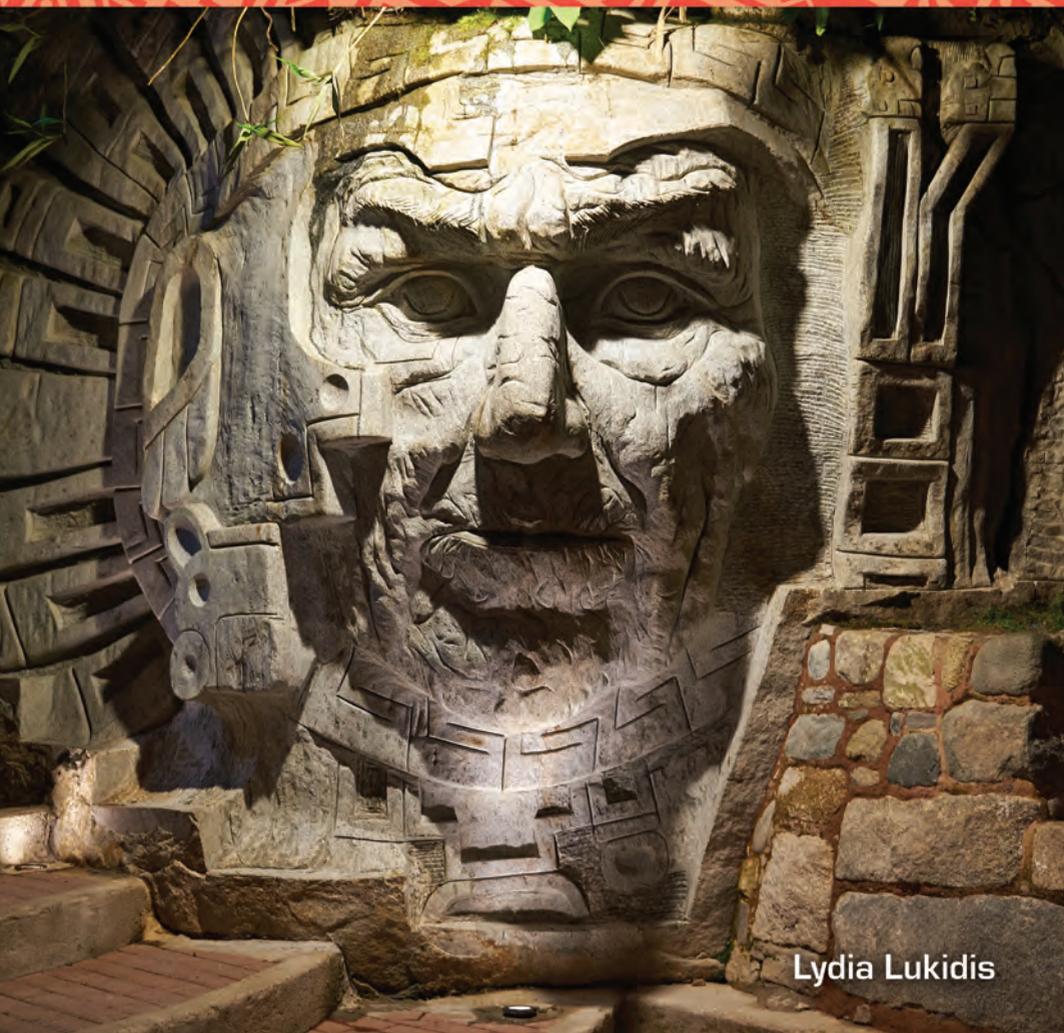
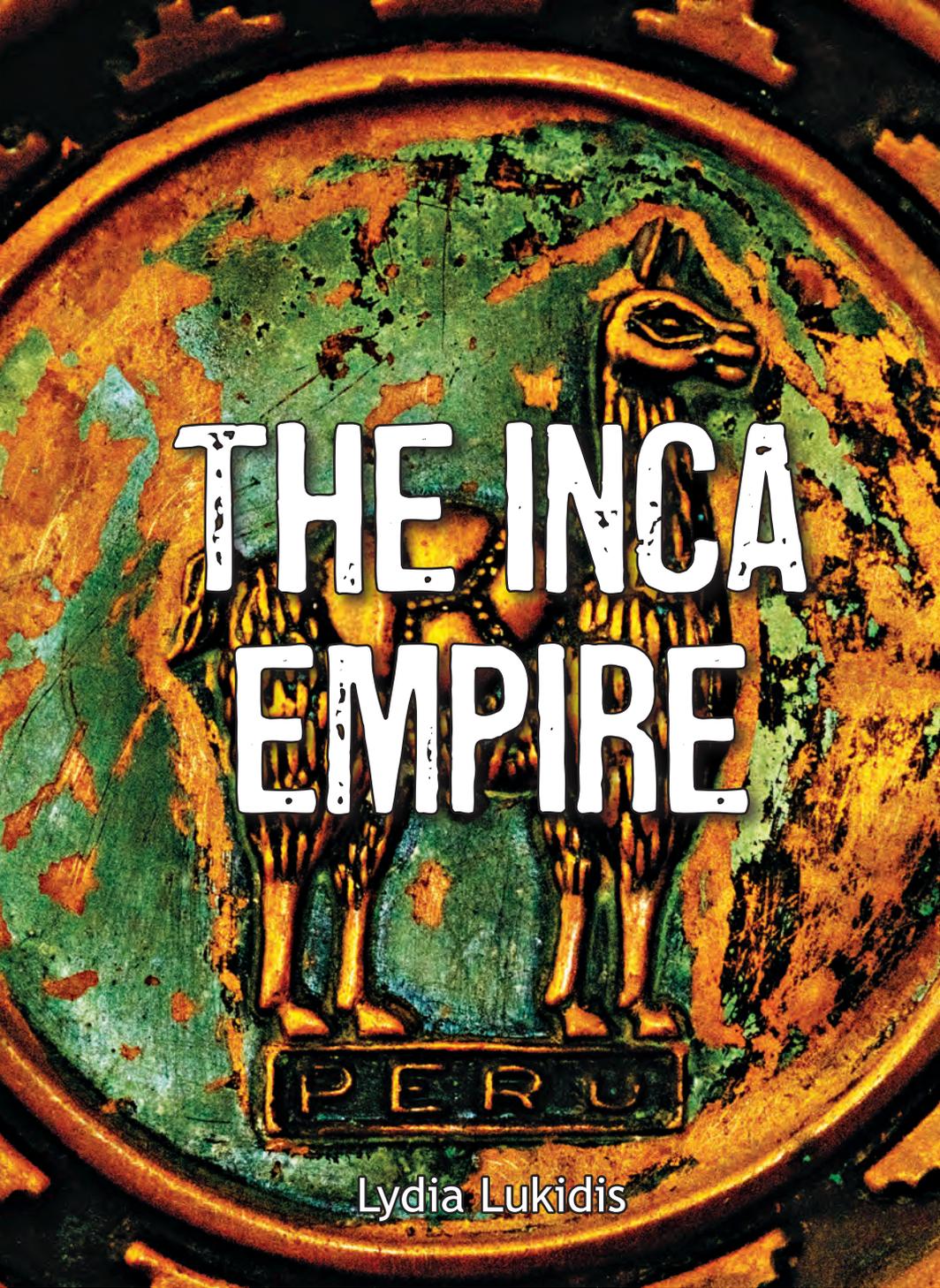


THE INCA EMPIRE



Lydia Lukidis



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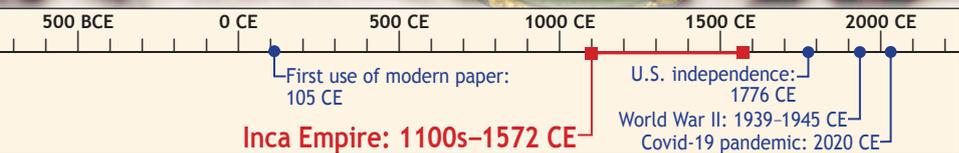
Lydia Lukidis



high noon books

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CHAPTER 1

DEEP IN THE JUNGLE

The year was 1911. Hiram Bingham was deep in the jungle of southern Peru.

Bingham was an American **archaeologist** (ar•kee•AH•luh•jist). An archaeologist studies the remains of past human life, such as buildings, tools, and pots.

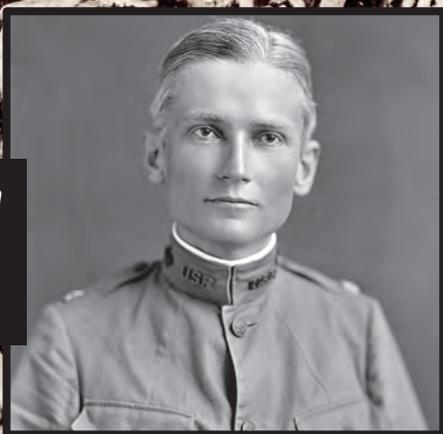




An archaeologist uncovers an ancient skull.

Bingham was also an explorer and a history professor. He had been doing research on the ancient Incas. These were people who had lived in what is now Peru. They had lived there as far back as the 12th century.

Hiram Bingham made major discoveries of Inca ruins.



The Spanish conquistadors (kahn•KEE•stuh•dorz) had written about the Incas. Conquistadors were Spanish soldiers and explorers who came to Mexico and Peru to take over the lands. The conquistadors had invaded Peru in 1532.

Bingham had been to South America before. On this trip, he had a clear goal. He wanted to find the “lost city” of Vilcabamba (vil•kah•BAHM•bah).

Deep in the jungle, he found the ruins of a great citadel (SIH•tuh•del). A citadel is a fortress that protects a city.



This is how the great citadel looked in 1912, the year after Bingham found it.

Bingham had not found Vilcabamba. But he had discovered the remains of Machu Picchu (MAH•choo PEE•choo). This citadel was a series of buildings, temples, and houses made of stone.



Today, the citadel, Machu Picchu, is cleared of plant growth. Many buildings have been restored.

This discovery led to a huge excavation (ek•skuh•VAY•shun) in 1912. To excavate is to dig into the earth. Bingham found many objects from the Incas buried in the soil.

INCA FACT

Vilcabamba was known as “the lost city of the Incas.” It was where the last Inca rulers fought the conquistadors. Shortly after he discovered Machu Picchu, Bingham found Vilcabamba, as well as a third Inca city.



This overgrown house is part of the remains of Vilcabamba.

AN EMPIRE RISES

How did this ancient culture begin? Nobody knows the exact answer. There are many legends (LEH•jenz), or stories from the past, about the early Incas. Legends may or may not be true.



This kind of ax was used by the Incas in some of their ceremonies.



Manco Cápac was the first leader of the Inca tribe. This is what he might have looked like.

Historians believe a man named Manco Cápac (MAHN•koh KAH•pahk) led the first Inca tribe. This was around the 12th century. The tribe lived in a small village in what is now southern Peru.



The Inca Empire was spread through the Andes Mountains.

Cápac then led his people to a new site. This site was in a valley in the Andes (AN•deez) Mountains. There, the group built the town of Cuzco (KOOS•koh). It would become the capital of the Inca Empire.

At first, the Incas were a small tribe. As time went on, the leaders captured more and more land around Cuzco. The tribe grew much bigger.



Many parts of Cuzco still stand today.

In the middle of the 15th century, a new Inca leader rose to power. His name was Pachacuti (pah•chuh•KOOT•ee). He became very powerful.

Pachacuti launched attacks on other cities. In just 30 years, he gained control over a very large area.



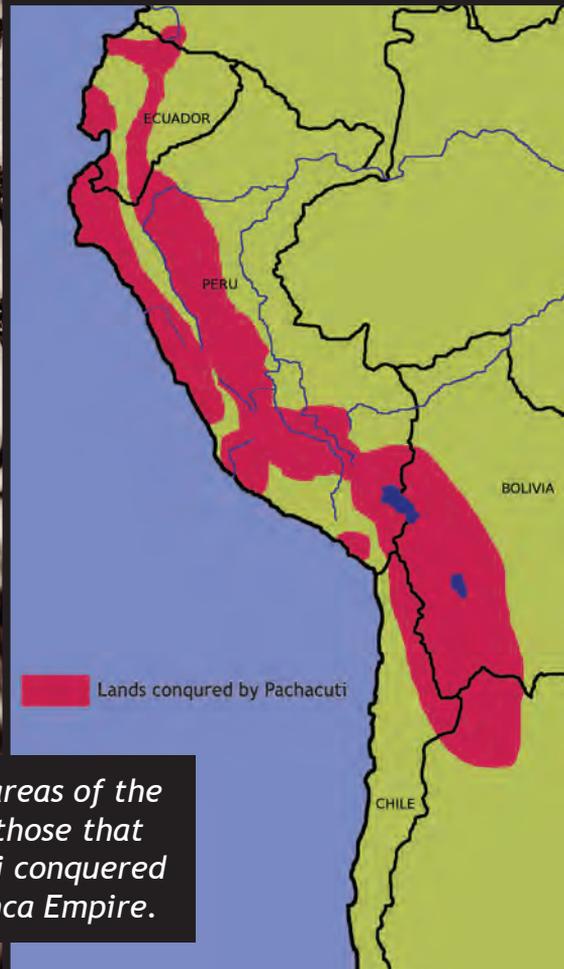
Pachacuti was one of the most powerful Inca rulers.



These are the ruins of Pachacuti's royal home.

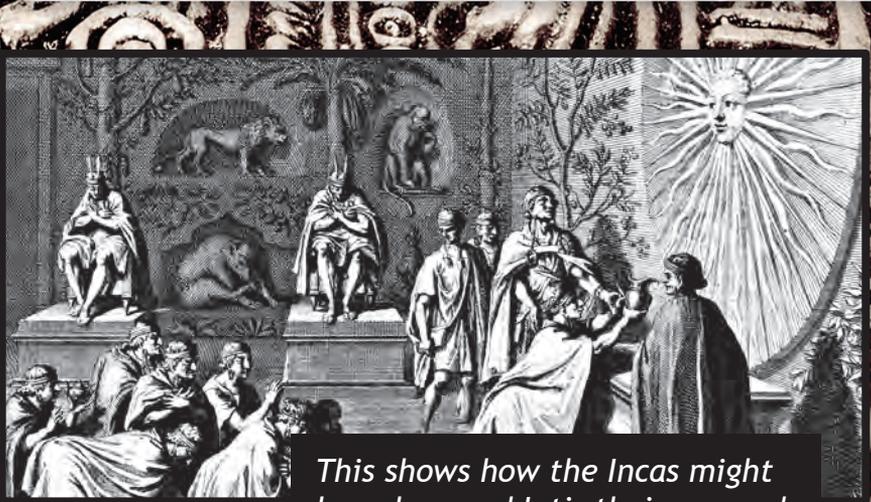
Pachacuti was the one who made the Incas into an **empire**. An empire is a large group of nations or people ruled by one leader. The leader is the **emperor**.

To the north, Pachacuti's empire stretched as far as present-day Ecuador. To the south, it stretched to present-day central Chile.



The red areas of the map are those that Pachacuti conquered for the Inca Empire.

The Inca Empire was the biggest civilization (sih•vih•lih•ZAY•shun) in the Americas at the time. A civilization is an advanced stage of a culture's development. The main language of the Inca Empire was Quechua (KEH•chuh•wuh). It is still spoken today.



This shows how the Incas might have honored Inti, their sun god.

INCA FACT

The Inca people called themselves “children of the sun.” The sun was important to them, because it gave warmth and allowed crops to grow. The Incas honored their sun god, Inti. They believed the emperor was related to Inti.