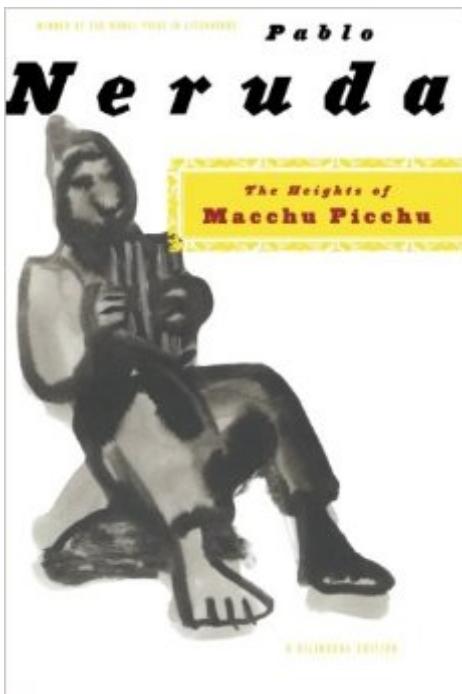


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The Heights Of Macchu Picchu: A Bilingual Edition



Synopsis

The Heights of Macchu Picchu is the finest and most famous of Neruda's longer poems and provides the key to his earlier work. It was inspired by his journey to Macchu Picchu, the Peruvian Inca city high in the Andes. Neruda's journey takes on all the symbolic qualities of a personal "venture into the interior" as the poem progresses, exploring both the roots of the poet's identity and the history of Latin America. This translation has been rendered by the distinguished poet Nathaniel Tarn and is presented in a bilingual edition, with the Spanish and English texts on facing pages.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (14 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Pablo Neruda must have written a thousand gorgeous and soul-shaking poems on everything from socks to multinational corporations, but in my (limited) experience, this is his most amazing work. He threads together a wide scope of metaphors-- corn, gloves, roses, lightning, streams, autobuses--as he searches through life for meaning and truth. Sounds like a worn-out, pretentious topic? Think again...Neruda doesn't indulge in philosophical navel-gazing, but delves into the most earthy, mundane, yet painful details of life in his quest. He encounters not a simple answer but the revelation of past tragedy, and a role for himself in bringing about the truth of justice. The poem's beauty may not hit like lightning at first--it must be absorbed bit by bit. Although I must have read Poem 10 (Antigua America, novia sumergida) fifty times, it always sends chills down my spine and sends me thousands of feet high into the Andes. The Heights of Macchu Picchu has comforted me when I felt lonely, helped me write my college essays, and helped me see my future plans as worthwhile instead of idealistic mush. Anyone concerned with the history of Latin America, social

justice, nature, or the works of Neruda should read this poem.

What is the deal here? One of the great works by one of the great poets of the modern era and there is one review here? Neruda is to poetry what Marquez is to fiction. Superb insight, irony, metaphor, symbolism, etc. etc. combined with mastery of language (a universal language that does not depend upon a translator's skill). By God, if anyone stumbles across this title by mistake (as apparently that's the only way it's going to make itself known) BUY THIS BOOK! It will change the way you read poetry. Is Neruda out of fashion? That's like saying Voltaire or Dostoevsky are out of fashion. If you love literature, shell out the money for this volume or go to your local library and hope they have it. All you Bukowski lovers and avante-garde wannabe's. This is the father of your sect. He had more command of imagery in the tip of his finger than any beat poet or other poseur that's come along in the past 50 years.

When I first read Nathaniel Tarn's translation of Pablo Neruda's great poem "The Heights of Macchu Picchu," I was literally stunned. My immediate thoughts were two: incredulity that I had never encountered this masterpiece before, and an overwhelming desire to share it with as many people as I could. Such is the power of this book. The poem, inspired by the great Chilean poet's visit to the ancient, abandoned city of Macchu Picchu, is presented in a bilingual format; Neruda's Spanish original faces Tarn's English on each two-page spread. "The Heights of Macchu Picchu" contains lines of poetic language that are both beautiful and thought-provoking. But equally intrinsic to this great work is the author's compassion for the human condition--a compassion which transcends the boundaries of time and culture. Neruda's passionate addresses to the men and women who shed their blood and their tears in the construction of this ancient stone city nearly had me in tears myself. This is one of those remarkable poems which is pregnant with the fire of prophecy; it reads like a sacred text for the modern age. Neruda's miniature epic is, I believe, one of those works which will abide as a monument of global literature. It is a gift for the entire human family.

Pablo Neruda, born in Chile 1904, is one of the greatest Latin American Poets Neruda's poetic power is alive and mind stretching if you read Spanish well. If not you are stuck with a translation that is both confusing and disjointed. Nathaniel Tarn takes liberties that distort Neruda's world and words. Not recommended because of Tarn's translation.

Every review here mentions the spectacular nature of Neruda's captivating poem. As he said

himself, he follows the philosophy of Rimbaud and arms himself with a "burning patience" that allows him to "enter splendid cities." However, the translation falls short of the quality of Neruda's words. Tarn inserts his own interpretations/images in his word choice which result in the creation of a new poem--occasionally distant or discordant with the original. (quick example: in Canto XII, Neruda twice uses the word "río" in one of many instances of repetition in the poem. Tarn replaces the first use with "torrent" and the second with "." He effectively removed Neruda's use of repetition and inserted a proper noun which carries with it connotations perhaps not intended by Neruda. This is merely one of many instances where Tarn's translation subtly, but importantly changes the poem's meaning). However, if you are a lover of Neruda poems and have a reasonable grasp of Spanish, this is an essential for your collection. 6 stars for the poem, 2 for the translation = overall score of 4 stars

Neruda needs no praise from the likes of me. This particular poem, which echoes in my mind, has always been a favorite; this is simply a replacement copy (to replace the one the Golden Retriever puppy read with such interest).

This master work of Chilean author, Pablo Neruda, enables the reader to quickly move back and forth between Spanish and English. Neruda's focus on indigenous people remains a significant influence in the Andean countries.

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