

## Summary

*Capacocha* was one of the most important rituals performed in the Inca Empire, in which children and young women were sacrificed. According to the chroniclers, the victims were supposed to come from the provincial elite and be beautiful and unblemished. *Capacocha* sacrifices were made during important events related to the life of the Imperial court, related to the local natural calamities (such as earthquakes, drought, volcano eruption, and epidemics), and to cyclical holidays (such as summer and winter solstice).

*Capacochas* were sacrificed to the most important deities in the Inca Empire, Viracocha, Inti (the Sun), Mama Quilla (the Moon), and Illapa (god of thunder and rain). In the provinces, *capacocha* was performed for the local *huacas* (deities), often identified with mountain summits. *Huacas* were an important element of creating a social identity and were treated as mythical founders and ancestors of the local communities. After conquering some provinces, the Incas abducted the *huaca* idols to Cuzco to enforce the subordination of the local elites.

Despite the wealth of information from chronicles, very few sacrifices of this type have been discovered to this date. Most of them were found on the mountain peaks of present-day southern Peru, northern Chile, and Argentina. *Capacochas* sacrificed at the Ampato, Pichu Pichu, and Misti volcanoes (Peru) were discovered in the 1990s by Johan Reinhard and Antonio Chavéz. They were the subject of anthropological research and biochemical analyses carried out by the author of the dissertation in the years 2018-2022. The mummy from the summit of Ampato and the mummy from Sara Sara were also re-examined. A total of 16 individuals were analyzed, which is almost half of all known *capacocha* victims (33). The aim of the thesis is, based on the analysis of ethnohistorical sources, previous archaeological research, and new results of anthropological, isotopic, and toxicological research, to try to answer questions regarding the inconsistencies between the ethnohistorical and archaeological sources, as well as to attempt to determine the social identity of the victims. The main purpose of the dissertation is to analyze the religious, social, and political significance of *capacocha* in the exercise of power by the Incas.

The work has been divided into the first part devoted to issues related to religion in the Inca State and its impact on the politics. It concerns issues related to the cult of ancestors and provincial *huacas*, the relationship between the Incas and the conquered peoples from the perspective of religious worship, and the role of the oracle and the cult of *huacas*. The following parts are devoted to information from ethnohistorical sources from the Spanish Conquest and

the early colonial periods on human sacrifices and *capacochas* in the Inca Empire. The next chapter concerns the results of previously published works on the imperial *capacochas*.

The second part of the work is based on an anthropological analysis (of *capacochas* from Sara Sara, Pichu Pichu, Misti, and Ampato), isotope studies (of *capacochas* from Pichu Pichu, Misti, and Ampato) and toxicological studies (of *capacocha* from Ampato). The research aimed to determine the age at time of death, health, diet (based on the carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis), and origin (based on the strontium and oxygen isotope analysis) of the sacrificed individuals. Ampato mummies were also the subject of a toxicological analysis for the presence of alkaloids and metabolites, including cocaine, benzoylecgonine, and cocaethylene, tryptamines (N,N-DMT and bufotenin), harmaline and harmine, mescaline, scopolamine, and atropine. The results of the research confirmed that the victims in the last months before their death chewed coca leaves and consumed plants of the *Banisteriopsis* spp genus, sources of harmine and harmaline.

The results of the studies were summarized and compared with previous research as well as ethnohistorical data, in order to determine what impact the *capacocha* and human sacrifice had on the shaping of the Inca State's policy and control over the conquered regions.