



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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Editorial Review

Review

"Shimada's monumental volume makes clear that 'Inka' can be understood in multiple ways, whether as a claim to ethnic origin, an assertion of status, a mode of governance or as a standard of beauty...This volume will surely influence research on the Inkas for decades to come. Moreover, although the volume maintains a tight focus on its subject matter, it offers rich and varied insights into imperialism that will interest scholars of ancient empires more generally." (*Antiquity*)

"This book is of major importance. It will be a classic for the next twenty years, challenging assumptions and pointing out new directions for productive research in all the disciplines included. In addition, it will be a graduate student's guidebook, a refresher for specialists who may not have been keeping up with advances in other disciplines, and utterly fascinating for scholarly readers interested in prehistoric empires, American native cultures, or the benefits of well-integrated multidisciplinary research." (Jeanette E. Sherbondy, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Emerita, Washington College, and author of *Cuzco: Aguas y Poder*)

"This edited volume not only provides a useful textbook for students but will act as an important benchmark and reference point for future research on the Inka Empire. It offers thoughtful summaries of the latest findings from archaeological, historical, anthropological, and linguistic approaches. It provides a broad overview of the Empire from its origins to the Colonial period, and from the heartland of Cuzco to the furthest outreaches. Each chapter is written by recognized authorities who are well placed to summarize the work of others and who write insightfully about topics, regions, and time periods on which they have been conducting their own research." (Bill Sillar, Senior Lecturer in Archaeology, University College London, author of *Shaping Culture: Making Pots and Constructing Households*, and coeditor of *Conservation, Identity and Ownership in Indigenous Archaeology*)

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About the Author

Izumi Shimada is Distinguished University Scholar and Professor of Anthropology at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. He has authored or edited over 200 publications, including *Pampa Grande and the Mochica Culture* and *Craft Production in Complex Societies*, and has received awards and honors from the

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