From classes I took in high school and texts I have read on the side, I went into this topic with many assumptions based on what I previously learned. It quickly became apparent that my knowledge of the Incas was misguided and very narrow in scope. The most surprising topics this week were how supportive and equally people were viewed in the Incan society, how they compared to the other native groups surrounding them, their technology and attention to detail, and the ingenuity that went into their system of documentation.

One of the more frustrating topics, which may have caused confusion with my comprehension of the reading is the term Indian. At first I believed this was a term describing the Incan’s from an outsider’s view such as the Spaniards, but the Indians and Incans were mentioned numerous times as individual groups so I work from the assumption that they are the surrounding peoples outside the Incan empire. While reading about the Incan state of perfection, I was amazed how equally society was divvied into classes and responsibilities. The more able-bodied and wealthy were expected to provide more effort than the poor and ill in almost every aspect of life and people helped each other in their time of need on a regular basis. This is vastly different from the society we live in today (overall from my observation).3 It was also interesting to read how many llama and alpaca the Incan’s farmed. It was quoted that the pastures almost outgrew the land; this is a definite statement of the breadth of resources kept at their fingertips.

I was also fascinated about the messenger system they implemented. Organizing it into approximately two mile blocks before changing couriers to keep the speed of he system at its highest and having individuals who cherish their job really created one of the best systems they could have with their given technologies! I also found the quipu fascinating in that in theory it can contain an arguably innumerable about of information from numerical data to events. I am still unsure how we can infer what we know about them seeing as though there is little to no written documentation describing how the data is encoded onto the strings.