



# **Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas (William & Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture)**

*Cristóbal de Molina*

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# Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas (William & Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture)

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Only a few decades after the Spanish conquest of Peru, the third Bishop of Cuzco, Sebastián de Lartaún, called for a report on the religious practices of the Incas. The report was prepared by Cristóbal de Molina, a priest of the Hospital for the Natives of Our Lady of Succor in Cuzco and Preacher General of the city. Molina was an outstanding Quechua speaker, and his advanced language skills allowed him to interview the older indigenous men of Cuzco who were among the last surviving eyewitnesses of the rituals conducted at the height of Inca rule. Thus, Molina's account preserves a crucial first-hand record of Inca religious beliefs and practices.

This volume is the first English translation of Molina's *Relación de las fábulas y ritos de los incas* since 1873 and includes the first authoritative scholarly commentary and notes. The work opens with several Inca creation myths and descriptions of the major gods and shrines (*huacas*). Molina then discusses the most important rituals that occurred in Cuzco during each month of the year, as well as rituals that were not tied to the ceremonial calendar, such as birth rituals, female initiation rites, and marriages. Molina also describes the Capacocha ritual, in which all the shrines of the empire were offered sacrifices, as well as the Taqui Ongoy, a millennial movement that spread across the Andes during the late 1560s in response to growing Spanish domination and accelerated violence against the so-called idolatrous religions of the Andean peoples.

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