Trade in the Americas

• There was no interaction between the Western and Eastern hemispheres before the voyages of Columbus.
• American trade networks were not as expansive as Afro-Eurasian ones.
  – Important limitations:
    • Lack of large mammals, wheeled vehicles, large oceangoing ships
    • Geographical or environmental factor, including north/south orientation
  – Local and regional commerce was evident, but not long-distance trade
  – Cultural traditions did not spread as widely as in Eastern Hemisphere

Loosely Interactive Web of Commerce

• From the Great Lakes to the Andes.
  – Cultural elements spread
  – Evidence of at least contact (games, building styles, pottery, etc. found in multiple regions)
  – Gradual spread of from its origin in Mesoamerica
  – (near present-day St. Louis) was at the center of a widespread trading network in North America
  – Chaco Canyon (SW U.S.) culture also interacted with Mesoamerica (evidence of cultural traditions in New Mexico)
  – Amazon and Orinoco river exchange networks were evident when explorers arrived
  – Caribbean peoples conducted trade
  – people traded along Pacific coast of South America

The Most Active Trade Network

• There was a major trade network in Mesoamerica.
  – and traded by land
  – Maya traded by sea on coasts (with dugout canoes)
  – Mostly goods; critical to upholding the and of the royal and noble families; also was a motive for among Mesoamerican states
  – Aztecs of fifteenth century had professional (pochteca)
Trade in the Andes

- Inca trade during fifteenth century was run by the ____________
  - No merchant groups
  - Large storehouses recorded on ____________ (knotted cords used to record numerical data) by highly trained ____________
  - Incan ____________ system provided goods throughout the empire
  - Local exchange at highland ____________ and along the borders