

UNIT I

Native American Cultures and European Settlements

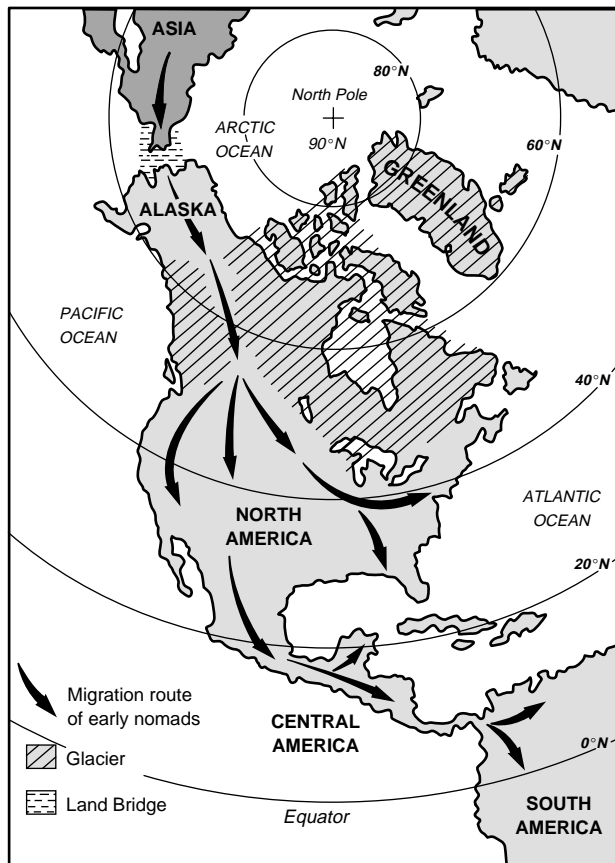
CHAPTER 1

Native Peoples of the Americas and New York State

Scientists believe that the first settlers in the Americas came from Asia, perhaps 40,000 years ago. They were **nomads**—people wandering in search of food. Following animal herds, they crossed to North America over a land bridge. It had been exposed when the ocean receded during an ice age. The nomads quickly spread east and south, settling most of North and South America.

Early Americans adapted to such places as forests, plains, and mountains. Their **culture**, or way of living, was formed largely by the **environment**—geography and climate.

Ice Age Migrations



First, early Americans hunted animals and gathered edible plants and nuts. Then, they settled down and began to farm. They learned about plant seeds, fertilized soil, planting times, **irrigation** (artificial supply of water), and the harvesting of crops.

When farm families were able to produce **surpluses** (food to store and use in the future), they developed other skills—pottery making, basket making, and weaving. Settlements grew into villages. Some villages grew into cities. These large marketplaces and centers of religion and government became **civilizations**. (Civilizations are cultures with advanced social patterns and **technology**—methods, tools, and machinery to use in everyday life).



INFO CHECK

1. How did the first Americans reach North America from Asia?
2. What are the advantages of farming over hunting-gathering?
3. How did civilizations develop from city centers?



EARLY AMERICANS OF MIDDLE AND SOUTH AMERICA

Olmecs Olmec civilizations (1200–200 B.C.) were among the earliest in Middle America (today's Mexico and Guatemala), and possibly the earliest in the Americas. Olmecs lived along the Gulf Coast, where they built religious and commercial centers. Their most dramatic achievements were massive stone heads. **Archeologists** (scientists who study how and where people lived in the past) believe these heads represent Olmec kings or gods.

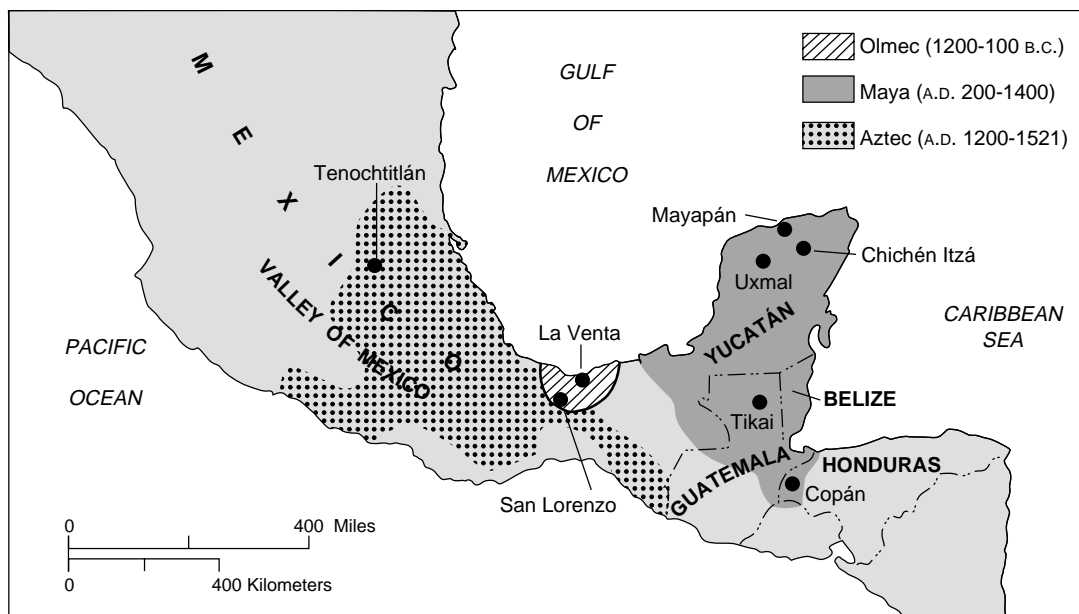
After 300 B.C., Olmec culture and social structures were taken over by neighboring peoples.

Maya Maya culture (A.D. 200–900) took root in the Yucatán Peninsula: Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, and Mexico. This civilization of 2 million people achieved more than any other Native American culture.

The Maya are best known for astronomy, mathematics, and writing. They predicted eclipses of the sun and moon; they studied planetary movements; they drew maps of star positions. The Maya calendar of a 365-day year is extremely accurate; it helped farmers plan planting, growing, and harvesting cycles. Maya writing was the most complex in the Americas.

Cities were ceremonial centers for priests. They had magnificent plazas, palaces, and temples, where priests performed religious duties such as sacrifices. The general population lived in farm villages but gathered in the cities for religious ceremonies and festivals. The Maya abandoned their cities after 900 A.D. for unknown reasons—perhaps invasion or economic decline.

Aztecs The powerful Aztec civilization began in northern Mexico as a band of warlike hunters. They moved into central Mexico about A.D. 1200. According to tradition, the Sun God, Huitzilopochtli, led them to Lake Texcoco. There, they founded



Olmec, Maya, and Aztec Civilizations

the island city of Tenochtitlán (today's Mexico City). During the rule of Montezuma I (mid-1400s), Tenochtitlán had a population exceeding 200,000. The city had a police force, efficient sanitation, and an aqueduct system to supply fresh water.

The Aztecs never lost their taste for war. By the early 1500s, they ruled an empire of from 5 to 6 million people. It stretched across Mexico from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The empire consisted mainly of conquered peoples, who gave the Aztecs money, food, and goods.

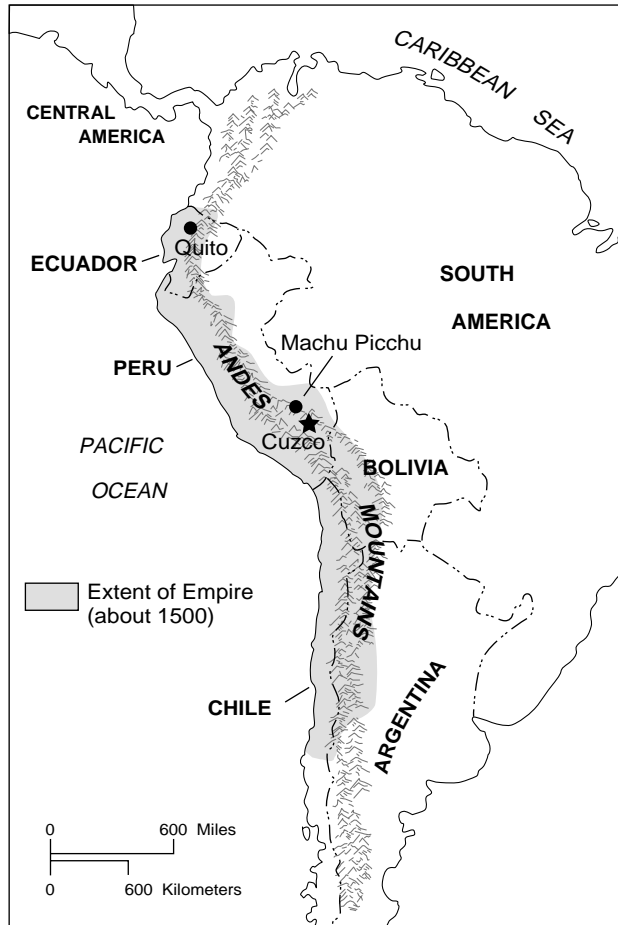
Religion was all-important. Aztec gods had to be well nourished before they would reward humans. Thus, Aztecs also waged war in search of sacrificial victims. These were either taken in battle or surrendered later on as **tribute** (gifts from the conquered).

Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent, was the god of learning and the priesthood. Legend said that the god had sailed away with a promise to return in a great sailing ship from the east. When Hernando Cortés arrived in 1519, Montezuma II believed that the Spaniard was the returning god. In fact, he was a **conquistador** (Spanish military leader in the Americas). Two years later, Spanish soldiers conquered the empire with the help of victimized Aztec neighbors.

Inca The Inca migrated to the highlands of Peru about A.D. 1250. Their capital city was Cuzco. By the early 1500s, they controlled about 3000 miles along the Andes Mountains, from Ecuador to northern Chile. The population exceeded 7 million. Most of them were conquered peoples incorporated into the Inca empire.

The Inca ruled this vast area through a strict political and social system. The all-powerful ruler was the Sapa Inca, viewed by his people as a direct descendant of the Sun God. Below him were nobles and priests, government and military administrators, and craftspeople and farmers.

All adult males were required to work part-time for the Sapa Inca or his priests. Men in villages had to farm the land of the sick, widows, orphans, and those who were away on the empire's business. Garcilaso de la Vega, of Spanish-



Inca Empire

Inca descent, left the following account of the Inca **work ethic** (belief that work is good):

- ★ No one who was lazy or who tried to live by the work of others was tolerated. Everyone had to work. Thus, on certain days each noble went to his land and took the plow in hand and cultivated the earth . . . nobody [was] so rich that he might look down upon the poor.

Of all the city dwellers in the Americas, the Inca were the best engineers. Their massive forts had stone slabs so well cut that no cement was needed; these forts still stand today. Inca road systems extended from Ecuador to Chile. They included mountain tunnels and high bridges. Elevated aqueducts supplied cities with fresh water.

Inca civilization flourished until the arrival of a small Spanish force under the conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1532. Greedy for gold, they lured the Sapa Inca, Atahualpa, to their camp and held him for ransom. Once the gold was paid, they killed him. Leaderless and without firearms, the Inca were helpless against the invaders. Within 40 years, they had become subjects of Spain.



INFO CHECK

1. Identify: archeologist, Olmec, Quetzalcoatl, Sapa Inca, Francisco Pizarro.
2. Describe the accomplishments of the Maya.

3. Explain why the Aztecs' neighbors sided with the Spaniards.
4. What was the Inca work ethic?
5. Describe accomplishments of the Inca.

EARLY AMERICANS OF THE CARIBBEAN

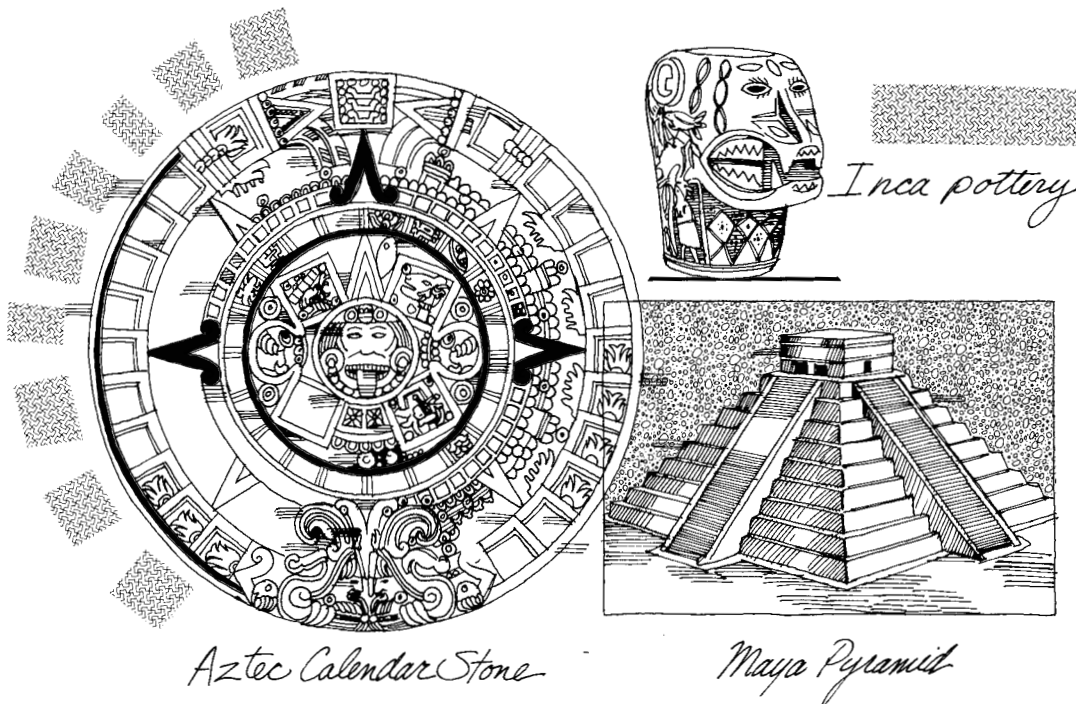
Arawaks About 2000 years ago, Arawaks moved to Caribbean islands from Venezuela. They were the first people that the explorer Columbus met in the Americas. Arawaks dominated the Greater Antilles—such islands as Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola.

The Arawak economy was based on fishing, hunting, and raising corn, cassava (a starchy root), beans, peanuts, and cotton. Their villages were made up of houses of wood and straw. The chief had a larger central hut.

Arawaks worshipped idols called **zemi**, which they carved in wood and stone. Zemi controlled all aspects of life, and the people honored them with special offerings and ceremonies. The fiercest spirit was Huracan, the god of evil. We derive the word “hurricane” from this god. Many other Arawak words also entered English: *canoa* (canoe), *hamaca* (hammock), *tabaco* (tobacco).

A peaceful people, Arawaks were unable to defend themselves against Caribs and Spaniards.

Caribs By the time of Columbus's voyages, warlike Caribs from South America had driven Arawaks from the Lesser Antilles islands in the southern Caribbean. These fierce raiders killed Arawak men and married their wives and daughters. Caribs were excellent navigators and undertook long-distance fighting expeditions in large dugout canoes.



Aztec Calendar Stone

Maya Pyramid



INFO CHECK

1. Identify: zemi, Carib.
2. Why did Arawaks find it hard to defend themselves against Caribs and Spaniards?
3. Name three Arawak words adapted into English.

EARLY AMERICANS OF NORTH AMERICA

In 1500, 2.5 million Native Americans lived in what is now the United States and Canada. Some were hunter-gatherers; others developed advanced agricultural societies. Archeologists have organized these populations into ten culture groups, summarized on the accompanying map and table.

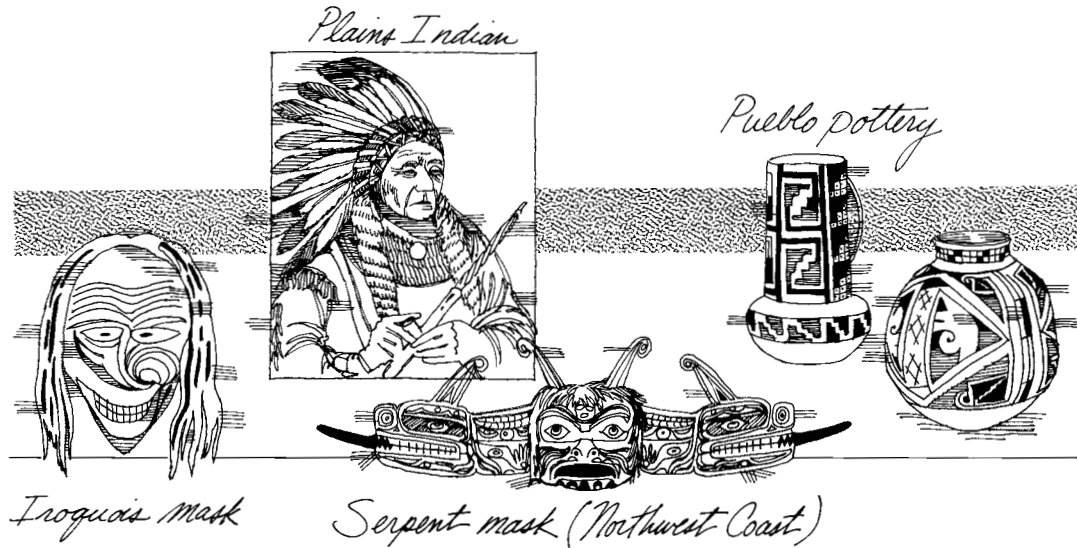
Culture Regions of North America





MAJOR NATIVE AMERICANS OF NORTH AMERICA, BY CULTURE GROUP

Region	People	Culture
Southwest	Hohokam	Ancient farmers; built irrigation systems; made ornate pottery.
	Anasazi	Ancient (post-Hohokam) farmers; built large villages in caves of cliffs.
	Hopi, Tano, Kere, Tiwa, Pueblo	Anasazi descendants; farmed and built riverside villages (called pueblos by the Spaniards).
	Navajo	Fierce warriors, who learned farming from the Hopi and sheep herding from the Spaniards; made beautiful rugs, blankets, silver jewelry.
	Apache	Fierce warriors who remained nomads.
Great Basin	Paiute, Ute, Shoshone	Developed very basic way of life in dry, harsh environment; wove waterproof baskets.
California	Hupa, Pomo, Chumash, Modoc, Yakima	Peaceful hunter-gatherers and fishers, benefited from mild climate, fertile soil.
Northwest Coast	Nootkas, Chinook, Tlingit	Hunter-gatherers and fishers of river salmon; used oceangoing canoes to hunt whales, sea lions, fish; carved totem poles and threw lavish parties (potlaches) to impress social rivals.
Plateau	Nez Percé, Cayuse, Flathead	Hunter-gatherers and fishers, who led a lean life coping with climate extremes and lack of vegetation; later, became horse breeders to increase their hunting and trading range.
Plains	Sioux, Cheyenne, Comanche, Blackfoot, Kiowa, Pawnee	Farmers and hunters dependent on the buffalo for essentials (food, clothing, shelter, tools); later, used horses to increase their hunting range; abandoned their culture after Europeans destroyed buffalo herds.
Southeast	Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Seminole	Fishers and hunters, who built riverside villages; some built great earth mounds for burial and religious rites.
Subarctic	Tanana, Hare, Dogrib, Chipewyan, Cree, Naskapi, Objibwa	Hunter-gatherers, who spent short summers and long cold winters in search of caribou and sea mammals; fished the area's many rivers and lakes.
Arctic	Inuit, Aleut	Developed techniques to survive extreme cold; fished and hunted whales, seals, walruses, polar bears, caribou; built ice-block houses (igloos).
Eastern Woodlands	Hopewell	Ice-age people, who hunted large game—mastodon, elk, caribou, and moose; later, hunted small game, settled down to farm; later still (100 B.C.–A.D. 500), built huge earth-mound tombs near present-day Ohio, traded long-distance, declined, and disappeared.
	[For Iroquois and Algonquian peoples, see the following text section.]	



✓ INFO CHECK

1. Identify: Anasazi, pueblo, potlatch, earth mound, igloo, Hopewell.
2. Why do you think that no great Native American civilization developed north of Mexico?

EARLY AMERICANS OF NEW YORK

Five thousand years ago, hunter-gatherers moved into (1) the Finger Lakes and Lakes Champlain and George regions; (2) the Mohawk, Hudson, Susquehanna, and Genesee river valleys; and (3) the coasts of Long Island and Manhattan. By settling along rivers and shores, these Algonquian and Iroquois peoples gained access to game, fish, and good water transportation.

Clothing Both groups used animal skins and woven corn husks to make shirts, pants, leggings, and moccasins. Beaver fur provided warm winter cloaks. Fine animal bones, skin, and sinew were fashioned into needles and thread for sewing.

Food New York's Native Americans grew crops for much of their food. Where soil was poor or the growing seasons were short (as in northern New York), they hunted, fished, and gathered nuts, fruits, and berries.

Corn (maize) was a part of every meal. It was ground and served as cereal and dumplings or combined with meat, beans, or berries. Many Native American corn dishes—chowder, cornbread, and succotash (corn and lima beans)—are still favorites.

The Iroquois called corn, beans, and squash the *three sisters*. They were their main foods and symbols of nature's goodness.

Deer was their main meat, supplemented by bear, rabbit, squirrel, bird, snake, and frog. River fish and coastal clams, mussels, oysters, and shrimp were also abundant food sources.



Contemporary Onondaga leaders display several rare Iroquois wampum belts.

Work The Iroquois and Algonquians spent most of their time and energy providing for life's necessities.

Men cleared the fields. As craftsmen, they shaped stone, wood, and bone into farm and household tools and weapons—bows, arrows, and spears. As hunters, they provided food. As warriors, they protected their tribes from enemies.

In addition to bearing and raising children, women planted and tended the fields until harvest. They also prepared and preserved food and made their family's clothing.

At harvesttime, the entire tribe—men, women, children, old people—picked and husked the corn.

INFO CHECK

1. How did the New York environment provide Algonquians and Iroquois with clothing?
2. In what respects was the diet of the Algonquians and Iroquois similar to that of early Americans elsewhere?
3. Give two examples of how men and women divided responsibilities to complete a big job.

Algonquians New York Algonquian nations included the Mahicans (upper Hudson Valley), Wappingers (near present-day Albany), Montauks (Long Island), and Delawares (lower Hudson Valley, Staten Island). Each nation had smaller divisions.



Algonquians preparing for winter. Harvesting of crops, especially corn, hunting, and fishing were essential activities in late summer and fall.

For example, Canarsies, Rockaways, Merokes, Massapeguas, and Shinnecocks were all Montauks.

Family The basic Algonquian social unit was the **nuclear family** of father, mother, and children. A married son and his family often lived with his parents. A number of such families, related by blood and marriage, formed the typical village. The Algonquian family was **patrilineal**: it traced its history back through the father's ancestors.

Village Algonquians settled on high ground near rivers or streams. They usually chose sites far enough inland to be safe from coastal storms. The land was cleared for farming and protected against raiders by **palisades** (fences of pointed wood).

A village of 100 to 300 members consisted of family **wigwams**. These round houses were made of poles covered with bark. A raised platform around the inside wall served as a bench, table, and bed. Underneath was storage space. A central firepit provided light, heat, and a cooking place in bad weather.

A village was rarely permanent. Farming wore out the soil. Clearing new fields diminished the supply of wood for fuel, weapons, and canoes. So the villagers moved elsewhere.

Political Organization Each village had a **sachem**, or chief, chosen for wisdom and family standing. In making important decisions, the sachem took villagers' opinions into account. When he was honored with gifts from other sachems, he shared them with the village.

Religion The Algonquians believed in the Great Spirit. It controlled their world through other invisible spirits, friendly and harmful. These spirits lived in all things—in people, ancestors, animals, plants, wind, rain, the sun and moon. The aim of life was to stay in harmony with the Great Spirit.

**INFO CHECK**

1. Identify: patrilineal, wigwam, sachem, Great Spirit.
2. Name two ways in which Algonquian social organization was like our own.
3. What factors did Algonquians consider when choosing a village site?

Iroquois *Iroquois* is a French form of the Algonquian term for “rattlesnake people.” The Iroquois, in turn, referred to Algonquians as the *Adirondack*, meaning “they eat trees.”

The Iroquois called themselves the *Ho-dé-no-sau-nee*, or “People of the Longhouse.” They were organized into five nations—the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. Together, they controlled most territory from the Hudson River west through the Finger Lakes to the Genesee River.

Family The basic social unit was the **extended family** (“longhouse family”) of parents, sisters and brothers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Each family of 50 to 200 members lived in one **longhouse**. All the children there thought of themselves as sisters and brothers.

A longhouse family was **matrilineal**: it traced its history back through the female line of mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and so on. The head of the family, or Chief Mother, was the oldest or most respected person in the longhouse. When an Iroquois male married, he moved into the longhouse of his wife’s family.

Clan A group of longhouse families with a common female ancestor made up a **clan**. Clan members were relatives and could not marry one another. Although women held the real power, a clan’s political leaders were men. The Chief Mothers, with female advisers, appointed them to their jobs, including the most important one, the clan sachem. Women also removed unsatisfactory officeholders from their jobs.

Village The Iroquois built villages on high ground near the fork of two streams. They surrounded the settlements with palisades of logs or saplings. Village populations varied from a few hundred to several thousand people. Like Algonquians, Iroquois villagers moved on when natural resources were used up.

A longhouse held five, ten, or twenty nuclear (“fireside”) families. The only light came from high, wide doors at each end and from smoke holes in the roof. A common storage area held firewood and food supplies. Bowl-shaped firepits were placed at equal distances along a central hallway. Along both sides were individual rooms where fireside families ate, worked, and slept. Storage closets of bark separated fireside families on each side, while families facing each other across the hallway shared a firepit.

Religion According to Iroquois belief, the universal spirit force was “*orenda*.” It flowed through all humans, animals, plants, trees, wind, rain, the moon and sun. The well-being of people, families, and the nation depended on keeping up a good relationship with *orenda*. Thus, religious ceremonies were performed to please its spirits.

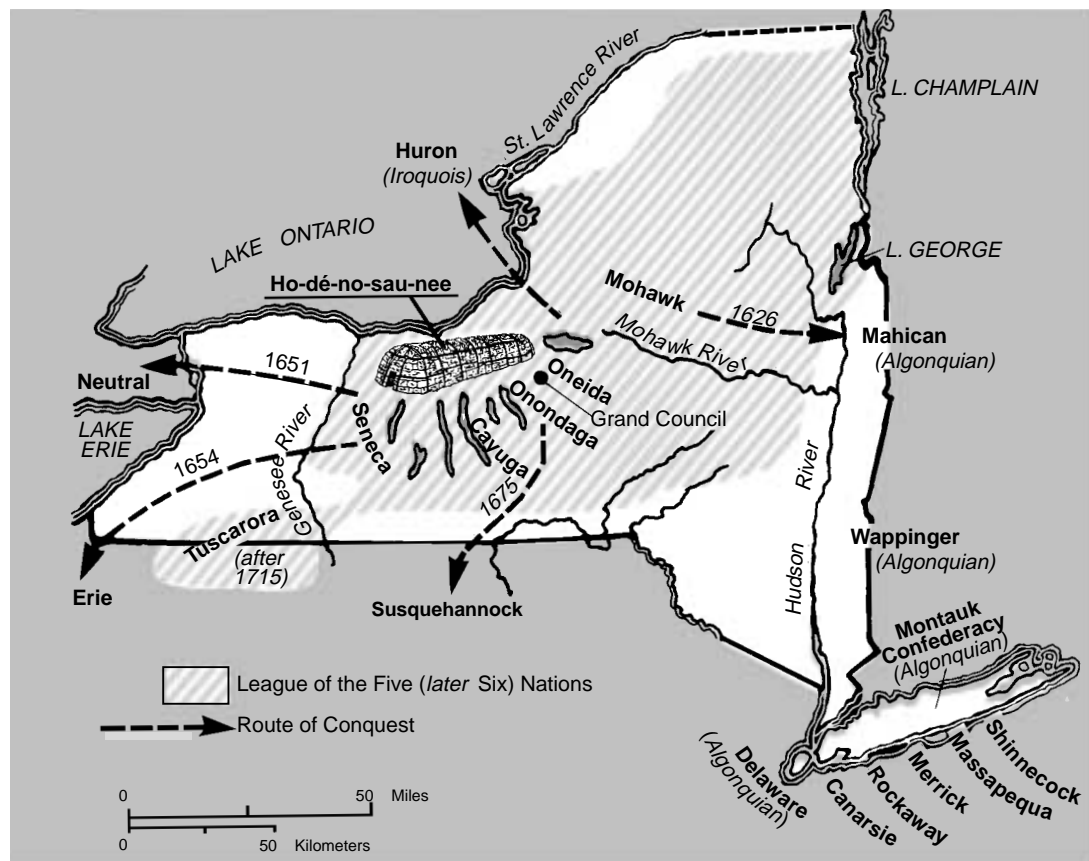
The Iroquois year was full of seasonal celebrations to thank the spirits for plants and animals. The most important festival was the Green Corn Dance. For four days, the Iroquois gave thanks to the three sisters, protectors of corn, beans, and squash. The ritual included chants of thanksgiving to all the spirits (earth, water, moon, sun, rain) and dancing, singing, games, and corn feasting.

League of the Five Nations Around 1570, the five nations formed the *Iroquois Confederacy*, or *Iroquois League*. Drawing strength from unity, the league dominated its neighbors.

Delegates from each nation met each fall in Onondaga, near present-day Syracuse. The Grand Council of 50 sachems, represented the league's important villages and clans. The council considered war, peace, and disagreements among members. To make decisions, the Mohawks and Senecas, the largest nations, first had to agree on a solution. They then asked the Oneidas and Cayugas for their opinions and approval. The Onondagas had to accept a unanimous decision. If, however, the other four were evenly divided, the Onondagas cast the deciding vote.

In the early 1700s, the North Carolina Tuscaroras migrated to southwestern New York and joined the five nations in an even stronger alliance, renamed the *League of the Six Nations*.

Conquests of the League of the Five Nations (1626-1675)



**INFO CHECK**

1. Identify: matrilineal, extended family, Green Corn Dance.
2. Describe the living arrangements in a longhouse.
3. Explain why the Iroquois were stronger than their neighbors.
4. Do you think that the Iroquois League's decision-making process was fair? Why or why not?

**EARLY ENCOUNTERS WITH EUROPEANS**

Algonquian Misfortune Algonquians living along eastern rivers and shorelines were the first of New York's Native Americans to meet Europeans. Without knowing it, the newcomers brought with them diseases that proved deadly to the natives—measles, smallpox, and typhoid. Algonquians lacked natural immunity and died by the thousands.

Europeans had their own idea about land ownership. It conflicted with the Native American idea of shared resources. Thus, wars broke out, in which many Algonquians were killed.

Devastated by disease and war, the survivors moved inland. By the middle of the 1700s, most of them were gone from areas of European settlement.

Iroquois Opportunism The arrival of Europeans dramatically changed Native American lives in other ways too—particularly among the Iroquois. The firepower and accuracy of guns transformed their traditional ways of hunting and warfare. Iroquois farmers put aside stone and bone tools in favor of iron axes and hoes. Clothing makers began to use iron needles and scissors. Quick-heating brass kettles replaced breakable clay pots over cooking fires.

In exchange, Europeans wanted furs, especially beaver pelts (see page 30). As the Iroquois focused on supplying pelts to European traders, they neglected their balanced lives of farming and hunting.

Dutch and English fur traders in New York gave the League of Six Nations a new reason for dominating central New York—economic power through fur trading. By controlling the supply of beaver pelts, the Iroquois could trade them for more guns and monopolize the fur trade. Well-armed Iroquois were a constant threat to Algonquian and French hunters and trappers.

**INFO CHECK**

1. Name two ways in which the arrival of Europeans was disastrous for the Algonquians.
2. How did European tools change Native American life?
3. How did the presence of Europeans motivate the Iroquois?



CHAPTER REVIEW

Multiple-Choice Questions

- The earliest settlers in the Americas were probably
 - Asian nomads wandering in search of food
 - Asian farmers fleeing from drought conditions at home
 - from India
 - long-distance seafarers searching for new lands.
- Maya cultures flourished in
 - northern Mexico
 - the Yucatán Peninsula
 - what is now Peru
 - Venezuela.
- Maya culture is best known for achievements in
 - methods of farming dry land
 - astronomy, mathematics, and writing
 - military power
 - shipbuilding and navigation.
- The Aztecs were famed for their
 - military power
 - universities
 - religious toleration
 - farming.
- The people most accomplished in constructing road systems and buildings were the
 - Inca
 - Maya
 - Olmecs
 - Aztecs.
- Quetzalcoatl was
 - an Aztec god
 - an Inca ruler
 - a Maya priest
 - a Spanish conquistador.
- The food that was most important to Eastern Woodlands peoples was
 - cassava
 - corn
 - caribou
 - salmon.
- The Iroquois family is called matrilineal because
 - women rule
 - men have no rights
 - men and women are equal
 - descent and inheritance are through the mother.
- Major Native American peoples in New York State were
 - Montauks and Inuit
 - Iroquois and Apaches
 - Algonquians and Iroquois
 - Pueblos and Algonquians.
- In all major Native American groups in New York, responsibilities of women included
 - hunting and fishing
 - farming and making clothes
 - farming and hunting
 - choosing men to serve as leaders.
- The Iroquois longhouse was
 - used to store agricultural surpluses
 - the home of a large extended family
 - an armed fortress
 - a barnlike shelter for cattle and horses.
- The Iroquois grew strong because they
 - formed a league that united their various tribes
 - learned how to manufacture guns
 - were allied with French settlers in Canada
 - prevented the Dutch from settling the Hudson Valley.

Constructed-Response Questions

Base your answer to question 1 on the drawing on page 5.

- From this drawing, what information can you learn about each civilization?

Base your answers to questions 2 and 3 on the drawing on page 8.

- List each culture represented in the drawing.
- What information about each culture can you learn from its art?

Document-Based Question

Part A: Short Answer

*Study each document and answer the questions that follow it. Then read the **Task** and write your essay. It should include references to most of the documents, along with additional information based on your knowledge of social studies.*

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: Geographic factors affected the settlement patterns and living conditions of the earliest Americans in the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

DOCUMENT 1. Refer to the map on page 4.

1. List the important physical features of the Inca empire.
2. With these features in mind, would you expect that the Inca had much contact with other civilizations? Explain.

DOCUMENT 2. Refer to the map on page 6 and the accompanying table of major Native American culture groups.

3. Explain how location and environment were related to the development of distinct native cultures.
4. What kind of information does the table present?
5. What does the table suggest about the development of distinct native cultures?

DOCUMENT 3. Refer to the illustration on page 10.

6. What does this painting tell you about harvest time?
7. What does the clothing in the painting show about the use of natural resources?

Part B: Essay

TASK

- Identify a Native American culture from North America and one from Central or South America.
- For each culture, describe the role played by geography in the development of one of its economic, political, or social features.
- Determine the extent to which geographic features influenced settlement patterns and living conditions of *one* of the Native American cultures you identified.