



**MAYA TRIBE**



The Maya peoples are a large group of Indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica. They inhabit southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador and Honduras.

The overarching term "Maya" is a collective designation to include the peoples of the region that share some degree of cultural and linguistic heritage; however, the term embraces many distinct populations, societies, and ethnic groups that each have their own particular traditions, cultures, and historical identity.

There were an estimated six million Maya living in this area at the start of the 21st century. Guatemala, southern Mexico and the Yucatán Peninsula, Belize, El Salvador, and western Honduras have managed to maintain numerous remnants of their ancient cultural heritage.



- Maya civilization (/ˈmaɪə/) was a Mesoamerican civilization developed by the Maya peoples, and noted for its hieroglyphic script—the only known fully developed writing system of the pre-Columbian Americas—as well as for its art, architecture, mathematics, calendar, and astronomical system.
- The Maya civilization developed in an area that encompasses southeastern Mexico, all of Guatemala and Belize, and the western portions of Honduras and El Salvador. This region consists of the northern lowlands encompassing the Yucatán Peninsula, and the highlands of the Sierra Madre, running from the Mexican state of Chiapas, across southern Guatemala and onwards into El Salvador, and the southern lowlands of the Pacific littoral



# The Maya area within Mesoamerica



- **THEIR PYRAMIDS AND CITIES ARE STILL BEING DISCOVERED.**

- It's amazing to think that something as large as a pyramid could elude archaeologists today. But it was only a few years ago that a Maya pyramid more than 1000 years old was discovered at Toniná in the Mexican state of Chiapas. It had been hidden under what was believed to be a natural hill.

- In 2015, researchers said this newfound monument was actually Mexico's tallest pyramid at 246 feet (75 meters) in height, surpassing the 213-foot Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan. The ruins of two Maya cities concealed by thick vegetation were also recently discovered in

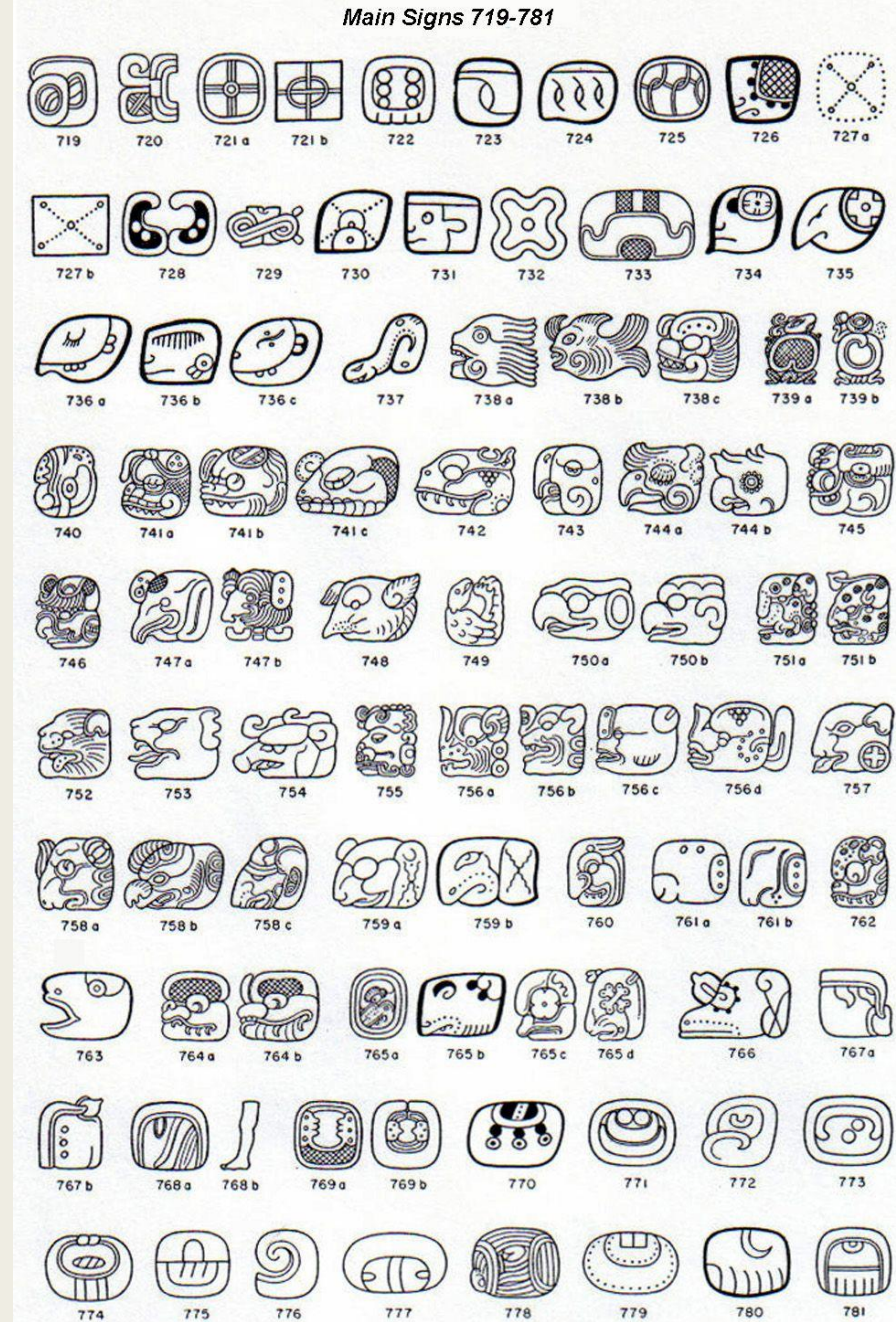


## THEY HAD A COMPLICATED SYSTEM OF HIEROGLYPHS.

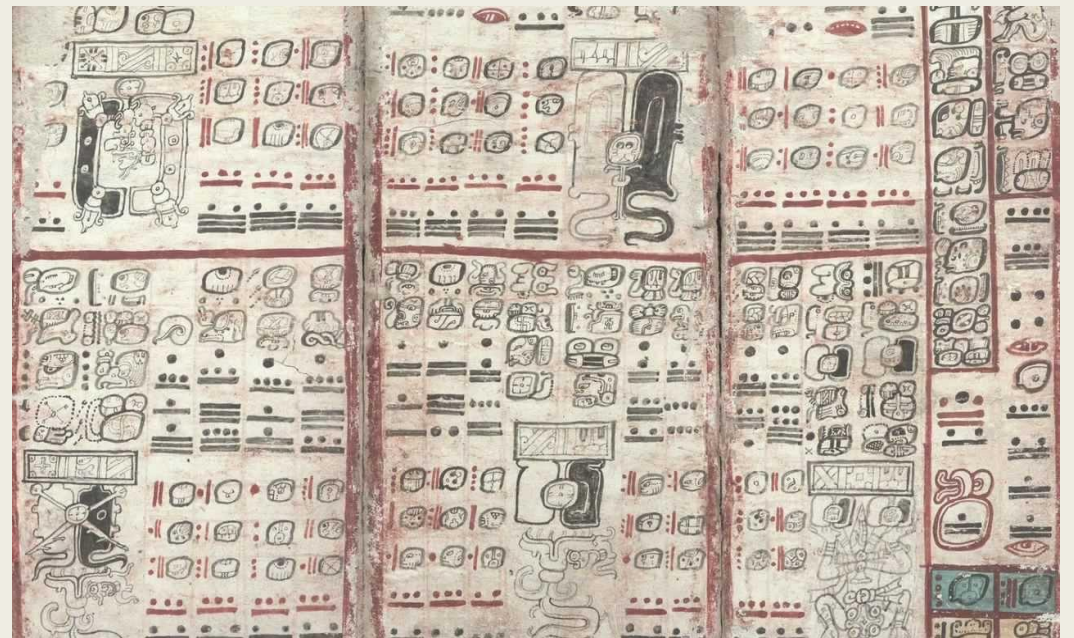
Mayan writing, which dates to the late Preclassic period (300 BCE to 100 CE), is preserved on buildings, stone monuments, rare books, and pottery.

While words in the English language are formed with combinations of 26 letters, written Mayan words are formed from various combinations of more than 800 hieroglyphs, each representing a syllable. The system is thought to be the most sophisticated of its kind in Mesoamerica.

Only in the last few decades have Mayanists gained the ability to read most of the glyphs.



- THE MAYA WROTE BOOKS ... AND THE EUROPEANS BURNED THEM.
- The Maya wrote books in their elaborate hieroglyphic script on long strips of durable paper made from the inner bark of fig trees. But there are just three Maya codices that survive today: the Dresden Codex, the Madrid Codex, and the Paris Codex. (There's also the fragmentary Grolier Codex, but scholars dispute its authenticity.)
- Many more Maya books fell victim to the damp conditions of Mesoamerica—or the arrival of Europeans who purposefully destroyed Maya texts. Diego de Landa, a Franciscan friar from Spain who arrived in Yucatan in the 1540s, described one such scene: “We found a large number of books in their letters and because they had nothing in which there was not superstition and lies of the devil, we burned them all, which they regretted to an amazing degree and which caused them sorrow.”

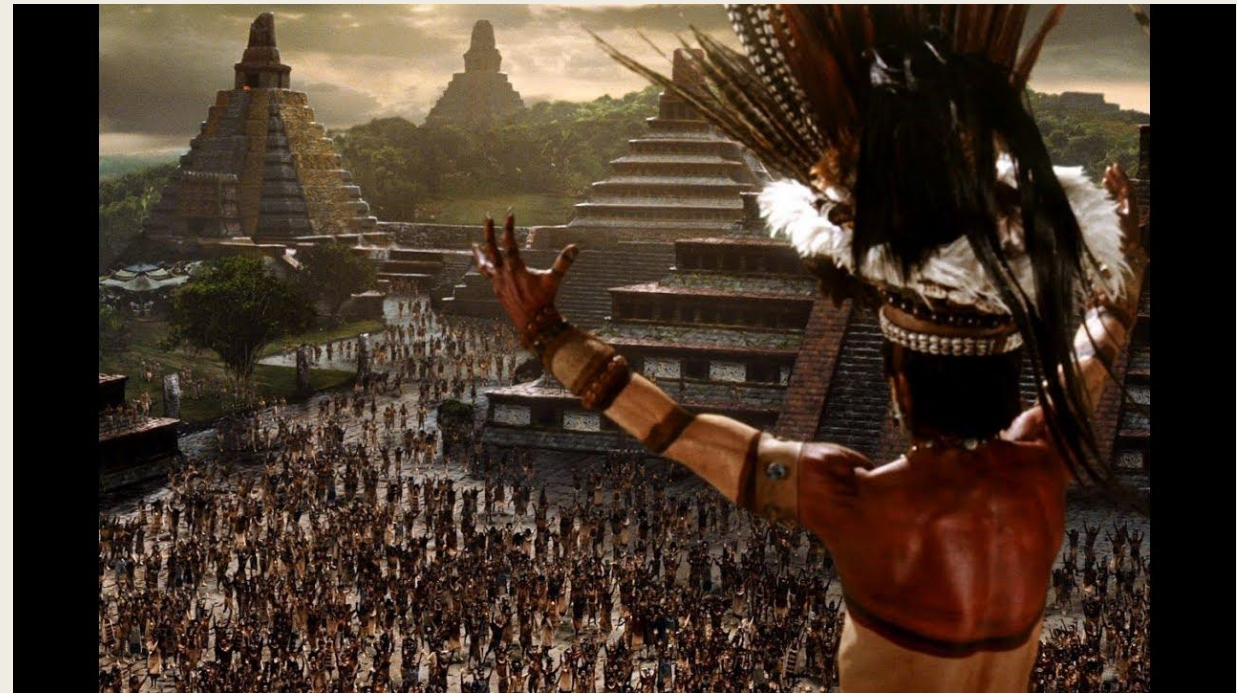




- **THEIR CALENDAR, WHILE COMPLEX, DID NOT PREDICT THE END OF THE WORLD.**
- There was a lot of talk in certain paranoid corners of the Internet that doomsday, as predicted by the Maya calendar, would come on December 21, 2012. The date came and went and the apocalypse never materialized, but any Mayanist could have told you that you had nothing to worry about.
- December 21, 2012 just happened to coincide with the end of a full cycle of 5125 years in the Maya's so-called Long Count calendar. This calendar was impressive because it used zero as a placeholder—one of the earliest uses of zero as a mathematical concept in history. And that was only one of the calendars the Maya used.
- They also had a 260-day sacred calendar, or Tzolk'in, which was used to plan religious ceremonies, as well as a 365-day solar calendar known as the Haab'.



- ARCHAEOLOGISTS STILL DEBATE WHY THE CIVILIZATION WENT INTO DECLINE.
- The civilization was really hitting its stride at the peak of the Classic Maya period (300 to 660 CE). But things started to go south in the 8th and 9th centuries.
- Maya cities in the southern lowlands that once boasted populations up to 70,000 people were abandoned.
- Scientists and archaeologists have pointed to a variety of culprits to explain what happened, including drought, rampant raiding and warfare among Maya city-states, migration to the beach and overpopulation, or perhaps some fatal combination of those things.





- THEY DIDN'T VANISH.
- Sure, many of the great Maya cities were mysteriously deserted, but the people didn't disappear. The descendants of the Maya are still around today, many of them living in their ancestral homelands, like Guatemala, where Maya people actually make up a majority of the population.
- “Maya” is really an umbrella term for many different indigenous ethnic group who may speak different Mayan languages such as Yucatec, Quiche, Kekchi, or Mopan.

- THEIR ARTIFACTS AND MONUMENTS ARE AT RISK.
- In Guatemala and Belize, locals apparently use the word huecheros—derived from the Maya word for armadillo, or huech—to talk about people who loot archaeological sites.
- Illegally excavated vases, statues, and other artifacts from Maya sites have made their way into the illicit antiquities market, and looters' tunnels destroy archaeological sites in the process. In one striking example, a pyramid was cut in half by looters at the Maya city of Xultún in Guatemala. In some cases, Maya antiquities have been returned to their country of origin.
- The Denver Art Museum returned a carved wooden doorway lintel to Guatemala in 1998 when the artifact was found to have been taken from El Zotz, a Maya settlement just west of the great city of Tikal.



THANKS FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION!

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