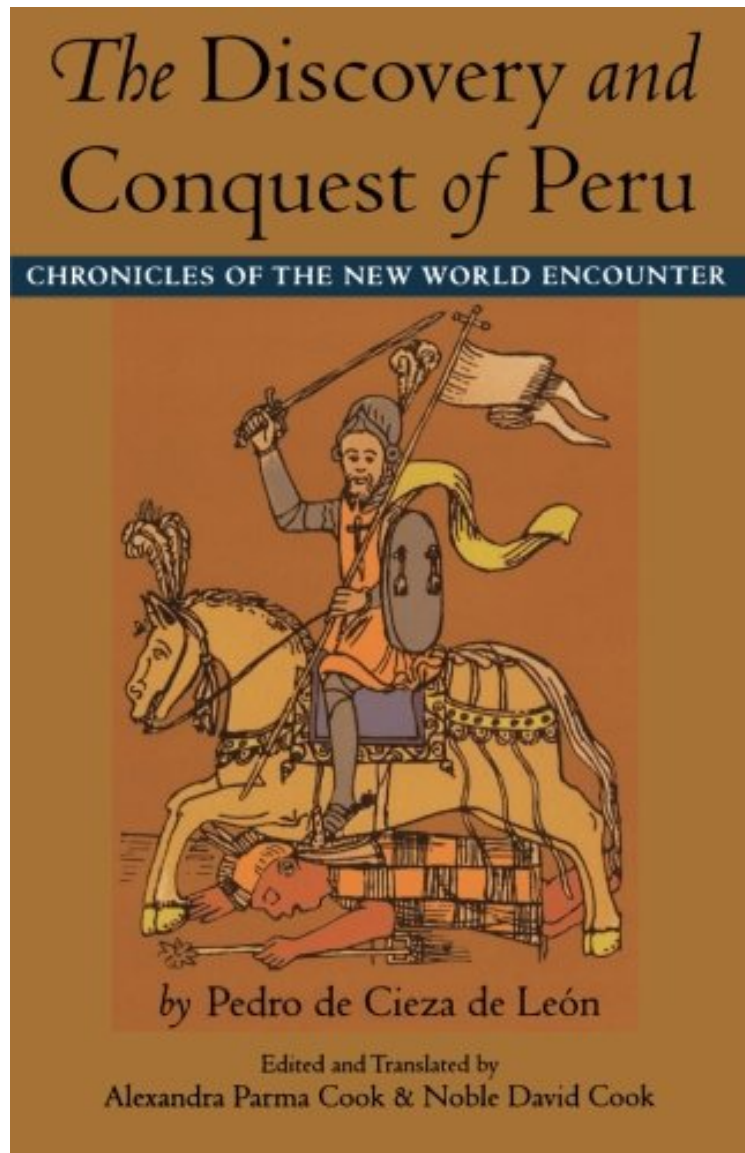


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The Discovery and Conquest of Peru (Latin America in Translation)

Pedro de Cieza de Leon

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Pedro de Cieza de Leon : The Discovery and Conquest of Peru (Latin America in Translation) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Discovery and Conquest of Peru (Latin America in Translation):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good Peruvian history By Claudia Castillo History can be enjoyed over the years and coming back to many books helps one understand how history is shaped by the events of the day.0

of 3 people found the following review helpful. tedious but informativeBy Earnest SludgeAccording to this, the principal actors, Pizarro and Almagro, were illiterate, although they did have secretaries. So, this book is as close to a first person narrative of the events as we can get. I bought this after reading Bernal Diaz's "Conquest of New Spain", expecting something fairly similar. Cieza interviewed many of the survivors of these events so this book is almost more reportage than history. Nonetheless, the narrative tends to be dull and plodding. The Aztecs showed a lot more backbone, too. The Inca-ruled Indians in Peru were totally scared crazy by the Spaniard's horses. There's a lot of ridiculous, whiny moralizing done, as well, mostly about how cruel, greedy and lecherous the Spaniards were. As if you can conduct a conquest with kid gloves. This is more for the history buff and not for the fan of first-person narratives and first-contact with Indians narratives. The text is beautifully presented in this edition. A real first-class job.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Readable Account of Incan History and The ConquestBy S. PactorIncan Civilization isn't exactly "pre-historic." True, they didn't have writing technically speaking but their rise was more or less contemporaneous with the arrival of the Spaniards. The Incans themselves didn't really exist before 1300 AD- before then they were just another tribe. The civilization laid south as evidenced by the Tuahuacnian ruins south of Titicaca. The so-called "Nazca" lines were created by the same people, around 1000 AD. Clearly, the Incans didn't invent civilization in the Andes. The Incans didn't even create the language, Quechan, which became the lingua franca of the entire Andes at the time of Spanish contact. Quechan came from a group that lived north of the original base for the Incans. The writer of this book, Pedro de Cieza, was actually a soldier who travelled with the Conquistador's who conquered the Incan empire. His lengthy, well written history of pre-Columbian Peru lay more or less forgotten until well into the 19th century. This particular English translation was published in 1959- the first American edition, I think. Cieza was not high ranking Conquistador, he was more a page or assistant type. The Incas makes a great starting point for anyone trying to grasp the complexity of pre-Columbian Andean civilization. Cieza describes the history of the Incan Empire in detail, and he travelled to almost all of the locations he wrote about. Cieza was the first person to describe the potato, he was the first person to write about the Tuahuacian civilization and also the first person to link them to the Nazca Area pre Incan civilization. He was both sympathetic to Incan achievements and skeptical about their claims regarding bringing civilization to the larger Andean region. He accurately described the arriviste nature of the Incans, similar in many ways to the rise of the Aztecs in the valley of Mexico prior to the contact with Cortes. The great irony of the Incan Empire is that it was their penchant for collecting gold, silver and jewels that made them such an attractive target to the Spaniards. The Incans were already mining precious metals from the mountains before the Europeans showed up. They loved gold and silver. Truly, the Incan Spanish conflict is the one time when the whole city of gold thing actually worked out. That city of gold was Cuzco, and the Spaniards took all the gold, and then discovered the largest mine of silver in the entire world in Potosi (modern day Bolivia) so that by the early 17th century Galleons filled with silver were being loaded outside of Lima. The Incans made it easy for the Spanish because they had gone through the distinct trouble of pacifying and homogenizing a hugely diverse area. The Incans gave everyone one language- Quechan- they build highways through the mountains to facilitate rapid transit between all points of the Empire. All the Conquistadors had to do was find Cuzco and they could go anywhere the Incans had been. The entire book illustrates the age old principle of conflicts between civilizations: A well assembled Empire is easy to take over than a bunch of ununified Tribes.

Dazzled by the sight of the vast treasure of gold and silver being unloaded at Seville's docks in 1537, a teenaged Pedro de Cieza de Len vowed to join the Spanish effort in the New World, become an explorer, and write what would become the earliest historical account of the conquest of Peru. Available for the first time in English, this history of Peru is based largely on interviews with Cieza's conquistador compatriotes, as well as with Indian informants knowledgeable of the Incan past. Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook present this recently discovered third book of a four-part chronicle that provides the most thorough and definitive record of the birth of modern Andean America. It describes with unparalleled detail the exploration of the Pacific coast of South America led by Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, the imprisonment and death of the Inca Atahualpa, the Indian resistance, and the ultimate Spanish domination. Students and scholars of Latin American history and conquest narratives will welcome the publication of this volume.

Even those outside the specialty of Peruvian history will welcome the publication of this translation, as it provides a window into the conquest era written by a Spaniard who was both conscientious about the material and a shrewd observer. Susan Ramirez, DePaul University