

1491:
THE AMERICAS
BEFORE
COLUMBUS

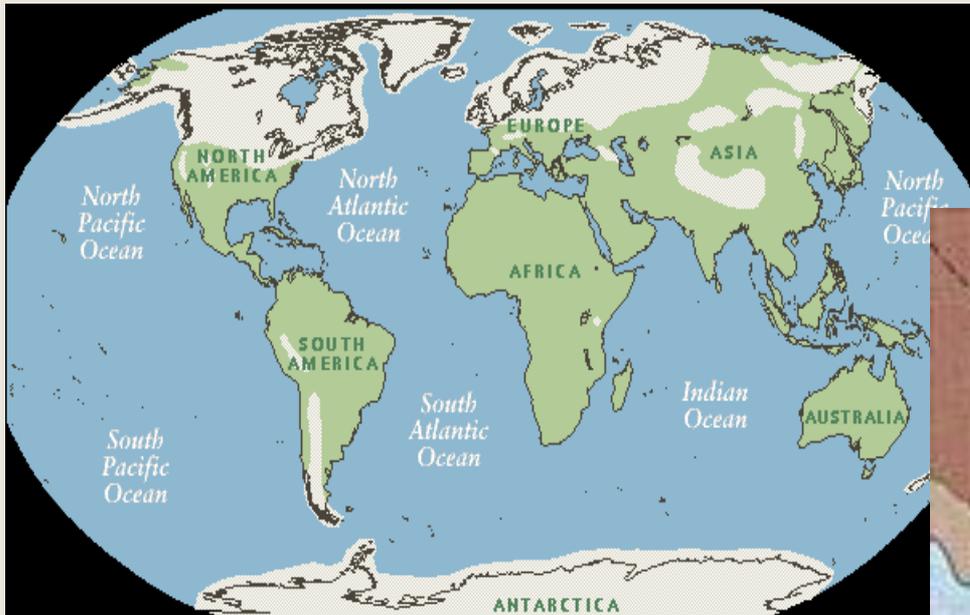


WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO KNOW?

- Analyze causes of internal migration and patterns of settlement in what would become the United States, and explain how migration has affected American life.
- Explain how geographic and environmental factors shaped the development of various communities, and analyze how competition for and debates over natural resources have affected both interactions among different groups and the development of government policies.
- **Key Concept 1.1:** As native populations migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed distinct and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.

FIRST: MIGRATION

- First: What is the commonly accepted theory about the peopling of North America?



SECOND: ALTERNATE THEORIES

- A sea route has been proposed

Click on the key finds for more info

Coastal Route

Explorers from East Asia may have paddled small boats to southern Beringia and down the western coast of the Americas starting as early as 16,000 years ago. The British Columbian coast was rid of ice by then, and migrants would have had access to a bounty of marine mammals and fish. The earliest known site near the coast, Monte Verde in Chile, dates to just 14,600 years ago; however, the thawing of the ice sheets during the last glacial period may have drowned the oldest sites along the ancient coastline.

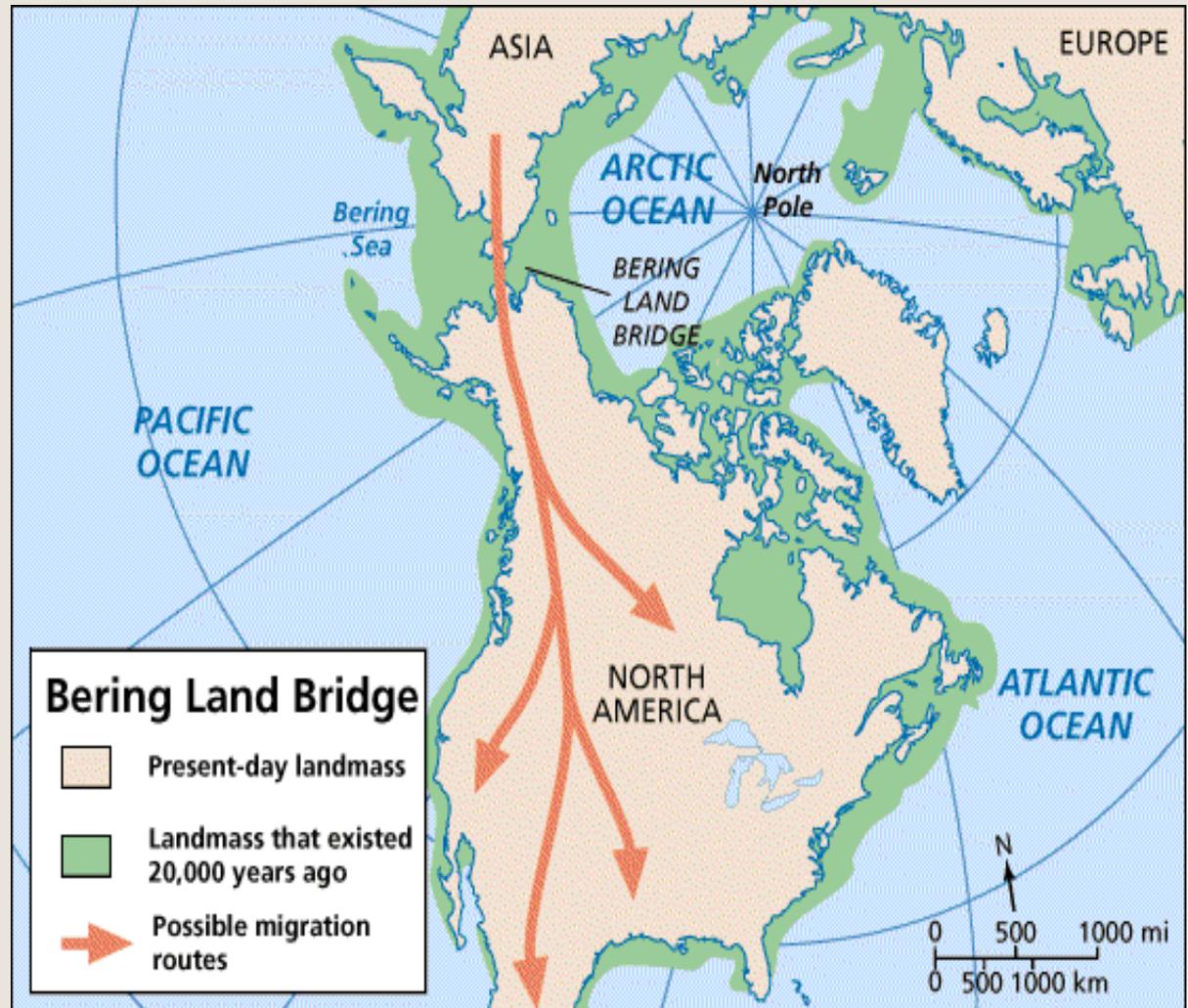
Land Route: Ice-Free Corridor

According to the Clovis First model, the Cordilleran and Laurentide ice sheets did not part ways until 13,000 years ago, thus barring a pre-Clovis overland migration into the Americas. But fresh geologic data indicate that the corridor opened by 15,000 years ago. Travelers along this route may have hunted birds and brought dogs with them to carry their gear. Trekking 16 kilometers a day, the migrants could have reached the end of the corridor in four months.



SPECULATE:

- Looking at the map, what are conclusions we can make about the settlement of North America?



CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO

- Spear points found at Clovis have been dated at approximately 13,500 years old.
- What then does this suggest?
 - Historians/Archeologists believe this evidence proves the Beringia Land Bridge theory of settlement.
 - Suggests that the Clovis site shows the earliest known “Americans” based on migration patterns.



NEW RESEARCH

- In the late 1970s, U.S. archaeologist Tom D. Dillehay and his colleagues began excavating an ancient settlement at Monte Verde in Chile.
 - In a creek bog, excavators found cordage, mastodon remains, stone choppers, augers, plant remains, edible seeds and traces of wild potatoes.
 - **Radiocarbon readings showed that the site was 14,800 years old, predating Clovis by more than 1,000 years.**
- What does this emergence of new research suggest?

CONSIDER AGAIN:

Click on the key finds for more info

Coastal Route

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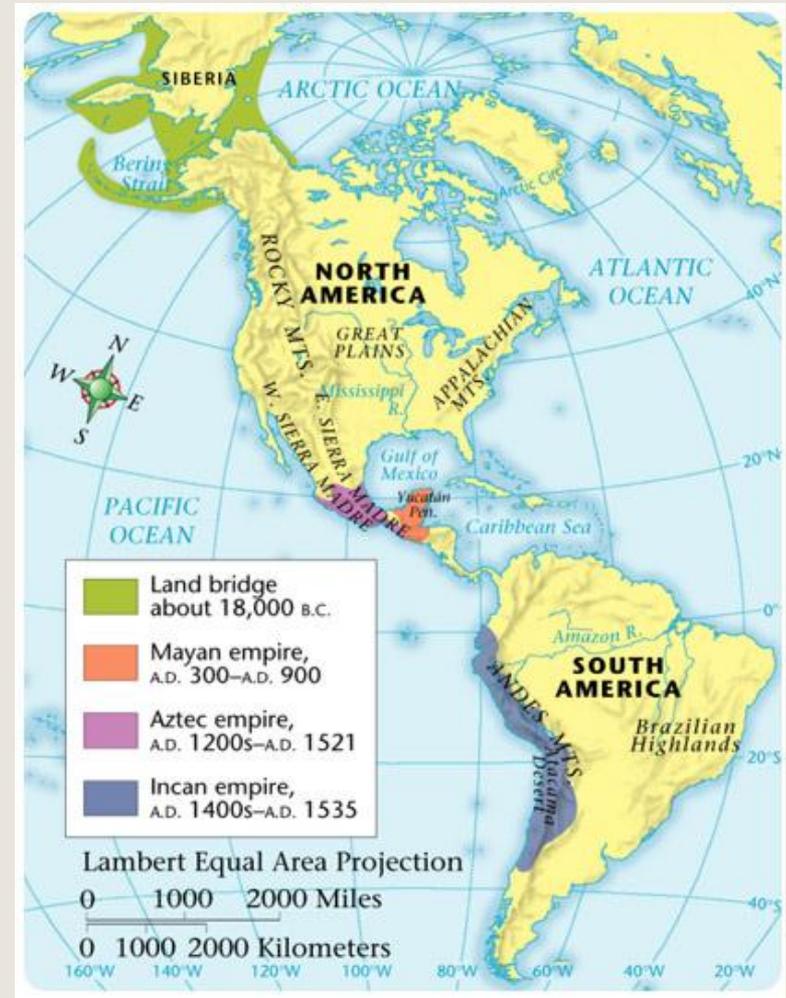


PART 1: CIVILIZATIONS

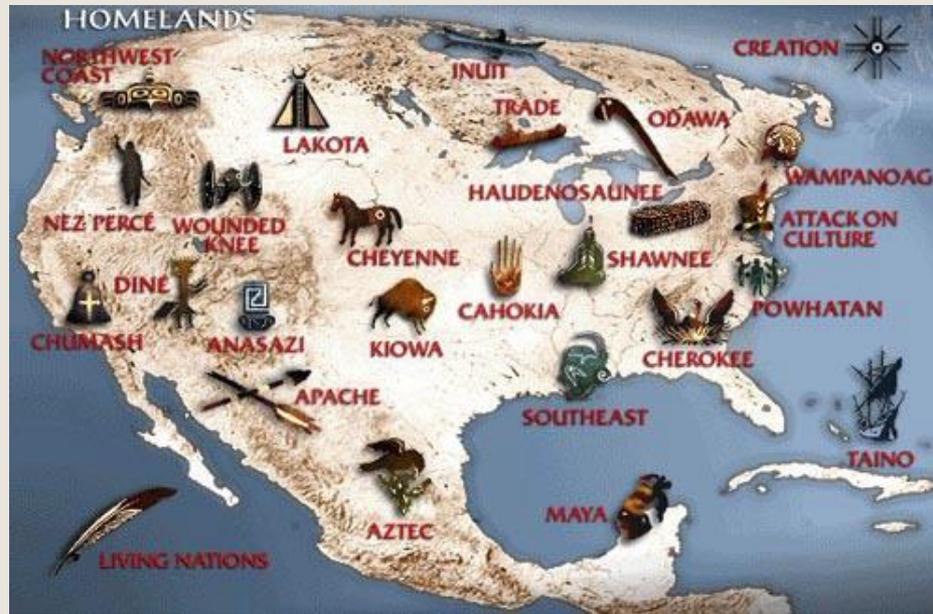
- There were many advanced and sophisticated societies in the Americas before the arrival of the Europeans.
- Many of these, especially in Central and South America, had very large populations. Often the population was bigger than countries in Europe.
- Examples: Aztec, Inca, Cahokia, Iroquois, Amazonia.

THE AMERICAS BEFORE 1492

- Today, many historians and archaeologists agree that there were probably around 100 million people living in the Americas around 1492.
- The greatest number of those lived in the two largest empires: the Aztec and the Inca.



THE AMERICAS BEFORE 1492



- There were also well developed societies in other parts of the two continents, including fairly advanced cultures in North America such as the Iroquois and Cahokia.

THE AMERICAS BEFORE 1492

- Despite many years of archaeological exploration, there are still a lot of unanswered questions about the civilizations that existed in the Americas before 1492.
- When the Europeans conquered the Americas they wiped out about 95% of the population of the Americas and much of the written record of history that did exist in some civilizations.

HISTORICAL PROBLEM

- Consider information we just reviewed:
 - Initial North American Settlement
 - Information on Americas before 1492
- Now consider this “Key Concept” from the APUSH folks:
 - Key Concept 1.1: As native populations migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed distinct and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.
- Now See if You Can Answer This?
 - What problem exists when trying to understand the key concept and the learning objectives?
 - Explain how geographic and environmental factors shaped the development of various communities, and analyze how competition for and debates over natural resources have affected both interactions among different groups.

CULTURE GROUPS

CULTURE GROUPS

*Cultural areas of North
America at time of
European contact*



DAY TWO:

- Key Concept 1.1: As native populations migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed distinct and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.
- HTS: Explain how geographic and environmental factors shaped the development of various communities, and analyze how competition for and debates over natural resources have affected both interactions among different groups and the development of government policies.

LET'S MAKE A CHART

Region	Main Tribal Groups	Regional Climate and Geographic Features	Common Economic Features (if any)	Common Societal Features	Something Someone Must Know about This Society
Plateau					
Great Basin					
California					
Southwest					
Northeast					
Southeast					
Northwest Coast					
Mexico					

NEW KEY CONCEPT

- **Key Concept 1.2:** Contact among Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans resulted in the Columbian Exchange and significant social, cultural, and political changes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

THE AZTEC

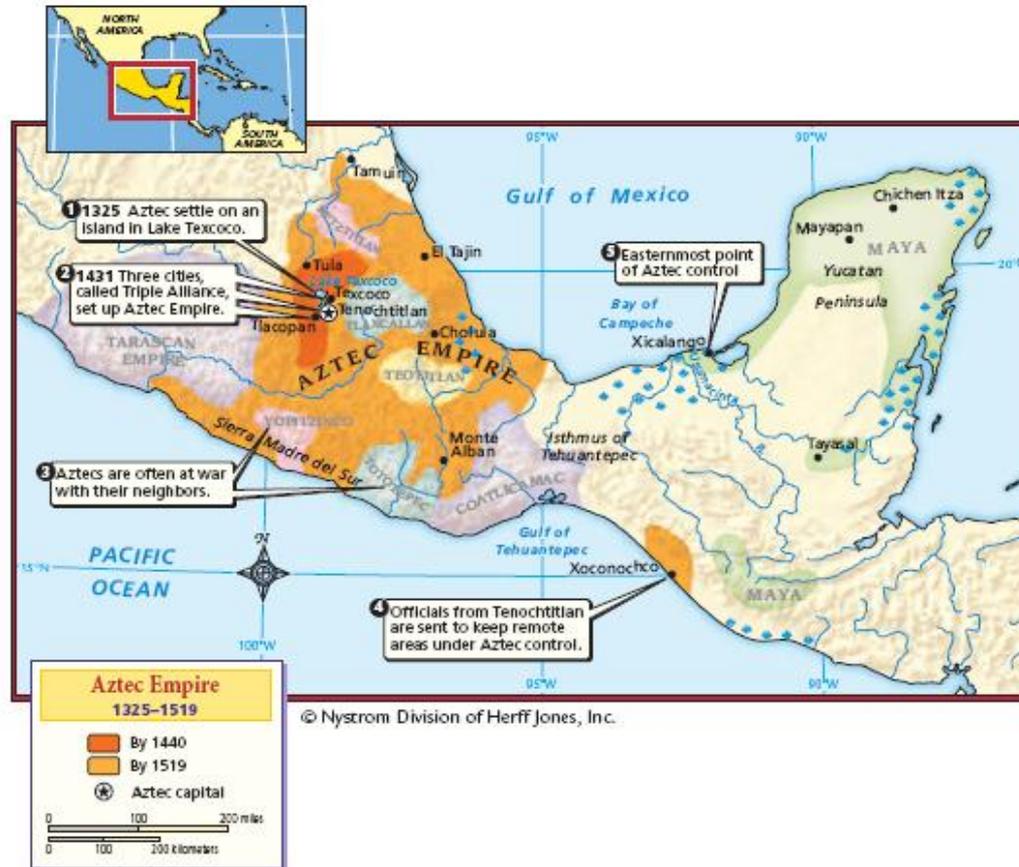


[Video Clip – The Aztec](#)

AZTEC EMPIRE

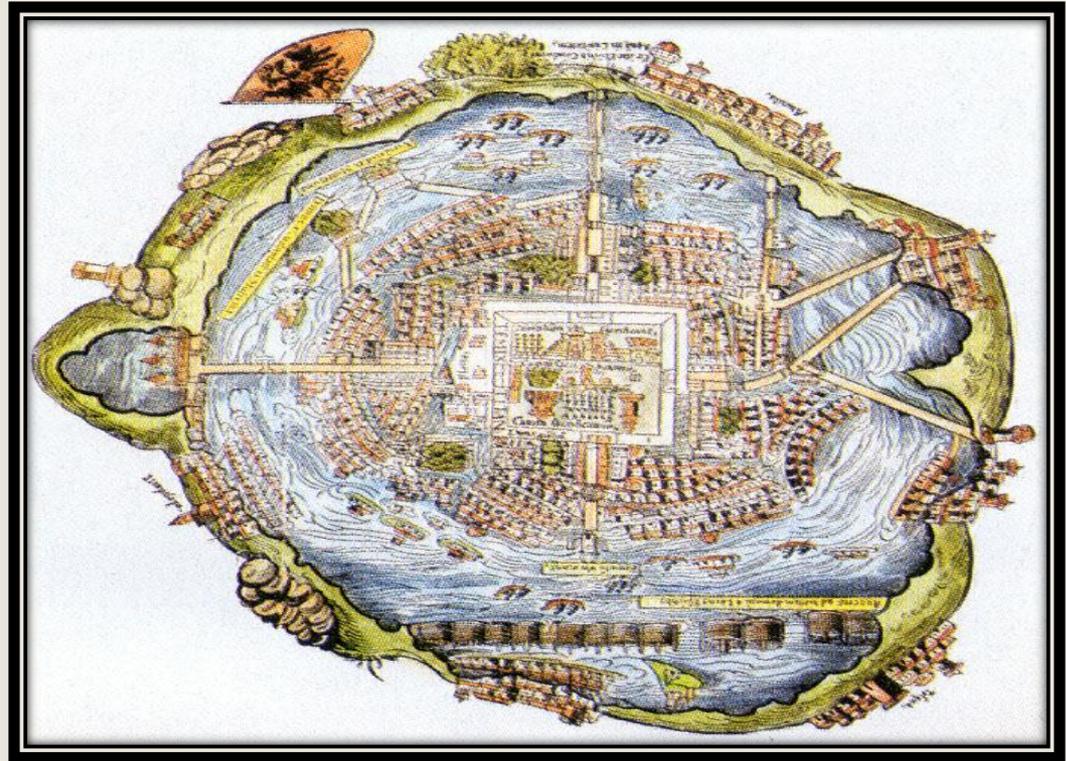
- Lived in central and southern Mexico
- Had a dominant empire in the region
- About 5 - 10 million people lived there
- They had an excellent agricultural system with irrigation and swampland restoration
- They had a strong army that had conquered many neighbouring peoples

MAP OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE



AZTEC CAPITAL: TENOCHTITLAN

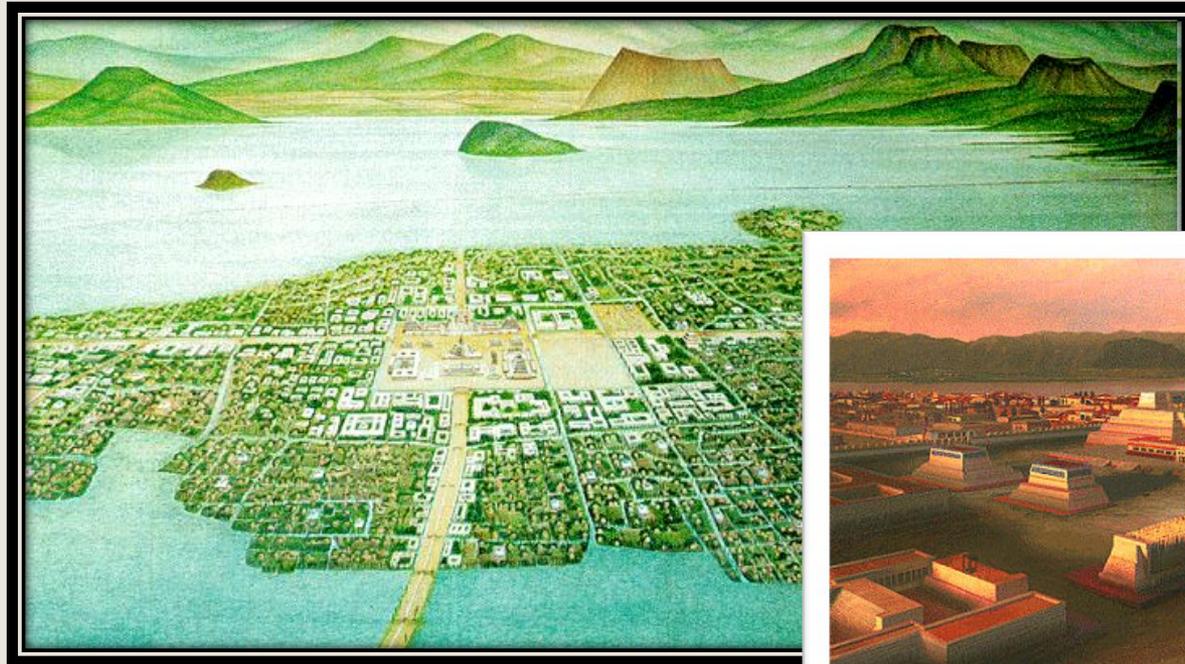
- Capital City: Tenochtitlan, population 250 000
- Artificially constructed islands in the middle of a great lake in central Mexico.



TENOCHTITLAN

- City had temples, canals, aqueducts and botanical gardens – the Spanish conquistadors were stunned by it all: *All about us we saw cities and villages built in the water, their great towers and buildings of masonry rising out of it...When I beheld the scenes around me I thought within myself, this was the garden of the world.*
—Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Spanish conquistador

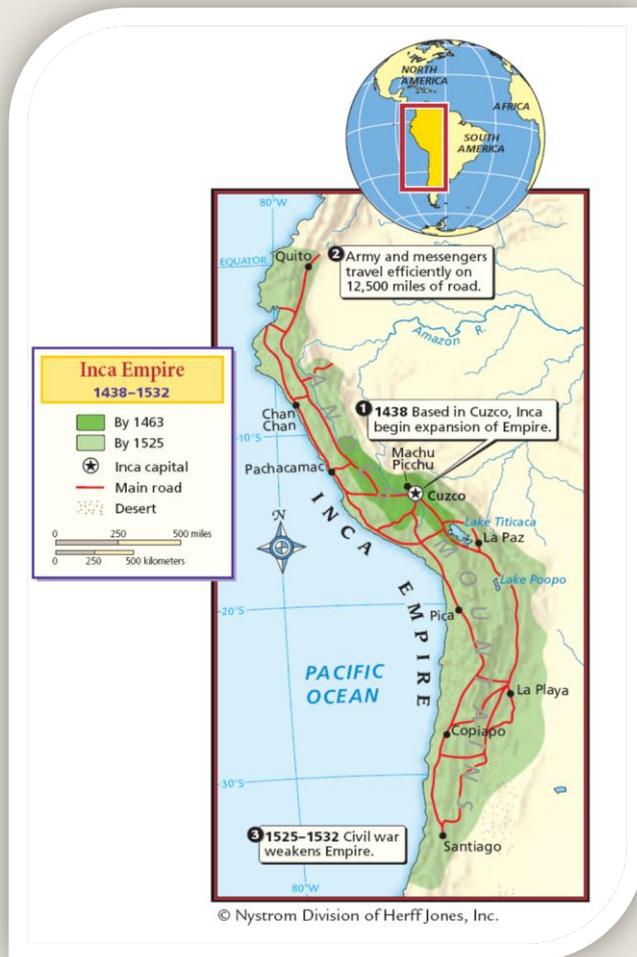
TENOCHTITLAN



INCA EMPIRE

- In 1491, it was the largest empire on earth. It was bigger than China or Russia or Songhai or the Ottoman.
- It included rainforest, desert and 20 000 ft. peaks. Much of the empire was built at 10 000 ft or higher.
- Began in the 1400s and lasted less than a hundred years before the arrival of Pizarro. It died soon after.
- Population: Between 15 and 20 million.

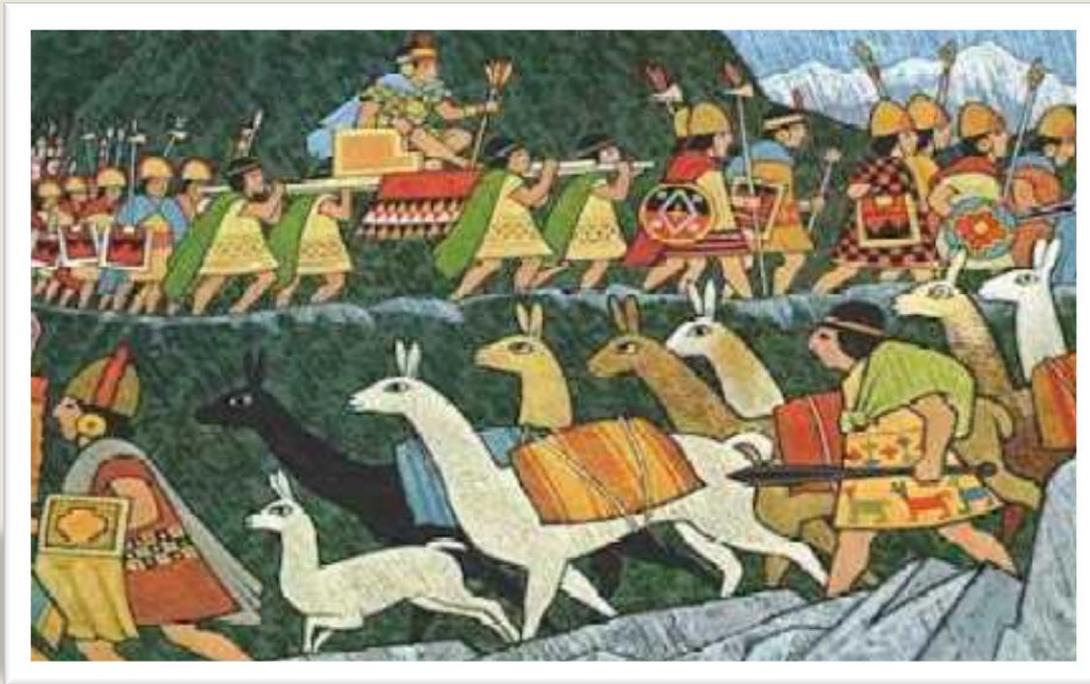
MAP OF THE INCA EMPIRE



- The Inca Empire covered a large portion of the west coast of South America.
- It ran along the spine of the Andes mountains from modern day Peru to southern Chile.

INCA EMPIRE

- It had a large army and a well-organized bureaucracy (governors, taxes, forced resettlement programs, public works).



INCA EMPIRE

- It also had an advanced agricultural system (with terrace farming), many palaces, temples, and fortifications.
- The road system had over 3000 km of roads with tunnels and vine bridges.



Inca Terrace Farming

MACHU PICCHU



CAHOKIA

- Located near present day St. Louis
- City of between 10 and 20 000 people (largest north of the Rio Grande at that time)
- Surrounded by a wooden barricade that took 20, 000 trees to make.
- 120 large mounds, the largest of which was larger than the Great Pyramid at Giza

THE LARGEST MOUND AT CAHOKIA

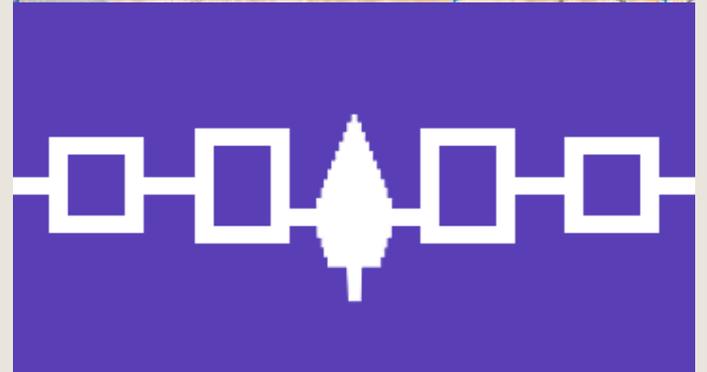
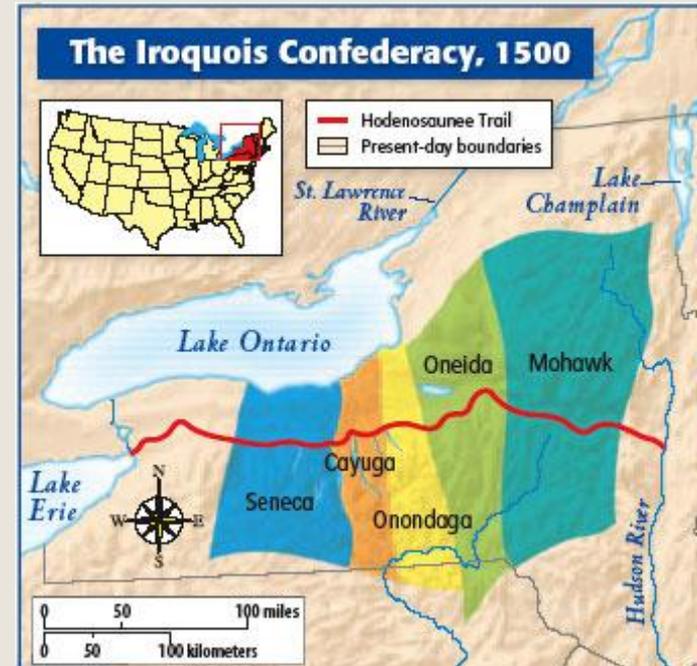


ARTIST'S RENDITION OF CAHOKIA

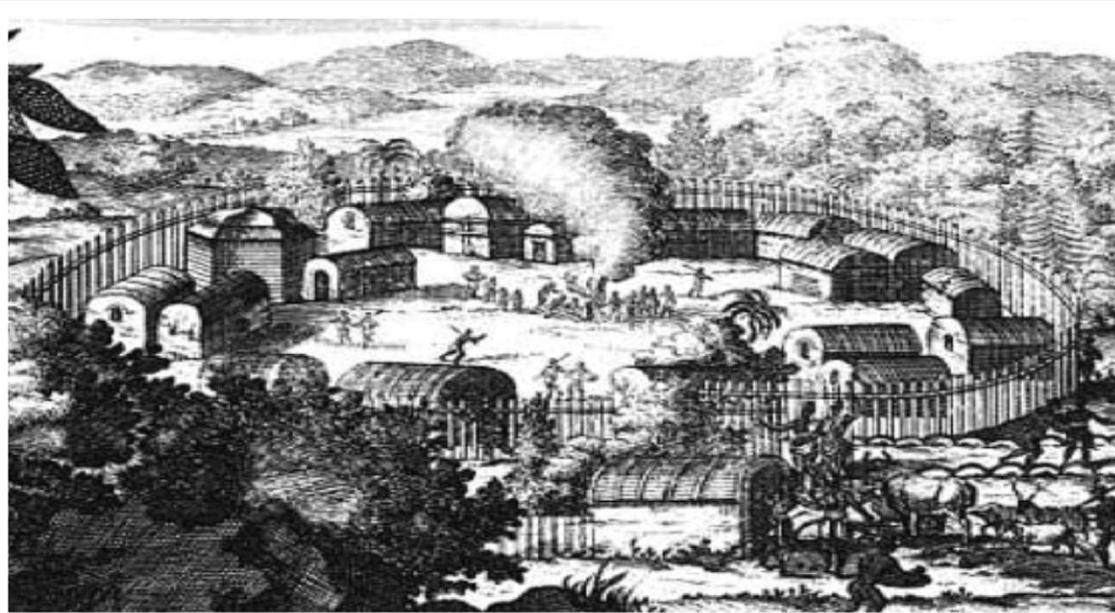


IROQUOIS (HAUDENOSAUNEE)

- The Iroquois had a sophisticated political system with quite a few democratic elements.
- They were a confederacy of six nations.
- A sophisticated law code gave rules for the Great Council. The 50 men of this council were actually appointed by the female leaders of their clans.



IROQUOIS



- Many white settlers chose to go and live with the Iroquois because of individual freedoms.
- In fact, Benjamin Franklin noted that white children taken prisoner by the Iroquois and then later returned to the English usually chose to return to life with the Iroquois.

AMAZONIA

- Anna Roosevelt, archaeologist, excavated a site called Marajo. She claims it had well over 100,000 people living over thousands of square kilometers.



AMAZONIA

- She also claims the people cleared forest and planted fruit, nut, and palm trees.



AMAZONIA

- According to other archaeologists, they also intentionally enriched the soil through “seeding” it with micro-organisms and charcoal, thus avoiding exhausting the soil.
- This new soil, called *Terra Preta*, holds its nutrients for centuries.

Amazonian dark earth - *terra preta*



Left a nutrient-poor oxisol; right an oxisol transformed into fertile *terra preta* - photo courtesy of Bruno Glaser

AMAZONIA



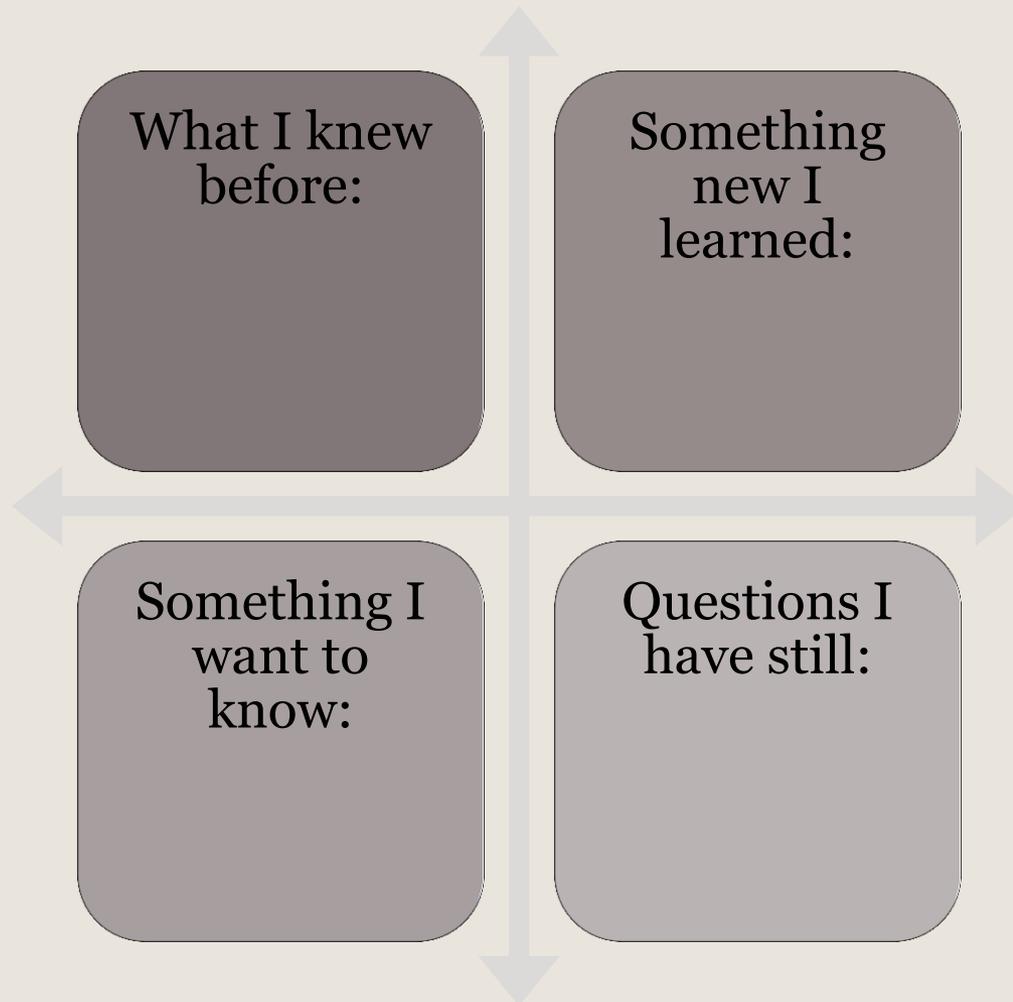
- There were towns and smaller villages spread through the rainforest. The towns were surrounded by large earthen walls. Roads connected the different settlements.
- There are signs of farming, dams, and artificial ponds possibly used as fish farms.

AMAZON CIVILIZATION



The Amazon Civilization

REFLECTION TIME

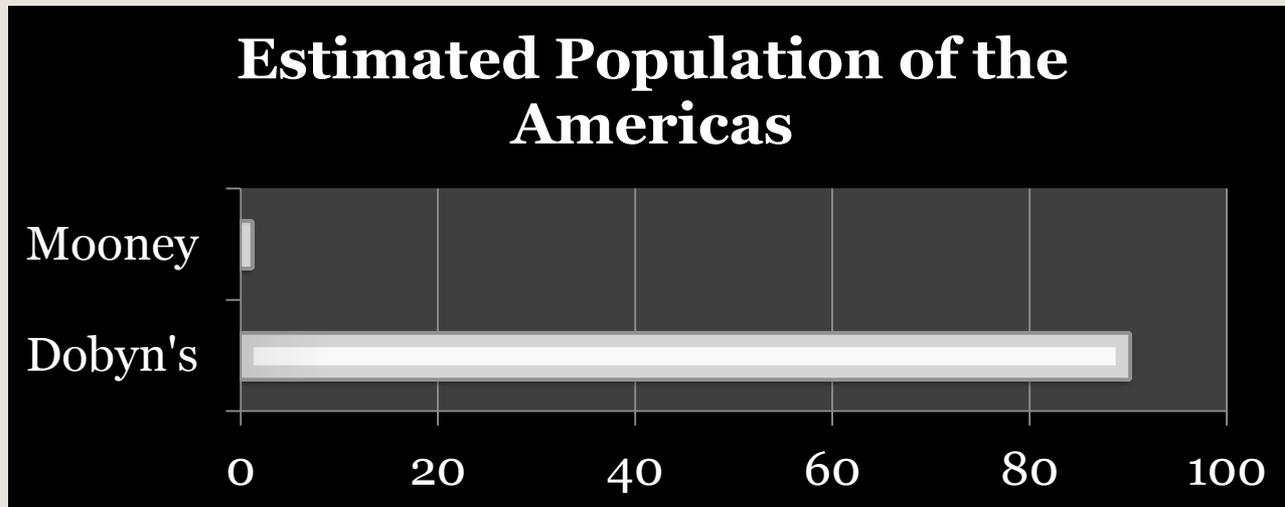


PART 2: TRADITIONAL VIEWPOINTS THAT NEED TO CHANGE

A. The traditional view of the population of Native American societies is probably wrong by quite a bit.

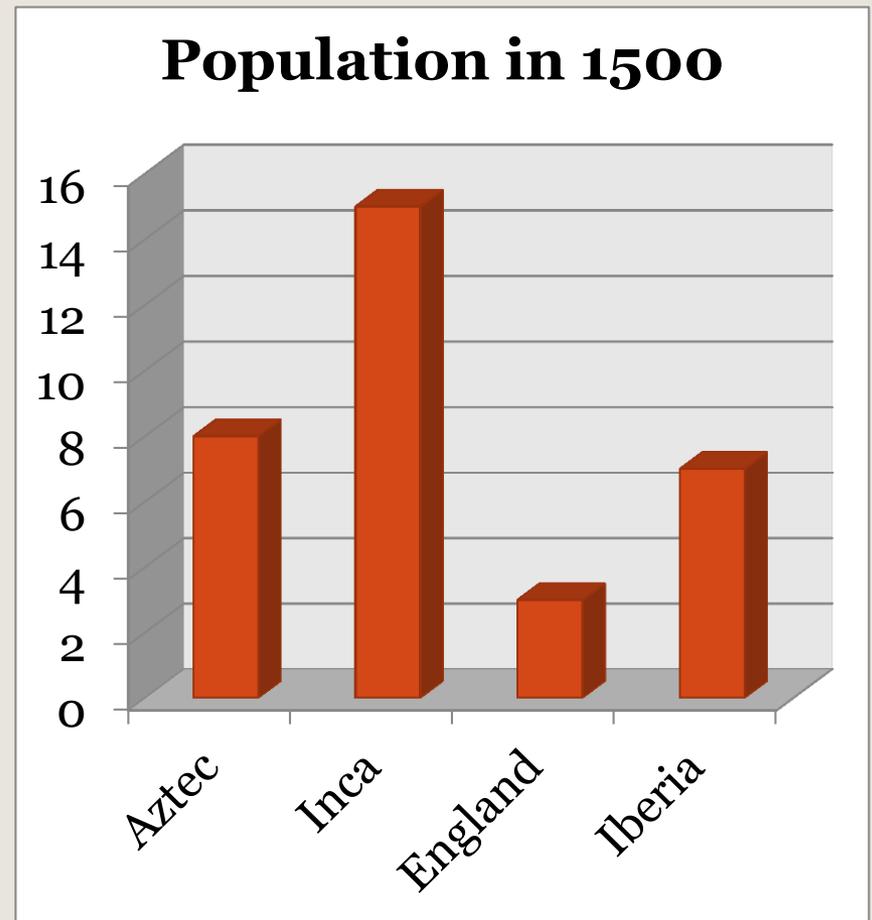
POPULATION OF THE AMERICAS

- How many people lived in the Americas?
- 1910, Mooney – 1.15 million est.
- 1966, Dobyns – 90 to 112 million est. (based on calculation of # dead from disease).



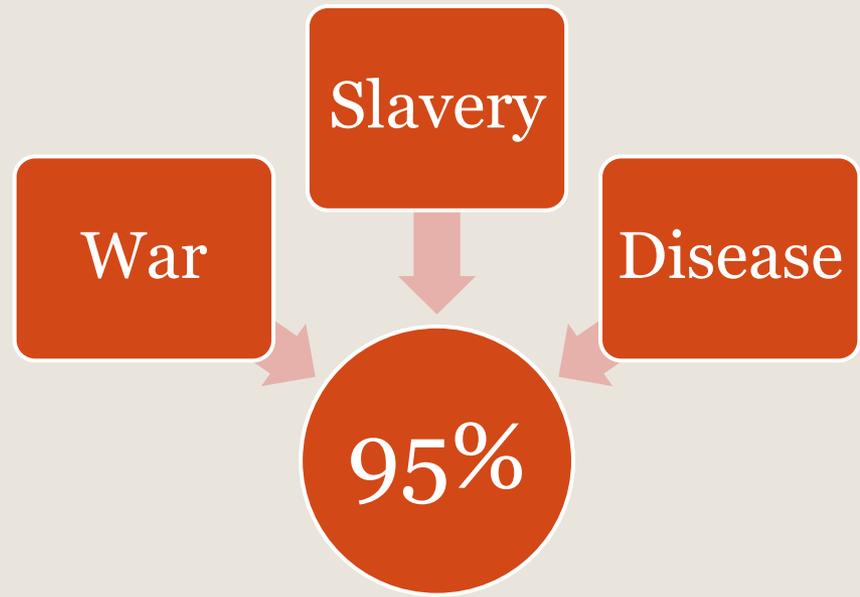
POPULATION OF THE AMERICAS

- Scholars still debate this. The reality is probably much closer to Dobyn's 100 million.
- In any case, it sets the population as comparable to Europe. Spain and Portugal (Iberia) together had about 7 million at that time.



DEPOPULATION OF THE AMERICAS

- After the arrival of Columbus and the Europeans the population of the Aborigines in the Americas decreased because of war, slavery, and disease.



- Dobyns (1966) estimated that 95% of Natives died in the first 130 years post-Columbus.

DEPOPULATION OF THE AMERICAS



■ Examples of the Effect of Disease:

■ De Soto (1530s) went on an expedition for gold throughout what is today the southern U.S. He described it as “very well peopled with large towns”. He brought 300 pigs with him to provide meat.



■ La Salle (1680s) was the next white explorer. He described the exact same area as deserted, most likely because of De Soto's pigs.



DEPOPULATION OF THE AMERICAS

- One people group called the Caddo dropped in population between De Soto and La Salle from 200,000 to about 8,500 (nearly 96%).
- Russell Thornton (anthropologist) says:
“That’s the reason whites think of Indians as nomadic hunters. Everything else – all the heavily populated urbanized societies – was wiped out.”

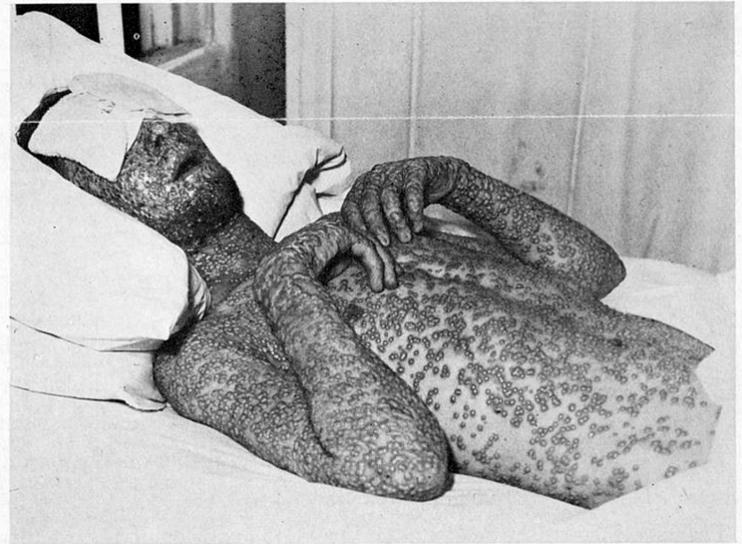


DISEASES FROM EUROPE

- Many diseases arrived in the century after Columbus.
- Natives were culturally unaware of the concept of quarantine.
- Natives are also genetically less able to fight disease with their immune systems because they had not lived with domesticated animals.

DISEASES FROM EUROPE

- Some of the diseases introduced to the Native populations as a result of contact with Europeans included:
 - Typhus
 - Influenza
 - Diphtheria
 - Measles
 - Mumps
 - Bubonic plague
 - Smallpox



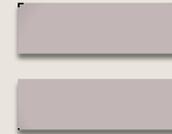
New York State Department of Health Photograph

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Domesticated
Animals



Immune
Systems

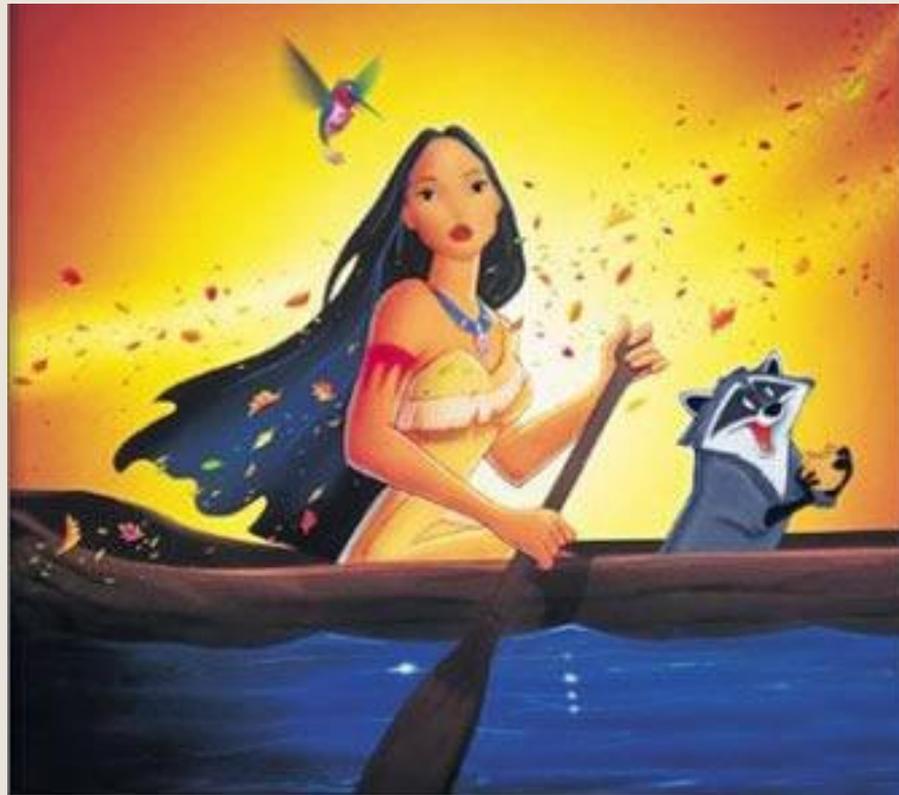


Population

PART 2: TRADITIONAL VIEWPOINTS THAT NEED TO CHANGE

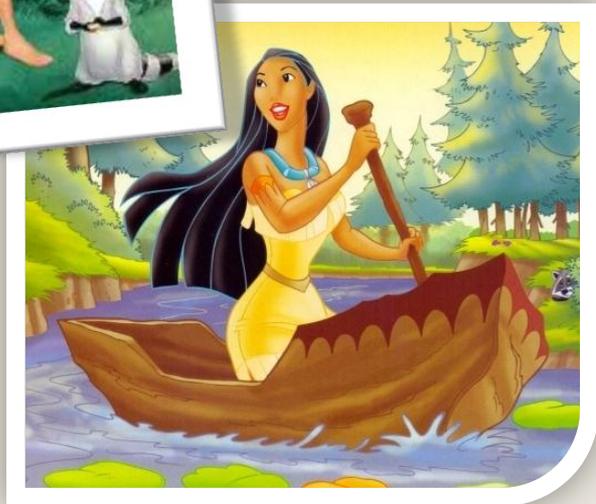
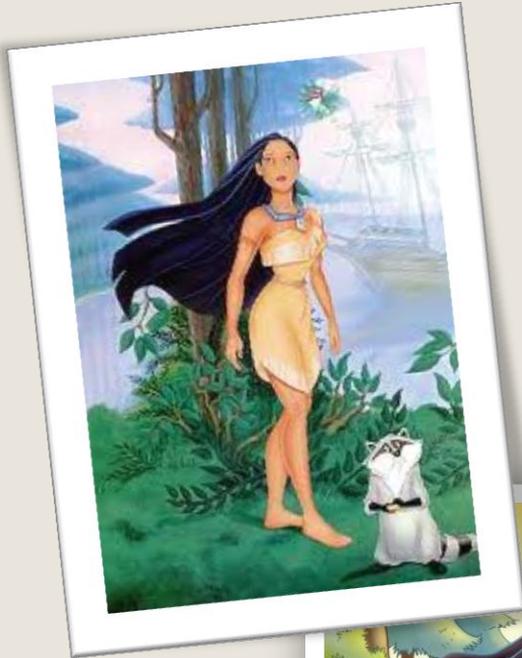
B. The traditional view of Natives just living in total harmony with nature (never modifying it) needs to be adjusted.

A LITTLE CLIP...



Colours of the Wind

INTERACTION WITH NATURE



- The Pocahontas “one with nature” idea is a false one.
- Natives modified and exploited their environment, just like people everywhere.
- Usually, though they did so in a way that didn’t cause long term damage.

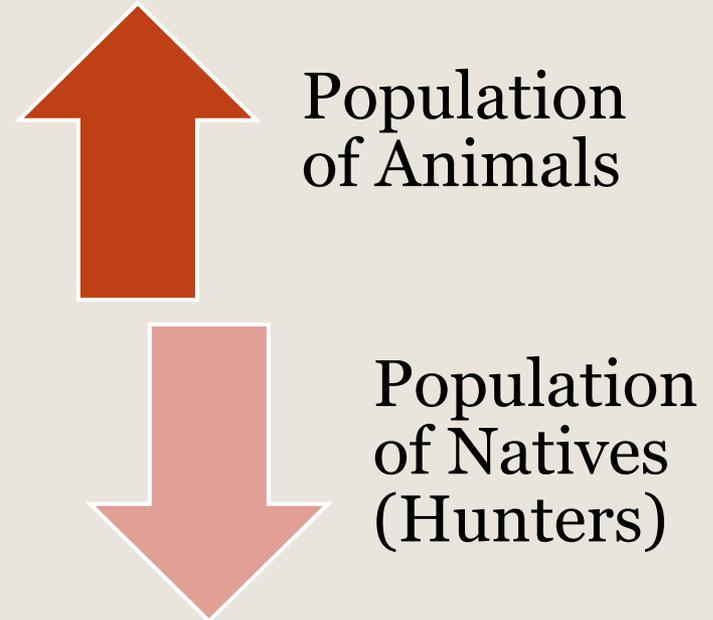
INTERACTION WITH NATURE



- “A principal tool was fire, used to keep down underbrush and create the open, grassy conditions favorable for game. Rather than domesticating animals for meat, Indians retooled whole ecosystems to grow bumper crops of elk, deer and bison.”

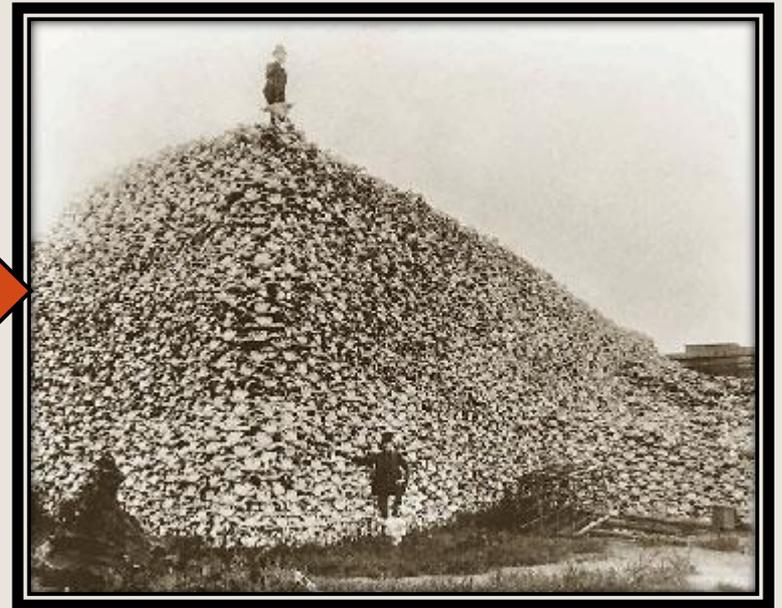
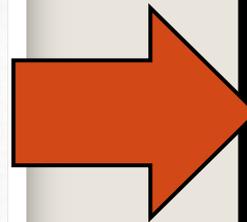
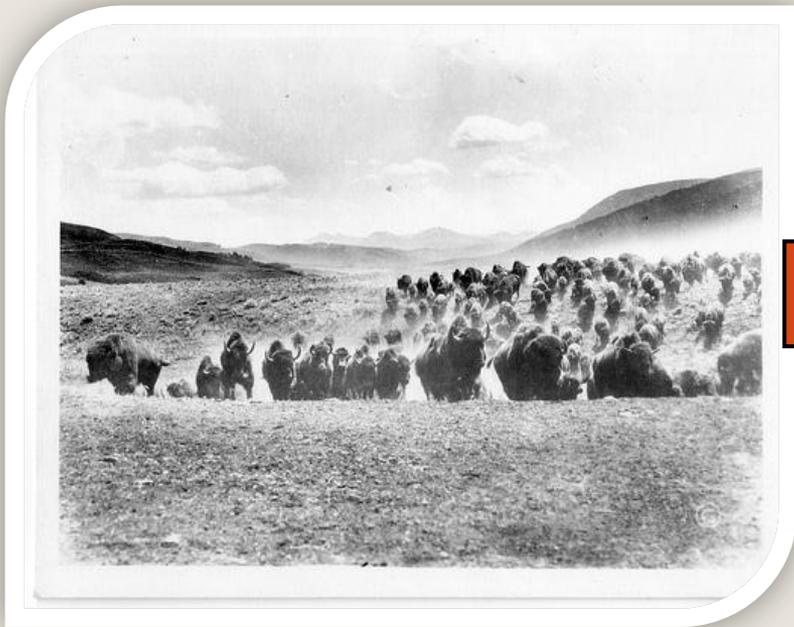
INTERACTION WITH NATURE

- People were a “keystone” species – one that “affects the survival and abundance of many other species”
- When the population of natives plummeted because of disease, other species populations skyrocketed.



INTERACTION WITH NATURE

- This was a problem because white people saw vast numbers of bison, passenger pigeons, and other animals and then proceeded to hunt these to extinction or close to it.



PUTTING IT TOGETHER

**Perspectives that
need to change
(stereotypes):**



**What actually
happened and the
effects:**

