

## Chapter 15: The Americas

### I. The Early Americas

#### A. The First Americans

1. First believed to come across land bridge 12,000 years ago
  - a. New evidence 40,000 - by boat from Asia Pacific Coast and go along coast to Americas and South Americas.
  - b. Hunter gatherers along coast at first and then later inland
  - c. Temperate regions domesticated crops- corn, beans, and squash.
2. North Americas
  - a. first culture shared but over time groups and tribes gain own identity – differentiation- customs- religion- clothing- tech- arts
  - b. geography and resources play large
3. Arctic and North West
  - a. Arctic severe climate and limited resources
  - b. Small bands and extended families
  - c. By 6500 B.C. some small villages and “animists”
  - d. Pit houses with whale bone and driftwood
  - e. Hunting and Fishing- whales, sea lions, seals, birds,
  - f. No firewood
  - g. Waste nothing
4. North West has thick forest with rain and mild climate
  - a. also fished but had firewood
  - b. temperate climate gives river fish and forest animals
  - c. around 500 A.D. began using wood which was a better resource- houses, canoes, and wood fiber nets.
  - d. Began moving from stone to copper tech
  - e. Society organized into lineages- each tribe descended from mythical ancestors
  - f. Each lineage- beginnings of specific sub tribes. With special patterns in arts and technology
  - g. Had festive gatherings –potlatches- every tribe bring gifts to exchange
  - h. Same long distance trading along coast.
5. Great Basin (California)
  - a. abundant resources- sea, rivers, plants(berries and nuts)
  - b. relatively easy life because of climate
  - c. also “animists” especially worship spirits of food, plants, and animals.
  - d. Further inland of basin is drier- desert and mountains made life harder and leaner
6. Southwest
  - a. Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah-fewer resources but used irrigation
  - b. Around 300 B.C. Hohokum in Arizona dug 3 mile canal
  - c. Utah region- Anasazi and their descendants- Pueblo grew corn and built homes of mud brick 2-3 stories
  - d. Also under ledges of cliffs and in valleys to protect from heat and enemies
  - e. Governed by religious leaders who conducted ceremonies in underground chambers called kivas to ensure harmony with spirits for good crops.
  - f. Apache- grouped lived where unable to farm but hunters and gatherers raided and traded
  - g. Navajo- same region as Apache
7. Great Plains(tribes – Kiowa/Crow/Blackfoot)

- a. vast grasslands- sod very thick and difficult to plow and not much rain to support crops
- b. some farming but mostly rely on bison herds
- c. tribes follow herd and use all parts
- 8. East Woodlands(east of Mississippi River)
  - a. no bison but deer/turkey/small game and used all parts
  - b. good climate for crops and mostly sediment living- beans, corn, tobacco, squash
  - c. village moved after land exhausted
  - d. Moundbuilders- Ohio & Mississippi Valley
  - e. Large earthen mounds- ceremonial center and tombs- some in the shape of animals (376)
  - f. Largest “city” called Cahokia- 40,000
  - g. Tribes in Northeast built fenced in villages and cleared forests and lived in long houses and semi portable
  - h. Women farmed and men hunted
  - i. By 1500’s 5 large groups allied to form Iroquois League- a confederation with council male representatives
  - j. Each clan have “clan mother”- an old woman who picks and deposes chiefs and council members.

## II. Early Mesoamerican Cultures

1. Central America Region
2. Many cultures but share much so lumped together for study
3. Olmec one of earliest at 1500 BC and last to 400 B.C.
  - a. near Gulf of Mexico
  - b. not really known until 1930 AD when 2 major cities found- San Lorenzo and La Venta
  - c. huge stone heads 40 tons and 9 ft. tall- pre 1930 farmers considered large rocks “nuisance”
  - d. only round tops visible
  - e. archaeologists hear about and look- should be no large rocks
  - f. rocks brought 60 miles and placed
4. only 1,000 people each but distinct society plan- markets, ceremonial mounds, stone drains, glyph writing, calendar
  - a. worshipped jaguar god of harvests
  - b. used slash and burn and traded with others
    - A. Maya- 900 B.C. in Yucatan Peninsula
      1. Peak between 300 and 900 A.D.
      2. Many sites and geographical locations- mountains, lowlands, coast
        - a. separated by geo and never had strong gov/emp.
        - b. City-states and small kingdoms
        - c. Shared trade-culture-political ties
      3. Religion- center of life with 2 levels of existence
        - a. 1 level of physical life and other with gods- souls of ancestors- supernatural creatures
        - b. actions of 1 effect other
      4. Kings- spiritual and political leaders
        - a. ensured- other world- gods are pleased
        - b. built plazas- temples- and pyramids
        - c. thousands gather for ceremonies and festivals
        - d. human “sacrifice” and bloodletting often
      5. gods in the shape of animals and combinations

- 6. ceremonial game- Pok-A-Tok- during festivals
  - a. religious and celebrated battles
  - b. similar to soccer and winning team rewarded as “sacrifice”
- B. Science
  - a. charted celestial movements(gods) for crop planting
  - b. math based on 20 units (metric 10)
  - c. 365 day calendar for harvests and predict eclipses
  - d. 260 day calendar for religious ceremonies
- C. Economy
  - a. like ALL others- based on agriculture
  - b. slash and burn but also large scale irrigation
  - c. traded along waterways with other tribes
  - d. also built roads and carried/hailed by humans
  - e. no large beasts of burden
- D. Writing –one of the first Native Americans
  - a. books accordion style of bark and plaster, only 4 survive
  - b. carved on stone, jade, bone shells
  - c. only last 25 years language translated
  - d. some symbols are phonetic and others complete words
- E. Collapse unknown for sure
  - a. increased warfare inside and outside
  - b. over-farming and erosion
- F. Other Mesoamericans
  - 1. Teotihuacanos (Tay-oh-tee-wuh-khun-ohs)
    - a. 30 miles North of Mexico City
    - b. dominated Central Mexico Plateau for 750 years
  - 2. main city Teotihuacan 120,000 to 200,000 people
    - a. grid system plan with 600 pyramids, 2,000 apartments, 500 workshops and large marketplace
  - 3. major trader of Obsidian- volcanic glass
    - a. weapons and medical instruments
    - b. along major trade route to North and South America
  - 4. declined around 750 A.D. not known why
    - a. Toltec took over
  - 5. Toltec conquered into Yucatan Peninsula
    - a. capital Tula
    - b. mining and trading, economy and farming
    - c. main gods: air; Quetzalcoatl(Ket-suhl-kwah-tuhl) and war; Tezcatlipoca(tehz-kaht-lee-poh-kuh)
    - d. adopted by Aztecs after they invaded and destroyed Tolec Empire in 1170 A.D.

### III. Aztec and Inca Empires

- 1. Aztecs moved from North to Central Mexico and took Toltec
  - a. capital founded 1325 Tenochtitlan (tay-nawch-teet-lahn)
  - b. legend- priests told people settle where find eagle with snake in mouth sitting on cat
  - c. found it on Lake Texcoco
- 2. made farmland by building floating farms- Chinampas
  - a. log rafts piled with dirt
- 3. population outgrew island and began settling mainland
- 4. made alliances with close neighbors and conquered distant rivals

- a. by 1500 A.D. empire North Mexico to Guatemala and Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean
- b. conquered provide heavy tribute- food, goods, slaves, and prisoners for sacrifice.
  - A. Gov. and Soc.
    - 1. Empire controlled gov/religion/army
    - 2. 4 social classes: nobility, commoners, serfs, and slaves.
      - a. commoners- priests, merchants, artisans, and farmers
      - b. serfs tied to land as in Europe feudalism\
      - c. slave class- criminals, debtors, females, children, and POW's
      - d. male POW's sacrificed
  - B. Religion motivated to engage war and sacrifice
    - 1. borrowed from Mayans and Toltecs
      - a. keep gods happy and prevent flood, drought, disasters.
    - 2. chief deity Huitzilopochtli(wee-tsee-loh-pokt-lee)
    - 3. religious calendar 360 day and 365 calendar for planting
      - a. sun calendar pg 388 depicts universe
    - 4. writers and artists glorified battles and gods
  - C. The Fall
    - 1. Empire very fragile because based on war and sacrifice
    - 2. when Spanish come- oppressed tribes join with sp.
      - a. bring fall
  - D. Inca Emp- South America pg 390
    - 1. began as one of may tribes competing for land in Andes Mountains
    - 2. around 1200 A.D. founded capital Cuzco(Koos-Koh) 11,600 ft.
      - a. from there- raided other tribes and began expansion
    - 3. major expansion with 9<sup>th</sup> ruler in 1438- Pachacuti comes to power
      - a. along with son- Topa Inca Yupanqui expanded empire
      - b. compared with Philip and Alexander of Macedonia
      - c. used persuasion, threats, and force
    - 4. empire stretch 2,500: N-S
  - E. Gov. and Soc.
    - 1. strong central gov. but allowed local rulers to gov.
      - a. rebellious people relocated
    - 2. complex system roads and runners
      - a. military posts/courts/tribute collection stations trade inspectors and work regulations
    - 3. established common imperial language- Quechua(Keh-chuh-wuh)
    - 4. gov.(kings) oversaw distribution of food- little farmland
      - a. used terrace farming+ irrigation systems
    - 5. believe various deities: Viracocha- creator god, Inti- sun god
      - a. priests offered feed/animals/humans
      - b. evidence of leaving in high mountains
      - c. priests also doctors- herbs and surgery
    - 6. No written language- quipu
      - a. rope with knotted cards different length and clots
      - b. did understand mathematical principles
      - c. predicted seasonal changes and designed buildings and roads

F. Decline

1. Sp. Conquistadors arrive S.Am 1531
  - a. killed Inca who resisted
2. Incan descendants still keep much culture today
  - a. not widely populated in high mountains

STONEKING'S NOTES - DO NOT USE TO MAKE YOUR OWN