

THE AMERICAS

CH 6: MESOAMERICA

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Middle
America

Central
America



I. MESOAMERICA*

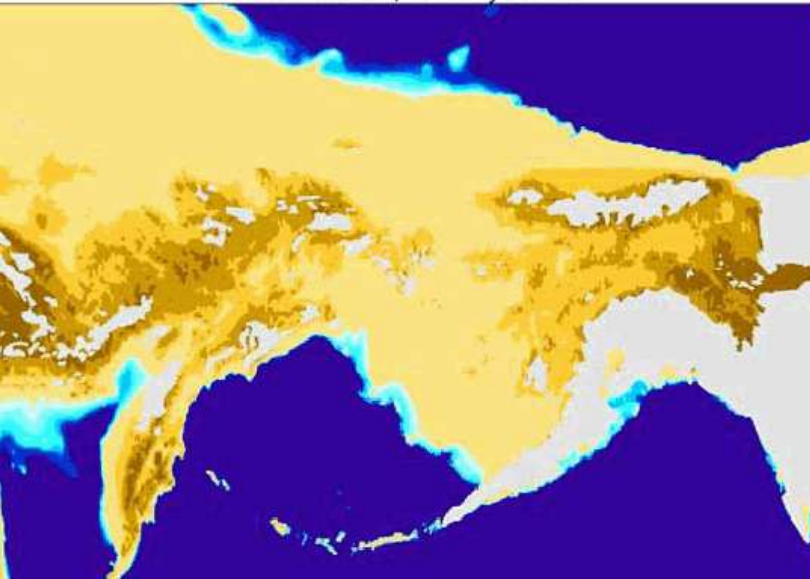


A. Geographic Setting

1. Land Bridge

a. Connected Asia & North America over the Bering Strait in Alaska

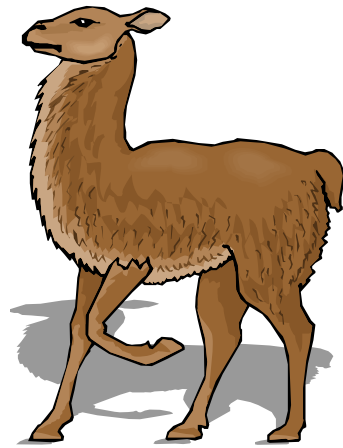
PALEO Paleoenvironmental Atlas of Beringia
Coastline 21,000 Cal years BP



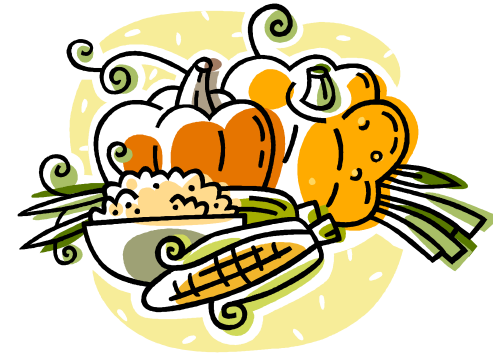
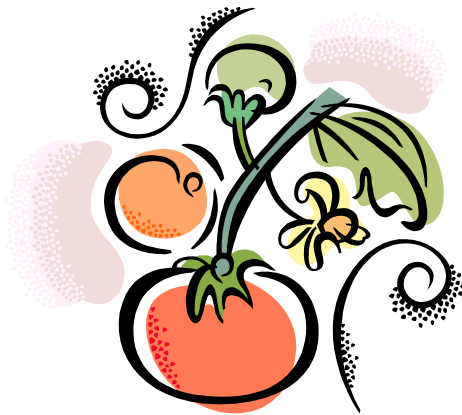
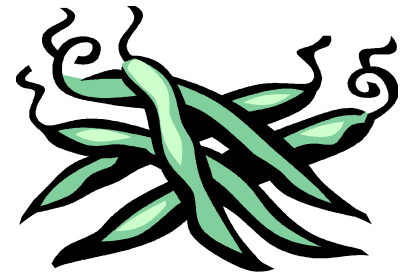
2. Permanent Settlements

a. Crop cultivation

1. corn, beans, tomatoes, squash



b. Domesticated animals: goats, llama, dogs



B. The Olmecs* = 1st major American civilization

1. Gulf Coast of Mexico

2. Polytheistic Religion

a. Built pyramid-shaped temples



**The Olmec
heartland
where the
Olmecs
reigned
from 1400 -
400 BCE**

3. Culture

a. System of writing w/
inscriptions

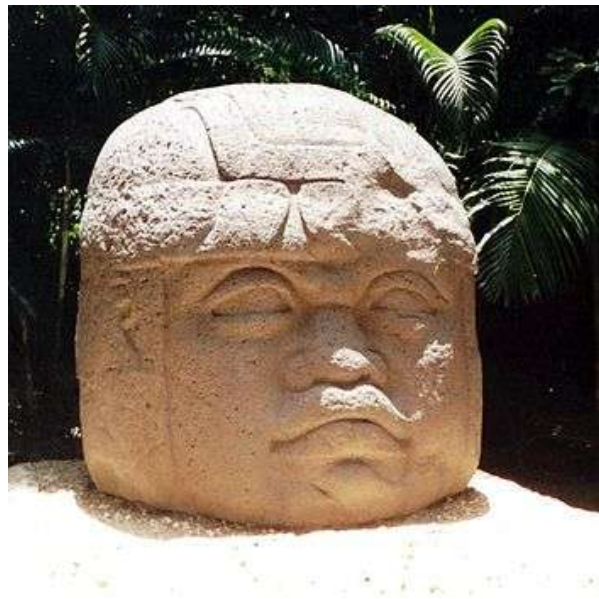


b. Calendar

c. Artwork in carved stone

d. Extensive trade network

e. Giant-stone heads



C. The Mayas*

1. Farming & Trade

a. Wealth through crops & trade

b. = farmers/merchants paid taxes to support the temples & cities

=
barter
economy



2. Religion

a. Polytheistic

b. Powerful Priests

c. Practiced human sacrifice



3. Society

Upper:

- 1. Ruler=men**
- 2. Nobles=govt officials, military leaders, Priests**
- 3. Scribes, painters, sculptors**

Middle:

- 4. Merchants**

Lower:

- 5. Farmers: most of Mayas, paid taxes to city**
- 6. Slaves: captured in war**

4. Contributions

a. Architecture

1. Temples & palaces

2. Paintings/carvings of Maya history & events





b. Agriculture

1. Developed 3 farming methods:

- i. Cut & burn forests for planting**
- ii. Letting fields go fallow**
- iii. Elevated fields—to stay above floods**



c. Learning & Science

1. Hieroglyphic-type writing

















2. Books made of tree bark

3. Calendar based on astronomy

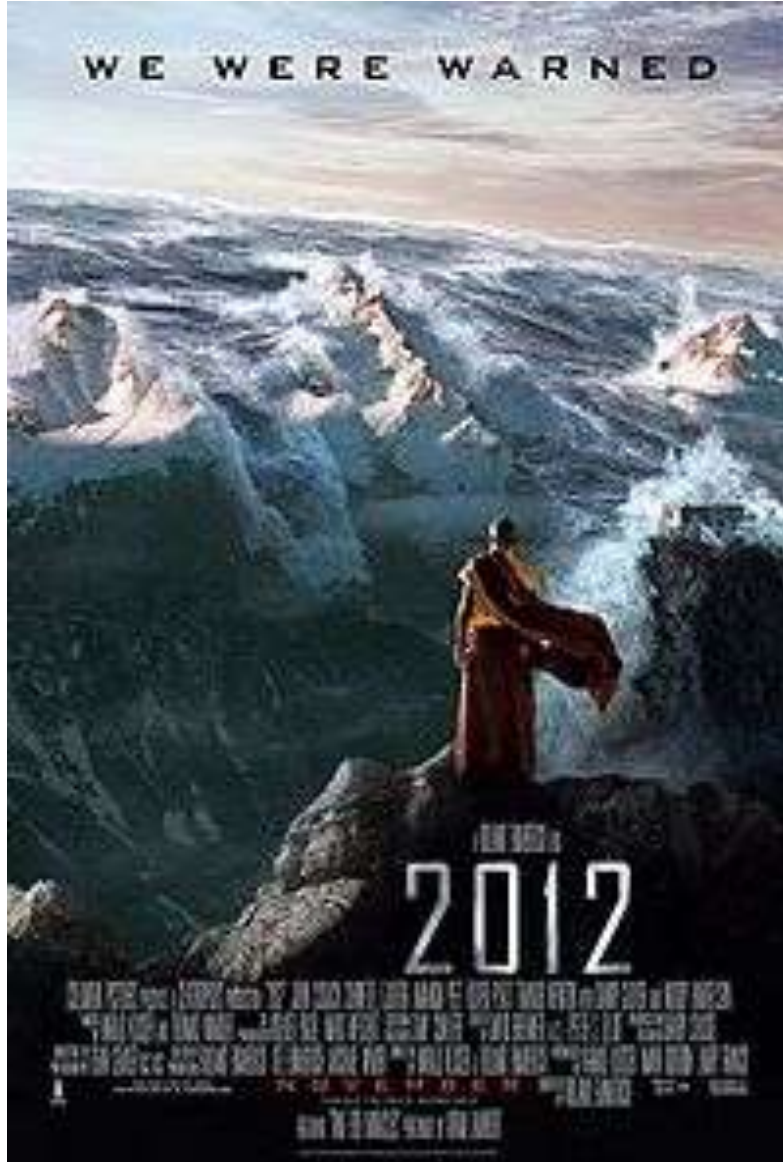
4. Numbering System & Zero



MAYAN
Numerals

0	1	2	3	4
	•	••	•••	••••
5	6	7	8	9
	• 	•• 	••• 	•••• 
10	11	12	13	14
	• 	•• 	••• 	•••• 
15	16	17	18	19
	• 	•• 	••• 	•••• 

5. *Mayan Doomsday Prophecy* December 21, 2012



I only had enough room to go up to 2012.

Ha! That'll freak somebody out someday.



Digit. by King Features - BIZARRRO.COM

d. Decline

1. Around 900AD

2. Abandoned cities

3. Possible reasons:

- i. warfare, disease,
hurricane, overpopulation**



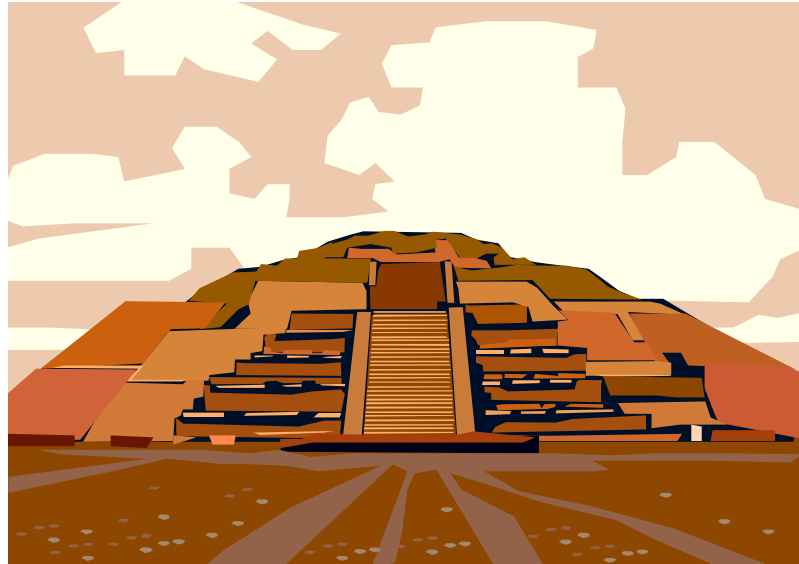
D. The Aztecs*

1. Aztec Expansion = 30 million people

a. Capital city: Tenochtitlan*

b. Conquered other tribes

**c. Wealth from tribute (stuff)
=payment from conquered peoples**



AZTEC EMPIRE



Provinces dépendant de la triple alliance

★ Membres de la triple alliance
○ Chef-lieu de province tributaire

Mixes État ou peuple indépendant
● Chef-lieu d'État indépendant



Mexico's Coat of Arms

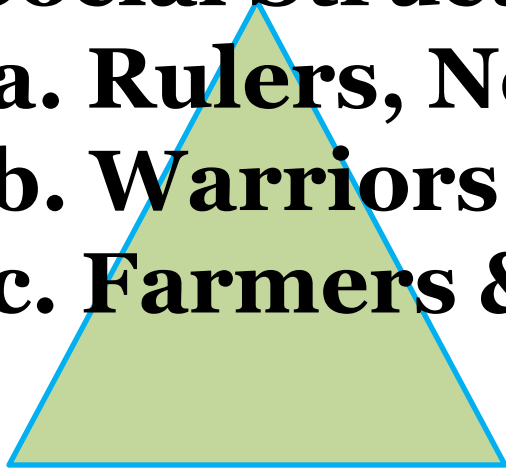


**The basin of Mexico
circa 1519**
at the arrival of the Spanish

TENOCHTITLAN

2. Social Structure

- U
M
L
- a. Rulers, Nobles, Priests
 - b. Warriors & Traders
 - c. Farmers & Slaves



3. Religion

a. Polytheistic

b. Human Sacrifice from
conquered



HUMAN SACRIFICE OF THE AZTECS



4. Contributions

a. Learning & Science

1. Calendar

2. Schools for upper class

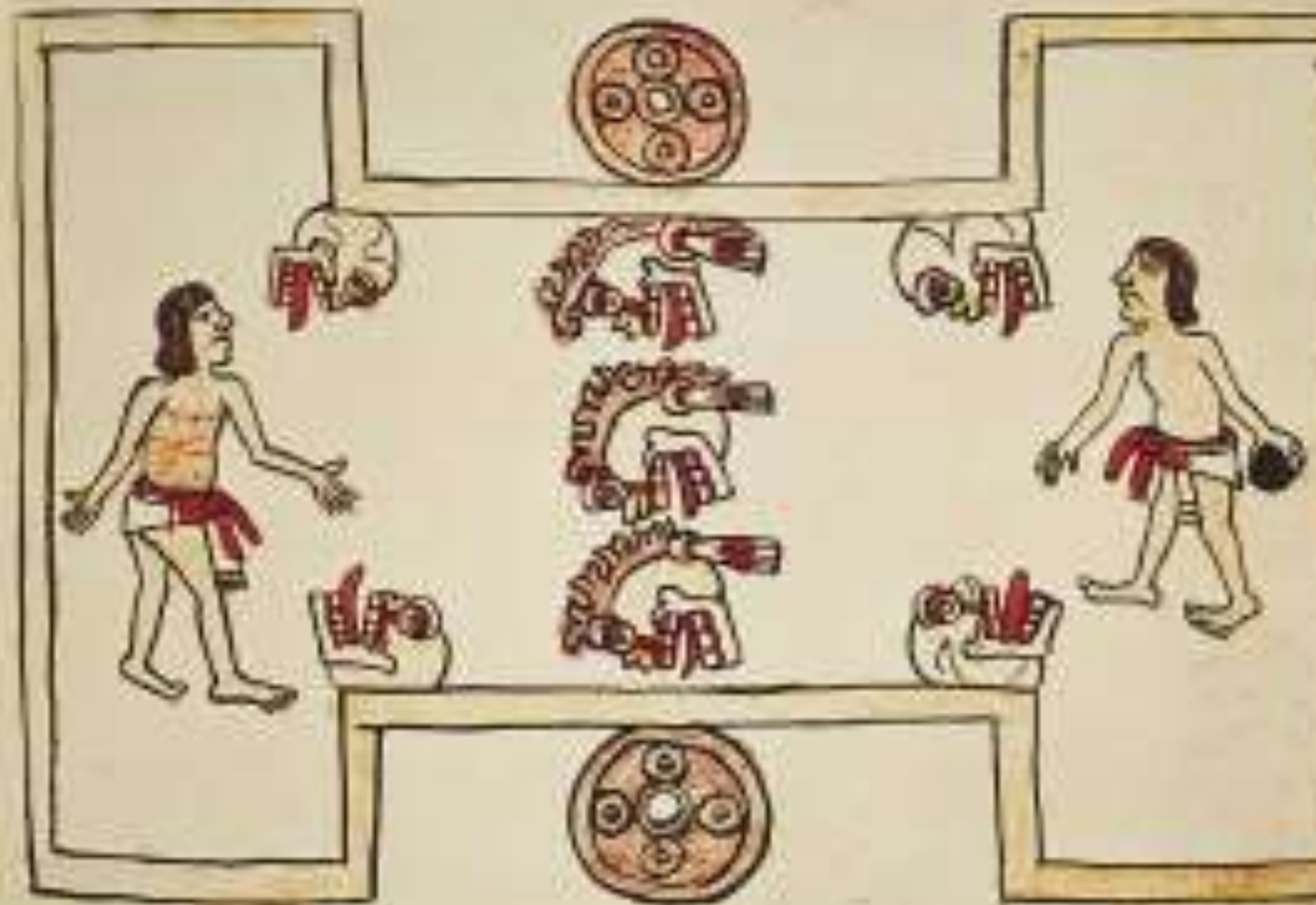
3. Medicine: dentistry, set broken bones

4. Zapotec game



ZAPOTEC





b. Architecture & Engineering

1. Tenochtitlan* (250,000 residents): city grid pattern, temples, apartment bldgs.

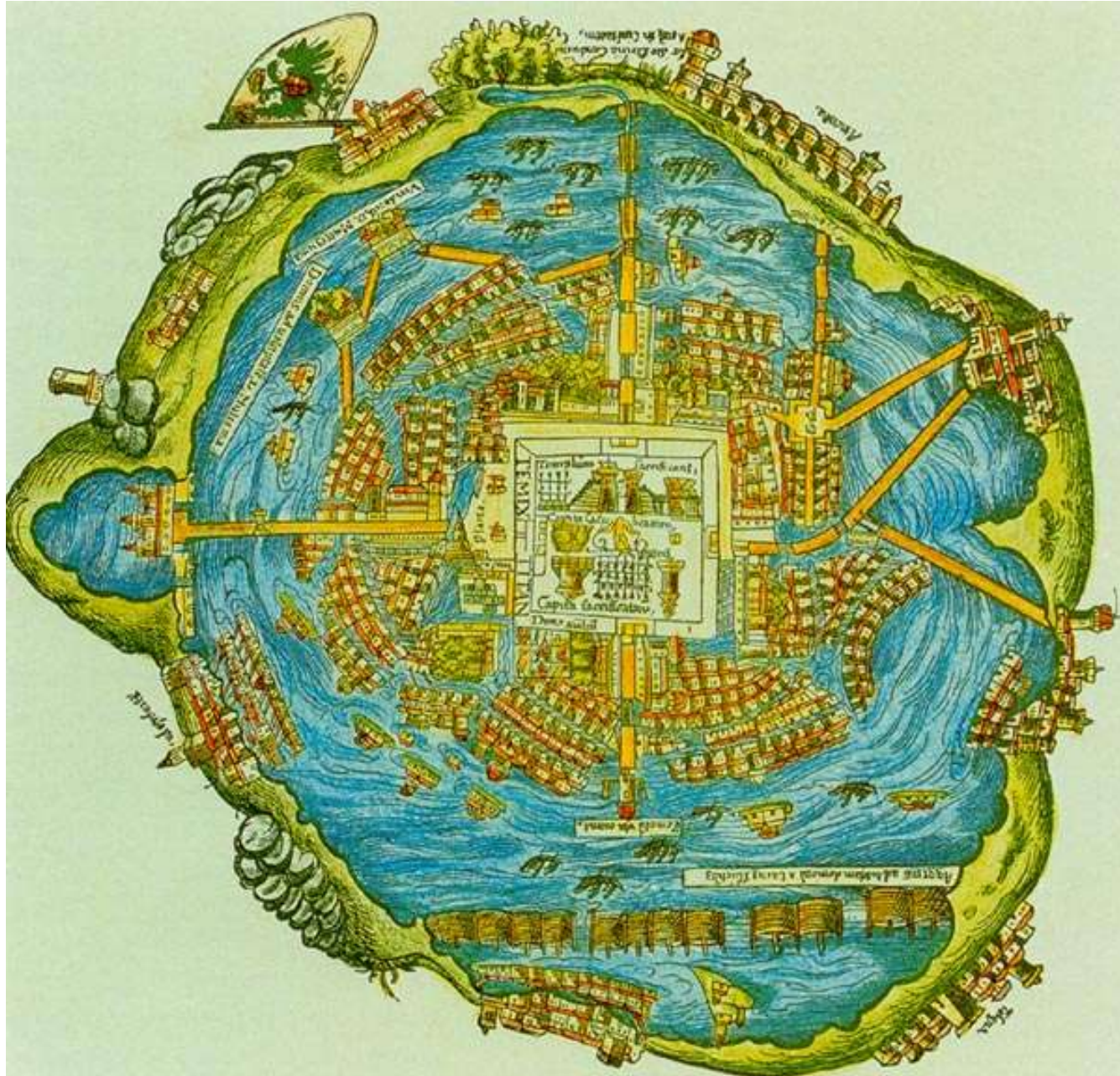
2. Causeways

3. Markets

4. Religious Temples



Tenochtitlan



Tenochtitlan



Aztec Temple of Blood



In 1411, to celebrate the completion of Tenochtitlan, 20,000 people were sacrificed in 4 days!





sacrifican sus los lenguas
 y orificios y las anayas a com en d nos
 y a bel de los monjes y de los
 como boca de la boca
 como boca de la boca



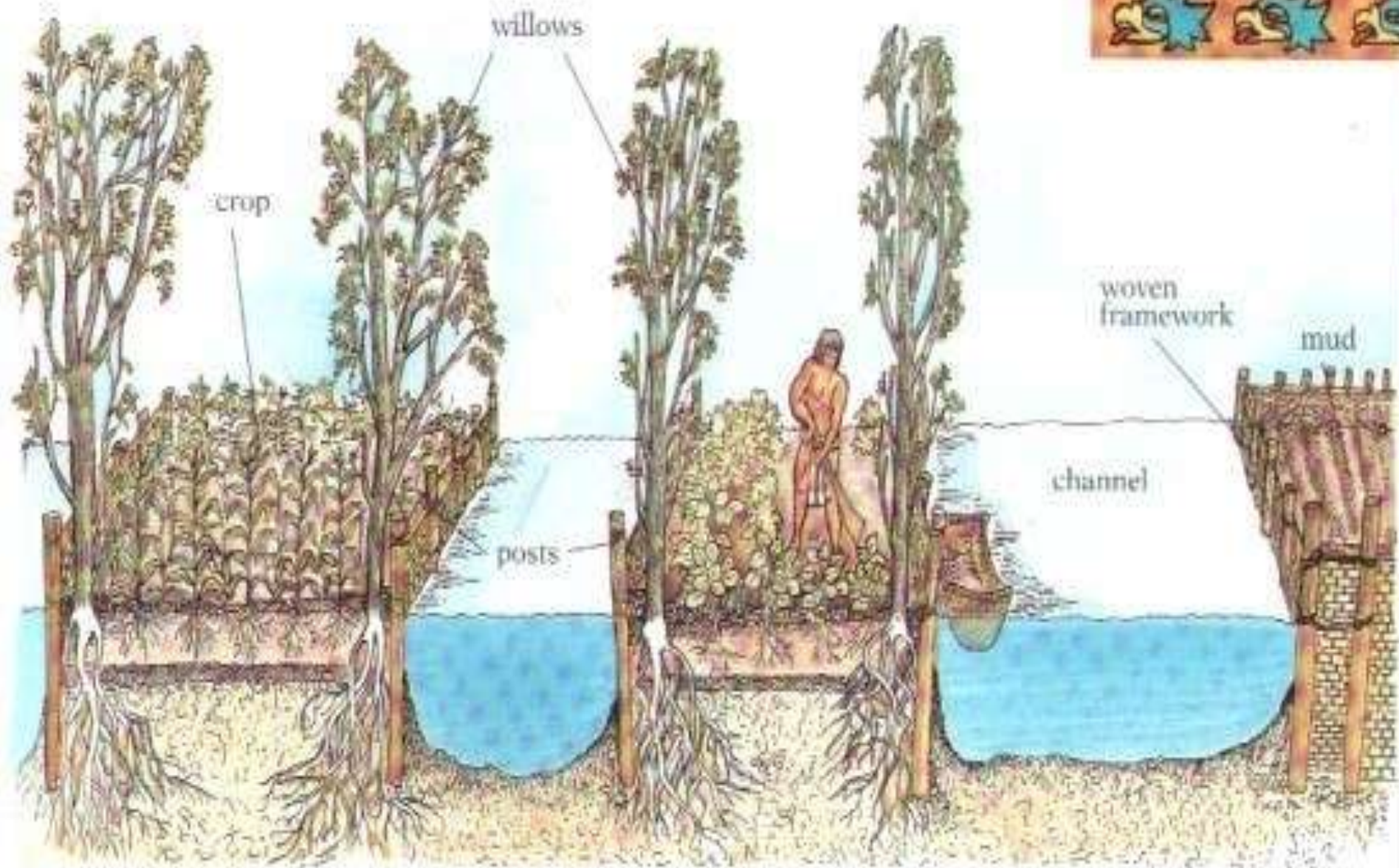
c. Agriculture

1. Natural fertilizers: manure

2. Chinampas*



Chinampas



Valley of Mexico

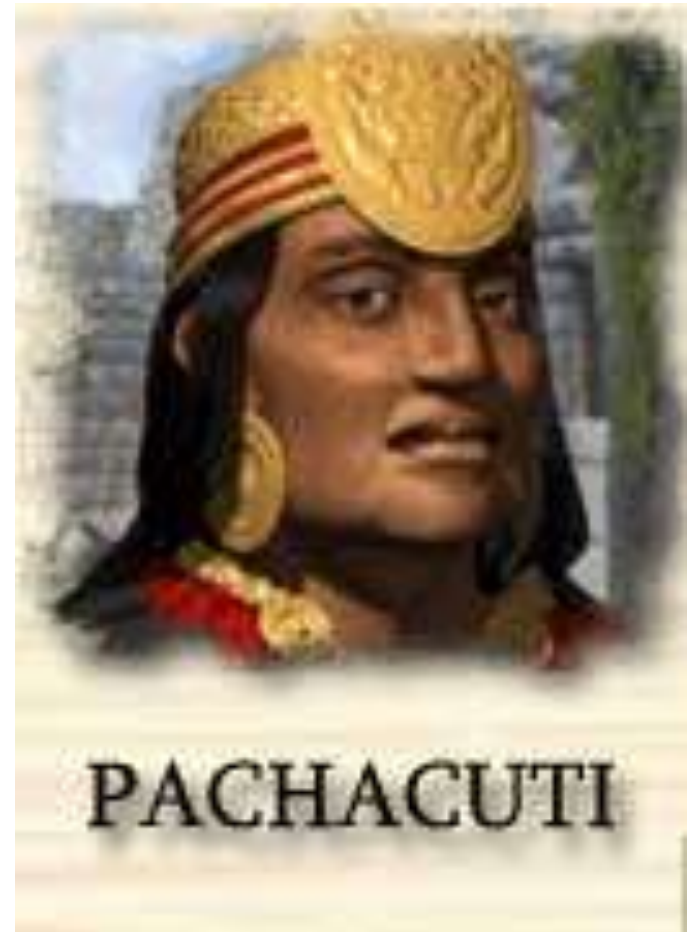
c. 1519

- Brackish Water
- Fresh Water
- Marshes
- Chinampas
- Causeway



E. The Incas*--centered in Andes Mts. of South America

1. 1st Emperor: (or Sapa Inca) Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui



2. A Centralized Govt

a. Absolute power of the emperor

1. He owned everything in the Inca empire, including the people

2. Gold=symbol of the emperor



b. Emperor claimed he was the son of the sun=his right to rule

Autokrat ←

c. He was the religious leader too

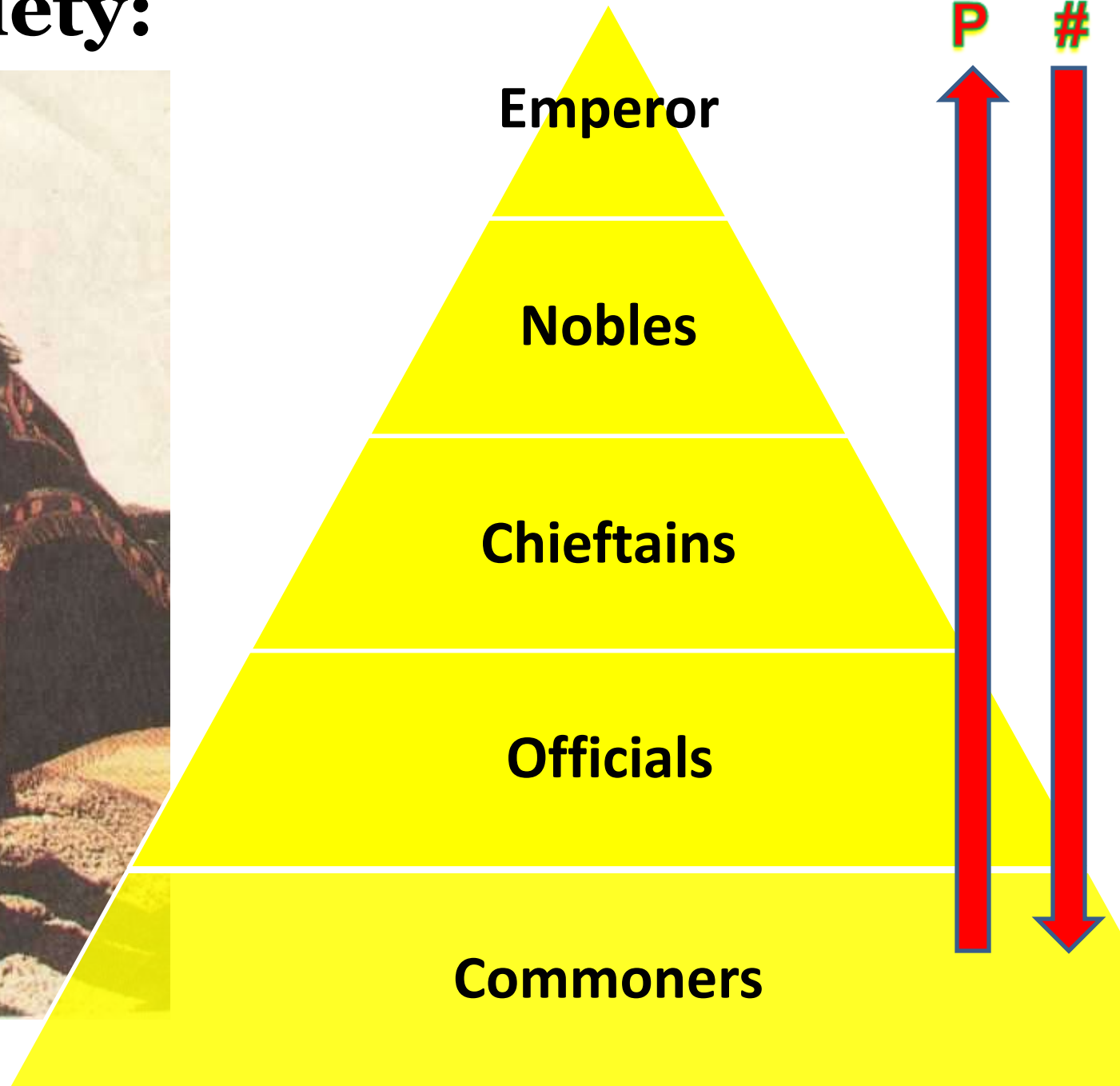
d. Capital city=Cuzco (in modern Peru)



C U Z C O

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e. Society:



3. An Empire Linked By Roads (2500 mile long empire, Ecuador to Chile)

a. w/ road networks & relay runners

1. 14,000 miles

2. Allowed rapid army deployment





4. Religion

a. Polytheism based on nature

b. Sun god #1

c. Powerful priests

d. Human Sacrifice = 8 yr.



5. Contributions

a. Engineering & Architecture

1. Roads: 12,000 mile network

a. Bridges, tunnels, step terraces on mts. for farming





2. Cuzco (capital city)

- a. Temple of the Sun**
- b. Gold walls**
- c. Earthquake-proof**



3. Macchu Picchu (the city in the clouds)—an astronomical observatory?





b. Agriculture

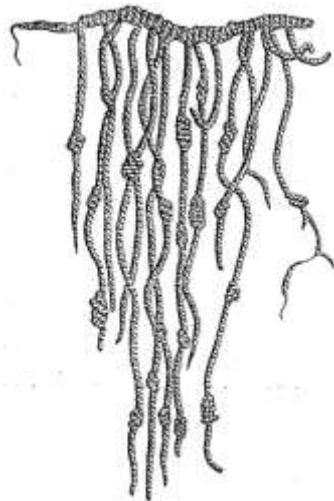
1. Step Terraces* on mt. sides for farming

a. Increased food production

b. Kept crops/soil from washing away

c. Communication

1. Quipus: knotted strings w/ beads



Potatoes

d. Science

1. Calendar

2. Medicine

a. Early form of brain surgery

b. Sanitation=antiseptics

c. Anesthesia

d. Mummification



e. Mastering Metalwork & Weaving

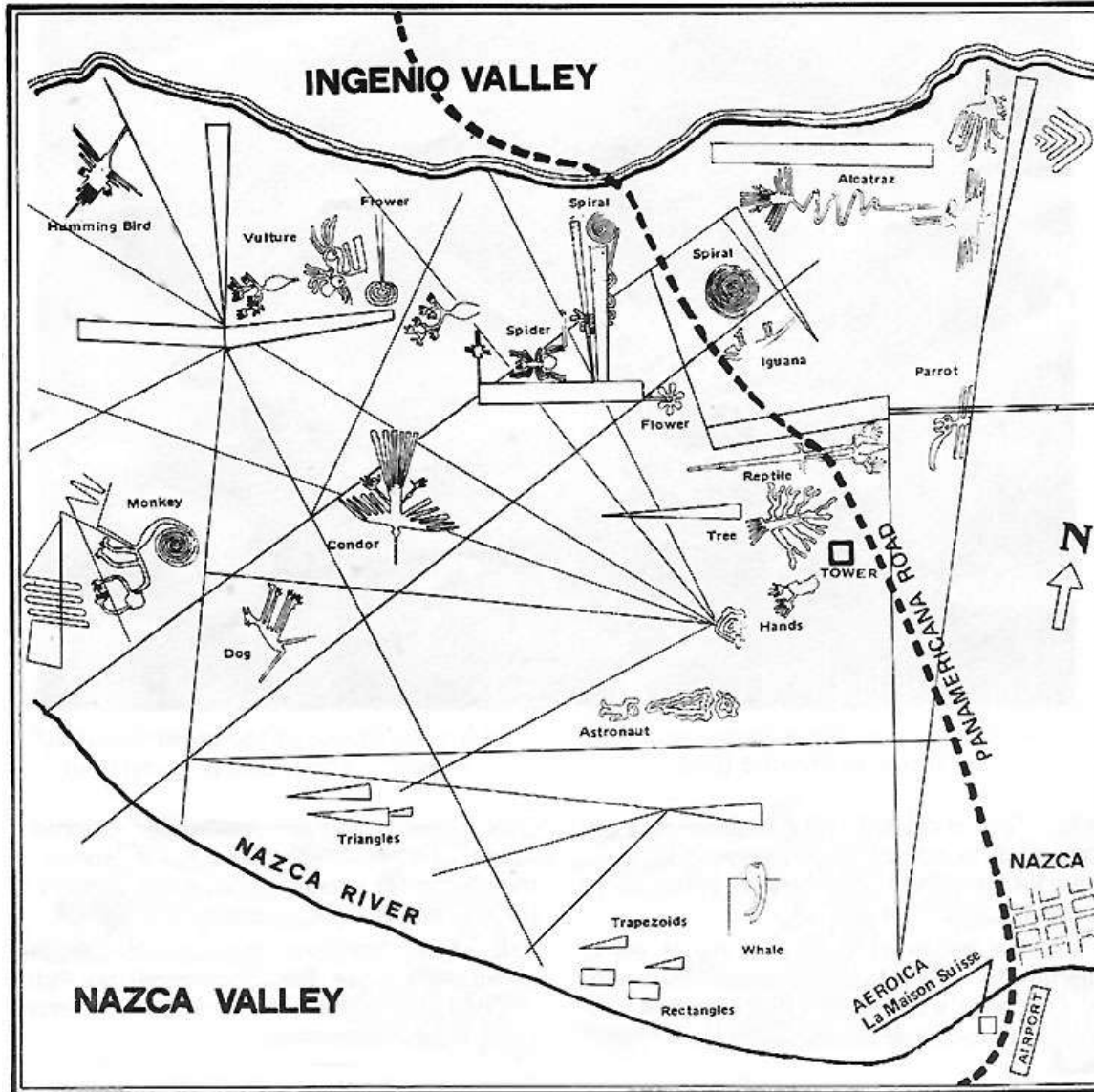
- 1. Learned to alloy (blend) metals**
- 2. Weaving from llamas, sheep, alpacas**



F. Nazca* ---500BC-500AD

Pre-Inca

1. Geoglyphs



bird



DECLINE OF AZTECS & INCAS?

16th c.

