

The inca civil war

Business



It is normal for siblings to fight and quarrel, but for the Incas, the fight between brothers resulted in war and death. The Inca civilization that lasted from 1483-1533 was a very powerful empire that once covered land in modern day Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia. In 1527, the emperor of the Incas, Huayna Capac, contracted smallpox and died, leaving two heirs, one of royal blood, Huascar, and one was a half blood, Atahualpa. They divided the land they inherited and lived peacefully for two years, then the fight between the siblings began. The Inca Civil War that lasted from 1529-1533 was very detrimental to the Inca society and is the major reason for the downfall of the Inca civilization because it divided the citizens' faith between two excellent rulers, it made the empire vulnerable, and the war made them weary of fighting.

During the Inca Civil War, the people had to choose sides between Huascar and Atahualpa and this divided the people. After Huayna died, Huascar inherited the southern part of the empire and gained the support of the citizens of Cuzco which was the more urban region of the society. Atahualpa on the other hand received the northern part of the empire and there he received the trust from the majority of the Inca's great military including the great generals, Chalcuchima, Ruminahui, and Quisquis in the city of Quito. The war began when Huascar, being the more greedy of the two, tried to take the city Quito which was under Atahualpa's rule. This angered Atahualpa and he sent his army to capture the city of Cuzco. Huascar then asked for the allegiance of the canari people, who lived in between the separate halves of the empire, but Atahualpa's army massacred many of them on his raid towards Cuzco.

Two years from that event, the canari helped the Spanish invaders in 1531 and that aided in the downfall of the Inca empire. The fighting between the two brothers ended in 1531 with Atahualpa being victorious, yet the war was not yet over. After Atahualpa's conquest of Cuzco, the Incas were not attentive of invaders and had their guards down when Francisco Pizarro, the leader of the Spanish Conquest over the Incas, made his move. Not months after the city of Cuzco was captured, Huascar was moved north to the city of Quito where he was held captive as Atahualpa and the others celebrated, unaware of the group of Spaniards coming from the north. The Spanish came as unsuspecting visitors, the Incas were too drunk to be concerned when 160 armed Spaniards went to the new emperor to ask for assistance when they unexpectedly attacked a large part of the Inca army and kidnapped Atahualpa and the Spanish held him underneath their control. Atahualpa at that point valued his life and his empire over the riches the Inca Empire had.

Atahualpa tried to make a bargain with the Spanish by offering a two rooms filled with silver and another room filled with gold in return for some control over his empire. The Spanish greedily agreed and Atahualpa had gold and silver sent from all over the Empire to pay for his reign. By doing this, Atahualpa made his empire very weak economically and vulnerable to the manipulations of the Spaniards. When the Spanish arrived, they were prepared to fight with all their might in case they ran into trouble on their conquest, but the Incas were tired of battling in the civil war and did not put up much of a fight. After Atahualpa was captured, nobody dared to go up against the Spanish and when Atahualpa started asking the citizens to send

in gold and silver to pay of his side of the bargain, the citizens did so without complaining.

Rumours started to spread in Cuzco that the great army of the Incas was reforming in the city of Quito and the Spanish were terrified because the Inca army would have overwhelmed them if they were attacked. They tried to protect themselves by threatening Atahualpa only to learn that the rumour was fake and the army in Quito was doing no such thing. In November of 1532, the Spanish asked to see Huascar who was held captive yet safe in the northern parts of the empire. When Atahualpa heard this, he used the remaining part of his power to ask his generals to execute Huascar just in case Huascar made a deal with the Spaniards against Atahualpa. They followed his orders without hesitation but when the Spanish heard that Huascar was killed a few months after, they pulled Atahualpa into a mock trial where he was found guilty for attempting to revolt against the Spanish and in the month of July in 1533, Atahualpa was executed and this marked the end of the War Between Two Brothers and the entire Inca civilization.

As you can see, because of the Inca Civil War, the Inca civilization was left defenseless, it left a separated empire, and it left soldier wearisome against the robust and greedy Spaniards. Although the story of Atahualpa and Huascar ended horribly, it teaches a very valuable lesson. Had Huascar and Atahualpa been less aggressive with one another, they would have been able to coexist and if the Spanish invaded, they would have been able to join forces and drive the Spanish out. This shows us that no matter what a sibling may do, it is better to love them than make war with them.