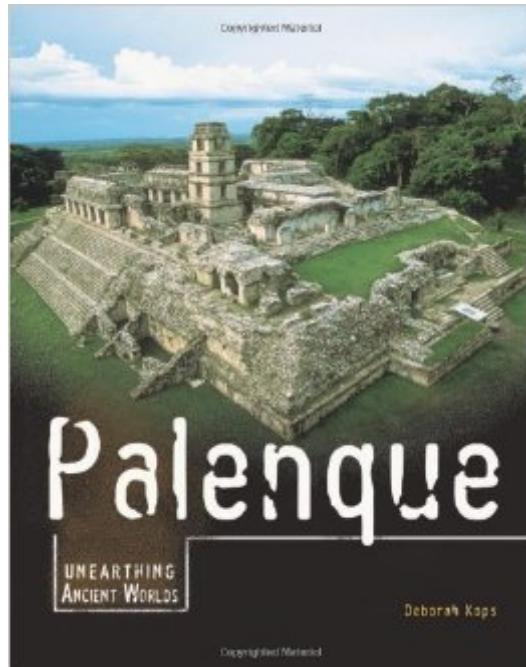


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Palenque (Unearthing Ancient Worlds)



Synopsis

In the Jungle of Chiapas, Mexico, nestled on a thickly wooded ridge, are the ancient ruins of Palenque (pah-LEN-keh). Occupied for several hundred years, from 400 to 800 A.D, it represents the western regional variant of Classic Maya civilization. It is believed to be one of the most important cities of its day during the Mayan period. The hieroglyphic inscriptions found at Palenque were the inspiration for the modern epigraphic understanding of the ancient Maya writing system. These inscriptions tell the dynastic history of a series of rulers the most famous being Pakal, who is buried in a sarcophagus in a chamber below the Temple of the Inscriptions. The first European to visit the ruins and publish an account was Father Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada in 1567. Archaeologists estimate that only five percent of the total city has been uncovered.

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