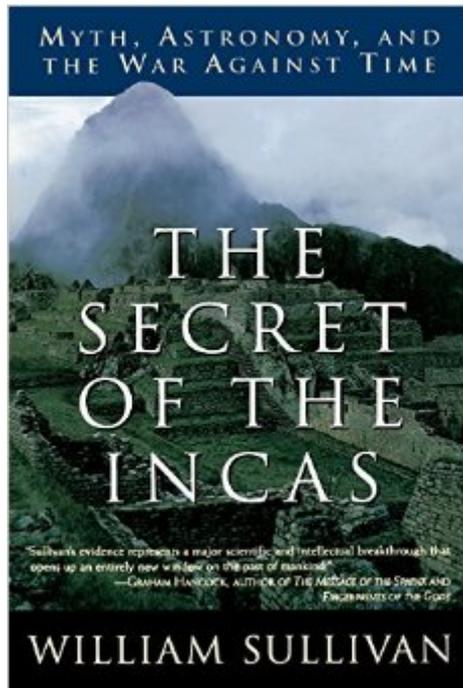


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The Secret Of The Incas: Myth, Astronomy, And The War Against Time



Synopsis

Step by step, Sullivan pieces together the hidden esoteric tradition of the Andes to uncover the tragic secret of the Incas, a tribe who believed that, if events in the heavens could influence those on earth, perhaps the reverse could be true. Anyone who reads this book will never look at the ruins of the Incas, or at the night sky, the same way again. Illustrations. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

William Sullivan decodes the myths of the Incas. *Secrets of the Incas* chronicles how Dr Sullivan first learned to decode ancient Andean myths. These myths - which were recorded by the Spanish at the time of their conquest of the Incas - are, according to Dr Sullivan, a 'message in a bottle' from the Incas to future generations. Dr Sullivan describes how he decoded the myths and how this led him to certain important dates in Andean prehistory and history. A glossary defines and explains various Andean mythological and historical terms, and a timeline shows what Dr Sullivan believes to be the correspondence between mythological, astronomical and archaeological events in the high Andes - how, in effect, what was happening in the heavens was mirrored by what was happening on Earth. On the evening of 15 November 1532, a band of 175 hardened Spanish adventurers crossed a pass in the high Andes. Looking down upon a broad, fertile valley in northern Peru, they became the first Europeans to make contact with the Incas, whose highly developed empire stretched 3,000 miles from Chile to Colombia and had a population of six million. On the following day, in what ranks as one of the strangest events in all recorded history, the Spaniards managed to seize the Inca king Atahualpa and, in the ensuing panic, used the advantage of their 120 warhorses to kill and wound

10,000 Inca warriors. From that day onward, through luck and guile, and with reinforcements soon pouring in from Panama, the Spaniards - who came in search of gold and glory, in the name of the Roman Catholic Church - never relinquished the edge they seized in that first fateful encounter.

William Sullivan has presented me with one of the most convincing "alternate history" books I've ever had the pleasure of reading. Building upon the theories first explored in the landmark "Hamlet's Mill" by De Santillana and von Dechend, Mr. Sullivan takes what little is known about the history of the Incas and the Andean peoples and helps those interested make sense of it all. Thankfully, "The Secret of the Incas" is written in a much more digestible manner than "Hamlet's Mill". The Inca Empire peaked for a brief moment and was then crushed by the invading Spanish in a very short period of time. There have been many theories as to how the Spanish were able to conquer most of the South American continent in such a brisk stroke, one of which involves the natives mistaking the invaders for "gods". The facts presented by Sullivan point to an even more mind-boggling fate. The Andean peoples (and the Incas who followed) were convinced that their fate was intertwined with the movements of the stars and planets. Astrology, as the Andean people interpreted it, was an unalterable fate, as impossible to deny as the need of air to breathe. These beliefs incorporated everything from their historical writings to their political attitudes towards their neighbors. Mr. Sullivan has impressed me with his interpretations of Andean thought. His work is conservative and he checks and re-checks his conclusions well. I had a lot of fun reading his theories, although some sections seemed to drag a little. His ending thoughts on "how" the Andean people might have originally become so obsessed with astrological readings and their terrestrial consequences are not so great, and I skimmed the last chapter which dealt with "chaos theory" and the like.

Sullivan's book, "The Secret of the Incas" is powerful, surprising, almost impeccable, and emotionally moving. The unexpected conclusions are, for all that they are unexpected, logical extensions of what I call the "Hamlet's Mill Thread" - the proposition that myth can be read as history, given certain rules for its decoding. Sullivan in effect provides the first comprehensive demonstration - I myself would say "proof" - that those rules, proposed by Santillana and Von Dechend, authors of "Hamlet's Mill", can be applied to specific bodies of cultural myth such as that of the Andes. The authors who explore this thread, which leads sometimes to imaginative stretches, have to tread a fine line to remain within the pale of academic respectability (and of course many of the most successful don't, not having academic posts to defend.) Sullivan does this by resolutely staying with the bounds of what he himself terms the "rules of engagement" for academia, but he

also has well-written and thoughtful critiques of the milieu in which he operates, including a welcome discussion of the reasons for the general rejection by archeologists and anthropologists of diffusionist theories - which are of course the only reasonable explanation for the wide-spread cultural similarities between the archaic pyramid cultures world-wide. He also discusses the reality of older matrilineal societies in the Andes, a nice reality check on the "age of matriarchy" idea whose adherents carry on one of the cartoon discussions of our time.

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