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How much do you really
know about Inca daily life?

Find out on Page 1.

Then, keep reading for
information on families,
government, and economy.

The Daily Routine

by Kitt R.

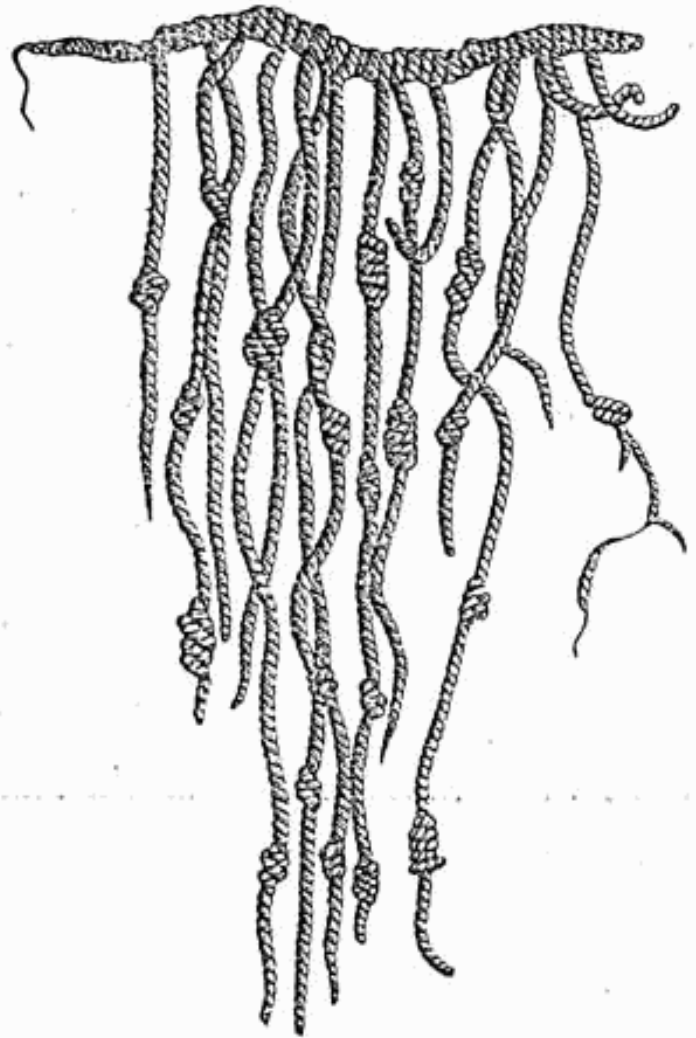


The Incas were an extremely advanced civilization in many respects, but this will focus on their daily life. They had a hierarchy, a class system, and most importantly, everybody contributed to the whole society.

First of all, let's focus on the class system. This system was a way of ranking the members of the Inca people so there was never any arguing over who was better. At the top of the hierarchy was the Sapa Inca, or supreme leader. Below the Sapa Inca was the Vilac Uma, which means chief priest, who was always a relation of the Sapa Inca. The third class was every other relation of the Sapa Inca who always had high authority regarding government. Next came all other Incas. A new class was established as the empire grew to keep order, called the Incas-by-privilege, who were people who had lived in Cuzco, the Inca center, for a long time and spoke Quechua. Under them were the public administrators, then the former leaders of conquered states, and then the artisans. Among the administrators was the quipu camayoc. The quipu camayocs' job was to keep records of the stored items, the mit'a labor obligations, the population, etc. The mit'a labor law was this; instead of gathering taxes of money, the conquered states had to send workers to do manual labor in the city. The Incas kept their surplus food for later use and stored tools for the artisans' use. Artisans were paid with necessities like food and drink.

The Incas also supported mass production. They used molds to create the same shapes every time, which was very advanced for the Inca's time, and whole towns were put aside for different skills. One Incan proverb was "Don't steal; don't lie; don't be lazy." This saying promoted a good life in the civilization meaning everybody had a job. As a consequence of the growth of the civilization, the farmers had a list to work off of: first they worked for the state, then the state religion, and then for their family, which helped create a rapidly growing supply of crops. In return, the farmers were given land and excess food for natural disasters or for the sick or old. They created a large, highly advanced irrigation system and built many terraces. They had a large road network that connected to every reach of every region. As you can see, the Incas used every little space they could.

Because the Inca were part of a hierarchy, they had an organized class system, everybody had a certain job, conquered people were bound by a labor law, and they had a way of storing surplus food, they were most definitely a very advanced culture.



Quipu

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The Inca Home & Family

by Joseph T.



The Inca had systems for everything: from how to know people's origins to trial marriage. That is why their culture and civilization excelled and prospered. They succeeded with their lifestyle, which was far more advanced than a western European city of the era. Only the guns and germs, which they couldn't help, brought them to an end

Everybody was required to be married. Multiple wives were not usually allowed. If marriage was chosen a trial was setup because divorce was not an option after official marriage. Land was only given to married people.

Childbirth was fully welcome. However, it was a tough job. Women would continue their work up to the day of the birth and would start working again right after. Women had the option of carrying their child while working or putting it aside in a cradle. When the period of breast-feeding was over, the rutichikoy ceremony occurred. Rutichikoy included haircutting, nail trimming, and naming. As children reached adulthood, a puberty ceremony, which included receiving adult names, occurred. Children of the common folk learned trades from watching parents rather than formal education. From anytime between five and nine years old, children learned the responsibilities of taking care of siblings, scaring harmful birds and animals from crops, collecting firewood, spinning thread, and helping cook and clean. Additional responsibilities came later.

Houses varied in each region. Not much time was spent inside of the house. Houses consisted of one dark and windowless rectangle shaped room. House materials varied by region. There wasn't any furniture, so everybody slept together on the floor under skins or woven blankets. Squatting was done instead of sitting in chairs.

Tunics were even designed to give extra support for the squatting!

Tradition and law kept houses clean. Biannual inspections were conducted to ensure cleanliness. Doors were left open so officials could see that all the rules and laws were being followed.

Incas relied on only two meals a day, one in the morning and another in the late afternoon. The meals were usually eaten outdoors. They consisted of mostly vegetables with a few meats (guinea pig, dog, and duck) or fish near Lake Titicaca.

Stew was common. Stews were cooked in ceramic pots. The most important of the foods were maize (corn), quinoa (a grain with lots of protein), and potatoes. Chili peppers were popular choices used to add flavor and spice to foods. Bread was easily made. Chicha was the most popular drink. It was alcoholic and made



Thick fog covers an ancient Inca village.

Used with permission of photographer Josh P.

from corn, quinoa, and other grains. Disabled, elderly, and sick people usually made the chicha. It was fermented (sugar was converted to alcohol) in buried jars. As a result of great surplus of crops, Inca women mastered preserving food. Every preservation process up to freeze-drying potatoes was done.

Inca clothing was planned out according to ethnicity. Unique clothing was assigned to each group or conquered people. It helped keep unwanted people away because common Incas weren't allowed to travel throughout the empire. The different elements were usually headbands, headdresses, belts, and bags.

More standardized attire for men included a tunic that would go down to the knees. The material (cotton or wool) varied depending on the temperature of a region. Men would wear big capes over their shoulders. Women had tunics that fell all the way to the ground. They

The Inca Economic

by Ian W.



The Inca civilization was one of the most advanced nations in the world for many reasons. They had a very complex and sophisticated society for their location in the world, full of great traditions and culture.

An example of this was the daily life of the nobility. One of the reasons the Spanish invaded Cuzco was because they heard stories about the gold and silks that the nobles wore and used. The central part of Cuzco was the rich part of town; there were palaces, temples and all sorts of goods and riches. These buildings were often covered in gold. Another thing was that a noble man could have as many wives as he wanted, but he only had one primary wife whom he married for his whole life. His other wives took care of the children but still lived in the house.

The Inca boys went to schools and were taught history, religion and language and they also used the quipu. When the young men went into puberty they took part in a sacred ritual during the festival of the sun god. The ritual included hiking up a mountain, performing sacred ritual dances, and sacrificing llamas. They were also given beatings to test their strength. At the end of the festival they split the boy's earlobes and put a wooden cork in it to show that they are men and have courage. These were some of the ways the Incan civilization showed pride in their culture and way of life. Burial was also very sophisticated in the Inca Empire. Although the rituals changed from region to region, they all shared advanced ways of burial. Unlike the

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tied a sash at their waist. They also had shawls that they would wear over their shoulders. Both men and women usually wore leather-soled sandals that they strapped up to their ankles. Clothing materials varied. Hotter areas used cotton, while cooler areas used llama wool.

Overall, Inca had employed many advanced systems

Spanish, the Inca would bury their nobles with their peasants. Although the nobles were buried in silk and gold weavings, peasants and nobles were still buried together. Archaeologists have found human remains in many different ways; they found bodies mummified by being preserved by other bodies or by environmental conditions, for instance extreme cold or dryness. In late 2002, archaeologists found two thousand bodies in the



A cozy Inca house.

Used with permission of photographer Josh P.

Andes Mountains. Many bodies still had hair and skin. This expanded the archaeologist's knowledge and understanding of the Inca people.

The Inca noble system, education, and rituals were some of the many reasons why the Incan empire was one of the most complex and advanced societies of the world.

that made them far more advanced than the Europeans of the time. For the Inca, simple and complex things in unison made up their great empire. It was only with germs and diseases along with the guns that Inca were unfairly defeated. Inca had things that still have not been given an equivalent in our modern society and world.

Ruling of the Incas: Government

by Elliott S.



Today I am going to tell you why the Incas were a highly advanced civilization by telling you how they ran their empire. The Incas were smart when it came to who they conquered. They conquered only the best of the best. Their eyes fell on the highly sophisticated Chimor Empire. When the Incas conquered a culture they did not make that culture hate them. They let them believe in their own gods and continue their old ways as long as they fulfilled certain requirements. In return the Incas helped their people by making sure people had enough money, food, and land. The Inca Empire had millions of people. To control this, the Inca people devised a way of controlling them. The officials/government demanded the maximum of work from every conquered people so they had no time to rebel. The Sapa Inca was the equivalent to a king. He ruled over everyone except the gods. During the golden age the great, smart, and wonderful Sapa Incas were Pachacutec, Tupac Inca Yupanqui, and Huayna Capac. The government thought that if the Sapa Inca married some one who was related to him he would stop invaders from becoming divine therefore the invaders would destroy the Incas. This is true because if you mixed a god with a mortal (or at least the god that protected your city) their baby would not have all of the god's powers. There by saying if you had child with someone that wasn't the god family and they became Sapa Inca, protector of the Incas, they would not have the power to defend the Inca people. The Incas knew that if they conquered people they would need to feed them and if they did not get something in return well that wouldn't be fair. So the government was to be given livestock crops and so on. The government, trying to appease everybody, would split up the conquered lands. 1/3 went to the Inca State, 1/3 went to the Inca State Religion, and 1/3 went to the Peasants. Peasants would farm their own territory and in exchange they would also farm the other two thirds. The cycle on the diagram explains about how the Incas system worked. The Incas were also military geniuses. When they won a battle they would persuade the defeated troops to join

the Incan army. Then they would pin the troops against one of their old enemy tribes so they both fell like their winning the battle. In return soldiers were promised goods, land, and wealth. The Incas relied on numbers in a battle so it was always good to have more troops.

I have given you a lot of information on how Inca society worked and functioned. With all the information above I think I've proven to you why the Incas were a highly advanced civilization. In my article I only told you about Inca government and a little about Inca military tactics but, with that information already you can see how great the Incas were.



Terraces lining a mountain.

Courtesy of Josh P.

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