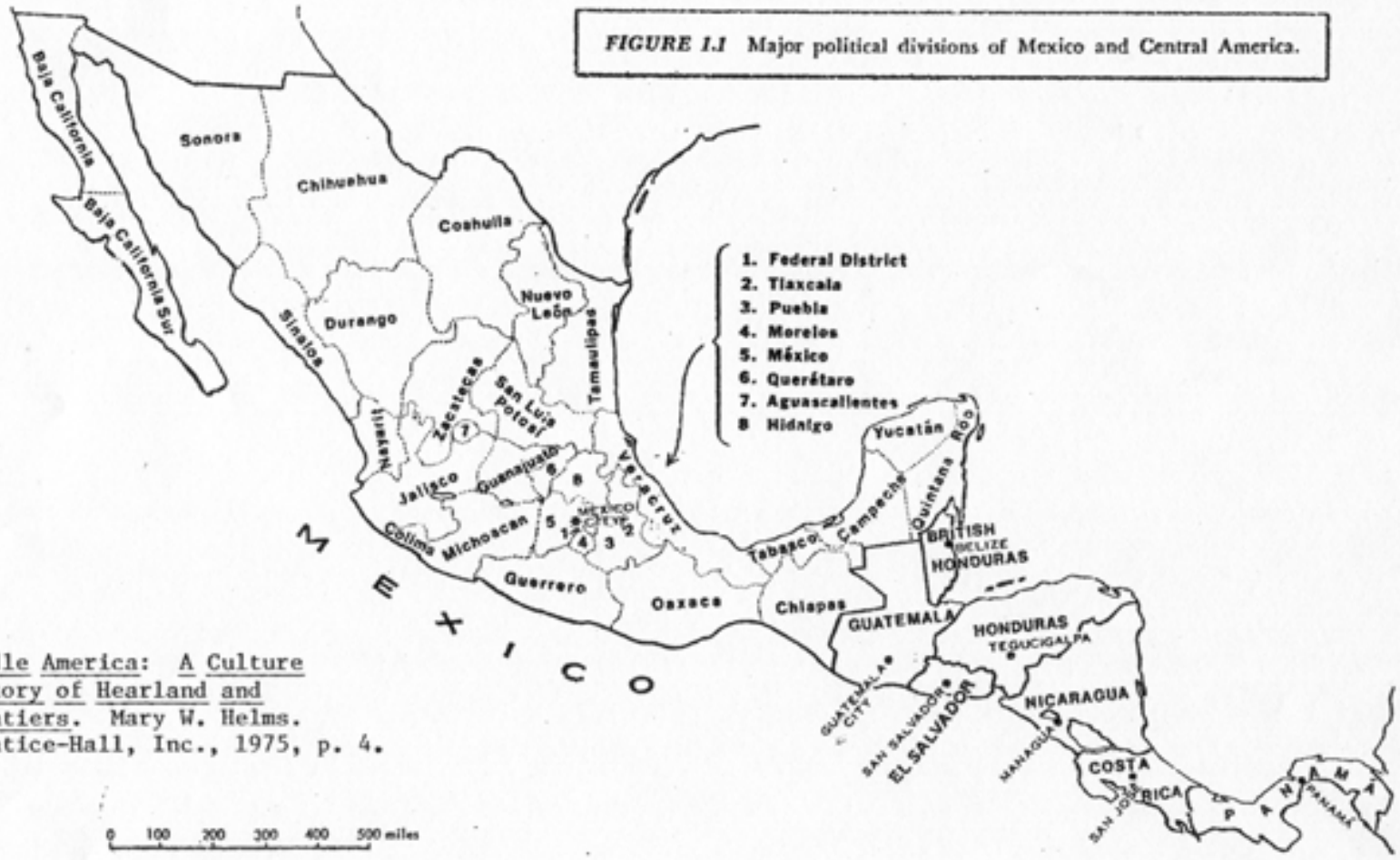


**and all along the way
we'll look at a lot of maps . . .**

**. . . starting with
two map handouts . . .**

**and all along the way
we'll look at a lot of maps . . .
. . . starting with
two map handouts . . .**

FIGURE 1.1 Major political divisions of Mexico and Central America.



SOURCE: Middle America: A Culture History of Heartland and Frontiers. Mary W. Helms. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975, p. 4.

Major Archaeological Sites of Mesoamerica



**and we'll start right off with a look
at a wonderful little
(more-or-less homemade)
movie . . .**



Day 01 Tuesday, 4 September 2012 nlt 11:56

video:

Woman of Chamula

(14 min., 1969, VC 128)

[streaming video](#)

[course viewing guide](#)



**when I say it's a “wonderful” little
film I mean the *content* is
wonderful . . .**

**the technical quality of the film is
*horrible***

(and that's a Spanish word)

**so bear with the quality and focus
on the content. It's an important
little film . . .**

. . . almost everything you see in it,
and some things you “view” but
don't “see” will re-appear quite
often this semester . . .

**so bear with the quality and focus
on the content. It's an important
little film . . .**

**. . . almost everything you see in it,
and some things you “view” but
don't “see” will re-appear quite
often this semester . . .**

next . . .

that wonderful little

(more-or-less homemade)

movie . . .



Day 01 Tuesday, 4 September 2012 nlt 11:56

video:

Woman of Chamula

(14 min., 1969, VC 128)

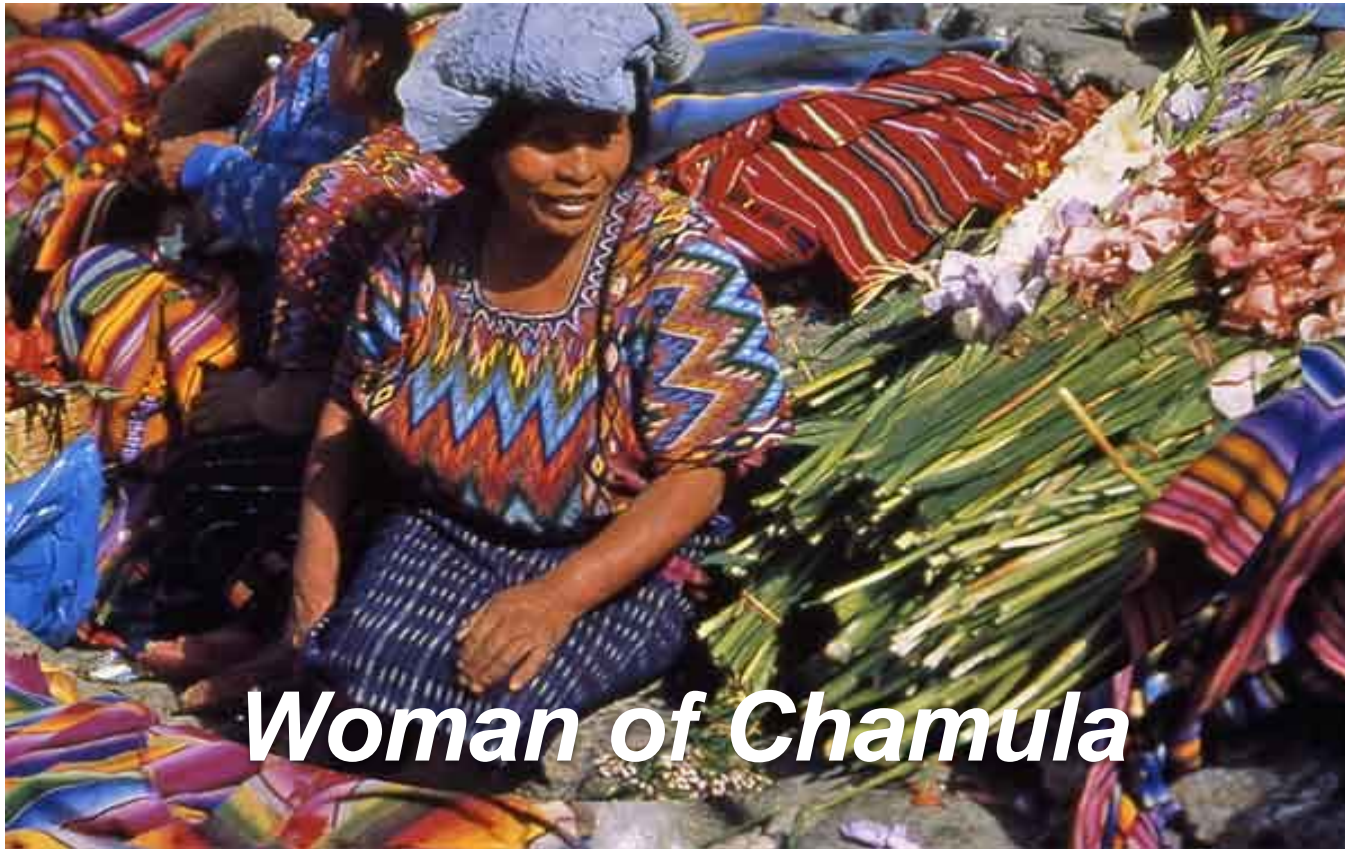
[streaming video](#)

[course viewing guide](#)



our first “field trip” . . .

(Day 01 . . . to see . . .)



Woman of Chamula

our second “field trip” . . .

(Day 02 . . . to visit . . .)



Tikal

and seven other Ancient Mesoamerican sites

our third “field trip” . . .

(Day 04 . . . to visit . . .)

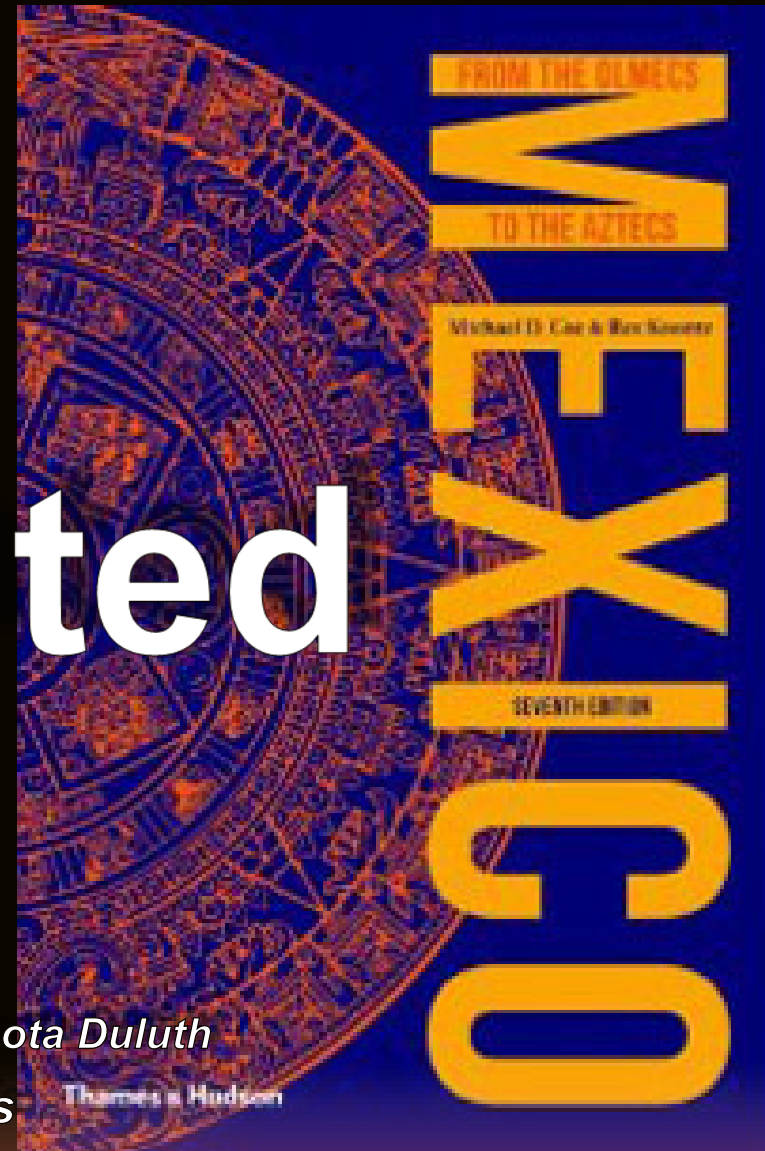
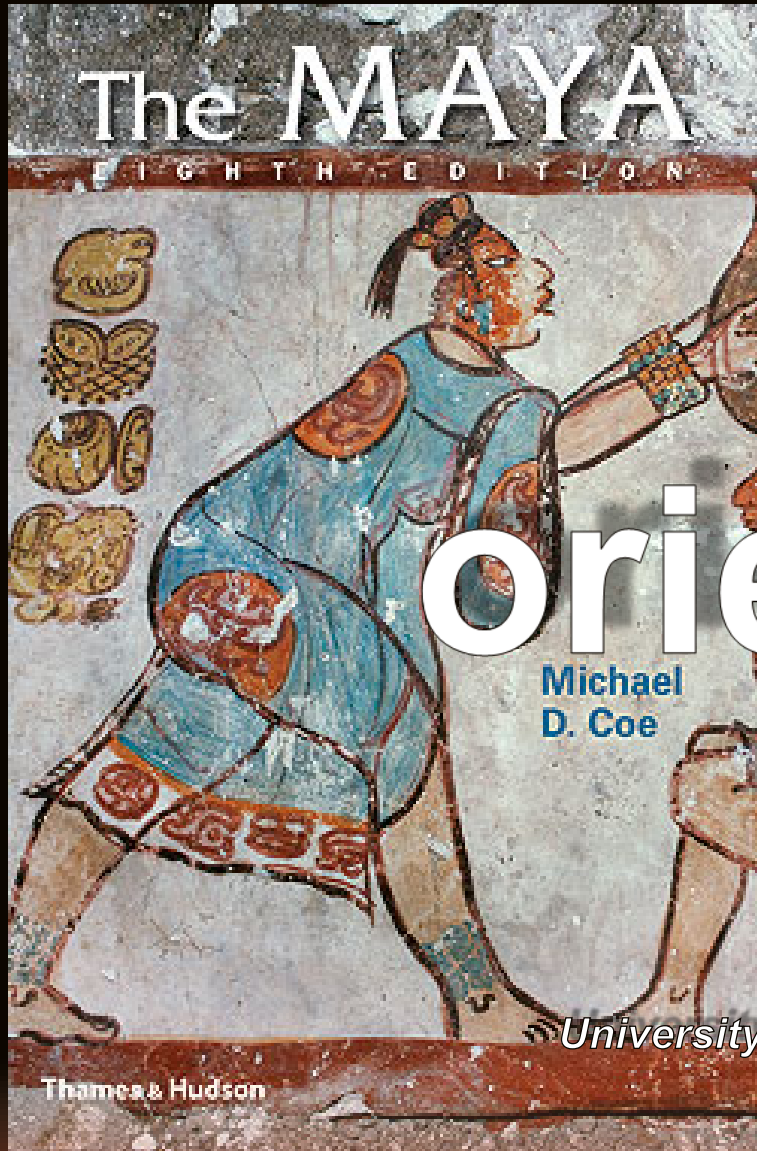
video:

"The Fifth World of the Aztecs"

(60 min., 1997, UM Duluth Library Multimedia (F1430 .S65 2006 DVD), VC 3403-4)

film HomePage
[course viewing guide](#)





oriented

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<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth3618/>