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## I. The meeting of cultures

- a. Human beings first crossed an ancient land bridge over the Bering between 12,000 and 14,000 years ago
- b. Ultimately, scientists estimate that in as early as 9,000 B.C., the migrations reached the southern tips of South America.

## A. America Before Columbus

### 1. The Civilizations of the South

- a. Incas were a powerful empire with 6 million people and paved roads as well as a complex political system
- b. Mayas had a written language, a numerical system, calendar, and an agricultural system.
- c. Aztecs were called "savages" despite their capital, Tenochtitlán being about the same size as the Egyptian pyramids.

### 2. The Civilizations of the North

- a. The southwest people built large irrigation systems on dry land and their densely populated settlement at Chaco Canyon and elsewhere consisted of stone and adobe terraced structure (pueblos) many of which resembled the large apartment building of later eras in size and design.
- b. In the southwest, cities emerged as trading and political centers. Among them was Cahokia that had a population 40,000 in 1200 A.D.
- c. Farming techniques were designed to exploit the land quickly rather than permanent settlements in the Northeast.
- d. Many of the tribes living east of the Mississippi River were linked together loosely by a common linguistic roots. Along with tribes lived along the Atlantic seaboard from Canada to Virginia (a language group) and Iroquois Confederation (mid-fifteenth century, upstate NY)
- e. Alliances among Indian tribes were fragile because peoples were not a single civilization.