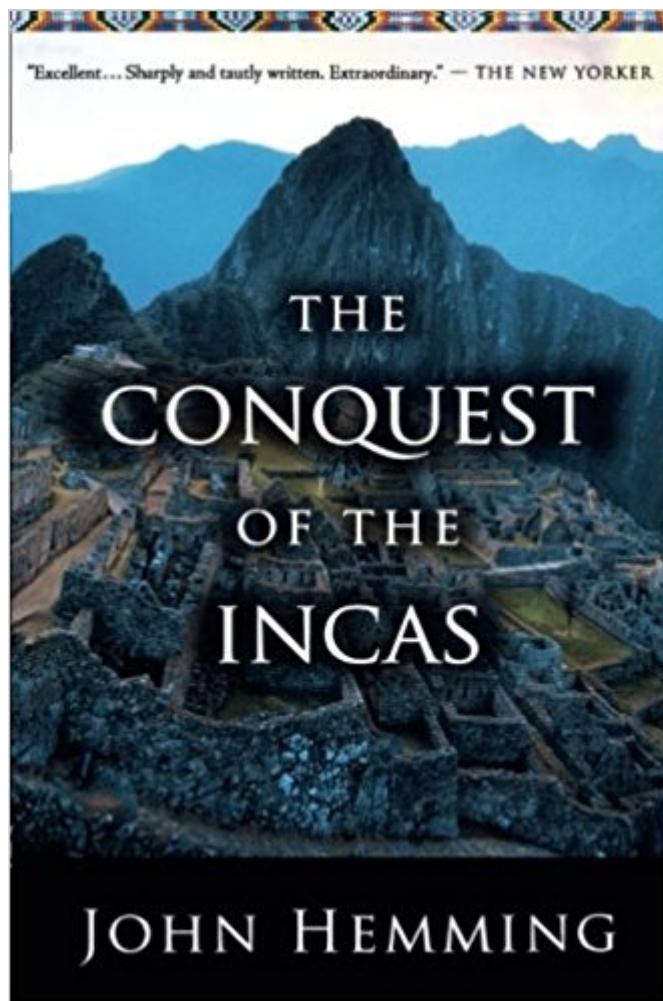


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The Conquest Of The Incas



Synopsis

“Distinguished by an extraordinary empathy, a feeling of one’s way into the minds of the sixteenth-century Spaniards and Indians . . . Provocative.” — New York Times

“An extraordinary book. Combining rigorous historical research and profound analysis with stylistic elegance, this work allows the reader to appreciate the tragic and fabulous history of the Incan empire in all its richness and diversity. It reads like the most skillful novel.” — Mario Vargas Llosa, winner of the Nobel Prize in literature

In 1532, the magnificent Inca empire was the last great civilization still isolated from the rest of humankind. The Conquest of the Incas is the definitive history of this civilization’s overthrow, from the invasion by Pizarro’s small gang of conquistadors and the Incas’ valiant attempts to expel the invaders to the destruction of the Inca realm, the oppression of its people, and the modern discoveries of Machu Picchu and the lost city of Vilcabamba. This authoritative, wide-ranging account, grounded in meticulous research and firsthand knowledge and told from the viewpoints of both protagonists, “keeps all the complex issues to the fore . . . the deeper wonder of the conquest and the deeper horror of its results” (Washington Post). “The bible for historians and archaeologists studying the final days of the Inca. For the past thirty years, The Conquest of the Incas has remained the most influential book for Inca scholars. There is no other book which is even in the same class.” — Brian S. Bauer, professor, University of Illinois at Chicago, leading archaeologist of the Inca

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Customer Reviews

"Conquest of the Incas" is almost unquestionably the best book ever written about the 16th century Spanish conquest of the Inca empire in Peru and neighboring countries. It replaces Prescott's famous "Conquest of Peru," a brilliant piece of research and writing but one compiled at a Boston desk from archival materials. Hemming has much more personal familiarity with the subject and a much greater range of sources to draw on. How it was that conquistador Francisco Pizarro and less than 200 men were able to overthrow the Inca empire of 15 million subjects is one of the great tales of history. "Conquest" details that struggle for power in convincing and fascinating detail, focusing on Pizarro and his brothers who were all brutal, deceitful, and courageous. Hemming gives almost equal time to the Incas and their leaders as they struggle against or accommodate themselves to Spanish rule. (As will be evident to contemporary visitors to Cuzco and Andean Peru, the Spanish conquest never penetrated very deeply. The Inca culture and language still live; Pizarro is despised by most Peruvians and the last Inca, Tupac Amaru, is a national hero.) The story of the conquest has been romanticized in the classic play "Royal Hunt of the Sun" which is well worth seeing for its portraits of Pizarro and the Inca emperor Atahualpa. But the capture and murder of Atahualpa is only the beginning of the story. What followed was a 40 year struggle between Inca and Spaniard (and among Spaniards) for control of Peru that ended with the beheading of Tupac Amaru. The last chapter of the book moves into modern times as it describes the search for the lost Inca province of Vilcabamba and the discovery of Machu Pichu in the early 20th century.

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