



# The Sacred Landscape of the Inca: The Cusco Ceque System

*Brian S. Bauer*

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The *ceque* system of Cusco, the ancient capital of the Inca empire, was perhaps the most complex indigenous ritual system in the pre-Columbian Americas. From a center known as the Coricancha (Golden Enclosure) or the Temple of the Sun, a system of 328 *huacas* (shrines) arranged along 42 ceques (lines) radiated out toward the mountains surrounding the city. This elaborate network, maintained by *ayllus* (kin groups) that made offerings to the shrines in their area, organized the city both temporally and spiritually.

From 1990 to 1995, Brian Bauer directed a major project to document the *ceque* system of Cusco. In this book, he synthesizes extensive archaeological survey work with archival research into the Inca social groups of the Cusco region, their land holdings, and the positions of the shrines to offer a comprehensive, empirical description of the *ceque* system. Moving well beyond previous interpretations, Bauer constructs a convincing model of the system's physical form and its relation to the social, political, and territorial organization of Cusco.

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