AMSCO Chapter 14

Americas on the Eve of Globalization

1. Mississippian Culture
2. Emerged between 700-1500 CE in eastern US along banks of Mississippi River; built huge earthen mounds in various shapes
3. Economy and Culture
4. Corn, beans, squash, and tobacco
5. Large towns and smaller villages built around a plaza with a mound in the center; largest town was Cahokia, in present day Illinois, 40,00 residents
6. Clay pottery, engraved shells, stone and leather items, wood, feathers, copper, bear teeth, turtle shells,
7. Animism, belief that natural world was full of spirits, even animal spirits; priests communicated with spirits and served as healers
8. Government and Society
9. Rigid structure, Great Sun was the chief, under were nobles and priests, then farmers, hunters, merchants, craftsmen and laborers, finally slaves
10. Women farmed, men hunted, matrilineal society with social standing from mother’s side; Great Sun title passed from chief to sister’s son
11. Decline of Mississippian Civilization
12. Cahokia abandoned around 1450; several theories including flooding or weather, crop failures, disease from Europeans
13. The Toltec
14. Tula was capital city by 950, 60,000 population
15. Warrior aristocracy in control, with landowners also serving as military leaders
16. Extracted tribute from conquered peoples
17. Toltecs defeated Mayans in 10th century
18. Religion continued the Quetzalcoatl religion of the Mayans, architecture similar to Mayan city of Chichen Itza
19. Decline of Toltecs by 1150
20. Aztecs
21. AKA Mexicas, hunter gatherers from Mexico around 1200s; capital of Tenochtitlan founded in 1325 where Mexico City is now
22. Created an empire that spanned the continent east to west.
23. Capital City
24. Island in middle of a swamp, dug up mud from lake bottom to create more dry land
25. Eventually 200,000 people, with a pyramid in the center made of stone, 150 feet tall
26. Agriculture
27. Floating gardens called chinampas supplemented maize grown outside city
28. Ditches with lake water irrigated fields, animal waste as fertilizer, stone terraces to prevent erosion
29. No wheeled vehicles or pack animals, all work done by hand
30. Government, Economy and Society
31. Tribute system where conquered peoples paid tribute of food, cloth, firewood, feathers, beads and jewelry, surrendered land and performed military service
32. Local leaders stayed in power and collected tribute
33. City-states grouped into provinces with a warrior to ensure Aztec control
34. Theocracy (rule by religious leaders), with Great Speaker (emperor) at the top, then land owning nobles/military leaders, scribes, healers, craftspeople, traders, peasants, soldiers, slaves
35. Religion
36. Hundreds of deities, with both male and female aspects
37. Gods of Sun, War, Rain, Wind, Knowledge, Agriculture, Fertility
38. Rituals, feast days and human sacrifice to atone for human sin
39. Culture – 365 day calendar from Mayans, gold, silver and precious stone jewelry, picture writing like Maya
40. Trade Network – From California to Costa Rica on both coasts that traded cloth, cacao, rubber, shells, feathers, precious stones
41. Role of Women – Weaving cloth made them important; a man could have more than one wife; some were priestesses, midwives, healers or merchants, even scribes
42. Decline of the Aztecs – low technology level made agriculture hard, food preparation also difficult, such as grinding maize by hand; too many human sacrifices
43. Unhappy citizens, arrival of Europeans and disease led to collapse of empire
44. The Inca
45. Centered in Cuzco ,Peru
46. Origins – Pachacuti gains control of Chanca people in 1438 and created an empire and his son expanded empire
47. Government, Economy, and Society
48. Empire split into four provinces, each with a governor
49. Mita system required mandatory public service from conquered people for all men 15-50 years old, working in farming and road construction
50. Quechua, Incan language, taught to all conquered people, in addition to religion and history
51. Few market towns and little trade; maize potatoes, tomatoes, squash, peanuts, coca, and cotton
52. Most small farmers had to give a portion of food to government for storage, which was used in times of famine
53. Religion
54. Royal ancestor veneration; leaders mummified and worshipped, maintained ownership
55. Sun God Inti used leaders as representative on Earth; leaders had to honor Sun god and their ancestor
56. 30 day calendar, monthly religious festivals
57. Priests could determine god’s will, diagnose illnesses, predict the future, solve crimes, and determine which sacrifices to make
58. Sacrifices included corn, guinea pigs, llamas, and even humans, but not as frequently as the Aztecs.
59. Animism belief that physical world could have supernatural powers, whether a stone or a river
60. Achievements
61. Quipu – knotted string system to count; tools from copper and bronze; mortarless stone structures
62. Terrace system of farming that redirected rain and avoided erotion
63. Forced mita laborers built roads, runners carried messages
64. Decline – Francisco Pizarro arrived in 1532 and took advantage of civil war after death of Emperor Huayna Capac