



# The Pre-Columbian Empires of Central and South America

The Inca and the Aztecs

# Thought Question

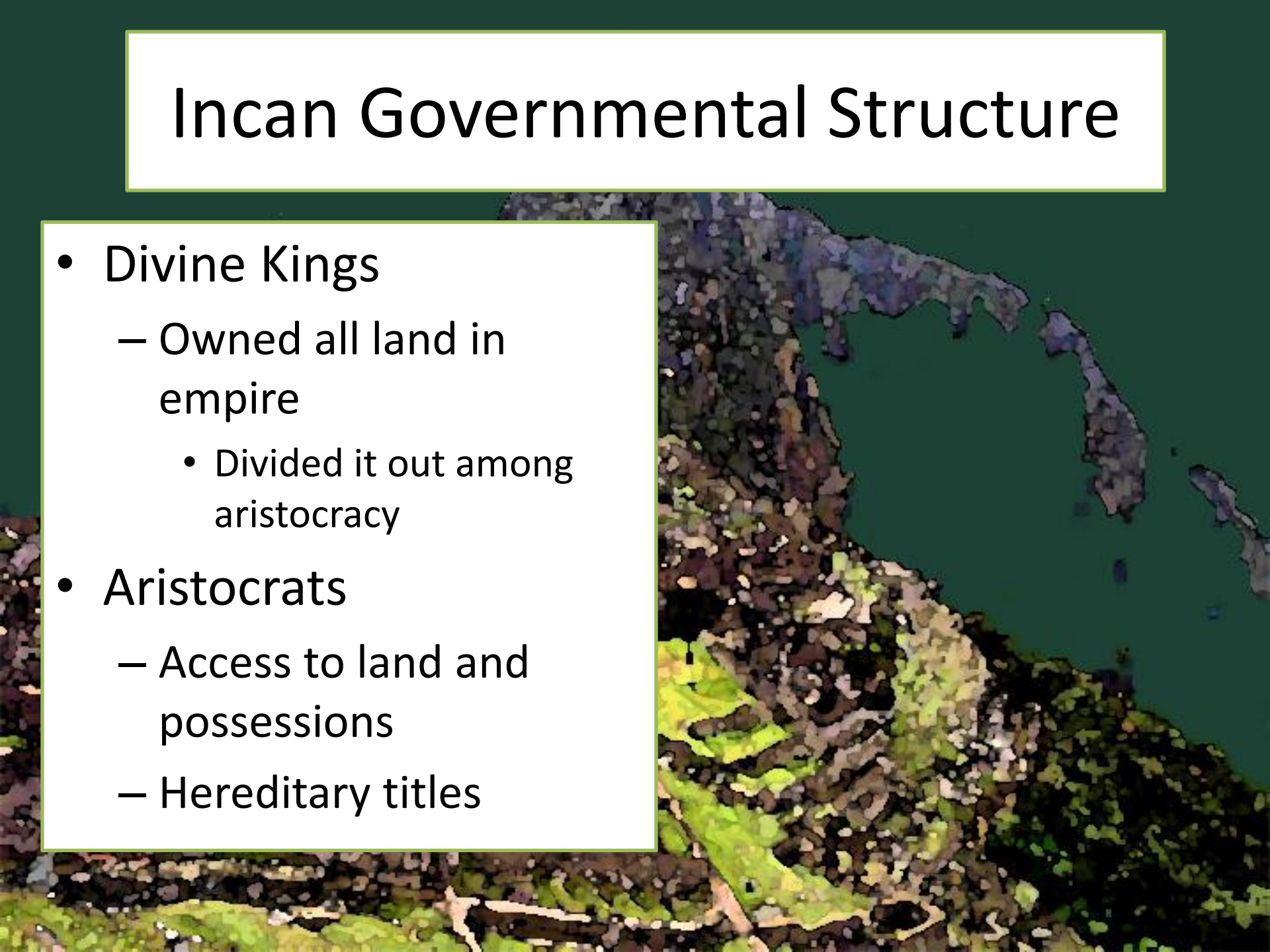
What types of institutions and infrastructure would you need to develop in order to control a large empire?

# The Incan Empire



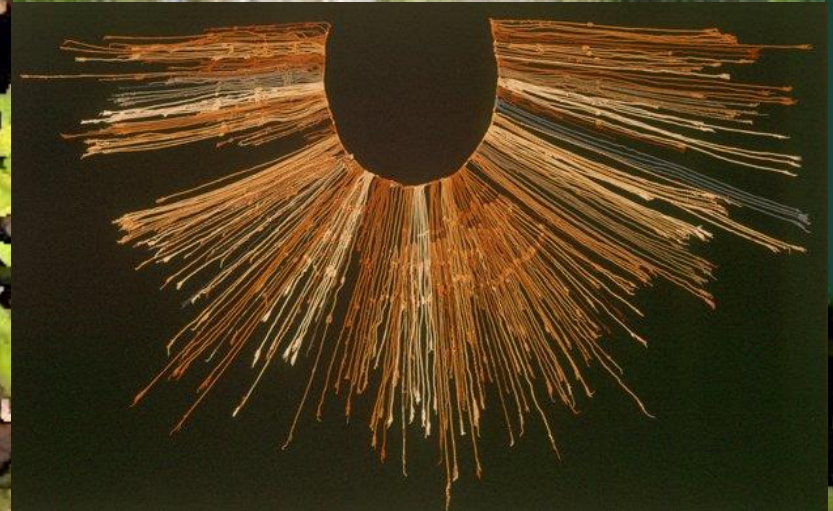
# Incan Governmental Structure

- Divine Kings
  - Owned all land in empire
    - Divided it out among aristocracy
- Aristocrats
  - Access to land and possessions
  - Hereditary titles



# Ruling the Empire

- Developed system of roads
  - Allowed connections between parts of empire
- Incorporated conquered peoples into empire
- Used record keeping system
  - Quipu
    - Series of strings with knots in them



# Incan Religious Structure

- Natural based religion
  - Inti – Primary Deity (Sun God)
- Use of sacrifices
  - Llamas and Guinea Pigs
    - Humans in extreme cases
- Priests
  - Devoted to worshiping gods

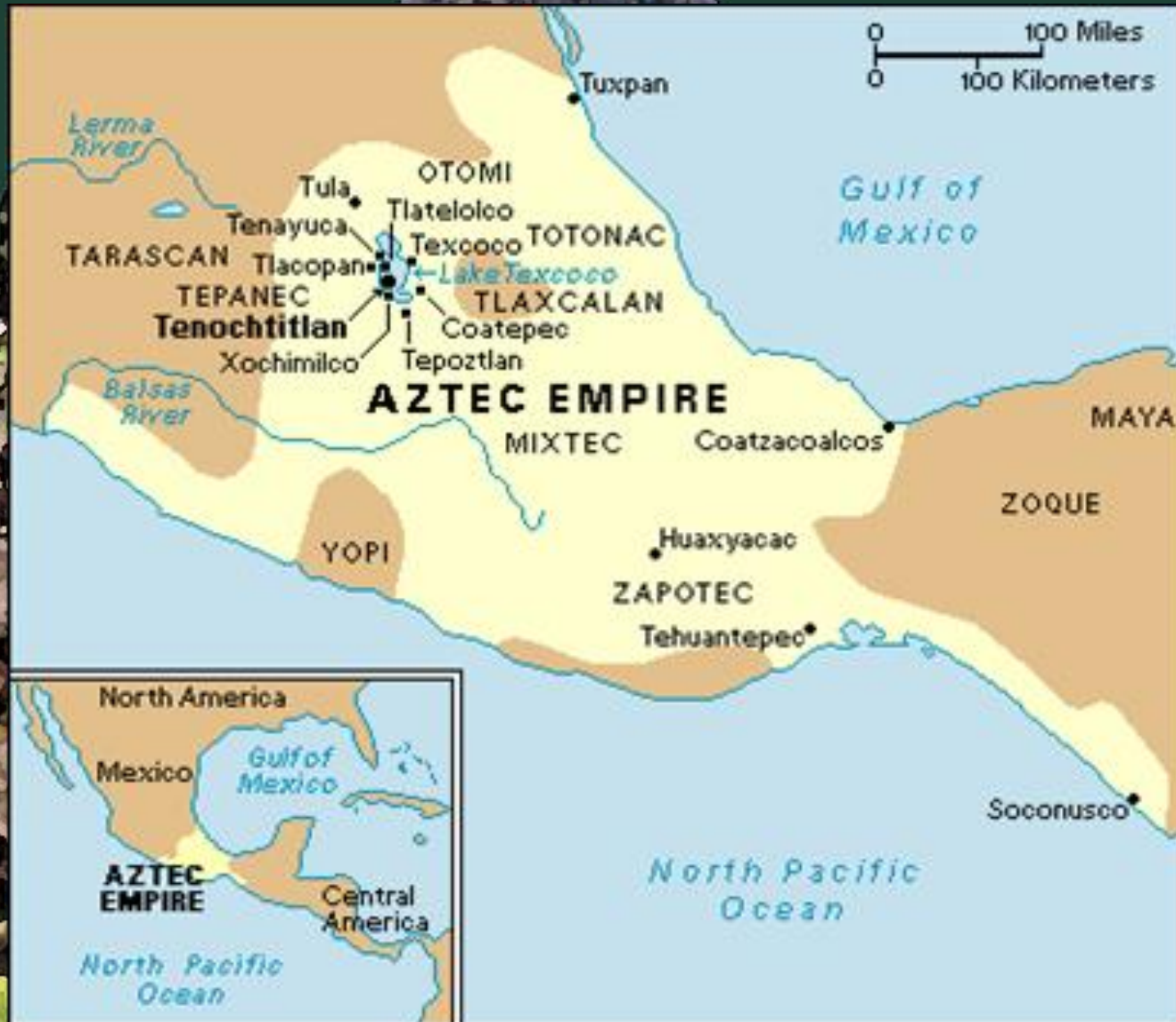


# Peasant life in the Incan Empire

- Lived in ayllu
  - Small rural communities
  - Consisted of a couple families
  - Communal
- Worked land of aristocrats
  - Men did manual labor
  - Women produced crafts



# The Aztec Empire





# Establishing the Empire

- Militant Society
  - Migrated to area around Lake Texcoco around 1325 C.E.
    - Had complete control of area by 1434 C.E.
  - Fierce warriors
    - Used defeated in Human Sacrifices



# Religious Structure

- Over 120 deities
  - Each city had a patron (similar to the Greeks)
- Three major cults
  - Fertility
  - Creator
  - Warfare
- Sacrifices
  - Gods required blood



# Social Stratification

## Class Society



King or High Priest (ahaw)

Council (Priesthood) - often part of the Royal Family



Nobles



Merchants & Artisans



Commoners - Farmers (and Slaves)

# Social Stratification

- The Great Speaker
  - Selected from sons of nobility
- Prime Minister
  - Ran matters of state
- Advisory Council
  - Rulers of conquered cities
    - Allowed to stay in charge as long as they paid tax



# Social Stratification

- Nobility
  - chosen from *calpulli*
    - Ancient ruling families of Aztecs
- Peasants
  - Farmers
    - Tied to the land like feudalistic society

