

Ancient incan impact on modern day peru history essay



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The Incan culture has affected the world in a number of ways. Arguably one of the most advanced indigenous cultures; the Incas have continued to inspire the people of the world. No one feels the presence of the Inca like the South American country of Peru. The Incan capital of Cuzco is still a city in Peru and the land is rich with Incan culture.

The Incas first became known in the 12th century AD. Their tribe began inhabiting the area around what is now Cuzco, located in the southern region of modern day Peru. After a period of time, the Incan empire grew to include the majority of the western side of South America.

Within the Incan culture there were a variety of subcultures, all with their own language. At one point, it is estimated that there was 700 different forms of the Incan language Quechua (New World Encyclopedia).

The Inca were wonderful architects. Through the study of Archaeology, many Incan mysteries are being unraveled all the time. Dig sites have been started throughout the area thought to house Incan remains. Much of this area is obviously centered around Peru and mostly around the ancient Incan capital of Cuzco, which is located in close proximity to the now famous Machu Picchu.

The food of the ancient Inca people was fairly diverse in comparison to other indigenous cultures of the time period. Because the land that was under Inca rule was a long and skinny stretch from north to south there were varying climates to choose from to produce the best fruits and vegetables. Within their extensive region there was also mountainous area in addition to the ocean bordering land.

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Where nourishment is concerned the Inca were very resourceful. Seaweed was a popular choice to the ancient people. It could be dried or eaten fresh, it was a multipurpose food. Domesticated animals made great additions to their diet. In particular, Llamas and Alpacas were very common and were easily accessible.

An ancient dish that is still today common in Peru is that of Cuy. Cuy is a fried guinea pig. The benefits of this small rodent of an animal are that it can be easily kept in the house, reproduces quickly, and there was no hunting involved. As stated earlier, Cuy is still a very popular Peruvian dish.

Clothing and textiles were a fairly important part of Incan culture. Clothing was made from either wool or cotton materials depending on what region they were from. Clothing determined the social class of a person, the best clothing was of course saved for the higher class members.

The clothing of men and women were slightly different from each other. Men wore an open tunic and pants whereas women wore one piece dresses. Appearance was also kept by the cutting of hair in men and women.

Peruvian History

Peru is the 3rd largest country in South America with the 5th largest population (state. gov). The western side of the country borders the Pacific Ocean while the land borders the South American countries of Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador. The terrain is very diverse. The land of Peru is very mixed; everything from mountains to coastal regions make up the area.

The Incan people were the first known to populate the area. After the Incan empire was taken over by the Spanish Conquistadors, the land that is now known as Peru became a colony of Spain. It was a long journey to freedom from Spanish rule; In 1821 Peru declared themselves free from the Spanish but Peru's independence from the colonial rule of Spain didn't become accepted in 1879 (state. gov).

The struggles of Peru were far from over. Although freedom had been won, there were battles over the land that was now theirs. Bordering countries fought for the border lines through a multitude of battles. It wasn't until the 1990s that these borders were set and agreed upon in black and white contract.

Today, Peru is obviously a part of the technological age. Tourism is one the rise and during the world wide economic crisis a couple years back Peru is one of the only South American countries to not feel the effects and actually earn money that year.

The tourism is provided mostly through the curiosity surrounding the Inca people.

If one were to decide to visit Peru today, they would be encouraged to try the local cuisine. Many of the dishes have their roots in ancient Inca culture. As stated before, Cuy or guinea pig is a very common dish which can be cooked either fried or roasted and is served in whole... including the head. Carapulca is another very common Peruvian dish which stems from an ancient dish from the Inca. It is almost a soupy texture and is now made up

of dried potatoes and pork and rice, whereas in the ancient times both the potatoes and the meat were dried.

Incan Influence on Modern Day Peru:

Incan influence can still be felt all over Peru. One reason for this is that Peruvians are very proud of their heritage and the other reason could possibly be that the curiosity surrounding the Inca Empire is a major source of revenue for the country of Peru. Tourism is on the rise and the most popular attractions are that of the Inca Trail and Machu Picchu.

Tourism is a major part of Peruvian economy these days. With ancient archaeological sites like that of Machu Picchu, it is easy to see why. The city of Cuzco, which is located in close proximity to the site of Machu Picchu, has benefited the most from the surge of tourism. There are now 5 star hotels that run the roads of what was once a humble town. The people of Cuzco still manage to maintain a lot of their local culture through religion and cultural art.

Archeology surrounds all the Inca area. In 2002, a graduate student from University of California Los Angeles came across what appeared to be an ancient burial ground. The area produced the skeletal remains of possibly 10, 000 deceased. More dig sites spout up all the time around the area of the Incan empire, there by securing the local interest in their ancient ancestors.

Tourists love the authenticity of Incan made souvenirs. As such, there is a huge market for anything that looks old and is a replica of something perhaps made in the ancient times. Incan clothes, pottery, rugs, etc. all sell like hot cakes and feed in to the local economy, thereby ensuring that Incan
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methods will continue to be a part of the Peruvian culture in one form or another for a long time to come.

Today, the Peruvian President, Alan Garcia, has been working tirelessly on the work that the President Alejandro Toledo before him to retrieve some X number of thousand artifacts from Yale University. The artifacts in question came from the tourist hot spot, and local pride: Machu Picchu which were excavated by a Yale Student long ago (The Economist, 2010). This dedication to the retrieval of important Incan artifacts shows the Peruvian commitment to protecting the Incan heritage.

Conclusion

There is no denying that the Incan empire had a significant impact of what is now the culture of Peru. Many ancient traditions are still being kept alive today. The fascination with all things Inca doesn't seem to be slowing and as long as there is interest there will be Inca in Peru.