

Quadrant II - Transcript

Under the initiative of the

'Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Goa titled.

Digital Integrated System for Holistic Teaching and Virtual

Orientation for Developing E-Content'.

This module deals with the Inca Empire,

its extent, political aspects, administrative divisions

social hierarchy, economy, religious beliefs and practices and the heritage of Inca cities.

The learning outcomes expected are ;

to acquire a general knowledge of the Inca civilization,

to understand and appreciate the achievements and legacy of the Incas..

The Inca civilization developed in South America.

The Empire was established in 1438 AD and lasted till about 1532 AD.

It lasted less than a 100 years. Its location was in the Andes of South America

It extended from Ecuador to Chile and included a part of North West Argentina and Bolivia .

Peru, was the center and heart of the Inca Empire.

It was approximately 5000 kilometers in length along the West Coast of South America.

It was the biggest Empire in the Americas then.

Cuzco, the capital city in South Central Peru, at a height of 3500 meters, was their most important city.

The Incas are the ancestors of the present day Peruvians.

The Political Aspects:

The Incas had an Emperor who was considered to be the highest authority in the Empire.

Inca rule was dynastic, which meant authority passed on from father to son.

It was a very important duty of a ruler to extend his Empire.

The government officials of the administration were known to be despotic.

They governed by harsh rules and severe penalties, which included burying alive, branding, nailing of the tongue to a board for lying.

The Administrative Divisions:

The basic unit of their administrative setup was a unit of

Ten families grouped under a Leader.

Under a Chief, there would be 100 families.

The next subdivision had 40,000 families.

And finally, the Inca Empire was organised into 4 divisions, each under a noble who was the Governor who was responsible to the Super Inca,- the Head of Households.

Social Hierarchy:

There was the Imperial Class at the top.

It was hereditary and it was a privileged class. It included the Emperor who was regarded as the descendant of the Sun God - Inti.

In fact, Inca means 'Children of the Sun'.

And Inca was the name of the Emperor, and therefore the

people and the Empire came to be known as the Incas.

Next came the Nobility who had administrative duties and

finally the Military Officials and the Priestly Class.

The Common folk was made up of the labor class, the farmers, and craftsmen.

Inca society was rigidly disciplined.

They paid taxes in crops or other products that they produce.

And in their labor, which was called 'mita'.

Inca society was disciplined rigidly at the hands of the their

Government Officials. Laws made the common man subservient to the State.

Conquered peoples were 'Incaised' means they were initiated into

the Inca Society, placing them under people who would train them to be Incas..

The defiant, however, were sent into forced labor camps.

There was a wide disparity between the lives of the privileged

ie. the upper classes and the common people.

However, the common people were neither rich nor poor. They had enough.

Another class of Inca society was the 'Yanacona'. They were the Serfs.

They were the natives of other cultures, put to work on the

'chakras' which were the big estates in Upper Peru.

Inca Economy.

The main sectors were agriculture and industry.

Their staple crop was corn, potato, sweetpotato.

Besides they had a variety of 40 other plants that they cultivated.

Land belonged to the State and was distributed to each family according to its size.

On the rugged mountainsides, the Inca farmers terraced the land for cultivation.

And they put in place an extensive system of irrigation.

Official store houses were built to provide for the privileged classes who did not work to

produce food. Food doles were also given to the common man in times of crop failure.

Crafts and Industry of the Incas:

The Incas excelled in the creation of textiles of cotton and wool

Wool they got from the llama and the Alpaca - two important animals of the Andes.

Using a loom, they created exotic designs and tapestries.

They excelled in feather work and making of ornaments.

They developed mining.

They mined for gold and copper. They were also skilled in alloy making, especially bronze.

Metal crafts included the use of bronze for tools and weapons.

They excelled in pottery and stone-cutting for constructions and brickmaking.

Inca Economy.

The Inca economy was a 'no money' economy.

The barter system was practiced.

Land was State property and there was no individual ownership.

The system called 'mita', was a system of contributory labor for men

according to their skills, for public and private projects.

Tributes and taxes were paid for in manual labor or the produce of the soil or with their various skills.

Inca Beliefs and Practices.

Sun God - was the principle God.

Morning Star - the Page of the Sun God.

Thunder, and lightning, his dread Ministers,

Rainbow - was another beautiful manifestation of the Sun God.

They celebrated the Feast of the Sun God, which was held at the Temple of the Sun, in their capital city of Cuzco.

This Temple is believed to have been guarded by women who were called 'Virgins of the Sun'.

At the feast of the Sun God, they sacrificed a black Llama.

They cooked it and the meat was eaten by the worshippers.

Religious ceremonies were held for all purposes with elaborate ceremonies, colorful costumes, loud music of various instruments, and both men and women participated.

They mummified their dead and buried them in a sitting position, with a variety of articles they used while they were living.

Literary heritage survived through oral traditions.

They spoke the language called Quechua, but strangely they created no system of writing.

They had a system/device of accounting and record keeping

using cords and knots called 'Quipu' and had trained recordkeepers.

Most of these have been destroyed, but whatever left is not decoded.

Their Calendar system was similar to that of the Mayans.

They are known to have performed surgeries, dental work and used herbal medicines

The Incas were master builders. They built huge temples, huge

pyramids, gates, fortresses, palaces, houses, bridges over

canyons, highways and roads to connect distant parts of their

vast Empire. There were Inns for travelers along the road and

Post runners called 'chasqui' and Post houses.

They built in stone, but had no iron, wheel, machinery, keystone arch

or beasts of burdens. Only stone and stone tools.

These are the Inca cities, Cuzco, the capital city,

the famous Lake Titicaca City, and Machu Picchu, which

remain as Wonders of the World.

In conclusion, we can say that

the Incas had impressive engineering skills without

knowledge of the wheel, machinery, iron tools and the keystone arch.

No written records, but the dead mummies of the Incas tell of their lives, status, features,

ornaments, dress and tools.

Isolated from the rest of the World, in the Andes, these

people develop their own unique culture that in some ways

surpassed the achievements of the contemporary cultures of the World then.

Pizarro, a Spanish conqueror, conquered and brought to an end the Inca Empire.

Thank you.