



The Inka Empire: A Multidisciplinary Approach (William and Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Cultur)

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Massive yet elegantly executed masonry architecture and *andenes* (agricultural terraces) set against majestic and seemingly boundless Andean landscapes, roads built in defiance of rugged terrains, and fine textiles with orderly geometric designs—all were created within the largest political system in the ancient New World, a system headed, paradoxically, by a single, small minority group without wheeled vehicles, markets, or a writing system, the Inka. For some 130 years (ca. A.D. 1400 to 1533), the Inka ruled over at least eighty-six ethnic groups in an empire that encompassed about 2 million square kilometers, from the northernmost region of the Ecuador–Colombia border to northwest Argentina.

The Inka Empire brings together leading international scholars from many complementary disciplines, including human genetics, linguistics, textile and architectural studies, ethnohistory, and archaeology, to present a state-of-the-art, holistic, and in-depth vision of the Inkas. The contributors provide the latest data and understandings of the political, demographic, and linguistic evolution of the Inkas, from the formative era prior to their political ascendancy to their post-conquest transformation. The scholars also offer an updated vision of the unity, diversity, and essence of the material, organizational, and symbolic-ideological features of the Inka Empire. As a whole, *The Inka Empire* demonstrates the necessity and value of a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates the insights of fields beyond archaeology and ethnohistory. And with essays by scholars from seven countries, it reflects the cosmopolitanism that has characterized Inka studies ever since its beginnings in the nineteenth century.

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