



Gold and Power in Ancient Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia (Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Conference Proceedings)

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The lands between Mesoamerica and the Central Andes are famed for the rich diversity of ancient cultures that inhabited them. Throughout this vast region, from about AD 700 until the sixteenth-century Spanish invasion, a rich and varied tradition of goldworking was practiced. The amount of gold produced and worn by native inhabitants was so great that Columbus dubbed the last New World shores he sailed as Costa Rica—the "Rich Coast."

Despite the long-recognized importance of the region in its contribution to Pre-Columbian culture, very few books are readily available, especially in English, on these lands of gold. *Gold and Power in Ancient Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia* now fills that gap with eleven articles by leading scholars in the field. Issues of culture change, the nature of chiefdom societies, long-distance trade and transport, ideologies of value, and the technologies of goldworking are covered in these essays as are the role of metals as expressions and materializations of spiritual, political, and economic power. These topics are accompanied by new information on the role of stone statuary and lapidary work, craft and trade specialization, and many more topics, including a reevaluation of the concept of the "Intermediate Area."

Collectively, the volume provides a new perspective on the prehistory of these lands and includes articles by Latin American scholars whose writings have rarely been published in English.

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