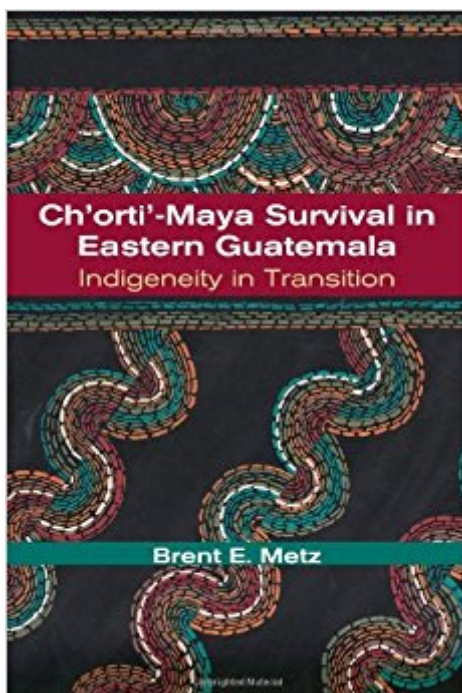


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Ch'orti'-Maya Survival In Eastern Guatemala: Indigeneity In Transition



Synopsis

Scholars and Guatemalans have characterized eastern Guatemala as "Ladino" or non-Indian. The Ch'orti' do not exhibit the obvious indigenous markers found among the Mayas of western Guatemala, Chiapas, and the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico. Few still speak Ch'orti', most no longer wear distinctive dress, and most community organizations have long been abandoned. During the colonial period, the Ch'orti' region was adjacent to relatively vibrant economic regions of Central America that included major trade routes, mines, and dye plantations. In the twentieth century Ch'orti's directly experienced U.S.-backed dictatorships, a 36-year civil war from start to finish, and Christian evangelization campaigns, all while their population has increased exponentially. These have had tremendous impacts on Ch'orti' identities and cultures. From 1991 to 1993, Brent Metz lived in three Ch'orti' Maya-speaking communities, learning the language, conducting household surveys, and interviewing informants. He found Ch'orti's to be ashamed of their indigeneity, and he was fortunate to be present and involved when many Ch'orti's joined the Maya Movement. He has continued to expand his ethnographic research of the Ch'orti' annually ever since and has witnessed how Ch'orti's are reformulating their history and identity.

Book Information

Paperback: 356 pages

Publisher: University of New Mexico Press; 44784th edition (May 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0826338801

ISBN-13: 978-0826338808

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,438,631 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #109 in [Books > History > Americas > Central America > Guatemala](#) #235 in [Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Mayan](#) #1237 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Latin America](#)

Customer Reviews

An ethnographic study of the Ch'orti' Maya of Guatemala and their reformulation of their history and identity.

Brent E. Metz is assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Kansas.

Perfect.

The book is quite technical, but unlike tourism guides, this text deals with the people and the culture. This is why international travel is interesting and rewarding. True, the book deals with the native peoples, but in doing so, also reveals the western encroachment, and interactions with other populations within Guatemala. It's worth reading.

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