

Pre field trip activity for schools visiting Pecos

General information on the Pueblo world prior to Spanish settlement in 1598.

Introduction

Francisco Coronado's expedition of 1540-42 covered a large part of New Mexico and Arizona and extended out into the Great Plains. However, Coronado found no gold and Spain lost interest in its northern lands. However, beginning in 1580 several new explorers ventured north and New Mexico was settled in 1598 by Don Juan de Onate. These expeditions that preceded Onate provided a last look at the Pueblo world before it would be changed forever by the Spanish settlers; civil, lay, and Christian missionaries.

Document: A Spanish Explorer Views the Pueblos, 1580

Hernan Lamero Gallegos of the Chamuscado- Rodriguez Expedition

The people sustain themselves on corn, beans, and calabashes. They make tortillas and corn- flour gruel (atole), have buffalo meat and turkeys – they have a large number of the later. There is not an Indian who does not have a corral for his turkeys, each of which holds a flock of one hundred birds. The natives wear a Campeche- type cotton blankets, for they have large cotton fields. They raise many small shaggy dogs – which, however, are not like those owned by the Spaniards – and build underground huts in which they keep these animals.

After we took leave of this people, the Indians led us to a large pueblo of another nation, which the inhabitants received us by making the sign of the cross with their hands in token of peace, as others had done before. As the news spread, the procedure in this pueblo was followed by the others.

We entered the settlement, where the inhabitants gave us much corn. They showed us many ollas and other earthenware containers, richly painted, and brought quantities of calabashes and beans for us to eat. We took a little, so that they should not think we were greedy nor yet receive the impression that we did not want it; among themselves they consider it disparaging if one does not accept what is offered. One must take what they give, but after taking it may throw it away wherever he wishes. Should one throw it on the ground, they will not pick it up, though it may be something they can utilize. On the contrary, they will sooner let the thing rot where it is discarded. This is their practice. Thus, since we understood their custom, we took something of what they gave us. Moreover, we did this to get them into the habit of giving freely without being asked. Accordingly, they all brought what they could. The supply of corn tortillas, corn- flour gruel, calabashes, and beans which they brought was such that enough was

left over every day to feed five hundred men. Part of this the natives carried for us. The women make tortillas similar to those of New Spain, and tortillas of ground beans, too. In those pueblos there are also houses of three and four stories, similar to the ones we had seen before; but the farther one goes into the interior the larger are the pueblos and the houses, and the more numerous the people.

The way they build their houses, which are in blocks, is as follows: they burn the clay, build narrow walls, and make adobes for the doorways. The lumber used is pine or willow; and many rounded beams, ten and twelve feet long, are built into the houses. The natives have ladders by means of which they climb to their quarters. These are movable wooden ladders, for which the Indians retire at night, they pull them up to protect themselves against enemies since they are at war with one another.

These people are handsome and fair-skinned. They are very industrious. Only the men attend to work in the cornfields. The day hardly breaks before they go about with hoes in their hands. The women bust themselves only in the preparation of food, and in making and painting their pottery and *chicubites*, in which they prepare their bread. These vessels are so excellent and delicate that the process of manufacture is worth watching; for they equal, and even surpass, the pottery made in Portugal. The women also make earthen jars for carrying and storing water. These are very large, and are covered with lids of the same material. There are millstones on which the natives grind their corn and other foods. These are similar to the millstones in New Spain, except that they are stationary; and the women, if they have daughters, make them do the grinding.

These Indians are very clean people. The men bear burdens, but not the women. The manner of carrying loads, sleeping, eating, and sitting is the same as that of the Mexicans, for both men and women, except they carry water in a different way. For this the Indians make and place on their heads a cushion of palm leaves, similar to those on Old Castile, on top of which they place and carry the water jar. It is all very interesting.

The women part their hair in Spanish style. Some have light hair, which is surprising. The girls do not have rooms except when permitted by their parents. They are very obedient. They marry early; judging by what we saw, the women are given husbands when seventeen years of age. A man has one wife and now more. The women are the ones who spin, sew, weave, and paint. Some of the women, like the men, bathe frequently. Their baths are as good as those of New Spain.

In all their valleys and other lands I have seen, there are one hundred pueblos. We named the region and province San Felipe and took possession of it in the

name of his Majesty by commission of his Excellency, Don Lorenzo Suarez de Mendoza, Count of Coruna, viceroy, governor and captain-general of New Spain. (1)

Questions

1. What crops did the Pueblo Indians grow?
2. What domesticated animals did they have?
3. What materials did they use to build their homes?
4. What was the different role of men and women in the pueblo?
5. Was each pueblo a separate unit or were all the pueblos united? Cite evidence from the reading.