

# Native americans: one of the greatest civilizations?

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“ By the eve of European conquest, north Native Americans had constructed great civilizations.” Support or rebuke this statement. Contrary to the beliefs of European settlers, the Northern Native Americans were not the “ savages” they were thought out to be, making up some of the greatest civilizations in history. The tribes of North America displayed these qualities in their everyday lives, exercising husbandry, social structures, and nomadic adaptability to enrich their cultures. The elements that make up a great civilization are a strong cultural identity, efficient use of land and agriculture, a thriving economy, and social stability. There are several reasons for the organized sophistication of Native American societies.

One of these factors is the established sense of community, an example like the Pueblo people who lived in interlocked dwellings near the Grand Canyon in the Southwest. Additionally, the ceremonies, both religious and agricultural, have inspired social solidity, through seasonal public celebrations of drinking, comedic impersonations, singing, dancing, and shared spiritual beliefs. Systematic traveling reinforced this community, as many native tribes were nomadic, roaming all over the country, which proved beneficial providing them with knowledge of their geographic terrains. A common misconception in history is America’s “ virginity” preceding European arrival, as Native Americas adapted the land for hunting, fishing, and foraging, never really having to suffer famine and growing rich resources. Native Americans established a competent trade system consisting of maize, corn, cotton, squash, and other vegetation, most of which was grown in rich harvests, as a result of Indian innovations in

farming. These Native American were the embodiment of indigenous ethos; the technically first established citizens of “ America”.

All Native American societies shared common philosophies about the natural world, believing spirits to exist in the natural components around them, ideologies similar to those in other great civilizations, like Asian Daoism. This may be part of the reason behind the rich harvests of the Native Americans. Their assets contributing to their prominence were not only in their philosophies and agriculture, but also in their politics. In fact, both European and native cultures shared common political characteristics such as class systems, monarchs, and priests. However, natives had a superior quality to European societies, the extensive female influence, as many communities in the South were matrilineal, tracing generations through mothers and grandmothers, and a woman’s influence extended to control of households and village life, even to the annual council meetings, where both men and women gave their consents.

Moreover, further political contribution was found in the Iroquois Five Nation Confederacy, a resolve made to even join together warring nations. “ Columbus did not a discover a new world. He established contact between two worlds, both already old;” historian J. H. Perry, Out of Many. Before epidemic diseases, like smallpox and the measles, before the Conquistadores, internal warfare, and enslavement, North America was home to over 2, 000 distinct languages and subcultures belonging to a variety of native tribes, including the Navajos, Apaches, Natchez, and Iroquois.

The strength of these Native American societies had derived from their indigenous cultural identity and sense of community woven through sacred traditions and agricultural and religious ceremonies. Their geographical efficiency, innovative agricultural methods, and cultural diversity are the reasons why the Native Americans have created great civilizations.