



# 4 - TAWANTINSUYU, THE INCA EMPIRE

Tupac Inca's reign got off to a bad start. He tried to add to Inca lands in the northeast. However, this was low-lying tropical rainforest or jungle, not the mountains the Inca armies were used to. The local tribes fought back. However, the Incas did take some new land, and trade routes were opened so that the Incas could have tropical products. The local tribes also agreed to supply archers for the Inca army.

However, the hard fighting led to a rumour that Tupac Inca Yupanqui had been killed. The Colla and Lupaca tribes (who lived south of Cusco) led a rebellion. Tupac hurried south, and captured the Colla's mountaintop fortresses one by one. Then he attacked the Lupaca, who had regrouped and joined up with the Pacasa tribe as their ally. The now all-powerful Inca army defeated them.

Tupac Inca continued hundreds of miles southward, conquering every-

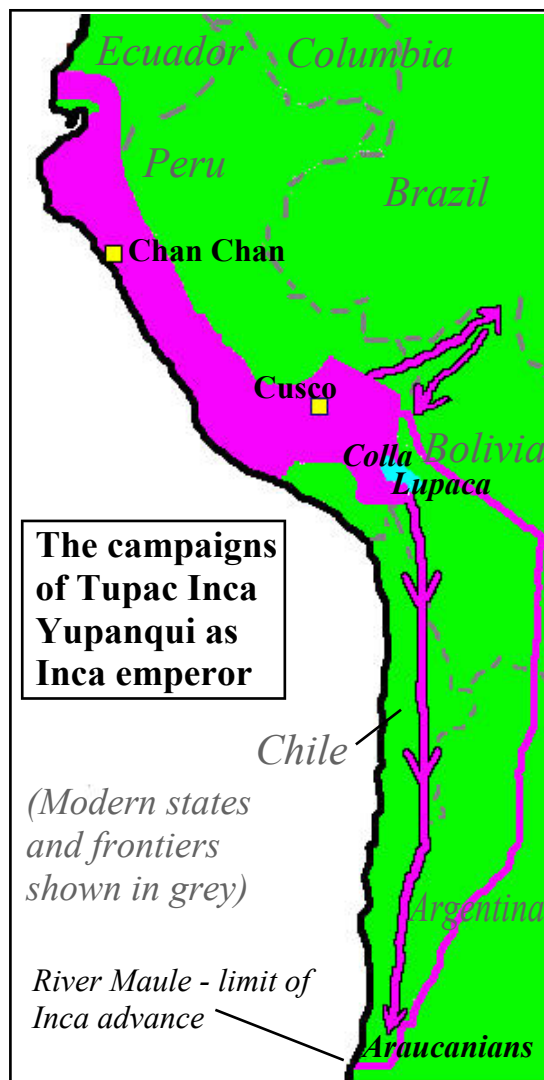
body in his path, as far as the Maule River (in central Chile). Here the tough Araucanian tribesmen, and the much colder climate, brought the Incas to a halt. A number of small civilized and independent lowland states

remained on the Pacific coast, west of Cusco. Around 1476 Tupac Inca Yupanqui attacked them one by one, defeating them all after heavy fighting.

Like his father Pachacuti, Tupac Inca spent the end of his reign changing how Tawantinsuyu was governed. He distributed the land he had conquered among his followers; he introduced a system of dividing people into labour units ranging from 100 to 10,000 men, to provide manpower for agricultural projects and the army; and he introduced the

system where each province provided girls to train to become **Acclacunas** (Chosen Women).

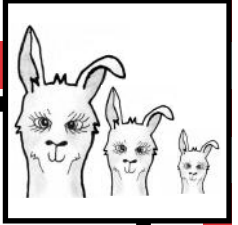
He died unexpectedly in about 1493.



**The campaigns of Tupac Inca Yupanqui as Inca emperor**

*(Modern states and frontiers shown in grey)*

*River Maule - limit of Inca advance*



After Tupac Inca's death different branches, or **panaqs**, of the Inca royal family, plotted to get their prince made Sapa Inca. The final choice was a young son of Tupac Inca called **Huayna Capac**. He was too young to rule on his own, so there was a further quarrel about who should hold real power.

Once he was old enough to rule in his own right, Huayna Capac proved a competent Sapa Inca. By the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Tawantinsuyu was nearing its maximum size. In fact it was so big that the main problem facing Huayna Capac was how to hold it together. To do this he travelled around, so that people would know him in each part of the empire. Despite this, he still had to put down a number of rebellions. Huayna Capac continued to add new territories to the empire. He conquered Chachapoyas, a mountainous area in northeastern Peru. Afterwards, these conquered people provided him with excellent body-

guards. Huayna Capac continued to push northwards.

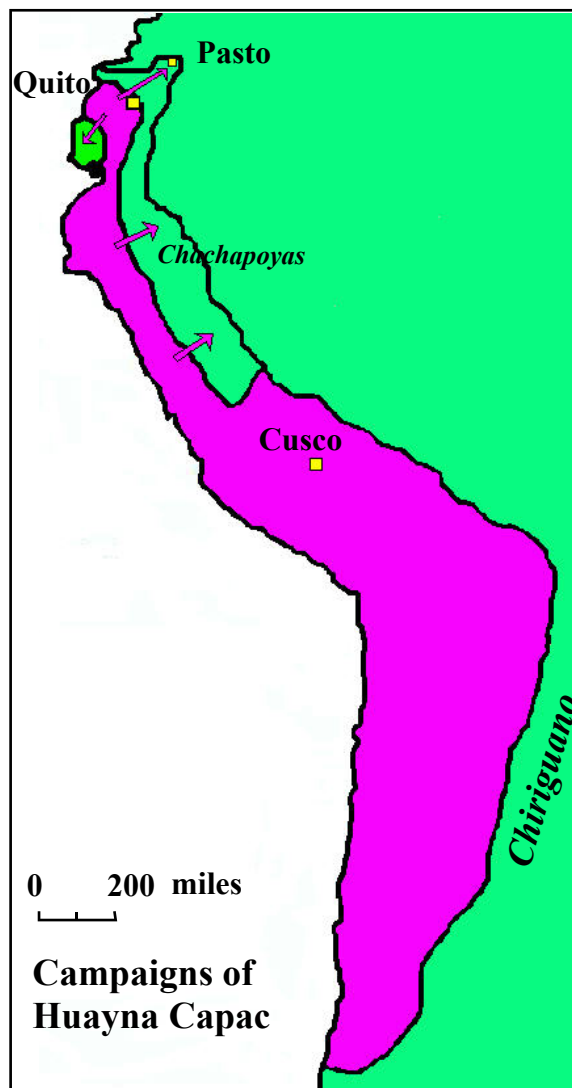
He also had to face a threat from the east. When the powerful **Chiriguano** tribe raided Tawantinsuyu, he sent an army to deal with them. The Chiriguano were driven back, and fortresses were built along the frontier to prevent further raids.

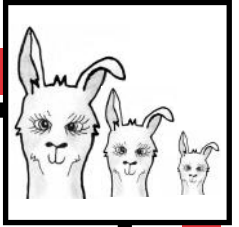
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Huayna Capac himself focused on bringing the northern province of Quito (the modern country of Ecuador) under control.

Meanwhile it was probably the Chiriguano who passed on the deadliest enemy the Incas were ever to face – European diseases. Early Spanish explorers on the Atlantic coast of South America were

carriers of diseases such as measles and smallpox which Native Americans had not been exposed to for thousands of years. They had no immunity, and died in large numbers.





In 1525 disease struck the area of the Inca capital Cusco, killing thousands. Huayna Capac returned to deal with the panic - and himself died of the disease. His successor, a young son Ninan Cuyuchi, died very soon afterwards. Tawantinsuyu now faced a major crisis.

