

Mr. Aitken

Washington State History



- Native Americans in the Pacific NW.

Coastal & Plateau Tribes

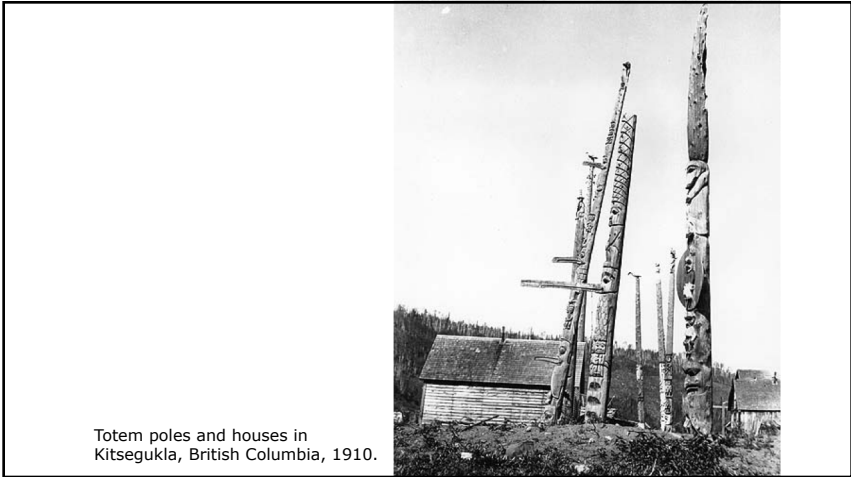
- Cascade Mountains:
 - Just like today, the Cascades formed a physical and climate barrier.
 - Different tribal cultures developed on either side of the Cascades.

Coastal Tribes

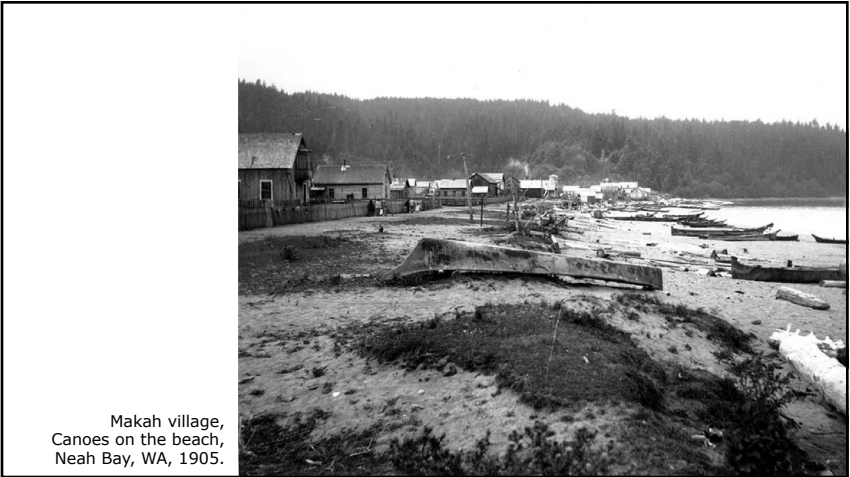
- Coastal Indians enjoyed a mild climate. Food from the sea was plentiful.
- Lived in longhouses.
- Totem poles were important spiritual symbols, and signs of wealth.
- Potlatch is a large party or gathering. Host would often give out lavish gifts.



Totem poles and houses in
Kitsegukla, British Columbia,
1910.



Totem poles and houses in Kitsegukla, British Columbia, 1910.



Makah village, Canoes on the beach, Neah Bay, WA, 1905.



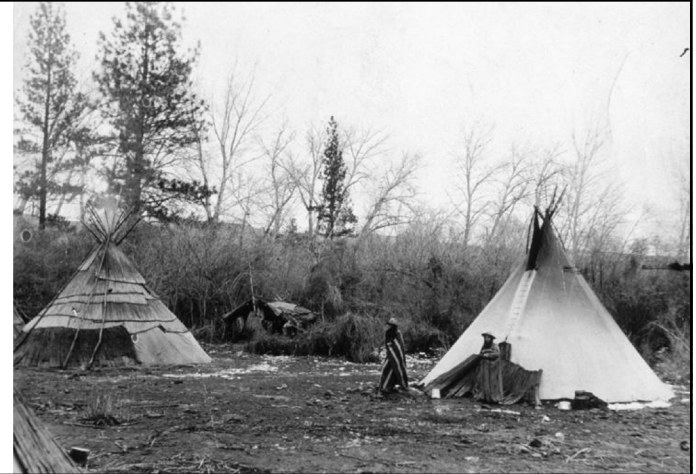
Seattle Seahawks logo, 1976-2001.



Kwakwaka'wakw transformation mask, Burke Museum.

Plateau Tribes

- Nomadic. Moved with the seasons.
- The Columbia River was a key trade corridor between coastal and plateau tribes.
- The Columbia River was also an important source of salmon.



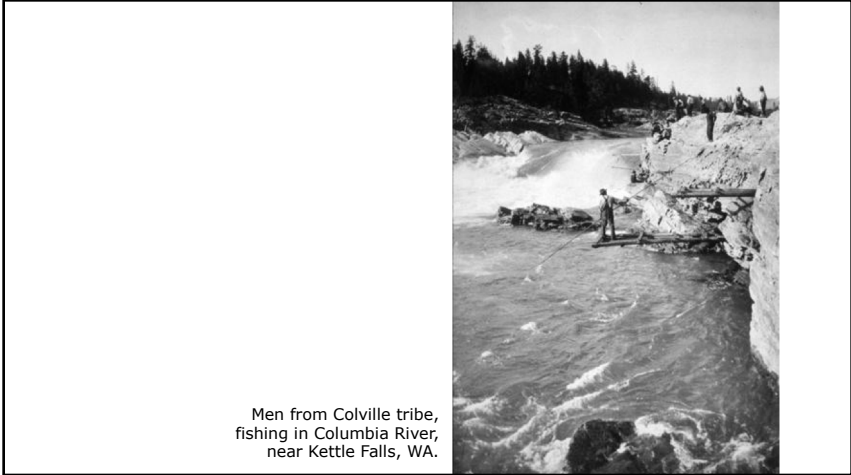
Colville teepee
and mat lodge,
Nespelem, WA.



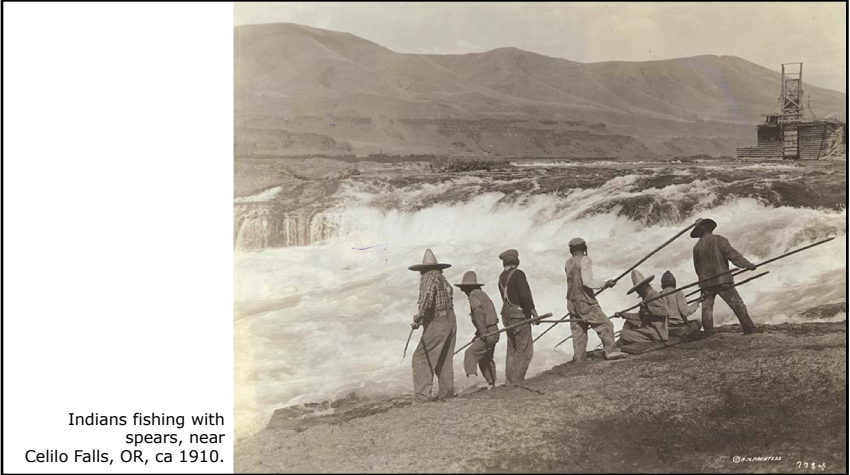
Nez Perce in
ceremonial dress,
ca. 1890.

Salmon

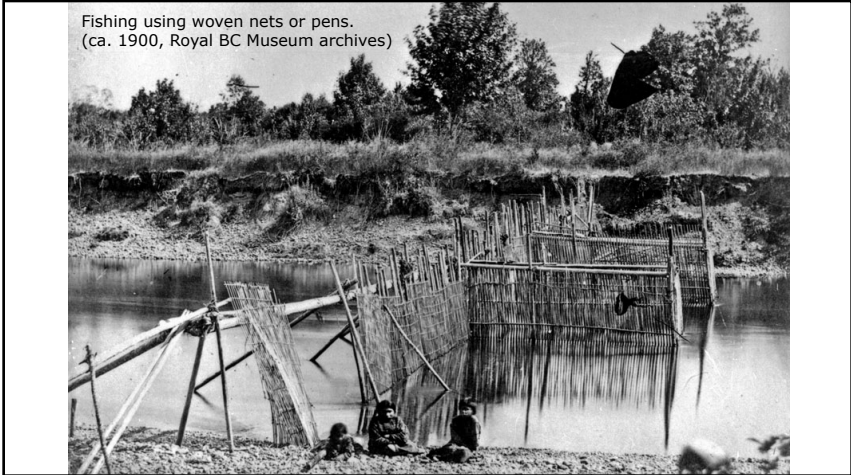
- Salmon were a significant source of food for both Coastal and Plateau Indians.
- Salmon were also used for trade.
- Salmon could be dried or smoked to preserve it to eat over winter.
- More than 15 million salmon swam up the Columbia and Snake rivers every year.



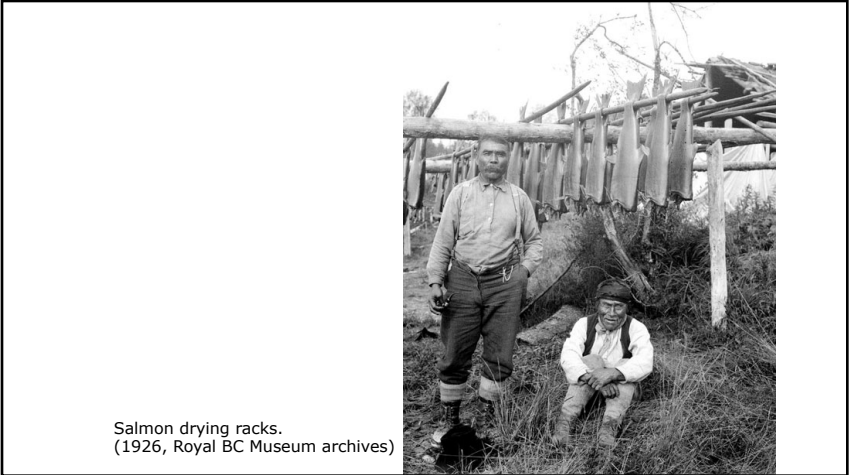
Men from Colville tribe, fishing in Columbia River, near Kettle Falls, WA.



Indians fishing with spears, near Celilo Falls, OR, ca 1910.



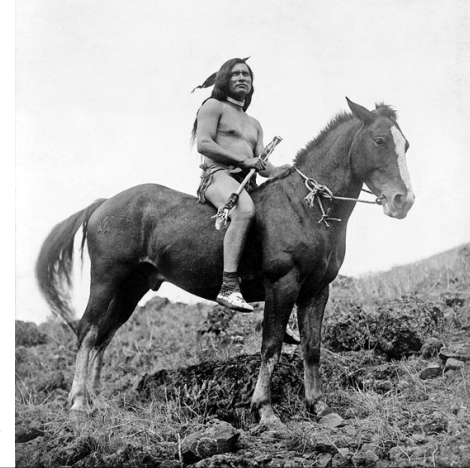
Fishing using woven nets or pens. (ca. 1900, Royal BC Museum archives)



Salmon drying racks. (1926, Royal BC Museum archives)

Horses

- Ancient horse species became extinct in North America around 12,000 years ago.
- Early natives would *NOT* have had horses.
- Horses were reintroduced to the Americas by Spanish Conquistadors in the 1500s.
- Horses were acquired by Pacific NW Indians around the late-1600s.
- Used more by nomadic plateau tribes.



Nez Perce warrior on horse,
ca. 1910

Horses

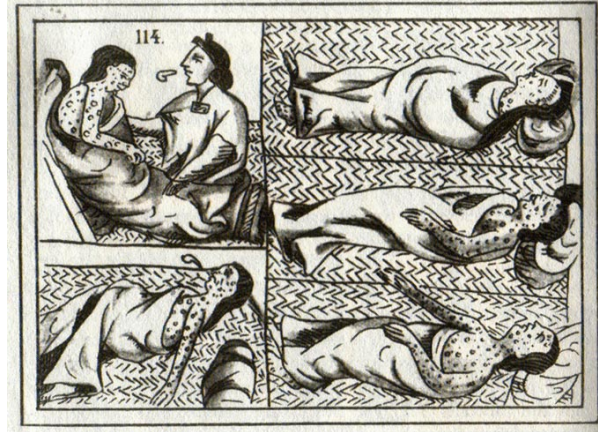
- Once acquired, horses were used more by plateau Indians than coastal Indians.
- Before horses, Indians had no domestic transportation animals. They walked or used boats.
- Horses made nomadic life much easier. Horses could easily carry people and teepees from one location to another.

Population Collapse

- There may have been as many as 18,000,000 natives in North America prior to contact with Europeans.
- Many more inhabited central and South America (25-37 million).
- Accurate numbers are extremely difficult to know with any certainty.

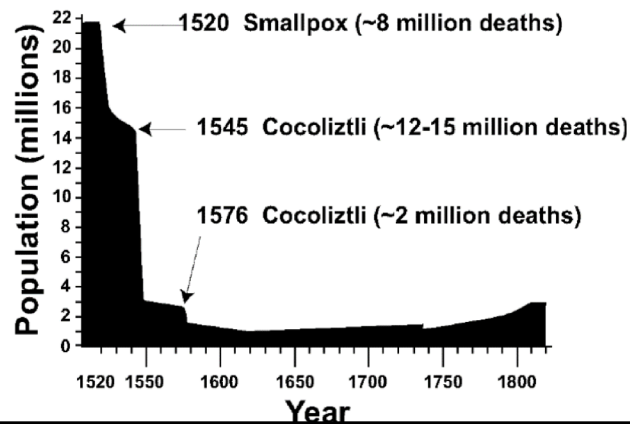
Population Collapse

- Smallpox: Invisible genocide.
- Indians had no immunity to smallpox and other European diseases.
- More than 90% population decline by 1600. Whole villages and tribes were wiped out by disease.



Smallpox. Aztec drawing, 1500s.

Population Collapse in Mexico



Population Collapse

- Such a population collapse would cause a loss of culture, learning, trade, and communication with other tribes.
- When first contact with non-Indians occurred, Indian population in the Pacific NW would have been far smaller than in the 1400s.