

Inca empire significance essay

[History](#), [Empires](#)



What made the Incan Empire so historically significant? Rachael Cardenas
Block 6B From 1438 to 1535, the Incan Empire made a historical impact. The Incan Empire was located in South America on the western coast in the present countries of Peru. (Tagle.) Three-fourths of the Empire was located within present day Peru. Since the rule of the Empire did descend through familial ties, the ruling emperor was chosen on account by his family dynasty. (Hutagalung.) The empire of the Incas merits importance and note due to its contributing factors of roads, agriculture, and medicine.

The Incas' construction of roads was the most impressive contribution of public works than any other ancient culture. The roads in total were estimated to be 14, 000 miles of paved roads and bridges. What made the building of the roads so remarkable was the diversity of the land such as swamps, mountains, valleys, snow, and deserts. Since the area surrounding the roads by the coast was dusty, the Incas built them on causeways to keep them free from sand being blown or pegging out. (Baudin.) Likewise, the roads near the swamps were built on stone viaducts.

In high regions where there was high rain or snowfall, the Incas paved the roads with cobblestones or flagstones. Also, the steep slopes were stabilized by means of steps, which cut into living rock. The accomplishment of these different types of roads was significant to history because it demonstrates that the Incas were able to maintain proper road structure throughout the Empire despite the obstacles each region's natural environment presented. (Hutagalung.) There were two main roads which connected the north and south territories along the coast and along the Andes Mountains.

These two main roads were linked to a shorter network of roads within each of the two territories. However, later there was another major creation of roads that was called the Andean Royal road; this road was over 3, 500 miles long, which is longer than the longest Roman road. This road extended from Quito, Ecuador in the north, passed through Cajamarca and Cusco, and ended close to Tucuman, Argentina. (Baudin.) Some of the smaller road networks as well as the Andean Royal road were used so often that they became permanently part of the landscape.

As a result, these roads remain critical, modern-day arteries of transportation. A noteworthy fact about the Incan roads was that the roads never experience the roll of a wheel or the stomp of a horses' foot because the Incas did not know the existence of the wheel and there were no horse natural to the area. (Martin.) For the transportation of goods from one part of the empire to another, the Incas used llamas. The llamas also assisted Incan travelers in their travels between the north and the south territories.

The roads of the Incan empire were a key factor in communication between territories. Throughout the Empire, messengers, or chasquis, carried information using these essential road networks. These messengers were chosen from the fittest and strongest men of young males. (Kruschndl.) They lived in cabins, or tambos, in groups of four to six. If one was tired and needed to rest, another one would meet him and try to memorize the message; in this way the tired one could rest in the cabin, or tanpu, while the other continued the messages' delivery to its final destination. (Baudin.) Since these messengers lived on the roads, the tanpu always had food and

clothing available for the messengers. A chasquis would travel more than 300 miles every day. Communication of important messages and transportation of essential goods flowed easily due to the combination of the well-constructed roads and logically developed messenger system.

(Hutagalung.) Also, because the military commanders of the Empire could easily move troops, they could quickly bring control where there was trouble. Priests, herders, or leisurely travelers are other examples who used the Incan roads.

In brief, the roads of the Incan Empire were not only a great benefit to its people who made use of it every day, but also to the Incan ruling class who demonstrated the power of the Incan state. The agriculture of the Incan Empire included every type of environment imaginable. The Incas developed an agricultural system so that plants could grow in such assorted surroundings. They were able to grow enough food to feed 15 million people with ancient technology and as well to have a 3 to 7 year surplus. In this way, the Incas grew a diverse set of plants compared to current systems of agriculture. Martin.) The Incan farmers were great farmers; farming a dozen root crops, such as three grains, three legumes, and more than a dozen fruits. The three staple crops were potatoes, corn, and quinoa. In this case, the seeds of quinoa were used to produce flour, soups, and cereal. Similarly, corn was special to the Incas and used in religious ceremonies. In fact, they also used the corn to make a drink called chicha. (Baudin.) More importantly, the Incas were the first civilization to harvest and plant potatoes. The Incas produced over 200 hundred potatoes; a remarkable harvest for a type of plant.

This allowed the Incas more choices of what to plant; so the Incan people can feed their families which the wealth of the Empire kept flowing. In addition, the Incas were able to grow tomatoes, avocados, beans, peppers, squash, and coco leaves to make chocolate. These plants, as well as others, were grown and sold in markets in the Andes Mountains by Indian, rural peasants. Correspondingly, several of these crops were exported to European countries: some of the crops were potatoes, peppers, lima beans, and tomatoes. (Martin. However, since a majority of the Incan crops were not exported, many of these crops were unknown outside of the Andes Mountains. (Baudin.) The planting and harvesting of all of the crops supported the Incan Empire through an established, thriving distribution system. The Incas are responsible for two main inventions. The Incas invented the first freeze-dry method of storage. The Incas first left their food out in the cold to freeze. Second, they stamped on the frozen food to squeeze out the water. Lastly, they left their stamped on food in the sun to dry.

This freezing method worked; if they wanted to use dehydrated foods, they just added water to the foods. This type of freezing method assisted the Incas greatly because they were able to save their food without risk of it going bad. (Martin.) Terrace gardening was another development that the Incas invented. The Incas carved steps of flat land up on the side of the mountain to create flat land for farming use. This allowed the terraces to keep rainwater from running off and also reduced erosion. As a result of this success, the government built aqueducts to carry water to farmlands for irrigation purposes. Baudin.) These agricultural inventions and successes

increased productivity and resulted in the farming of the Incas to expand to the farming areas. Above all, the agriculture of the Incas allowed the economy to keep flowing with trade and commerce. In terms of medicine, the Incas made many discoveries. Felipe Guaman Poma, or known best as Huaman Poma, was a man born in 1550 in Peru. (Tagle.) He wrote the complete historical manuscript of information of the medicine practice in the Incan civilization. Today scholars now know that the Incan medicine was a complex mix of different medical treatments and specialties. The Incas considered that the cause of all the sicknesses were by the act of supernatural forces. They also believed that sins against the gods, lies, as well as breaking Inca laws were enough reasons to become ill. The cures for the sicknesses were combinations of minerals and herbs, followed by magic spells and prayers. The Incan medicine was known to treat sicknesses in the immune system effectively. (Tagle.) The Incan people had treatments which allowed the increase of natural production of white cells; including the end of the progress of some diseases.

The Incas were able to cure their people with this knowledge that they had of medicine. (Kruschndl.) The Incas had three types of doctors who worked in partnership. The first type of doctors was known as Watukk. The job of Watukk was to find out the cause of the sickness; he did this by researching the daily life of the patient. He explored the emotional, physical, and pathological health of the patient. The Watukk was responsible for pinpointing the correct diagnosis of the patient's illness. The second type of doctor was known as the Hanpeq, who would then apply his medical knowledge about the diagnosed disease.

He would combine and connect the properties of herbs and minerals treat the patient. He also paid special attention to ensure that the post-treatment was accurate and enabled the patient to become healed. Today, the Hanpeq is what we call a Shaman: a religious, mystical, and natural medicine doctor. The last type of doctor was known as the Paqo. He was known to treat the soul of the patient. The Incan doctors believed that the soul lived in the heart of the patient. His major obligation was to harmonize the spiritual health with the physical health.

In addition because a patient's body could have varied reactions to a treatment, the Paqo monitored the patient's treatment. Generally speaking, the Paqo was responsible for minimizing any possibility of a negative reaction to the patient. (Kruschndl.) The Incan Empire also had other individuals and doctors who would help patients through the use of supernatural means. Incan medicine had so many complexities: it classified and treated sadness, anxiety, depression, anger, regret, just to name a few. Some Incan medicine addressed psychological illnesses such as insanity, madness, dementia, or grief.

Incans also performed skull surgeries. The patient had a remarkable 90% chance for survival, which is extraordinary due to the materials and knowledge of the Incan doctors. When in the surgeries; the Incan doctors performed maneuvers in the wounds that were so precise that hardly any cases of infection were documented. Scholars today have few manuscripts that explain how the Incan doctors worked; however, most of the precious

Incan knowledge has been destroyed. (Tagle.) The text *The History of the Incas* portrays how a doctor's knowledge was passed from father to son.

If the son was skilled enough, the family would send him to gain education in an Incan school of medicine in the city of Cusco. As a student could go to medical school in present day today, the scholar back then would learn advanced techniques and gather the knowledge of Incan medicine taught by the Amautas. The Amautas were people who dedicated their entire lives in search for answers so that they could pass down knowledge and wisdom to the next generations. (Tagle.) Therefore, the Incan Empire was advanced in medicine due to their medical discoveries and accomplishments.

Aiding in the Incan medical advancements, a medical student would go to an Incan medical school for three to five years, depending on the skill level of the student. The education was rigorous, as the scholar had to learn and use herbs and mineral properties. The scholars would then learn the correct quantities of cures needed for cures. (Kruschndl.) The professors taught the students how to discover the sicknesses and how to cure them. When the student finished medical school, he had to spend various years in practice before he was considered ready to be a doctor.

Because of the rigorous process an Incan doctor had to endure, Incan medicine made great advancements during its time. (Tagle.) All in all, the Incans were able to achieve a variety of inventions in the fields of road construction, agriculture, and medicine. The Incan Empire's had many accomplishments and discoveries helped to create a noteworthy empire, despite not having as many resources as the Roman Empire. MLA Works

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