



# Ancient Titicaca: The Evolution of Complex Society in Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia

*By Charles Stanish*

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## **Ancient Titicaca: The Evolution of Complex Society in Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia** By Charles Stanish

One of the richest and most complex civilizations in ancient America evolved around Lake Titicaca in southern Peru and northern Bolivia. This book is the first comprehensive synthesis of four thousand years of prehistory for the entire Titicaca region. It is a fascinating story of the transition from hunting and gathering to early agriculture, to the formation of the Tiwanaku and Pucara civilizations, and to the double conquest of the region, first by the powerful neighboring Inca in the fifteenth century and a century later by the Spanish Crown. Based on more than fifteen years of field research in Peru and Bolivia, Charles Stanish's book brings together a wide range of ethnographic, historical, and archaeological data, including material that has not yet been published. This landmark work brings the author's intimate knowledge of the ethnography and archaeology in this region to bear on major theoretical concerns in evolutionary anthropology.

Stanish provides a broad comparative framework for evaluating how these complex societies developed. After giving an overview of the region's archaeology and cultural history, he discusses the history of archaeological research in the Titicaca Basin, as well as its geography, ecology, and ethnography. He then synthesizes the data from six archaeological periods in the Titicaca Basin within an evolutionary anthropological framework.

Titicaca Basin prehistory has long been viewed through the lens of first Inca intellectuals and the Spanish state. This book demonstrates that the ancestors of the Aymara people of the Titicaca Basin rivaled the Incas in wealth, sophistication, and cultural genius. The provocative data and interpretations of this book will also make us think anew about the rise and fall of other civilizations throughout history.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"No previous writer has attempted such an ambitious synthesis of the archaeology of Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia. Stanish is to be congratulated for his bold and successful endeavor. This work will be required reading in university level courses and a regular presence on the bookshelves of Andean scholars for years to come."-Garth Bawden, author of *The Moche*

#### From the Inside Flap

"No previous writer has attempted such an ambitious synthesis of the archaeology of Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia. Stanish is to be congratulated for his bold and successful endeavor. In this book he offers his readers an impressively broad range of archaeological, historic and cultural data and presents a coherent and plausible interpretation of the evolution of society in the greater Titicaca Basin. It is exciting that this material will now be available to Andean specialists and students of comparative civilization alike. This work will be required reading in university level courses and a regular presence on the bookshelves of Andean scholars for years to come."—Garth Bawden, author of *The Moche*

"This case study of prehispanic cultural evolution in the Titicaca Basin addresses issues of broad general interest, not only to Andeanists but also to scholars working in many other parts of the world where archaic states and empires developed from simpler cultural forms. Stanish, who has been working along the forefront of research on the Titicaca Basin, brings a very large body of new data to bear upon major theoretical concerns in evolutionary anthropology. This book makes the Titicaca Basin archaeological record much more accessible than it ever has been in the past. It is a major contribution, and will surely be a landmark study for years to come."—Jeffrey R. Parsons, co-author of *2000 Prehispanic Settlement Patterns in the Upper Mantaro and Tarma Drainages, Junin, Peru*

#### From the Back Cover

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