



The Ancient Kingdoms of Peru

Nigel Davies

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This essential book draws on the evidence of recent excavations of Peruvian sites in a remarkable survey of the civilizations which preceded the Incas.

As recently as 1987, robbers discovered by far the most spectacular vestiges of the Moche people, who ruled much of Peru for the first six centuries of the Christian era. This find—a royal burial chamber shoulder-deep in gold and silver ornaments and carvings studded with jewels—has provided many powerful insights into their way of life, as Nigel Davies shows.

Patterns representing a condor, a killer whale and even an 80-meter monkey, visible only from the air, are etched into a bare expanse of desert at Nazca. Davies analyzes and assesses the latest scholarly theories surrounding one of the world's great enigmas. He then turns to the key power centers of the 'middle period' in Huari and Tiahuanaco, the great coastal civilization of Chimir (the first for which we have written accounts), and its eventual defeat by the Incas around 1470 AD. Alongside the often biased conquistador chronicles, archaeology can now illuminate the Inca imperial cult, their methods of agriculture, road-building, town-planning and settlement.

In this lively and compelling overview, Davies makes accessible the latest research on all these ancient kingdoms of Peru.

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