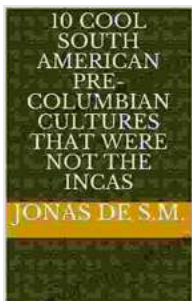


# 10 Cool South American Pre-Columbian Cultures That Were Not the Incas

When it comes to pre-Columbian South America, the Incas often steal the spotlight. But long before the Incas ruled over the Andes, a multitude of other fascinating and sophisticated cultures flourished in the region. Here are ten of the most remarkable that you may not know about:

## 1. Moche

The Moche flourished in northern Peru from around 100 to 700 AD. They were known for their elaborate ceramics, which often depicted scenes of daily life, warfare, and ritual sacrifice. The Moche were also skilled builders, and they constructed vast irrigation systems and monumental pyramids.



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★★★★★ 5 out of 5

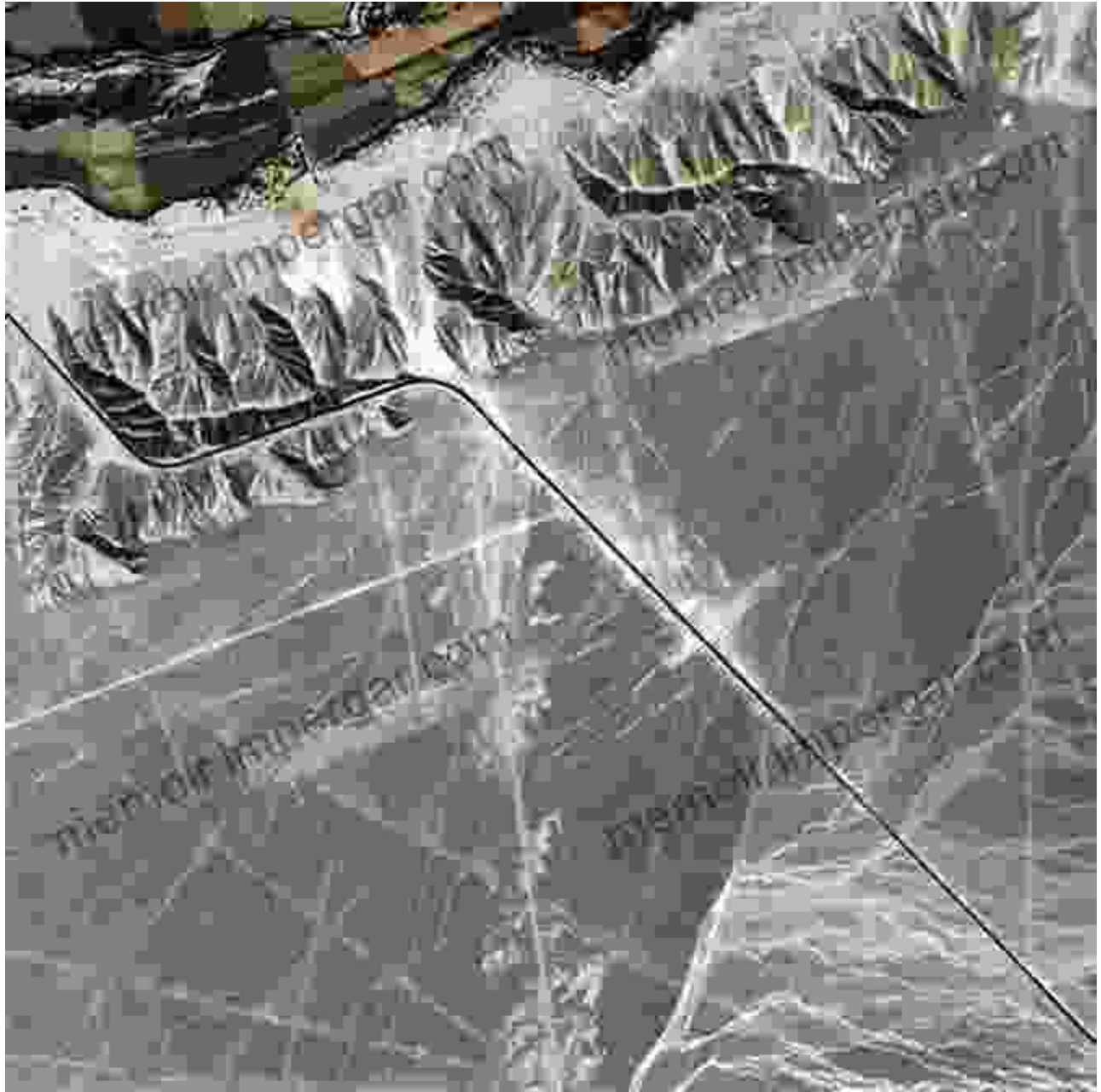
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## 2. Nazca

The Nazca culture inhabited the southern coast of Peru from around 200 BC to 600 AD. They are best known for their enigmatic Nazca Lines, which are vast geoglyphs etched into the desert floor. The Nazca Lines depict animals, plants, and geometric shapes, and their purpose remains a mystery.



An aerial view of the Nazca Lines

### **3. Tiahuanaco**

Tiahuanaco was a major pre-Columbian city located in present-day Bolivia. It flourished from around 500 BC to 1200 AD, and it was one of the largest and most important cities in the Andes. Tiahuanaco is known for its

monumental architecture, including the Gate of the Sun and the Kalasasaya temple.



#### **4. Wari**

The Wari culture emerged in the central Andes of Peru around 600 AD. They were a powerful and expansionist empire, and their influence extended over much of the Peruvian coast and highlands. The Wari are known for their fine textiles, ceramics, and metalwork.



A Wari textile fragment

## 5. Chavín

The Chavín culture flourished in the northern Andes of Peru from around 900 to 200 BC. They are best known for their monumental ceremonial center at Chavín de Huántar. Chavín de Huántar is a UNESCO World

Heritage Site, and it is one of the most important archaeological sites in the Americas.



## **6. Paracas**

The Paracas culture developed on the southern coast of Peru from around 800 to 200 BC. They are known for their elaborate textiles, which were often decorated with brightly colored geometric designs. The Paracas also practiced cranial deformation, and many of their skulls have been found with elongated or flattened shapes.



A Paracas textile fragment

## 7. Chimú

The Chimú culture flourished in northern Peru from around 900 to 1470 AD. They were a powerful and wealthy empire, and they controlled much of the Peruvian coast. The Chimú are known for their impressive architecture,

including the city of Chan Chan, which is the largest pre-Columbian city in the Americas.



## 8. Huari

The Huari culture emerged in the central Andes of Peru around 600 AD. They were a powerful and expansionist empire, and their influence extended over much of the Peruvian coast and highlands. The Huari are known for their fine textiles, ceramics, and metalwork.





A Huari textile fragment

## 9. Cañaris

The Cañaris culture inhabited the southern highlands of Ecuador from around 500 BC to 1500 AD. They were known for their skilled metalwork, and they produced a variety of gold and silver objects, including jewelry, weapons, and ritual vessels.



## 10. Inca

Of course, no discussion of pre-Columbian South America would be complete without mentioning the Incas. The Incas emerged in the Andes of Peru around 1200 AD, and they quickly became one of the most powerful and expansive empires in the Americas. The Incas are known for their

impressive architecture, including the city of Machu Picchu, which is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world.



The city of Machu Picchu

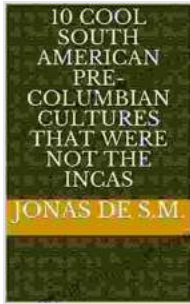
These are just a few of the many fascinating pre-Columbian cultures that flourished in South America. Each of these cultures had its own unique identity, and each made significant contributions to the development of the region. By learning about these cultures, we can gain a deeper understanding of the rich and diverse history of the Americas.

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