



Unit One: Pre-Columbian America

The American Natives:  
30,000B.C. to 1400 A.D.



Four Corners



Cultural Area of the Southwest



Great Plains



Mississippi Valley



Great Lakes



Ohio Valley



Appalachian Mountains



Southeastern United States

# Geography of North America

- The continent of North America has a diverse geography.
- The two main mountain chains are the Appalachian mountains (East) and the Rocky mountains (West)
- The Mississippi River is the main river system fed by the Missouri, Arkansas, Red, and Ohio rivers that runs through most of the Great Plains region.
- The Colorado River is another river system that runs through the Great Basin region.

# North America

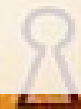
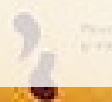
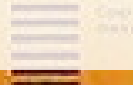


# Early American Time Periods

- Early American history is divided into two broad time periods, Pre-Columbian (Before) and Post-Columbian (After).
- Pre-Columbian means before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492 in North America.
- Post-Columbian means after the landing of Christopher Columbus and the introduction of European culture and etc. on the North American Continent.

# Early Migration From Europe

- Ice Age was a period of time when the earth was mostly covered by large sheets of ice called glaciers which lasted from 1.9 million to 10,000 B.C. or the start of the Paleolithic Age.
- This caused water levels to drop and a ice/land formation to be formed in the Bering Strait called Beringia which led early peoples to migrate from Asia (Russia) to North America.

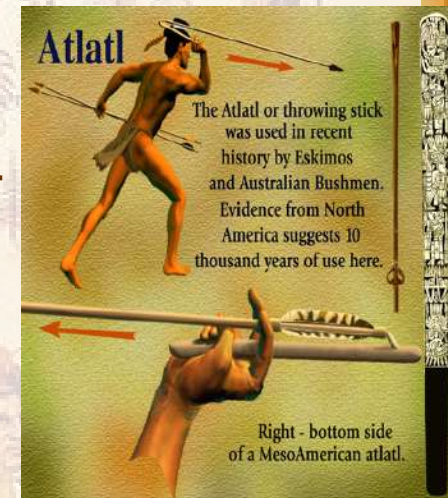


# North American Migration



# Paleo-Americans

- The early Paleo-Americans were hunter-gathers who were mostly nomadic (moving place to place) living on a diet of meat and berries, mostly made into a substance known as pemmican.
- The paleo-Americans used spears for short distance and javelins for long distance.
- Most weapons used flint rock for the projectile fitted into the stick .



# Paleo-Americans

- As different tribal family groups separated and moved into different areas, they developed their own languages.
- During this time five major language groups developed: Algonquian (Canada and New England), Iroquoian (Great Lakes region), Muskogean (Southeast), Siouan (Great Plains), and Uto-Aztecan (North & South West).
- Natives used a simple language to communicate between tribal areas.

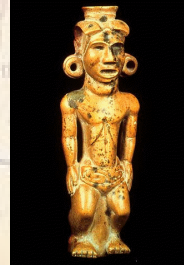


# Archaic Age

- The Archaic Age began when Native Americans began to form settled communities (staying in one area).
- The Natives also developed agriculture by domesticating the native wild plants and the first squash, gourd, pumpkin, sunflower, bean, and maize (corn) plants were grown in large gardens.
- The Natives also domesticated the dog for a pack animal (beast of burden) and the turkey for a ready food source.

# Woodland Period

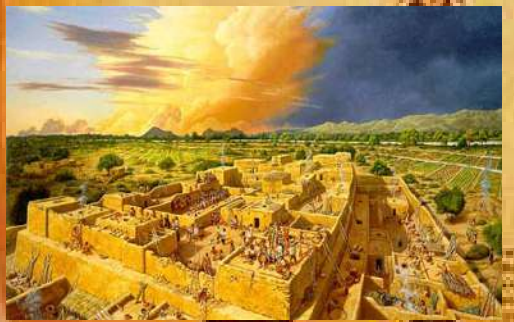
- The Woodland Period began with the emergence of distinct cultures and civilizations.
- In the East between the Great lakes and the Gulf of Mexico the mound builder civilizations began.
- The first two of these cultures were the Adena and the Hopewell.
- These tribes receive the name mound builder because they built large earthen mounds to bury their dead usually in the shape of a small hill or a long squiggly line.



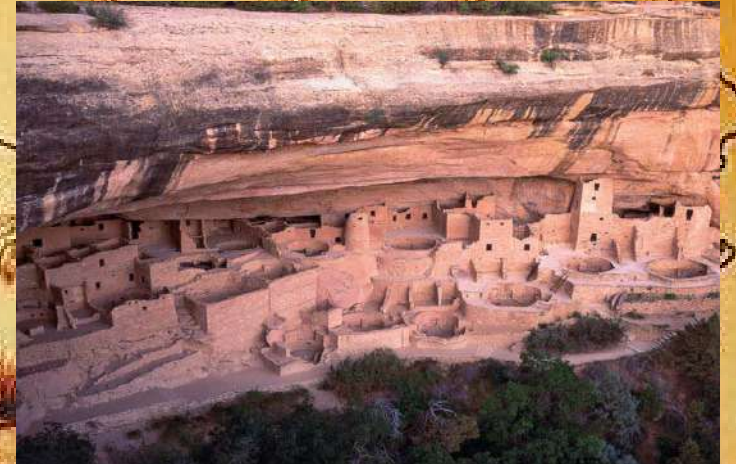
# Middle Period

- Around 300 A.D. the farming revolution hit North America and the first tribe to start planting was the Hohokam in present day Arizona using long canals to irrigate crops.
- The Hohokam lasted until the mid 1300s but mysteriously died out. The Anasazi moved into the area of the Hohokam in the 600s A.D. around the desert canyons and cliffs.
- The Anasazi carved their homes into the side of the cliffs which were later called pueblos (Spanish for village) the most famous of which was Pueblo Bonito which had more than 600 rooms and an underground chamber called a kiva.

# Anasazi and Hohokam Cultures



Life in the often harsh environment of the Sonoran Desert did not stop the Hohokam from creating objects of lasting beauty like these shell and turquoise mosaics and shell necklaces. Photo provided by the Arizona State Museum



# Mississippian Period

- The last major unified culture was the Mississippians because they were located along the Mississippi river.
- The Mississippians developed organized societies and built cities, the largest of which was Cahokia.
- The Mississippians also built earthen mounds, but built them in the shape of a pyramid with flat tops.
- Tobacco was used as a currency among the Mississippians.
- Shortly before the arrival of Columbus and the Conquistadors the Mississippians split into smaller tribes that led to an inability to repel the Europeans.

# Mississippian Culture



# North American Cultural Regions

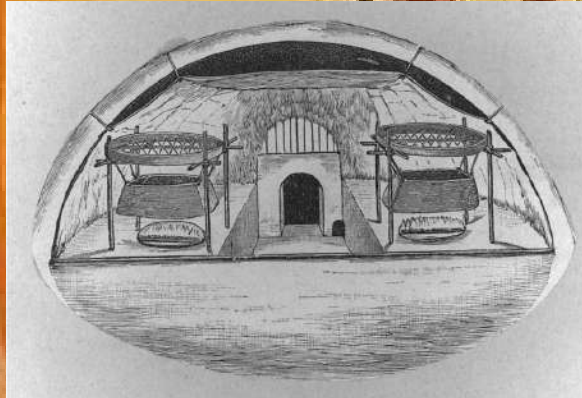


# Arctic/ Subarctic

- The Native American's of the Arctic/Sub arctic region lived in the areas of the tundra and Canada.
- These tribes included the Kutchin, Beaver, Cree, Dogrib, and the most dominant was the [Inuit](#) (Eskimos).
- During the winter months the Inuit built [Igloos](#) ( a dome shaped house built out of blocks of ice) to live in.
- The Inuit used small [kayaks](#) (small one man enclosed canoe) to hunt for seals, used sleds pulled by dogs to travel over the snow, and also invented snow shoes.



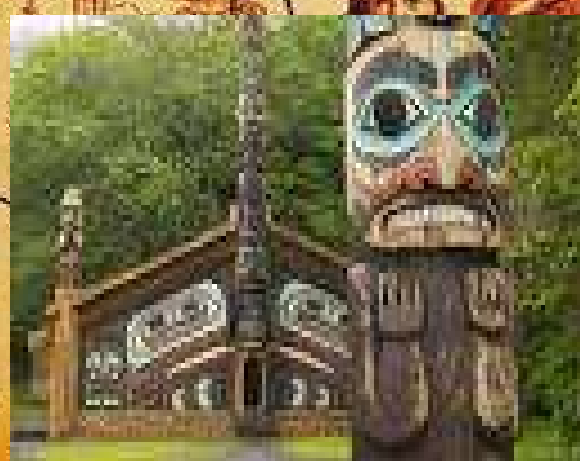
# Inuit Culture



# Northwest Coast

- The Northwest Coast Indians lived in plank homes (wooden buildings with plank board siding).
- They built large carved poles called totems (animals or objects used as symbols of a clans unity or behavior).
- The use of a totem was very common among North American Native tribes.

# Northwest Culture

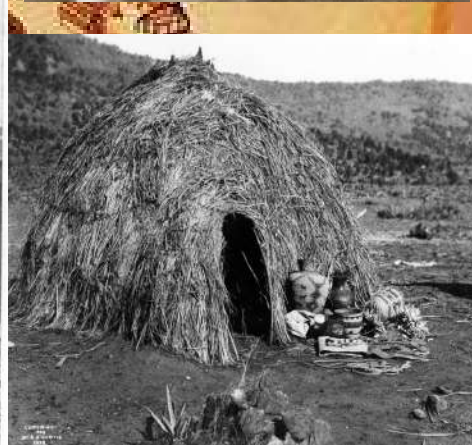
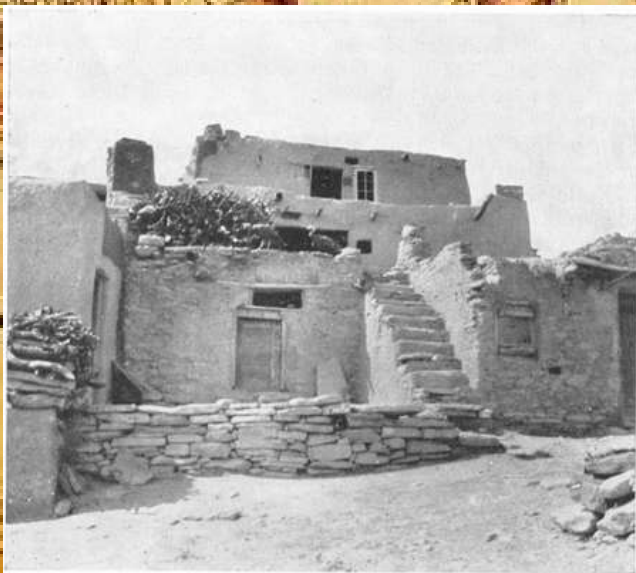


MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

# Southwest Tribes

- The Southwest tribes included the Apache, Navajos, Hohokams, Pueblos, and Zuni.
- The Southwest tribes lived in either a Hogan (dome shaped frame house covered with mud) or a Wigwam (dome shaped house covered with grasses or animal skins ).
- Native Americans used a pipe called a “Peace Pipe” in spiritual and social rituals.

# Southwest Culture



# Great Plains

- The Native American tribes of the Great Plains included these tribes: Sioux, Blackfeet, Crow, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Apache, and Comanche.
- The Great Plains Indians were nomadic hunter-horticulturists whose main source of food, shelter, and clothing came from the buffalo.
- The Great Plains Indians made cone shaped tents out of buffalo skin called a tipi (tepee)

# Great Plains Culture

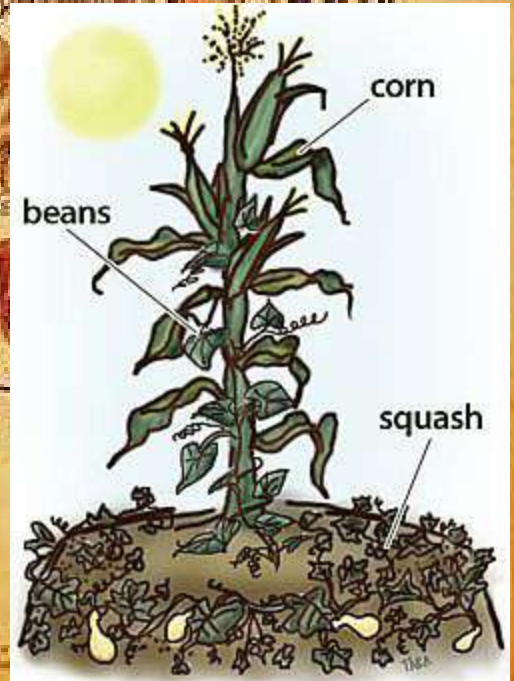


# Eastern Woodlands

- The Native tribes of the Eastern Woodlands included Algonquians, Hurons, Iroquois, Shawnees, Leni-Lenapes, Wampanoag, Pawhatan, and Pequot.
- The Five Nations of the “Iroquois” (Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca) were brought together into a confederacy called the Iroquois League by Dekanawidah through a code of laws called the Great Peace.
- The tribes of the Eastern Woodlands lived in Longhouses ( a long rectangular cabin) that could hold a full tribe of about two hundred people.



# Eastern Woodland Culture



Direct-Sow, Easy-to-Grow:  
The Ancient **Three Sisters** Method

# Southeast

- The Native tribes of the Southeast included the Muskogee (Creeks), Natchez, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Timucua (later Seminoles).
- The Southeast Tribes were similar in culture to the Eastern Woodland Tribes.
- The Southeast Tribes held a yearly ceremony called the Green Corn Ceremony to celebrate the harvest by dancing, fasting, feasting, and drinking a cleansing drink called the Black Drink

# Southeast Culture



# Native Culture

- Most Native Americans even though very unique and different shared some similar cultural characteristics.
- All Native Americans believed in animism (spirits live in inanimate objects) and to understand the “spirit world” one’s dreams must be interpreted by a shaman (priest).
- Most Natives believed that every person had a spirit guide usually shown in the form of an animal that helped a person find their “path”.

# Native Culture

- Most Native American tribal names when translated mean “human beings” or the “people”.
- Native American warfare mimicked the hunt with the use of ambush style attacks by small war parties (group of warriors).
- Most boys were tested by battle to reach manhood.
- Native warfare was not meant to annihilate another tribe, but to humiliate. When captives were taken they were used as slaves and most of the time allowed to return to their own tribe or remain with the new tribe.

# Native Culture

- Most Native tribes were matrilineal (family identity coming from the mother).
- Women were the “homemakers” and men were the hunters/warriors.
- Native tribes were highly democratic (people ruled) and bureaucratic (organized with a chain of command) mostly ran by a chief or a Tribal Council.
- Native Americans did not believe in private property, but that all nature was owned by Manitou (god) and man was to look after it.
- No Native tribes had any form of written language only an oral language.