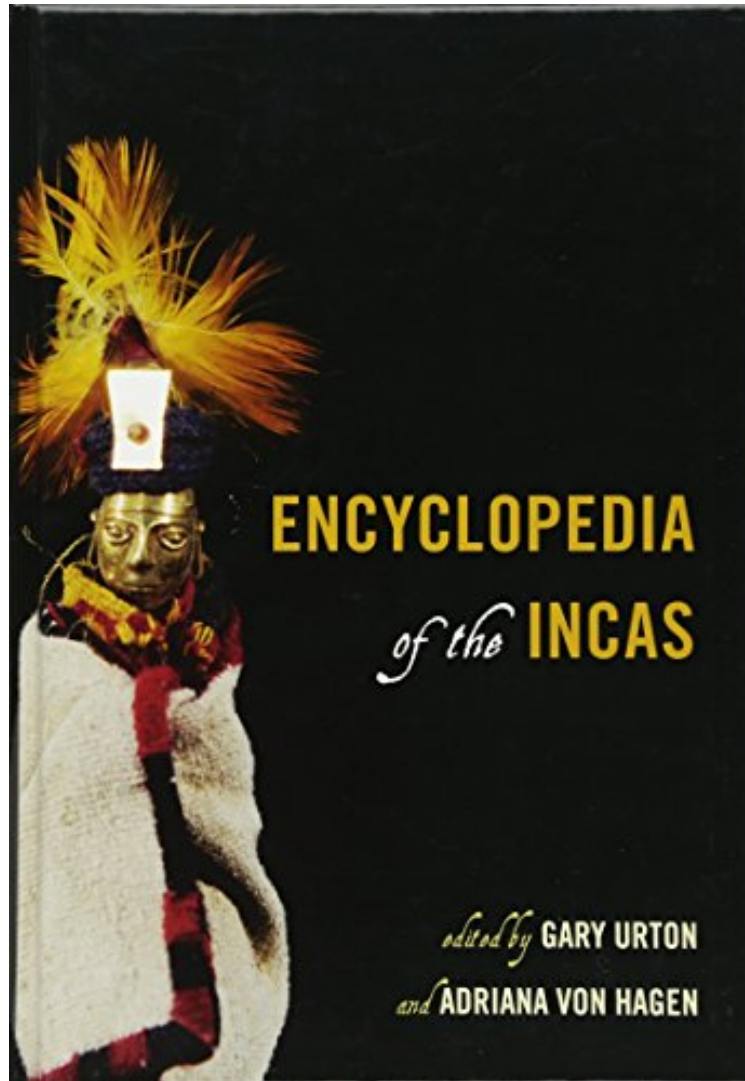


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Encyclopedia of the Incas

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is loaded with some 128 different subjects written by 33 top experts. As an aid to the reader, there are 12 pages of index and a handy "Thematic" table of contents. You can open almost any page and be hooked by the inviting style of the writing and credible storytelling. I recommend this encyclopedia to scholars and arm-chair travelers.

The Inca Empire existed for fewer than 100 years, yet ruled more subjects than either the Aztecs or the Maya and occupied a territory stretching nearly 3000 miles. The Incas left no system of writing; what we know of them has been gleaned from the archaeological record and accounts written following the Spanish invasion. In this A-to-Z encyclopedia, Gary Urton and Adriana von Hagen, together with over thirty contributors, provide a broad introduction to the fascinating civilization of the Incas, including their settlements, culture, society, celebrations, and achievements. Following a broad introduction, 128 individual entries explore wide-ranging themes (religion, architecture, farming) and specific topics (ceremonial drinking cup, astronomy), interweaving ethnohistoric and archaeological research with nuanced interpretation. Each entry provides suggestions for further reading. Sidebars profiling chroniclers and researchers of Inca life ranging from Jos de Acosta and Cristbal de Albornoz to Maria Rostworowski and R. Tom Zuidema add depth and context for the cultural entries. Cross-references, alphabetical and topical lists of entries, and a thorough index help readers navigate the volume. A chronology, selected bibliography, regional map, and almost ninety illustrations round out the volume. In sum, the Encyclopedia of the Incas provides a unique, comprehensive resource for scholars, as well as the general public, to explore the civilization of the Inca, the largest empire of the pre-Columbian New World.

Among recent works in Inca studies, there is nothing quite comparable to this reference work designed for the curious to follow cross-references and seek out both the classic and current sources mentioned in bibliographies accompanying each of its 130-plus brief topical and biographical entries. Editors Urton and von Hagen contribute about half of the entries, while the remainder are by 33 specialists in disciplines spanning archaeology, anthropology, ethnohistory, art, architecture, materials science, linguistics, history, bioanthropology, ethnomusicology, and museology. . . . The Rowman and Littlefield encyclopedia is well structured for its purpose...with a table of contents of entries arranged A-Z, another divided into historic personages and thematic topics, and a list of contributors with affiliations. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All libraries. All levels. (CHOICE) While the Inca Empire was the largest in the pre-Columbian New World, until recent decades it had drawn less scholarly attention than the Maya and Aztecs. Editors Urton (pre-Columbian Studies, Harvard Univ.) and Peruvian archaeologist von Hagen have gathered 35 Inca specialists to describe key elements of an empire that extended from Colombia to Chile and encompassed coastal plains, mountains, and tropical forests. The Incas did not invent a writing system but used quipus (knotted string devices) for record keeping. There are fascinating entries on fortifications, and their extraordinary road and bridge network, which was some 25,000 miles long, linked Cuzco to the rest of the empire and featured roadside lodgings called tambos every ten to 15 miles. Specialists and students alike will reap the benefits of this helpful reference. (Library Journal) Urton and von Hagen present an encyclopedia that has a broad introduction outlining the main themes of their volume before presenting material in an accessible format that can be considered current, accurate and comprehensive. Encyclopedia of the Incas at once presents its reader with a fascinating array of information but leaves them with many questions. For scholars, this will be ideal, leading to new branches of knowledge and research. For amateurs, it provides a further investigation into a fascinating culture with an emphasis not only on the people but also on their invaders. Fascinating, unique and important, this is a well-presented and important work. (Reference s) Thirty-five specialists from varied disciplines and with distinct points of view contributed to this Encyclopedia of the Incas, the first of its kind. The challenge of the editors, Gary Urton and Adriana von Hagen, was to assemble an organic array of authors and entries that would result in a work capable of synthesizing the vast body of knowledge on the Incas in a comprehensive, detailed and authoritative fashion. At the same time, the volume is accessible to a non-specialist, English speaking audience; which, for historical and geopolitical reasons, is not very familiar with the world created by the lords of Cuzco. Through a careful selection that does not omit a single central aspect of Inca civilization and that also includes specific features of the most diverse nature, the editors have minimized the potential randomness implicit in any selection of this type while at the same time skirting the restrictions proper to the academic genre to which the work belongs. (Jos Carlos de la Puente Revista Andina) This comprehensive book features an expert cast of authors and a rich narrative that illuminates the Inca. Sections combining ethnographic, ethnohistoric, and archaeological data are particularly well-written. It is a valuable reference in general, but also (and surprisingly for an encyclopedia) a solid resource for scholars who will benefit from its interpretive strengths and bibliographic references. (Ryan Williams, The Field Museum) About the Author Gary Urton is Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Pre-Columbian Studies at Harvard University. His publications include *At the Crossroads of the Earth and the Sky*, *The History of a Myth*, *The Social Life of Numbers*, *Inca Myths and Signs of the Inka Khipu*. Adriana von Hagen is cofounder of the Museo Leymebamba in Chachapoyas, Peru, and writes on the archaeology of Peru. Her publications include *The Incas* and *The Cities of the Ancient Andes* (both with Craig Morris).