

Chapter 21 - Pre-1500 Americas

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States and Empires in Mesoamerica and North America

The Toltecs and the Mexica

- **Toltecs**
 - Unified central Mexico.
 - Originally settled in Tula in the 700s.
 - Used the River Tula to irrigate maize, beans, peppers, tomatoes, chiles, and cotton.
 - Between 950 to 1150, they had an urban population of ~60,000.
 - Held a compact regional empire.
 - Large and powerful army.
 - Sometimes campaigned throughout central Mexico.
 - Maintained fortresses on the outskirts to protect the state from nomadic invasion.
 - Took tribute from subject people, made their capital wealthy.
 - Residents lived in spacious houses of stone, adobe, or mud.
- **Tula**
 - Center of weaving, pottery, and obsidian work.
 - Imported large amounts of jade, turquoise, animal skins, bird feathers, and other luxury goods from other regions of Mesoamerica.
 - Had relations with Gulf coast societies and Yucatan Maya.
 - Shared architectural design with Mayan cities 1000 miles away.
 - 1125 - Decline began.
 - Race war between ethnic groups in Tula.
 - Nomadic peoples began settling in the outskirts.
 - Fire destroyed the city itself.
- **The Mexica**
 - Also called the Aztecs, name derived from the name of their alliance.
 - Liked to kidnap women and seize already-settled land.
 - Kept getting kicked out of town so they traveled around, jostling locals.
- **Tenochtitlan**
 - 1345 - Mexica founded on an island on Lake Texcoco.
 - Lake had lots of fish for food.
 - Enabled them to develop the *chinampa* agricultural system.
 - Advanced agricultural system.
 - Dredged rich and fertile muck from lake-bottom and built small plots of land called *chinampas*.
 - Used water from canals to irrigate the *chinampas*.
 - Temperate climate, grew maize, beans, squash, tomatoes, peppers, and chiles year-round.
 - So fertile that they could harvest seven crops per year.
 - Protected by water, warriors patrolled the three causeways linking the island to the mainland.
- **Aztec Empire**
 - Mexica launched imperial expansion campaigns.
 - Under Itzcoatl (1428-1440) and Motecuzoma I (1440-1469):
 - First advanced against Oaxaca in southwestern Mexico, planted colonists in the city to bring it into their empire.
 - Next, conquered the Gulf coast for its tropical products.
 - Conquered the cities of the high plateaus in between.
 - Joined forces with neighboring cities Texcoco and Tlacopan, a triple alliance that created the

- Aztec Empire.
- Expanded rule over 12 million people in most of Mesoamerica.
- **Tribute and Trade**
 - Goal was to extract as much tribute as possible.
 - Received food crops and manufactured items like textiles, blankets, jewelry, and obsidian knives.
 - Ruling elite gave valuable items to specially designated merchants who traded with foreign lands.
 - Included translucent jade, emeralds, tortoise shells, jaguar skins, parrot feathers, seashells, and game animals.
 - Tropical lowlands supplied vanilla beans and cacao, to create tasty beverages.
- **Governance**
 - Unlike eastern counterparts, Aztecs had no elaborate bureaucracy or administration.
 - Simply conquered allies and took tribute.
 - Governance was up to the locals.
 - Did not maintain military presence or a standing army throughout the empire.
 - 489 subject territories gave tribute to Tenochtitlan at its height.

Mexica Society

- **Social Structure**
 - Very rigid hierarchy.
 - All males were potential warriors.
 - Good warriors could improve social standings.
 - Military elite came from the well-trained Mexica aristocracy.
- **Warriors**
 - Wealth and honors were piled onto the military elite.
 - Land grants and tribute from commoners.
 - Most prominent warriors selected ruler, discussed public issues, and ran the government.
 - While commoners were required by law to wear coarse garments, aristocrats draped themselves in cotton.
- **Mexica Women**
 - Played no role in political affairs of militarily-dominated society.
 - Enjoyed high honor as mothers of warriors.
 - Did not inherit property or hold government positions.
 - Under strict authority of fathers and husbands by law.
 - All women either married or joined the temple.
 - Responsibilities: raising young children and preparing food.
- **Priests**
 - Priests were high on the social ladder.
 - Presided over rituals perceived as crucial to survival of the world.
 - Read omens and explained the world, and influenced rulers in this manner.
- **Cultivators and Slaves**
 - Cultivated chinampas and fields given to their families by community groups called *calpulli*.
 - Calpulli originally meant ancestral family.
 - Expanded to communities that organized their own affairs.
 - Cultivators also worked on land belonging to powerful members of society.
 - Cultivators contributed labor to constructing palaces, temples, roads, and irrigation systems.
 - Cultivators delivered tribute to state agents.
 - Some of it went to the elites.
 - The rest went into state granaries and warehouses.
 - Slaves worked as domestic servants, and were not foreigners but mostly Mexica.
 - Families sold members into slavery to pay off debts.
- **Artisans and Merchants**

- Skilled artisans had prestige in Mexica society.
- Long-distance merchants were not as prestigious but had an important role to play.
 - Supplies exotic products (gems, animal skins, bird feathers).
 - Scrutinized for being greedy profiteers, and were often extorted by elites.

Mexica Religion

- **Mexica Gods**
 - Adopted religious beliefs common to Mesoamerica.
 - Two principal gods had pantheons since Teotihuacan peoples.
 - Tezcatlipoca was the giver and taker of life and patron deity of warriors.
 - Quetzalcoatl was the patron of arts, crafts, and agriculture.
- **Ritual Bloodletting**
 - Gods had set the world in motion through individual sacrifice.
 - Gods let their blood flow to give earth moisture.
 - Mexica honored their deities with sacrificial bloodletting to continue the world.
 - Clearly reflected desire of Mexica to keep their agricultural society going.
- **Huitzilopochtli**
 - Mexica priests presided over human sacrifices.
 - Saw it as essential to human survival.
 - Seen as sacrifice to war god Huitzilopochtli, their patron deity.
 - Victims sourced from criminals, but also PoWs and tributes from neighbors.

People and Societies of the North

- **Pueblo and Navajo Societies**
 - Pueblo and Navajo developed irrigation systems.
 - Sustained permanent populations even in the face of periodic famine and drought.
 - Built stone and adobe buildings by the 700s.
- **Iroquois Peoples**
 - Lived in the woodlands east of R. Mississippi.
 - Lived in settled communities and surrounded them with walls.
 - Women were in charge of villages and supervised field cultivation.
 - Men were responsible for hunting, fishing, and war.
- **Mound-Building Peoples**
 - Woodland structures in the eastern half of North America.
 - Used for ceremonies and rituals, sometimes dwellings and burial sites.
 - **Cahokia** society built an *enormous* mound surrounded by numerous smaller mounds, where tens of thousands lived around.
- **Trade**
 - Recognized various social classes, higher classes got more stuff in the grave.
 - Rivers allowed peoples to trade via canoe.
 - Cahokia was a trade and communication *hub*.

States and Empires in South America

The Coming of the Incas

- **Chucuito**
 - Dominated highlands region around Lake Titicaca.
 - Used llamas and alpacas (similar to camels) for food, poop for fires, and hides.
 - Exchanged potatoes and woolen textiles for maize from the lower valleys.
- **Chimu**
 - Irrigation networks to water fields and create abundant harvests of maize and yams.
 - Considerable wealth and clear distinctions between social classes.
 - Massive brick buildings indicated a capacity to mobilize people and resources for public works projects.
 - Each block of their capital (Chanchan) belonged to a clan.

- **Inca Empire**
 - Inca settled around Lake Titicaca in the 1200s.
 - Lived among the many peoples who were there, but got ambitious.
 - Took over area from modern Quito to Santiago.
 - Ruled with a military and administrative elite.
 - Bureaucracy and army made of conquered peoples.
 - Banished rebels to distant parts of the empire.
- **Inca Administration**
 - Capital at Cuzco.
 - Taxes to support Inca government.
 - State-owned storehouses for surpluses and textiles.
 - Constructed extensive network of roads to enable Inca forces and administrators quick travel.
- **Quipu**
 - Substitute for writing system.
 - Stored statistical information like population, state property, taxes, and labor services.
 - Not as efficient as writing but allowed rulers to maintain orderly empire.
- **Cuzco**
 - Administrative, religious, and ceremonial center of Inca Empire.
 - Very wealthy city.
 - Inhabited by the administrative elite, religious leaders, and hostages of conquered peoples (used as blackmail to maintain order).
- **Inca Roads**
 - Roads were among the most advanced of the time period, with wide paved stone and shade from trees.
 - Sent information through the empire by official runners, within three days.
 - Spread the religious cult of sun-worship and the Quechua language, too.

Inca Society and Religion

- **Trade**
 - Inca did not generate large merchant and skilled artisan classes.
 - Inca state handled trade, and individuals were not permitted to handle long-distance trade themselves.
 - Some people made pottery, textiles, and tools for local consumption, but these artisans weren't as numerous as they were in the Mexica society.
- **Ruling Elites**
 - Chief ruler was a deity from the sun.
 - He owned all land, livestock, and property, and was seen as infallible.
 - Supervised bureaucrat class, which allocated plots of land for commoners to cultivate.
- **Aristocrats and Priests**
 - Consumed fine foods and clothing produced by commoners.
 - Priests led celibate and ascetic lifestyles, supported by major temples and female staff.
- **Peasants**
 - Cultivators that lived in communities called *ayllu*, similar to the Mexica *calpulli*.
 - Ayllu supported several families that shared everything.
 - Peasants worked on state lands instead of paying taxes or tribute, produce used for the elite and for the public storehouses.
 - Compulsory labor service: men did construction, maintenance, road repair; women did textiles, pottery, and jewelry.
- **Inca Gods: Inti and Viracocha**
 - Venerated the sun as a god called Inti.
 - Viracocha was the creator of the world and humankind, and some people worshiped that.
 - Cuzco had tons of priests and a beautiful, gold-filled central temple.

- Sacrifices were from llamas and guinea pigs instead of humans.
- **Moral Thought**
 - Incas had sin as a violation of social order.
 - Believed in afterlife based on quality of earthly lives.
 - Rituals of confession and penance, priests absolved individuals of sins.

Societies of Oceania

Nomadic Foragers of Australia

- **Trade**
 - Aboriginal tribes were nomadic, and each had access to different varieties of resources.
 - Small-scale exchange worked like this: different communities would spread some goods to one after the other until one of them finally used them.
 - Traded oyster shells, axe heads, spears, boomerangs, furs, skins, and fibers.
- **Cultural and Religious Traditions**
 - Seasonal migrations were not enough to diffuse religions.
 - Focused on local matters and lore around landforms to worship.
 - Did not appeal to other lands due to this dependence on geography.

At this point, it really doesn't matter if I continue because Oceania isn't even on the objectives sheet. Call me lazy, but that's it for now. You should be prepared enough with the stuff already written. Good luck on the test :)