

Unit 1: 1491-1607

Topic 1.2: Native American Societies Before European Contact

Learning Objective 1: Explain how and why various native populations in the period before European contact interacted with the natural environment in North America.

A. The spread of maize cultivation from present day Mexico northward supported economic development, settlement, advanced irrigation, and social diversification among societies.

B. Societies responded to the aridity of the Great Basin and the grasslands of the western Great Plains by developing largely mobile lifestyles.

C. In the Northeast, the Mississippi River Valley, and the Atlantic seaboard, some societies developed mixed agricultural and hunter-gatherer economies that favored the development of permanent villages.

D. Societies in the Northwest and present-day California supported themselves by hunting and gathering, and in some areas developed settled communities supported by the vast resources of the ocean.

Topic 1.3: European Exploration in the Americas

Learning Objective 1: Explain the causes of exploration and conquest of the New World by various European nations.

A. European nations' efforts to explore and conquer the New World stemmed from a search for new sources of wealth, economic and military competition, and a desire to spread Christianity.

Topic 1.4: Columbian Exchange, Spanish Exploration and Conquest

Learning Objective 1: Explain the causes of the Columbian Exchange and its effect on Europe and the Americas during the period after 1492.

A. The Columbian Exchange brought new crops to Europe from the Americas, stimulating European population growth, and new sources of mineral wealth, which facilitated the European shift from feudalism to capitalism.

B. Improvements in maritime technology and more organized methods for conducting international trade, such as joint-stock companies, helped drive changes to economies in Europe and the Americas.

C. Spanish exploration and conquest of the Americas were accompanied and furthered by widespread deadly epidemics and by the introduction of crops and animals not found in the Americas.

Topic 1.5: Cultural Interactions Between Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans

Learning Objective 1: Explain how and why European and Native American perspectives of others developed and changed during the period.

A. Europeans and Native Americans asserted divergent worldviews regarding issues such as religion, gender roles, family, land use, and power.

B. Mutual misunderstandings often defined the early years of interaction and trade as each group sought to make sense of the other. Over time, Europeans and Natives adopted aspects of each other's culture.

C. As European encroachments on Native Americans' lands increased, native peoples sought to defend and maintain their political sovereignty, economic prosperity, and religious beliefs through diplomatic negotiations and military resistance.

D. Extended contact with Native Americans and Africans fostered a debate among European religious and political leaders about how non-Europeans should be treated.