



## **Conversations with the High Priest of Coosa**

Charles M. Hudson

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"This book begins where the reach of archaeology and history ends," writes Charles Hudson. Grounded in careful research, his extraordinary work imaginatively brings to life the sixteenth-century world of the Coosa, a native people whose territory stretched across the Southeast, encompassing much of present-day Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama.

Cast as a series of conversations between Domingo de la Anunciacion, a real-life Spanish priest who traveled to the Coosa chiefdom around 1559, and the Raven, a fictional tribal elder, *Conversations with the High Priest of Coosa* attempts to reconstruct the worldview of the Indians of the late prehistoric Southeast. Mediating the exchange between the two men is Teresa, a character modeled on a Coosa woman captured some twenty years earlier by the Hernando de Soto expedition and taken to Mexico, where she learned Spanish and became a Christian convert.

Through story and legend, the Raven teaches Anunciacion about the rituals, traditions, and culture of the Coosa. He tells of how the Coosa world came to be and recounts tales of the birds and animals--real and mythical--that share that world. From these engaging conversations emerges a fascinating glimpse inside the Coosa belief system and an enhanced understanding of the native people who inhabited the ancient South.



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