

# MACHU PICCHU BY REBECCA HINSON

(HISTORY/NONFICTION)

## Questions for *Machu Picchu* by Rebecca Hinson

### LEVEL 1: What does it say?

#### General Understanding

- Quote accurately from the text to explain why Pachacuti built Machu Picchu and why this estate was important to him.

#### Key Details

- What does the text say about quipus?
- Based on specific information in the text, explain the religious significance of Inti, Pachacuti, the summer solstice, the winter solstice, water springs, apus, and huacas.

### LEVEL 2: How does it work?

#### Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning of courtier, shrine, celestial, repel, subdue, resources, sovereignty, emissaries, brandishing, tribute, ritual, solstice, equinox, litter, prostrate, Coraquenque, llama, huanacos, alpacas, vicuña, coverlet, eradication, inventories, currency, protrudes, barholds, mechanism, granite, hammerstones, double jamb, trapezoidal, plaza, lintel, wall niche, flora, fauna, spout, cascading, embodying, deities, rite, shaft, puma, fasting, basin, replenished, reenactment, ear spools, culminated, Pleiades, perpetuity, hemisphere, testament, hallowed.

#### Structure

- Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in *Machu Picchu* and *Citadelle La Ferrière*.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyTnn9qsnGY>

#### Author's Craft

- Analyze accounts of Inti Raymi in *Machu Picchu*, *Inti Raymi, Festival of the Sun* (link below), and *History of the Conquest of Peru* (below), noting important similarities and differences in the points of view they represent.

### *Inti Raymi, Festival of the Sun*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFQUndZ0ZAw>

### *History of the Conquest of Peru*

Perhaps the most magnificent of all the national solemnities was the feast of Raymi, held at the period of the summer solstice, when the Sun, having touched the southern extremity of his course, retraced his path, as if to gladden the hearts of his chosen people by his presence. When the appointed day arrived, the Inca and his court, followed by the whole population of the city, assembled at early dawn in the great square to greet the rising of the Sun. They were dressed in their gayest apparel, and the Indian lords vied with each other in the display of costly ornaments and jewels on their persons, while canopies of gaudy feather-work, and richly tinted stuffs, borne by the attendants over their heads, gave to the great square, and the streets that emptied into it, the appearance of being spread over with one vast and magnificent awning. Eagerly they watched the coming of their deity; and, no sooner did his first yellow rays strike the turrets and loftiest buildings of the capital, than a shout of gratulation broke forth from the assembled multitude, accompanied by songs of triumph and the wild melody of barbaric instruments, that swelled louder and louder as his bright orb, rising above the mountain range towards the east, shone in full splendour on his votaries. After the usual ceremonies of adoration, a libation was offered to the great deity by the Inca from a huge golden vase, filled with the fermented liquor of maize or of maguey, which, after the monarch had tasted himself, he dispensed among his royal kindred. These ceremonies completed, the vast assembly was arranged in order of procession, and took its way towards the Coricancha.

At the feast of Raymi, the sacrifice usually offered was that of the llama. . . A burnt-offering of the victims was then made on the altars of the deity. This sacrifice was but the prelude to the slaughter of a great number of llamas, part of the flocks of the Sun, which furnished a banquet not only for the Inca and his court, but for the people. . . A fine bread or cake, kneaded of maize flour by the fair hands of the Virgins of the Sun, was also placed on the royal board, where the Inca, presiding over the feast, pledged his great nobles, in generous goblets of the fermented liquor of the country, and the long revelry of the day was closed at night by music and dancing. These amusements continued for several days, though the sacrifices terminated on the first.

LEVEL 3: What does it mean?
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### **Author's Purpose**

- Hinson states that Machu Picchu's location was chosen for its alignment with sacred mountains and water springs, celestial activities, and other royal residences. Which reasons and evidence does she provide to support this claim?
- The author states that, merging from Lake Titicaca, Manco and Mama were sent to earth by Inti (Father Sun) to found a holy city, conquer the nations to the north, south, east, and west, and civilize the world. As ruler, she claims that Pachucuti also followed these commands. Which reasons and evidence does she provide to support this claim?

### **Intertextual Connections**

- Drawing on information from the following sources, how did the Shapa Inka distinguish himself as the divine son of Inti?

#### *Astronomy and Empire in the Ancient Andes*

Astronomy and the coordination of the calendar by the state are important issues in the study of ancient complex societies. In their roles as divine heads of state and the masters of the society's rituals, the rulers controlled time as well as the processes of societal reproduction. The rulers gained prestige and access to cosmogonic powers through rituals, and the state was inscribed into the very structure of social order.

Development of a ritual calendar, which reinforced the ruling Inca's role as the paramount religious authority and which was largely based on solar and lunar sightings, helped to justify the status of the emperor. The ruling Inca, divine descendant of the sun, was seen to have access to ethereal knowledge and powers through which he controlled or interacted with universal forces. The unique position of the ruling Inca, as mediator between the Sun and the people of the Andes, provided him with eminent powers and proved to be an important component element of Inca statecraft.

In the case of the Inca, participation in large public astronomical observations in conjunction with elaborate ceremonies provided visible links to their origin myth and helped to strengthen the ruling elite's claim to dynastic power.

#### *History of the Conquest of Peru*

The government of Peru was a despotism, mild in its character, but in its form a pure and unmitigated despotism. The sovereign was placed at an immeasurable distance above his subjects. Even the proudest of the Inca nobility, claiming a descent from the same divine original as himself, could not venture into the royal presence, unless barefoot, and bearing a light burden on his shoulders in token of homage. As the representative of the Sun, he stood at the head of the priesthood, and presided at the most important of the religious festivals. He raised armies, and usually commanded them in person. He imposed taxes, made laws, and provided for their execution by the appointment of judges, who he removed at pleasure. He was the source from which everything flowed, -- all dignity, all power, all emolument. He was, in short, in the well-known phrase of the European despot, "himself the state."

The Inca asserted his claims as a superior being by assuming a pomp in his manner of living, well calculated to impose on his people. His dress was of the finest wool of the vicuña, richly dyed, and ornamented with a profusion of gold and precious stones. Round his head was wreathed a turban of many-coloured folds, called the llautu; and tasselled fringe, like that worn by the prince, but of a scarlet colour, with two feathers of a rare and curious bird, called the coraquenque, placed upright in it, were the distinguishing insignia of royalty. The birds from which these feathers were obtained were found in a desert country among the mountains; and it was death to destroy or take them, as they were reserved for the exclusive purpose of supplying the royal head-gear.

### *Machu Picchu, Unveiling the Mystery of the Incas*

It is very significant that a large number of architectural structures, around thirty, were used for religious activities. This total is very high when compared to the remains of other royal estates, such as Chinchero, Huamanmarca, Pisac, and Callachaca. Pachacuti dedicated substantial amounts of skilled labor and prime real estate to these religious elements within the palace complex at Machu Picchu. It suggests that from the outset Pachacuti and his panaca may have played an exceptionally important role in the ceremonial life of the Cuzco elite. The claim by Inca Pachacuti and later rulers that a special relationship existed between the Inca royal lineages and the supernatural forces immanent in the landscape and the celestial sphere was so important that it had to be actively reaffirmed through daily ritual. It may be significant that one of Pachacuti's sons, Yamque Yupanqui Topa, was said to have devoted his life to Inca religious activities rather than political rulership. If a special link existed between Pachacuti's panaca and the Inca religious cult, it might help explain the presence of unusual ritual constructions like the Temple of Three Windows, whose architectural metaphorical reference to the Inca mythical origins is unparalleled at other royal estates. Encoded within Machu Picchu's architecture lies the structure of the Inca ideology upon which Pachacuti's legitimacy rested.

## LEVEL 4: What does it inspire you to do?

### **Opinion with Evidence or Argument**

- Integrate information from the following links in order to write or speak about who should own and possess artifacts of Machu Picchu. Should all countries be allowed to reclaim objects that were taken from them?

<https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/23/opinion/23karp-toledo.html>

<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/5298164>

<https://www.npr.org/2010/12/15/132083890/yale-returns-machu-picchu-artifacts-to-peru>

<https://www.npr.org/2012/01/01/143653050/finders-not-keepers-yale-returns-artifacts-to-peru>