

# 1 - A TIME OF TRIBAL WARFARE

The Incas used to recite and sing the legends about how they began. According to one of these legends, a family of four brothers and four sisters came out of a cave 15 miles South of Cusco. They were led by **Manco Capac**, and his sister, **Mama Ocllo**, whom he married. They persuaded ten **ayullus** (small tribes or extended families), who emerged from two other caves, to come with them to find somewhere to settle and grow crops.

The Incas eventually arrived in the **Cusco** area. They made the people there accept them as their rulers. From time to time they attacked

neighbouring tribes, forcing them to hand over their wealth.

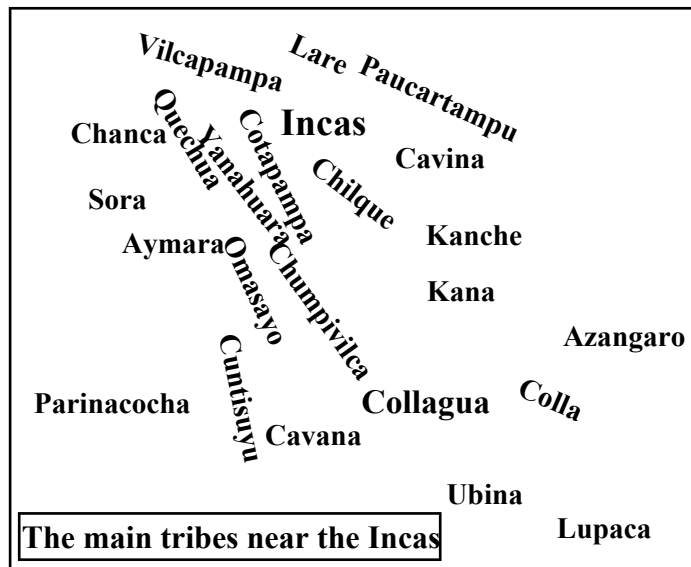
The legends do not provide us with firm facts about how the Incas began. But they do tell us at least three things about how the Incas wanted to remember their rulers:

1. They admired powerful warriors, but knew that cruel ones might lose the support of their own people.

2. They had a custom where the ruler would marry his own sister. This may have been to keep power over the tribe within the royal family.
3. They thought that the best way to change their ruler was for him to choose his successor from among the sons of his chief wives. The idea was that he would choose the most capable of his sons to rule after him.

Each of these things may have

helped the Incas to become stronger than their neighbours. While some of the details of the Inca legends are disputed by historians, the Incas must have started somehow, perhaps

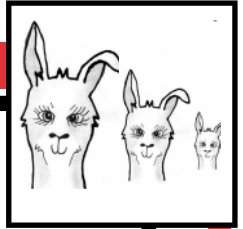


The main tribes near the Incas

round about 1200 A.D.

According to the Inca stories, the leaders who followed Manco Capac, Sinchi Roca and Lloque Yupanqui, were not particularly warlike.

As can be seen from the map, the Incas were just one of many tribes living in the central Andes.



The Incas became more warlike under their fourth leader, **Mayta Capac**. One reason why the Incas became more aggressive may have been a change in climate resulting in less rainfall. More land was needed to grow the same amount of food. Mayta Capac led the Incas in a fight with their neighbours over water rights. The Incas won the war, looted their neighbours' homes, and took over some of their land and water.

According to some accounts the fifth leader, Capac Yupanqui, was the first one to fight outside the Cusco valley. He defeated two very small tribes, the Cuyumarca and Ancasmamarca. His successor, **Inca Roca**, conquered land to the south east of Cusco.

One of Inca Roca's young sons, **Yahuar Huacac**, was kidnapped and held captive for a number of years because of a quarrel between two neighbouring tribes, the **Ayarmaca** and the **Huayllaca**. Yahuar Huacac's mother, **Mama Mikaywas**, was from the Huayllaca tribe. Yahuar Huacac was eventually released and became

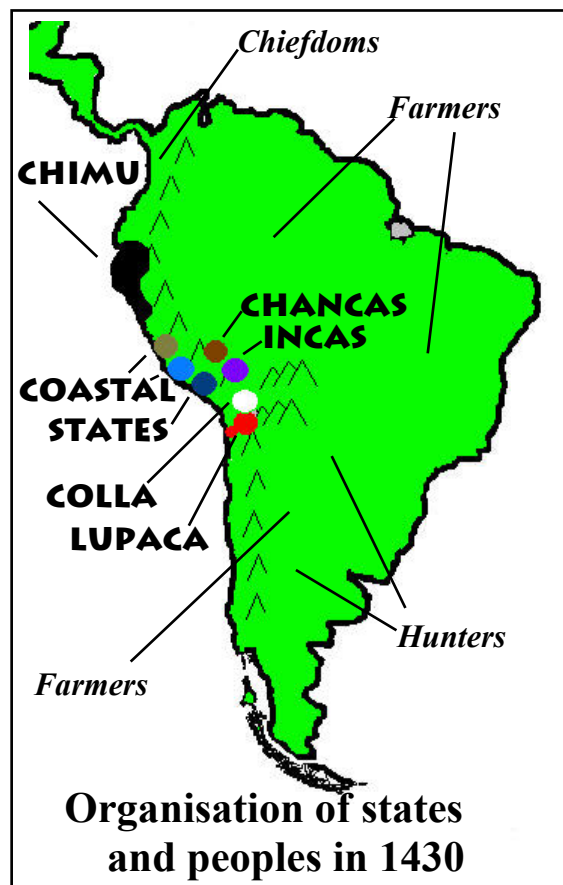
Sapa Inca on the death of Inca Roca. The kidnapping shows that the Incas were not at this point any more powerful than their neighbours.

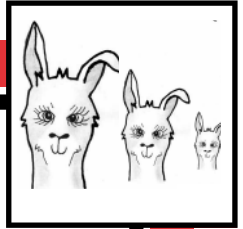
During the reign of **Viracocha Inca**, in the early 15th century, the Incas began their permanent conquests, at first on a small scale. Viracocha's uncles, **Vicaquirao** and **Apo Mayta**, were able generals. They defeated the **Ayarmaca** kingdom by attacking it from two directions. But instead of just helping themselves to

plunder they took the kingdom over. This set a pattern for future Inca conquests.

Viracocha was now the ruler of a powerful state, one of only 8 powerful states in the Andes area of South America. Two of these, the Colla and the Lupaca, lay to the south of Inca territory. The Incas became allies of the Lupaca, so the Colla were faced

by enemies in two directions. But in the fighting that followed the Inca army arrived at the scene only to find that the Lupaca had already won the battle!





To the West of the Inca kingdom, the **Chancas** seemed set to become the leading power in the Central Andes. They had already conquered the Quechua tribe, and in about 1438 attacked the Incas.

According to one story **Viracocha Inca** and his chosen heir **Inca Urcon** left Cusco. They withdrew some miles to the north to Calca. However, another son, later to be known as **Pachacuti** or 'Earthshaker', remained in Cusco to defend the city, supported by generals Vicaquirao and Apo Mayta.

Pachacuti successfully defended Cusco. (According to legend, stones turned into warriors in order to complete the Chanca defeat!) More Inca soldiers joined Pachacuti's army, and he was able to drive the Chancas away from Cusco.

By now there were two Inca states, one in Cusco, led by Pachacuti, and the other in Calca, led by his father Viracocha Inca. As the power of the Cusco group grew,

many people left the Calca group to join Pachacuti.

Pachacuti had to deal with two enemies at the same time, the Chancas, and his father's forces at Calca. Pachacuti struck eastward, to the edge of the tropical rainforest, to add to the territory he controlled, and to hem in Viracocha's forces at Calca.

At this point Viracocha Inca died, and Inca Urcon was killed shortly afterwards in a **skirmish**. Viracocha's and Urcon's followers accepted Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui as the new Sapa Inca, and the Inca nation was reunited.

Pachacuti continued fighting the Chancas until he had completely subdued them. The Incas now had the resources of a large and powerful kingdom to add to their own, and in Pachacuti they had a

Sapa Inca who had a vision of what he could do with that power. He believed the gods had given him the task of conquering the Andes.

