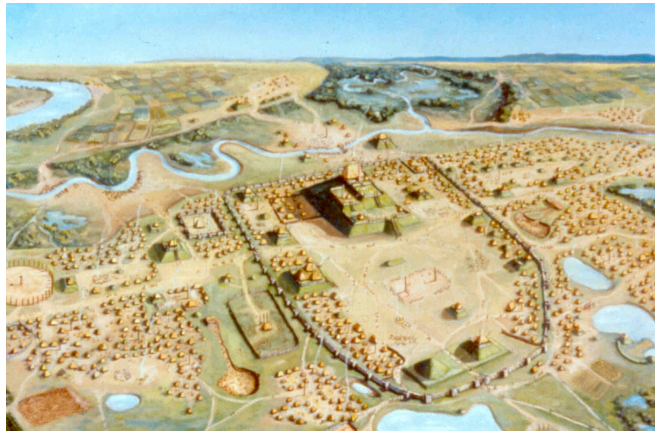


Pre-Columbian America



Cahokia at its height

I. Earliest American immigrants

- A. Asians crossed the Bering Strait in several migrations beginning about 14,000 years ago.
- B. Eventually groups spread all the way to the tip of South America
- C. By Columbus' arrival, several significant cultures had developed in the region south of the current U.S.
 - 1) Incas in Peru--By 1438 AD they controlled most of the Andean region. Conquered by Pizarro.
 - 2) Mayans in Yucatan--By 300 AD the city of Tikal featured 20,000 residents and elaborate temples
 - 3) Olmecs in Mexico--500 AD over 100,000 on current site of Mexico City
 - 4) Aztecs--conquered by Cortez in 1520.

II. North American cultures

- A. Most Indians developed a stone age culture (little metalwork, no written language, no use of the wheel)
- B. Hohokan culture (200-1450 AD) in southwest U.S.
 - 1) Extensive use of irrigation canals for crops
 - 2) Adobe buildings as tall as four stories built, probably for religious purposes
 - 3) Gradual decline and dispersal into small groups
- C. Hopewell culture (100-400 AD) in the Northeast and midwest
 - 1) Agricultural rather than hunter-gatherers
 - 2) Large mounds for religious purposes or burials, mostly along the Ohio River
- D. Mississippi River cultures (900 -1500 AD)
 - 1) Mound-builders (largest city, Cahokia, had as many as 40,000 residents and was the largest city north of Mexico)
 - 2) Highly developed trade system with Indians throughout North America
 - 3) Maize cultivation

4) After contact with Europeans, civilization declined and many tribes turned to nomadism

III. Contact with Europeans

A. Transatlantic exchange

- 1) Old World received food (corn, potatoes), syphilis, gold
- 2) New World received horses, smallpox, Christianity, slavery

B. Most Indian groups were decimated by displacement, disease, and warfare

- 1) Arawaks met by Columbus numbered 250,000 in 1492. By 1550, 500 survived. By 1650, 0.
- 2) Indians of North America met the Spanish in the West, the English and Dutch in the East, and the French in Canada. In almost all encounters, the Indians were conquered or made dependent on the Europeans

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