



# Maya Inca Aztec Similarities Chart

## Pre-Columbian Comparison Matrix

| Parameter                                  | Maya (Classic Period)   | Aztec (Late Postclassic)   | Inca (Late Horizon)   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Timeline &amp; Geography</b>            | 250–900 CE.<br>Yucatán Peninsula, Petén Basin (dense tropical jungles).                                     | 1325–1521 CE. Valley of Mexico (arid high-altitude lake basin).                        | 1438–1533 CE.<br>Andes Mountains (extreme altitudes and coastal deserts).                                   |
| <b>Agricultural Baseline</b>               | <i>Milpa</i> (slash-and-burn) agriculture, reliance on <i>cenotes</i> (sinkholes).<br>Maize, squash, beans. | <i>Chinampas</i> (highly productive floating lake gardens).<br>Maize, amaranth, beans. | <i>Andenes</i> (advanced earthquake-resistant terrace farming).<br>Potatoes, quinoa.                        |
| <b>State Administration &amp; Taxation</b> | Decentralized network of autonomous city-states. Local tribute to ruling elites.                            | Highly centralized Triple Alliance. Aggressive military tribute from conquered lands.  | Highly centralized absolute monarchy (divided into 4 <i>suyus</i> ). <i>Mit'a</i> state-mandated labor tax. |



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|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Social Hierarchy</b></p>              | <p><i>Ajaw</i> (Divine King). Unbridgeable social gap between elite and vast commoner base.</p> | <p><i>Tlatoani</i> (Emperor). <i>Pochteca</i> (merchants) held distinct quasi-noble privileges.</p> | <p><i>Sapa Inca</i>. <i>Curacas</i> (ethnic elites). <i>Ayllu</i> (kinship-based collective landholding).</p>       |
| <p><b>Primary Deities &amp; Rituals</b></p> | <p>Polytheistic. Elite bloodletting for cosmic communication.</p>                               | <p><i>Huitzilopochtli</i> &amp; <i>Quetzalcoatl</i>. Constant heart extraction for cosmic debt.</p> | <p><i>Inti</i> (Sun God). <i>Capacocha</i> (high-altitude child sacrifice during environmental crises).</p>         |
| <p><b>Logistics &amp; Technology</b></p>    | <p>Fully functional hieroglyphics, base-20 math, concept of zero. No pack animals.</p>          | <p><i>Macuahuitl</i> (obsidian-bladed clubs). Pictographic codices. No pack animals.</p>            | <p>Extensive bronze metallurgy, <i>Qhapaq Ñan</i> road network, llamas/alpacas. <i>Quipu</i> (knotted strings).</p> |