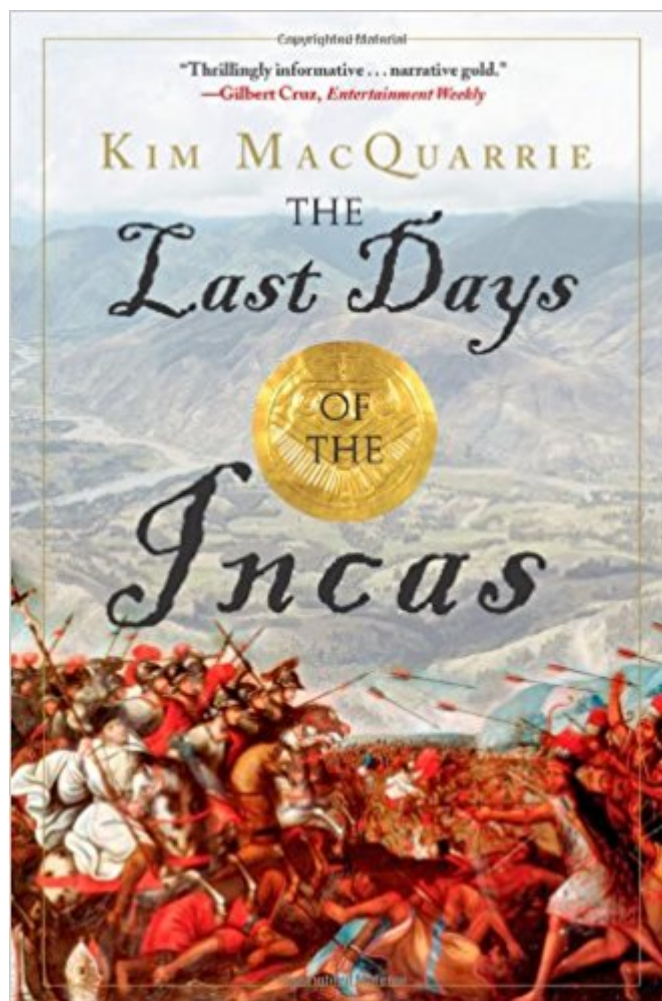


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The Last Days Of The Incas



Synopsis

The epic story of the fall of the Inca Empire to Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in the aftermath of a bloody civil war, and the recent discovery of the lost guerrilla capital of the Incas, Vilcabamba, by three American explorers. In 1532, the fifty-four-year-old Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro led a force of 167 men, including his four brothers, to the shores of Peru. Unbeknownst to the Spaniards, the Inca rulers of Peru had just fought a bloody civil war in which the emperor Atahualpa had defeated his brother Huascar. Pizarro and his men soon clashed with Atahualpa and a huge force of Inca warriors at the Battle of Cajamarca. Despite being outnumbered by more than two hundred to one, the Spaniards prevailed—due largely to their horses, their steel armor and swords, and their tactic of surprise. They captured and imprisoned Atahualpa. Although the Inca emperor paid an enormous ransom in gold, the Spaniards executed him anyway. The following year, the Spaniards seized the Inca capital of Cuzco, completing their conquest of the largest native empire the New World has ever known. Peru was now a Spanish colony, and the conquistadors were wealthy beyond their wildest dreams. But the Incas did not submit willingly. A young Inca emperor, the brother of Atahualpa, soon led a massive rebellion against the Spaniards, inflicting heavy casualties and nearly wiping out the conquerors. Eventually, however, Pizarro and his men forced the emperor to abandon the Andes and flee to the . There, he established a hidden capital, called Vilcabamba—only recently rediscovered by a trio of colorful American explorers. Although the Incas fought a deadly, thirty-six-year-long guerrilla war, the Spanish ultimately captured the last Inca emperor and vanquished the native resistance.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. With vivid and energetic prose, Emmy Award-winning and author MacQuarrie (From the Andes to the) re-creates the 16th-century struggle for what would become modern-day Peru. The Incas ruled a 2,500-mile-long empire, but Spanish explorers, keen to enrich the crown and spread the Catholic Church, eventually destroyed Inca society. MacQuarrie, who writes with just the right amount of drama ("After the interpreter finished delivering the speech, silence once again gripped the square"), is to be commended for giving a balanced account of those events. This long and stylish book doesn't end with the final 1572 collapse of the Incas.

Fast-forwarding to the 20th century, MacQuarrie tells the surprisingly fascinating story of scholars' evolving interpretations of Inca remains. In 1911, a young Yale professor of Latin American history named Hiram Bingham identified Machu Picchu as the nerve center of the empire. Few questioned Bingham's theory until after his death in 1956; in the 1960s Gene Savoy discovered the real Inca center of civilization, Vilcabamba. Although MacQuarrie dedicates just a few chapters to modern research, the archeologists who made the key discoveries emerge as well-developed characters, and the tale of digging up the empire is as riveting as the more familiar history of Spanish conquest. B&w illus., maps. (May 29) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The Incas were members of the group of Quechuan peoples of Peru, who established an empire from northern Ecuador to central Chile before the Spanish conquest. MacQuarrie reminds his readers that nearly 500 years ago, 168 Spaniards arrived in what is now Peru and collided with an Incan empire of 10 million people. The author, who lived in Peru for five years, chronicles the adventures of Hiram Bingham, who, in 1911, discovered Machu Picchu and believed it was the Incan capital. MacQuarrie also recounts the search by Gene Savoy, the American explorer who found Vilcabamba, the true capital. He describes the adventures of other conquistadors and puppet kings, the rebellion of 1535, and other military attempts to conquer the Indians. MacQuarrie, a four-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, researched Spanish and Incan chronicles. The result is a first-rate reference work of ambitious scope that will most likely stand as the definitive account of these people. George Cohen Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This was a well researched and well written account of the Spanish conquest of the Inca nation. I was naturally appalled, if not surprised, at the way the Spanish treated the natives. That said, it is

equally important to remember the atrocities committed by the Incas in the name of religion. They were not the nicest people either. Last Days of the Incas was a page turner from the first encounter between Francisco Pizarro and the Inca to the final showdown between the warring Spanish over who would have control of the new colonies. Then, in an epilogue, MacQuarrie jumps forward to 1911 and gives a general overview of the modern explorers who discovered the ruins of the Inca cities, including Machu Picchu. At this point, things got a little weird for me. The material was still interesting, just in terms of knowing the timeline of when and how some of these amazing ruins were discovered, but I think the ins and outs of the competition to publish first and the personal lives of some of the explorers might well be a different book. Highly recommended, but beware. If you didn't already have Peru on your bucket list, you will after you read this book.

This is an excellent book, and does a superb job in detailing the last years of the Inca Empire. Kim has done a marvellous job in bringing the last years of the Inca Empire. I had read about this vaguely, but this brought a whole new world to life. He has been balanced in his approach, and while he undoubtedly indicts the Spanish for their appalling behaviour, he does, subtly, show that they were brave (but, cruel) men, who had no respect for the Inca culture. This is, however, not restricted to the Spanish. The English did not respect Indian culture when they came into India. My own countrymen have been guilty of similar transgressions, I am sure, when the South Indian kings spread Hindu culture in South East Asia. This does not excuse the Spaniards, however. The last days have been brought to life in a manner that is sad, exciting, tragic all rolled into one. Yes, I agree with the reviewer 'CJA' in that he could have spoken about how the Spanish subsequently tried to stamp out the Inca culture, but I would not have traded this for the tale of how the ruins were discovered. All in all, a marvellous book.

This is an excellent history of the Spanish conquest of Peru and its aftermath. Detailed history of Inca resistance and initial losses. It was a much harder fought colonization than usually presented in history books. Give lush detail on the activities of the later Inca emperor in their struggle to rid themselves of the Spanish. The one drawback is that MacQuarrie give little credit to the Indian allies of the Spanish. He makes it sound like a small band of Spanish on horses fended off hundreds of thousands of the Incas and their allies in one siege that last for more than a year. At the same time, it is clear that the Incas had powerful native enemies. This part of the story is hardly convincing. Otherwise it is a great read,

This is the book to read as you land in Lima on your way to Cuzco and Machu Picchu. It's a fantastically rich and riveting book that gave me a panoramic view of both Peruvian history, the Incas and a keen understanding into the Spanish explorers of the New World. This book is the an incredible tour guide as you stand in the Plaza de Armas in Lima knowing Pizarro was assassinated near or the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco where the Spaniards were surrounded and where they killed their own.

Kim MacQuarrie's "The Last Days of the Incas" is one of the best pieces of nonfiction I've ever read. His depiction of the vanquishing of Atahualpa, his kidnapping and ransom at the hands of Pizarro and his band of conquistadors, and the subsequent sacking of Cuzco reads like an epic novel. The story really comes alive in MacQuarrie's very able hands, filled with action-packed drama and suspense. We all know how the story turned out. Yet MacQuarrie keeps us turning the page with his skillful recounting, providing a highly satisfying read to anyone remotely interested in this subject. I wholeheartedly recommend this book for anyone planning a trip to Cuzco and Machu Picchu. It will definitely make your journey richer and more interesting if you have read this gripping history in advance. A huge two-thumbs up for MacQuarrie and this wonderful book. Frankly, in writing my own book, *The Unconquered: In Search of the 's Last Uncontacted Tribes*, I found MacQuarrie's work an invaluable guide for understanding the reach and impact of the Incas into the Antisuyo, the Eastern Quarter; that is to say, the eastern slopes of the Andes leading down into the . But this work is so much more. It greatly enhanced my understanding and appreciation of the Incas and the history of the Conquest, itself a key moment in global history. Thank you, Kim MacQuarrie.

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