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WORLDS APART



WHAT WAS life like
for Native Americans prior to 1492?

WHAT BENEFITS to European princes,
merchants, and traders did exploration provide?



HOW DID the French, English,
and Spanish fare in their early efforts
in the New World?

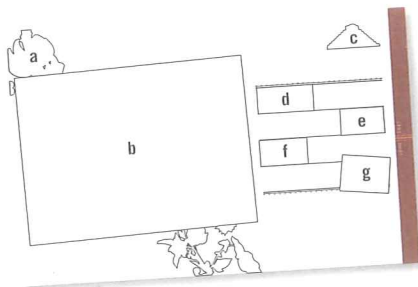
WHAT WERE the consequences
of contact between the Old and New Worlds?





IMAGE KEY

for pages 2–3



- a. Banana blossom.
- b. The meeting of Cortes and Montezuma Tenochitlan, 8 November 1519.
- c. Pyramid of Kukulcan at Chichen Itza.
- d. The coastal Algonquian village of Secoton.
- e. Dutch colonial officer Peter Minuit purchases Manhattan Island from Man-a-hat-a Native Americans.
- f. John White finding no trace of the colony of Roanoke on his return to Virginia in 1590.
- g. Aztec Indians, with smallpox contracted from the Spaniards, ministered to by a medicine man.

WHAT WAS life like for Native Americans prior to 1492?

After a journey of over two hundred miles, the exhausted man arrived in the grand city of Tenochtitlán. He had hurried from the Gulf Coast with news for the Aztec leader, Moctezuma.

Our lord and king, forgive my boldness. I am from Mictlancauhtla. When I went to the shores of the great sea, there was a mountain range or small mountain floating in the midst of the water, and moving here and there without touching the shore. My lord, we have never seen the like of this, although we guard the coast and are always on watch.

[When Moctezuma sent some officials to check on the messenger's story, they confirmed his report.]

Our lord and king, it is true that strange people have come to the shores of the great sea. They were fishing from a small boat, some with rods and others with a net. They fished until late and then they went back to their two great towers and climbed up into them. . . . They have very light skin, much lighter than ours. They all have long beards, and their hair comes only to their ears.

Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the conquest of Mexico* (Boston, 1962).

MOCTEZUMA RECEIVED NEWS, like the messenger's initial report, filled with foreboding. In Aztec religion, omens and prophecies were thought to foreshadow coming events. Several unusual omens had recently occurred—blazing lights in the sky, one temple struck by lightning and another that spontaneously burst into flames, monstrous beings that appeared and vanished. Now light-skinned strangers were offshore. Magicians warned that trouble lay ahead.

The messenger's journey to Tenochtitlán occurred in 1519. The "mountains" he saw were the sails of European ships, and the strange men were Spanish soldiers under the command of Hernán Cortés. Like Columbus's voyage to the Caribbean in 1492, Cortés's arrival in Mexico is often considered a key episode in the European discovery of the "New World." But we might also view the messenger's entry into the Aztec capital as announcing the native Mexicans' discovery of a New World to the east, from which the strangers must have come. Neither the Aztecs nor the Spaniards could have foreseen the far-reaching consequences of these twin discoveries. Before long, Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans—who had previously lived worlds apart would come together to create a world that was new to all of them.

DIFFERENT WORLDS

The New World reflected the diverse experiences of the peoples who built it. Improving economic conditions in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries propelled Europeans overseas to seek new opportunities for trade and settlement. Spain, Portugal, France, and England competed within Europe, and their conflict carried over into the Americas. Native Americans drew upon their familiarity with the land and its resources, their patterns of political and religious authority, and their systems of trade and warfare to deal with the European newcomers. Africans were brought to the Americas by the Europeans to work as slaves. They too would draw on their cultural heritage to cope with a new land and a harsh life.



◆ AMERICAN VIEWS ◆

CABEZA DE VACA AMONG THE INDIANS (1530)



Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca came to the New World in 1527 in search of riches, not suffering. But the Spanish expedition of which he was a member met disaster shortly after it arrived in Florida on a mission to conquer the region north of the Gulf of Mexico. Of an original group of three hundred soldiers, only Cabeza de Vaca and three other men (including one African slave) survived by walking thousands of miles overland from the Gulf Coast to northern Mexico. This eight-year-long ordeal tested their wits and physical endurance. Instead of entering Indian villages as proud conquistadors, Cabeza de Vaca and his companions encountered native peoples from a position of weakness. To survive, they had to adapt to the ways of the peoples across whose land they passed. After Cabeza de Vaca made it back to Mexico City, he described his experiences in a report to the king of Spain. This remarkable document offers vivid descriptions of the territory extending from northern Florida to northern Mexico and the many peoples who inhabited it. It also reveals much about Cabeza de Vaca himself and the changes he made to survive.

WHILE LIVING among the Capoques, what sort of work did Cabeza de Vaca have to do, and why? Why did Cabeza de Vaca decide to become a merchant? What advantages did this way of life offer him? Why did the Indians welcome Cabeza de Vaca into their communities, even though he was a stranger?

I had to stay with the Capoques more than a year. Because of the hard work they put me to, and their harsh treatment, I resolved to flee to the people of Charruco in the forests of the main. . . . My life had become unbearable. In addition to much other work, I had to grub roots in the water or from underground in the canebrakes. My fingers got so raw that if a straw touched them they would bleed. The broken canes

often slashed my flesh; I had to work amidst them without benefit of clothes.

So I set to contriving how I might transfer to the forest-dwellers, who looked more propitious. My solution was to turn to trade.

[Escaping to Charruco about February 1530,] I did my best to devise ways of making my traffic profitable so I could get food and good treatment. The various Indians would beg me to go from one quarter to another for things they needed; their incessant hostilities made it impossible for them to travel cross-country or make many exchanges.

But as a neutral merchant I went into the interior as far as I pleased. . . . My principal wares were cones and other pieces of sea-snail, conchs used for cutting, sea-beads, and a fruit like a bean [from mesquite trees] which the Indians value very highly, using it for a medicine and for a ritual beverage in their dances and festivities. This is the sort of thing I carried inland. By barter I got and brought back to the coast skins, red ochre which they rub on their faces, hard canes for arrows, flint for arrowheads, with sinews and cement to attach them, and tassels of deer hair which they dye red.

This occupation suited me; I could travel where I wished, was not obliged to work, and was not a slave. Wherever I went, the Indians treated me honorably and gave me food, because they liked my commodities. They were glad to see me when I came and delighted to be brought what they wanted. I became well known; those who did not know me personally knew me by reputation and sought my acquaintance. This served my main purpose, which all the while was to determine an eventual road out.

Source: Cyclone Covey, ed., *Cabeza de Vaca's Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America*, pp. 66–67. Reprinted by permission of Scribner, a Division of Simon & Schuster. © 1961 by Macmillan Publishing Company.



NATIVE AMERICAN SOCIETIES BEFORE 1492

Convinced that he had landed in the East Indies in 1492 Columbus called the people he met *indios*. His error is preserved in the word *Indian*, used by Europeans to identify the original inhabitants of the two American continents.

By 1492, the continents of North and South America had been inhabited for a long time—estimates range from 15,000 to 50,000 years. The human population of the two continents may have been as high as 70 million—nearly equal to the population of Europe at that time, most of them south of what is now the border between the United States and Mexico. These people belonged to hundreds of groups, each with its own language or dialect, history, and way of life.

The first Americans were nomadic hunters from Siberia who probably came in several waves across a land bridge that once connected Siberia and Alaska. Some may have arrived from Asia as recently as 8,000 years ago. They and their descendants gradually ranged southward and eastward, spreading throughout North and South America.

QUICK REVIEW

The Earliest Americans

- Paleo-Indians were resourceful hunters.
- During the Archaic period Indians adapted to regional environments.
- Farming began near the end of the Archaic Period.

The earliest Americans, whom archaeologists call *Paleo-Indians*, traveled in small bands, tracking and killing mammoths, bison, and other large game. Paleo-Indians were resourceful hunters who crafted sharp stone points for their spears. Their efficiency may have led to overhunting for by 9000 B.C. mammoths, mastodons, and other game had become extinct. The world's climate also grew warmer, turning grasslands into deserts and reducing the animals' food supply, hastening their disappearance. This meant that humans had to find other food sources.

Between roughly 8000 B.C. and 1500 B.C.—what archaeologists call the *Archaic* period—Indians adapted to regional environments, learning to use local resources efficiently. Gradually, populations grew, and people began living in larger villages. Men did most of the hunting and fishing. Women remained closer to home, gathering and preparing wild plant foods and caring for children. Each group made the tools it used, with men carving fishhooks and arrowheads and women making bone needles and baskets.

Archaic Indians also collected local nonfood resources, including rocks, shells, and bones. They fashioned goods from these materials and traded them with other peoples, sometimes hundreds of miles away. At Indian Knoll, in western Kentucky, archaeologists have found copper from the Great Lakes area and shells from as far away as the Gulf of Mexico. Ideas as well as goods circulated among Archaic Indian peoples. Across the continent, human burials became more elaborate, suggesting that ideas about death and the afterlife passed between groups. Bodies might be wrapped in woven mats or cloths, and the deceased's personal possessions were often placed in the grave.

Near the end of the Archaic period, some groups began farming. Around 5000 B.C., the people of southern Mexico started raising an ancient type of maize, or corn. At first, farming supplemented a diet still largely dependent on hunting and gathering, but agriculture gradually became more widespread. In addition to maize, the main crop in both South and North America, farmers in Mexico, Central America, and the Peruvian Andes learned to cultivate peppers, beans, pumpkins, squash, avocados, sweet and white potatoes (native to the Peruvian highlands), and tomatoes. Mexican farmers also grew cotton. Maize and bean cultivation spread from Mexico in a wide arc to the north and east. Peoples in what is now the southwestern United States began farming between 1500 and 500 B.C., and by A.D. 200, farmers tilled the soil in present-day Georgia and Florida.

Wherever agriculture took hold, populations grew, since farming produced a more secure food supply than hunting and gathering. Permanent villages ap-

peared as farmers settled near their fields. In central Mexico, agriculture eventually sustained the populations of large cities. Trade in agricultural surpluses flowed through exchange networks. In many Indian societies, women's status improved because of their role as the principal farmers. Specialized craftworkers produced pottery and baskets to store harvested grains. Even religious beliefs and practices reflected the centrality of farming. In describing the origins of their people, Pueblo Indians of the Southwest compared their emergence from the underworld to a maize plant sprouting from the earth.

Despite their diversity, certain generalizations can be made about societies that developed within broad regions, or *culture areas* (see Map 1-1, p. 8). Throughout the North and West, Indians did not adopt agriculture. In the challenging environment of the Arctic and Subarctic, small nomadic bands moved seasonally to fish, follow game, and, in the brief summers, gather wild berries. Far to the north, Eskimos and Aleuts hunted whales, seals, and other sea mammals. Further inland, the Crees and other peoples followed migrating herds of caribou and moose. Northern peoples fashioned tools and weapons of bone and ivory, clothing and boats from animal skins, and houses of whalebones and hides or blocks of sod or snow.

Along the Northwest Coast and Columbia River Plateau, abundant resources supported one of the most densely populated areas of North America. With rivers teeming with salmon and other fish and forests full of game and edible plants, people prospered without agriculture. Among groups like the Kwakiutls and Chinooks, extended families lived in large communal houses located in villages of several hundred people.

Farther south, in present-day California, hunter-gatherers lived in smaller villages, several of which might be led by the same chief. These settlements usually adjoined oak groves, where Indians gathered acorns. To protect their access to this important food, chiefs and villagers vigorously defended their territorial claims to the oak groves.

Small nomadic bands in the Great Basin, where the climate was warm and dry, lived in caves and rock shelters. Shoshone hunters captured antelope in corrals and trapped small game, such as squirrels and rabbits. In present-day Utah and western Colorado, Utes hunted elk, bison, and mountain sheep and fished in mountain streams. Women gathered pinyon nuts, seeds, and wild berries. In hard times, people ate rattlesnakes, horned toads, and insects. They celebrated whenever food was plentiful and urged religious leaders to seek supernatural help when starvation loomed.

Mesoamerica, the birthplace of agriculture in North America, extends from central Mexico into Central America. A series of complex, literate, urban cultures emerged in this region, beginning around 1200 B.C. with the Olmecs, who flourished on Mexico's Gulf Coast until 400 B.C. The Olmecs and other early Mesoamerican peoples built cities featuring large pyramids, developed religious practices that included human sacrifice, and devised calendars and writing systems.

Mayan civilization followed, reaching its greatest glory between about A.D. 150 and 900 in the southern Yucatán, creating Mesoamerica's most advanced writing and calendrical systems and developing a sophisticated mathematics that included the concept of zero. The Mayans of the southern Yucatán suffered a decline after 900, but there were still many thriving Mayan centers in the northern Yucatán in 1492. The great city of Teotihuacán dominated central Mexico from the first century to the eighth century A.D. and influenced much of the rest of Mesoamerica through trade and conquest.

Some two hundred years after the fall of Teotihuacán, the Toltecs, a warrior people, rose to prominence, dominating central Mexico from about 900 to 1100.

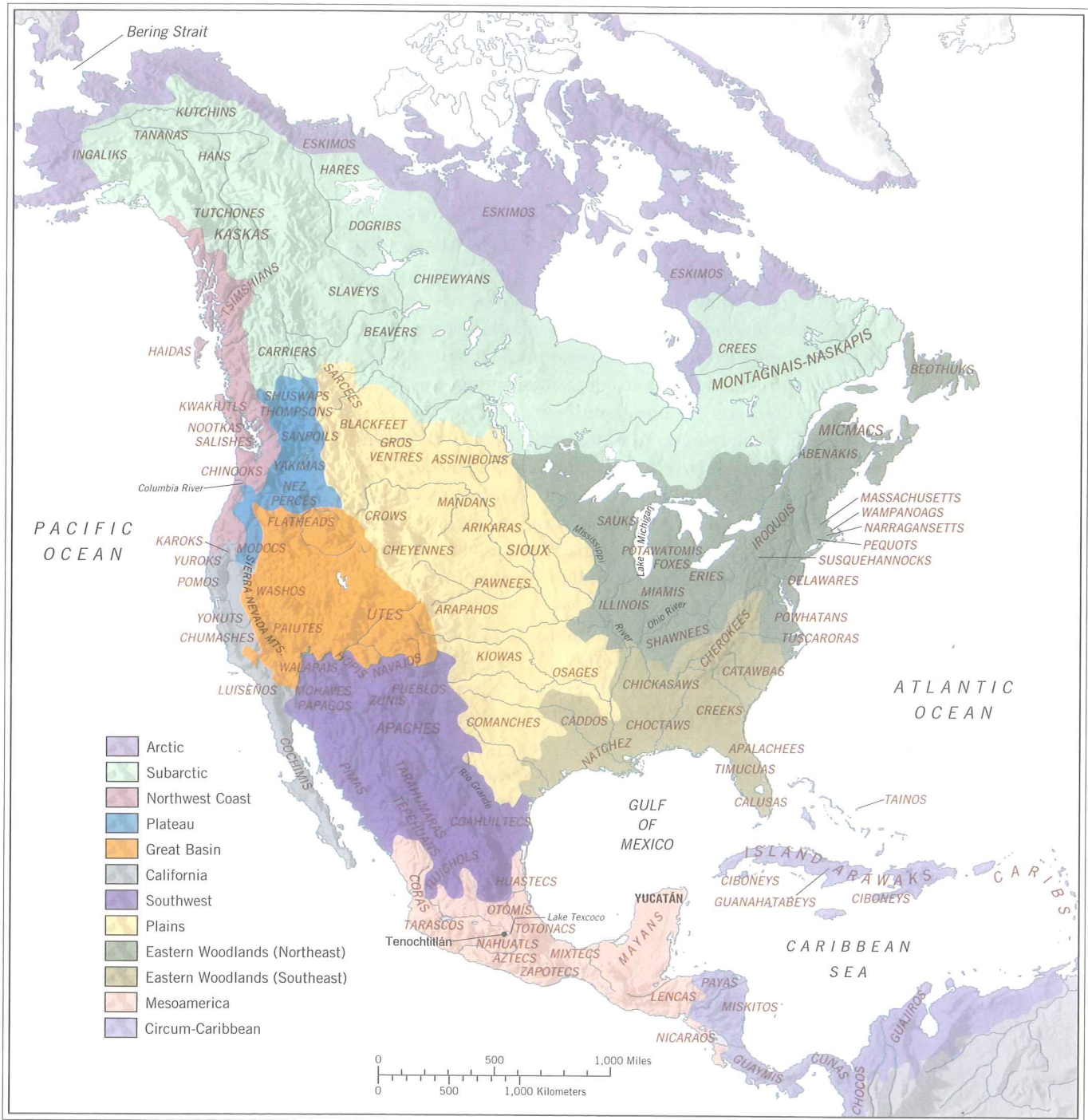
QUICK REVIEW

Mesoamerica

- ◆ Mesoamerica was the birthplace of agriculture in North America.
- ◆ Olmecs were the first literate urban culture in the region.
- ◆ Mayan civilization reached its height between A.D. 150 and 900.

MAP EXPLORATION

To explore an interactive version of this map go to <http://www.prenhall.com/goldfield2/map1.1>



MAP 1-1

North American Culture Areas, c. 1500 Over the course of centuries, Indian peoples in North America developed distinctive cultures suited to the environments in which they lived. Inhabitants of each culture area shared basic patterns of subsistence, craftwork, and social organization. Most, but not all, Indian peoples combined farming with hunting and gathering.

WHAT DOES this map tell you about the role different geographic regions in the Americas played in determining the type of culture (social organization, hunting, farming, etc.) the inhabitants of those regions developed?



In the wake of the Toltec collapse, the **Aztecs**, another warrior people, migrated from the north into the Valley of Mexico and built a great empire that soon controlled much of Mesoamerica. The Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán, was a city of great plazas, broad avenues, magnificent temples and palaces, ball courts, and busy marketplaces. Built on islands in the middle of Lake Texcoco, it was connected to the mainland by four broad causeways. In 1492, Tenochtitlán was home to some 200,000 people, one of the largest cities in the world at the time.

In the great pyramid in Tenochtitlán, Aztec priests sacrificed human victims—by cutting open their chests and removing their still-beating hearts—to offer to the gods to prevent them from destroying the earth. Hundreds, even thousands, of victims died in ceremonies that sometimes lasted for days.

Aztec culture expanded through continuous military conquest, driven by a quest for sacrificial victims and for wealth in the form of tribute payments of gold, food, and handcrafted goods. Neighboring peoples hated the Aztecs and submitted to them out of fear. With a powerful ally to lead them, they would readily turn on their overlords and bring the empire down.

Native societies emerging north of Mexico shared certain characteristics with those of Mesoamerica. The introduction of a drought-resistant type of maize (probably from Mexico) into the desert Southwest in 400 B.C. enabled a series of cultures to develop. Beginning about 300 B.C., the Hohokams settled in southern Arizona, eventually building permanent villages of several hundred people. Substantial harvests of beans, corn, and squash, watered by a complex system of canals, fed Hohokam villagers. In large communities, inhabitants built ball courts similar to those found in Mexico. Artisans wove cotton cloth and made goods reflecting Mesoamerican artistic styles out of shell, turquoise, and clay. Extensive trade networks linked the Hohokams to places as far away as California and Mexico. Their culture endured for over a thousand years and then disappeared mysteriously by 1450.

Beginning around A.D. 1, the Anasazis (their name is Navaho for “ancient alien ones”) settled where the borders of present-day Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico meet. They gradually adopted agriculture, first adding maize and later beans and squash to a diet of wild foods. Scarce rainfall, routed through dams and hillside terraces, watered the crops.

The Anasazis originally lived in villages on mesas or canyon floors. Their dwellings included special rooms, or *kivas*, for religious ceremonies. The largest communal dwelling, Pueblo Bonito in New Mexico’s Chaco Canyon, covered three acres and contained 650 to 800 rooms, housing about 1,200 people. Pueblo Bonito may have been the center of Anasazi society from about A.D. 900 to 1100.

After around 1200, the Anasazis began carving multistoried houses into canyon walls. These were not easy places in which to live, and they could be reached only by difficult climbs up steep cliffs and along narrow ledges. Archaeologists suggest that warfare and climate change forced the Anasazis into these homes. Around 1200, a colder climate reduced food supplies, and food scarcity may have encouraged violence. The Anasazis may have moved to the cliff dwellings for protection. By 1300, most Anasazi survivors had dispersed to villages along the Rio Grande.

The Pueblo peoples of the Southwest, including the Hopis and Zunis, are descendants of the Anasazis. In 1492, many lived in large communal dwellings in permanent villages (*pueblo* is the Spanish word for “village”). Pueblo men did most of the farming, and in religious rituals all Pueblos prayed to the gods for rain for the all-important harvest.

The Great Plains of the continent’s interior were much less densely settled than the desert Southwest. Scattered villages of Mandans, Pawnees, and other groups clung

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

Mesa Verde National Park,
Coloradowww.mesa.verde.national-park.com

Aztecs A warrior people who dominated the Valley of Mexico from 1100–1521.



CHRONOLOGY

<p>c. 40,000–8,000 B.C.</p> <p>c. 10,000–9000 B.C.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">c. 9000 B.C.</p> <p>c. 8000–1500 B.C.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">c. 3000 B.C.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">c. 1500 B.C.</p> <p>c. 500 B.C.–400 A.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">c. 700–1600 A.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 4em;">c. 900</p> <p style="padding-left: 4em;">c. 1000</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">c. 1000–1500</p> <p style="padding-left: 4em;">c. 1290s</p> <p>1400–1600</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">1430s</p>	<p>Ancestors of Native Americans cross to Americas.</p> <p>Paleo-Indians expand through the Americas.</p> <p>Extinction of large land mammals in North America.</p> <p>Archaic Indian era.</p> <p>Beginnings of agriculture in Mesoamerica.</p> <p>Earliest mound-building culture begins.</p> <p>Adena-Hopewell mound-building culture.</p> <p>Rise of West African empires.</p> <p>First mounds built at Cahokia. Anasazi expansion.</p> <p>Spread of Islam in West Africa.</p> <p>Last mound-building culture, the Mississippian.</p> <p>Anasazi dispersal into smaller pueblos.</p> <p>Renaissance in Europe.</p> <p>Beginnings of Portuguese slave trade in West Africa.</p>	<p>1492</p> <p>1494</p> <p>1497</p> <p>1497–1499</p> <p>1517</p> <p>1519–1521</p> <p>1532–1533</p> <p>1534–1542</p> <p>1540–1542</p> <p>1542–1543</p> <p>1558</p> <p>1565</p> <p>1560s–1580s</p> <p>1587</p> <p>1598</p>	<p>End of <i>reconquista</i> in Spain. Christopher Columbus's first voyage.</p> <p>Treaty of Tordesillas.</p> <p>John Cabot visits Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.</p> <p>Vasco da Gama sails around Africa to reach India.</p> <p>Protestant Reformation begins in Germany.</p> <p>Hernán Cortés conquers the Aztec empire.</p> <p>Francisco Pizarro conquers the Inca empire.</p> <p>Jacques Cartier explores eastern Canada for France.</p> <p>Coronado explores southwestern North America.</p> <p>Roberval's failed colony in Canada.</p> <p>Elizabeth I becomes queen of England.</p> <p>Spanish establish outpost at St. Augustine in Florida.</p> <p>English renew attempts to conquer Ireland.</p> <p>Founding of "Lost Colony" of Roanoke.</p> <p>Spanish found colony at New Mexico.</p>
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to tree-lined rivers. Women raised crops and gathered wild plants for food and medicine. Men hunted bison, whose skin and bones were used for clothing, shelter, and tools. Plains Indians moved frequently, seeking more fertile land or better hunting.

The spread of agriculture transformed native societies in the Eastern Woodlands, a vast territory extending from the Mississippi Valley to the Atlantic seaboard. Farming first appeared around 2500 B.C. but was not firmly established until about A.D. 700. As agriculture spread, several "mound-building" societies—named for the large earthworks their members constructed—developed in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. The oldest flourished in Louisiana between 1500 and 700 B.C. Members of the Adena-Hopewell culture, which appeared in the Ohio Valley between 500 B.C. and A.D. 400, built hundreds of mounds, often in the shapes of humans, birds, and serpents. Most mounds were grave sites, where people were buried with valuable goods, many obtained through long-distance trade.

The last mound-building culture, the Mississippian, emerged between 1000 and 1500 in the Mississippi Valley. One of the largest cities was **Cahokia**, located on the Mississippi River across from present-day St. Louis. By 1250, Cahokia, the largest city north of Mexico, had perhaps thirty thousand residents, making it about the same size as medieval London. Its central feature was a 100-foot-high mound, the world's largest earthwork. Cahokia dominated the Mississippi Valley, but numerous other towns, some with hundreds or thousands



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

★ Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Collinsville, Illinois
www.siu.edu/CAHOKIAMOUNDS

Cahokia One of the largest urban centers created by Mississippian peoples, containing 30,000 residents in 1250.



of residents, dotted the Woodlands region, linked by trade networks. Powerful chiefs, thought to be related to the sun, dominated these communities.

Mississippian culture began to decline in the thirteenth century. Food shortages and warfare drove people from the great cities into the countryside. Elements of Mississippian culture survived among dispersed Woodlands people, particularly methods of maize and bean agriculture. By 1492, although the large cities of the Mississippian era had disappeared, Woodlands Indians maintained long-distance trade links throughout the region, with such precious goods as copper, shell beads, and pearls passing among groups.

The Caribbean islanders whom Columbus first encountered descended from ancient cultures. Ancestors of the Tainos probably came from what is now Venezuela. The Guanahatabeys of western Cuba originated in Florida, and the Caribs of the easternmost islands moved from Brazil's Orinoco Valley. Island peoples began farming perhaps in the first century A.D. on clearings made in the tropical forests. Canoes carried trade goods throughout the Caribbean, as well as Mesoamerica and coastal South America.

By 1492, as many as 4 million people may have inhabited the Caribbean islands. Powerful chiefs ruled over villages, conducted war and diplomacy, and distributed food and other goods obtained as tribute from villages. Elite islanders were easily recognized by their fine clothing, bright feather headdresses, and golden ear and nose ornaments—items that eventually attracted European visitors' attention.

Long before 1492, North America had witnessed centuries of dynamic change. Populations grew and spread across thousands of miles of territory. Farmers developed new varieties of essential food plants. Empires rose and fell. Large cities flourished and disappeared. People formed alliances with trading partners and warred with groups who refused to trade. Because their histories have been preserved in oral traditions and archaeological evidence rather than written documents, they are less distinct, but no less real, than the Europeans whom they would soon meet.

CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS

Misunderstandings inevitably arose between Indians and Europeans when such dissimilar peoples encountered each other for the first time. Even simple transactions had unexpected results. When Columbus showed swords to the Tainos, for example, “they took them by the edge and through ignorance cut themselves” because they had never seen metal weapons. Similarly, French explorers choked when they tried to smoke unfamiliar Iroquois tobacco, which tasted, one of them reported, like “powdered pepper.”



This artist's rendering, based on archaeological evidence, suggests the size and magnificence of the Mississippian city of Cahokia. By the thirteenth century, it was as populous as medieval London and served as a center of trade for the vast interior of North America.

Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site.



Many misunderstandings, however, had far graver consequences for the outcome of the encounter. Each group struggled to understand the strange behavior and customs of the other. Europeans usually decided that native practices were not just different from their own but inferior. Indians doubtless felt the same about European practices but their opinions were rarely recorded.

Religious differences were the hardest to reconcile. Seeing no churches or recognizable religious practices among the Tainos, Columbus wrote, “I do not detect in them any religion.” His comment derived from his own Christian background. Christian Europeans worshiped one God in an organized church led by trained priests. They preserved their religious traditions in a written bible. Most Indians, however, believed in a variety of gods. They considered nature itself to be sacred and understood certain beings, including plants, animals, and stars, to possess spiritual powers. Indians living north of Mexico preserved religious beliefs through oral traditions, not in writing. Their religious leaders performed ceremonies that mediated between the human and spiritual worlds. Europeans, however, thought that these men were magicians or even witches. They assumed that Indians worshiped the devil and insisted that they adopt Christianity. In the face of this demand, many native peoples doubtless shared the opinion voiced by some Iroquois: “We do not know that God, we have never seen him, we know not who he is.”

Europeans also disapproved of the relative equality of men and women they observed among some Native American peoples. Europeans believed that men were naturally superior to women and should dominate them. But in North America they encountered female rulers among the Wampanoags and Powhatans and learned that among groups such as the Hurons, women helped select chiefs. They found that many Indian societies, including the Pueblos, Hurons, and Iroquois, were *matrilineal*; that is, they traced descent through the mother’s family line instead of the father’s, as Europeans did.

In most Indian societies, men cleared the fields, but women planted and harvested the crops. Women also prepared food, cared for children, made clothing and baskets, carried burdens, and, in some regions, broke down, transported, and reassembled shelters when villages changed location. Europeans, who came from a society in which men did most agricultural work, thought that Indian women lived “a most slavish life.” Misjudging the importance of Indian men’s roles as hunters and warriors, Europeans scorned them as lazy husbands. Such confusion worked both ways. Massachusetts Indians ridiculed English husbands “for spoiling good working creatures” because they did not send their wives into the fields.

The ultimate source of conflict between Indians and Europeans was the intention of the Europeans to dominate the land. Within three days of his arrival in America, Columbus announced his intention “not to pass by any island of which I did not take possession” and soon speculated on the possibility of enslaving Indians. Native peoples everywhere challenged European claims to possession of their lands and resisted European attempts at domination.

WEST AFRICAN SOCIETIES

Many Europeans followed Columbus’s lead in exploring what they soon realized was not Asia after all. Yet in the three centuries after 1492, fully six out of seven people who crossed the Atlantic to the Americas were not Europeans but Africans, the vast majority of whom arrived as slaves. Most came from West Africa, and like the inhabitants of North America or Europe, they belonged to many different ethnic groups, each with its own language and culture (see Map 1–2).

In 1492, Timbuktu, with a population of perhaps seventy thousand, was one of the greatest cities in West Africa. Located on the Niger River, the flourishing com-

QUICK REVIEW

Women in Indian Society

- ◆ Many Indian societies had female rulers.
- ◆ Pueblos, Hurons, and Iroquois were matrilineal.
- ◆ Most Indian societies divided labor on the basis of gender.



Craftsman from the West African kingdom of Benin were renowned for their remarkable bronze sculptures. This intricate bronze plaque depicts four African warriors in full military dress. The two tiny figures in the background may be Portuguese soldiers, who first arrived in Benin in the late fifteenth century.

Benin bronze plaque. National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Aldo Turino, Art Resource, N.Y.

mercial metropolis was the seat of the powerful Songhai empire ruled by Sunni Ali. The city was a center of trade as well as government. A visitor in 1526 described Timbuktu's busy streets lined with "shops of artificers and merchants, and especially of such as weave linen and cotton cloth," and reported—with some exaggeration—that the inhabitants "are exceeding rich."

The Songhai empire was only the latest in a series of powerful states to develop in western Sudan, the vast plain lying south of the arid Sahara. This large and wealthy empire emerged around 1450, dominating the Sudan until it fell to a Moroccan invasion in 1591. Large empires did not appear in coastal West Africa, although the Asante, Dahomey, Oyo, and Bini kingdoms there grew to be powerful. Other coastal peoples, such as the Mendes and Ibos, lived in autonomous villages where all adult males participated in making decisions.

In the vast grasslands of the Sudan, people raised cattle and cultivated millet and sorghum. In the 1500s, European visitors introduced varieties of Asian rice, which soon became another important crop. On the coast—where rain falls nearly every day—people grew yams, bananas, and various kinds of beans and peas in forest clearings. They also kept sheep, goats, and poultry.

West Africans were skilled artisans and particularly fine metalworkers. Smiths produced intricate bronze sculptures, designed distinctive miniature gold weights, and forged weapons.

Complex trade networks linked inland and coastal states, and long-distance commercial connections tied West Africa to southern Europe and the Middle East. For centuries, mines in the area of present-day Guinea and Mali produced tons of gold each year, which was exchanged for North African salt, a rare commodity in West Africa. North African merchants also bought pepper, leather, and ivory. The wealth generated by this trans-Saharan trade contributed to the rise of the Songhai and earlier empires.

Most West Africans, however, were farmers, not merchants. West African men and women shared agricultural tasks. Men generally prepared fields for planting, while women cultivated the crops, harvested them, and dried grain for storage. Men also hunted and, in the grassland regions, herded cattle. Women in the coastal areas owned and cared for other livestock, including goats and sheep. West African women regularly traded goods, including their crops, in local markets.

Family connections helped define each person's place in society. West Africans emphasized not only ties between parents and children but also those linking aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Groups of families formed clans that further extended an individual's kin ties. Most clans were *patrilineal*—tracing descent through the father's line—but some (including the Akans and Ibos) were matrilineal.

Religious beliefs magnified the powerful influence of family on African life. Africans believed that their ancestors acted as mediators between the worlds of the living and the dead. Families held elaborate funerals, which helped keep the memory of ancestors alive for younger generations.

West Africans worshiped a supreme being and several subordinate deities. West Africans, like Native Americans, believed that the gods often sent spirits to speak to people. And like Native American priests who mediated between the human and spirit worlds, West African medicine men and women provided protection against evil spirits and sorcerers. Religious ceremonies took place in sacred places often near water—but not in buildings that Europeans recognized as churches. And like the Indians, West Africans preserved their faith through oral traditions.

Islam began to take root in West Africa around the eleventh century, probably introduced by Muslim traders from North Africa. By the fifteenth century, the

QUICK REVIEW

West African Society

- ◆ West Africans were skilled artisans and metalworkers.
- ◆ Most West Africans were farmers.
- ◆ Most West African clans were patrilineal.



Located in Djenné, Mali, this massive mosque, made of sun-hardened mud, dates from the fourteenth century. At that time, Djenné prospered as a center of trade and Islamic learning.

James Stanfield, National Geographic Image Collection.

cities of Timbuktu and Djenné had become centers of Islamic learning. Even so, most West Africans probably retained traditional religious beliefs and practices.

Before the fifteenth century, Europeans knew little about Africa beyond its Mediterranean coast. Spain, much of which had been subject to Islamic rule before 1492, had stronger ties to North Africa than most of Europe, but Christian merchants from other European lands had also traded for centuries with North Africans. When stories of West African gold reached the ears of European traders, they tried to move deeper into the continent, but they encountered powerful Muslim merchants intent on monopolizing the gold trade.

The kingdom of Portugal, eager to expand its trade, sought in the early fifteenth century to circumvent this Muslim monopoly. In 1415, Portuguese forces conquered Ceuta in Morocco and gained a foothold on the continent. Portuguese mariners gradually explored the West African coast, establishing trading posts along the way to exchange horses, clothing, wine, lead, iron, and steel for African gold, grain, animal skins, cotton, pepper, and camels.

By the 1430s, the Portuguese had discovered perhaps the greatest source of wealth they could extract from Africa—slaves. Slavery had long been a part of West African society. African law made land available to anyone willing to cultivate it—provided that no one else was using the same plot—and the possession of a large labor force to work the land became the principal means to wealth. Some people became slaves as punishment for crime, but most slaves were captured in raids into neighboring territories, a regular feature of African life.

Most slaves worked at a variety of tasks for their owners. Many labored more or less independently as farmers, producing surplus crops for their masters. Some rulers acquired female slaves to serve as wives, concubines, or workers. Powerful Sudanese rulers employed large numbers of slaves as bureaucrats and soldiers, rewarding them for loyal service with good treatment and, occasionally, freedom.

Europeans who observed African slaves' relative freedom and variety of employment often concluded that slaves in Africa were "slaves in name only." Slavery in Africa was not necessarily a permanent status and did not automatically apply



to the slaves' children. European purchasers of African slaves generally treated them much more harshly. Slavery became even more oppressive as it developed in the Americas.

WESTERN EUROPE ON THE EVE OF DISCOVERY

When Columbus sailed from Spain in 1492, he left a continent recovering from the devastating disease and warfare of the fourteenth century and about to embark on the devastating religious conflicts of the sixteenth century. Between 1337 and 1453, England and France had exhausted each other in a series of conflicts known as the Hundred Years' War. And between 1347 and 1351, an epidemic known as the *Black Death* (bubonic plague) killed perhaps a third of all Europeans, with results that were felt for more than a century.

The plague left Europe with far fewer workers, but the survivors learned to be more efficient, adopting labor-saving techniques to increase productivity. Metalworkers, for instance, built larger furnaces with huge bellows driven by water power. Shipbuilders redesigned vessels with steering mechanisms that could be managed by smaller crews. Innovations in banking, accounting, and insurance also fostered economic recovery.

By 1500, Europe had a stronger, more productive economy than ever before, but not everyone prospered equally. In parts of England, France, Sweden, and the German states, peasants and workers rebelled against the propertied classes. Protests grew from the workers' desire to protect their improving economic fortunes. They did not want to see their rising wages eaten up by higher rents and taxes.

In some parts of Europe, economic improvement encouraged an extraordinary cultural movement known as the *Renaissance*—a “rebirth” of interest in the classical civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome. The Renaissance originated in the city-states of Italy, where a prosperous and educated urban class promoted learning and artistic expression. Wealthy townspeople joined princes in becoming patrons of the arts, offering financial support to numerous painters, sculptors, architects, writers, and musicians.

European states were hierarchical, with their populations divided into fairly rigid classes. Monarchs stood at the top of society. Just below were the aristocrats, who, along with the royal family, dominated government and owned most of the land. Next came prosperous gentry families, independent landowners, and, at the bottom, landless peasants and laborers.

Most of Europe's people were peasant farmers. Peasant men did most of the heavy field work, while women helped at planting and harvest time and cared for children, livestock, and the household. The economic recovery after the Black Death brought prosperity to some families, but crop failures and disease could often cause great suffering in villages and towns.

European society was *patriarchal*, with men dominating political and economic life. Men also controlled the Catholic Church. Inheritance was patrilineal, and only men could own property.

By the end of the fifteenth century, after more than a hundred years of incessant conflict, a measure of stability had returned to Western Europe. Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, Louis XI of France, and Henry VII of England successfully asserted royal authority over their previously fragmented realms, creating strong state bureaucracies to control political rivals. They gave special trading privileges to merchants to gain their support, creating links that would later prove important in financing overseas expeditions.

The consolidation of military power went hand in hand with the strength-

QUICK REVIEW

European Society

- ◆ European states were hierarchical.
- ◆ Most Europeans were peasant farmers.
- ◆ European society was patriarchal.



ening of political authority. Portugal developed a strong navy to defend its seaborne merchants. Louis XI of France commanded a standing army, and Ferdinand of Spain created a palace guard to use against potential opponents. Before overseas expansion began, European monarchs exerted military force to extend their authority closer to home. Louis XI and his successors used warfare and intermarriage with ruling families of nearby provinces to expand French influence. In the early sixteenth century, England's Henry VIII sent soldiers to conquer Ireland. And the Spain of 1492 was forged from the successful conclusion of the *reconquista* ("reconquest") of territory from Muslim control.

Even as these rulers sought to unify their realms, religious conflicts began to tear Europe apart. For more than a thousand years, Catholic Christianity had united western Europeans in one faith. By the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church had accumulated enormous wealth and power. The pope wielded influence not only as a spiritual leader but also as the political ruler of parts of Italy. The church owned considerable property throughout Europe. Many Christians, especially in northern Europe, began to criticize the worldliness of the popes and the church itself for corruption, abuse of power, and betrayal of the legacy of Christ.

In 1517, a German monk, Martin Luther, invited open debate on these issues, asserting that the church had become too insistent on the performance of good works, such as charitable donations or other actions intended to please God. He called for a return to what he understood to be the purer practices and beliefs of the early church, emphasizing that salvation came not by good deeds but only by faith in God. With the help of the newly invented printing press, his ideas spread widely, inspiring a challenge to the Catholic Church that has come to be called the **Reformation**.

When the church refused to compromise, Luther and other critics formed their own religious organizations, emphasizing the relationship between God and the individual believer. Luther urged people to take responsibility for their own spiritual growth by reading the Bible, which he translated for the first time into German. What started as a religious movement, however, quickly acquired an important political dimension.

Sixteenth-century Germany was a fragmented region of small kingdoms and principalities that were officially part of the Holy Roman Empire. Many German princes supported Luther for both spiritual and secular reasons. When the Holy Roman Empire under Charles V (who was also king of Spain) tried to silence them, the reformist princes protested. From that point on, these princes—and all Europeans who supported religious reform—became known as **Protestants**.

The Protestant movement took a more radical turn under the influence of the French reformer John Calvin, who emphasized the doctrine of **predestination**. Calvin maintained that an all-powerful and all-knowing God chose at the moment of creation which humans would be saved and which would be damned. Each person's fate is thus foreordained, or predestined, by God, although we cannot know our fate during our lifetimes. Good Calvinists struggled to behave as God's chosen, continually searching their souls for evidence of divine grace.

Calvin founded a religious community consistent with his principles at Geneva, a Swiss city-state near the French border. From Germany and Geneva the Protestant Reformation spread to France, the Netherlands, England, and Hungary. In succeeding years, other Protestant groups formed, split, and split again, increasing Europe's religious fragmentation. The new religious ideas particularly interested literate city dwellers, while peasants adopted the new ideas more slowly.

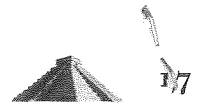
The Reformation addressed spiritual needs that the Catholic Church had left unfulfilled, but it also fractured the religious unity of western Europe and spawned

Reconquista The long struggle (ending in 1492) during which Spanish Christians reconquered the Iberian peninsula from Muslim occupiers.

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Protestants All European supporters of religious reform under Charles V's Holy Roman Empire.

Predestination The belief that God decided at the moment of Creation which humans would achieve salvation.



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a century of warfare unprecedented in its bloody destructiveness. Protestants fought Catholics in France and the German states. Popes initiated a “Counter Reformation,” intended to strengthen the Catholic Church. Europe thus fragmented into warring camps just at the moment when Europeans were coming to terms with their discovery of America.

CONTACT

Portugal, Spain, France, and England competed to establish footholds on other continents in an intense scramble for riches and dominance. The success of these early endeavors was a reflection of Europe’s prosperity and a series of technological breakthroughs that enabled its mariners to navigate beyond familiar waters. By 1600, Spain had emerged as the apparent winner among the European competitors for New World dominance. Its astonishingly wealthy empire included vast territories in Central and South America.

THE LURE OF DISCOVERY

Most Europeans, busy making a living, cared little about distant lands. But certain princes and merchants anticipated spiritual and material benefits from voyages of discovery. The spiritual advantages included making new Christian converts and blocking Islam’s expansion. On the material side, the voyages would contribute to Europe’s prosperity by increasing trade.

Merchants especially sought access to Asian spices like pepper, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg that added interest to an otherwise monotonous diet and helped preserve certain foods. But the overland spice trade—and the trade in other luxury goods such as silk and furs—spanned thousands of miles, involved many middlemen, and was controlled at key points by Muslim merchants. One critical center was Constantinople, the bastion of Christianity in the eastern Mediterranean. When it fell to the Ottomans—the Muslim rulers of Turkey—in 1453, Europeans feared that caravan routes to Asia would be disrupted. This encouraged merchants to turn westward and seek alternate routes. Mariners ventured farther into ocean waters, hoping to sail around Africa and chart a sea route to Asia.

Ocean voyages required sturdier ships and more reliable navigational tools. In the early fifteenth century, Prince Henry of Portugal, excited by the idea of overseas discovery, sponsored the efforts of shipbuilders, mapmakers, and other workers to solve these practical problems. Iberian shipbuilders perfected the caravel, a ship whose narrow shape and steering rudder suited it for ocean travel. Ship designers combined square sails (good for speed) with triangular “lateen” sails, which increased maneuverability. Two Arab inventions—the magnetic compass and the astrolabe (which allowed mariners to determine their position in relation to a star’s known location in the sky)—gained popularity among European navigators. As sailors acquired practical experience on the high seas, mapmakers recorded their observations of landfalls, wind patterns, and ocean currents.

Portugal’s Bartolomeu Días reached the southern tip of Africa in 1488. Eleven years later, Vasco da Gama brought a Portuguese fleet around Africa to India, opening a sea route to Asia. These initiatives gave Portugal a virtual monopoly on Far Eastern trade for some time.

The new trade routes gave strategic importance to the islands that lie in the Atlantic off the west coast of Africa and Europe. Spain and Portugal vied for control of the Canary Islands, located 800 miles southwest of the Iberian peninsula. Spain eventually prevailed in 1496 by defeating the islands’ inhabitants. Portugal

WHAT BENEFITS to European princes, merchants, and traders did exploration provide?

QUICK REVIEW

Discovery and Exploration

- ◆ Europeans sought access to Asian spices.
- ◆ Technological innovations made longer sea voyages possible.
- ◆ State sponsorship funded voyages of exploration.



Advances in ship design, including the development of the caravel pictured in this fifteenth-century woodcut, made transoceanic voyages possible. The arrangement of sails allowed the caravel to catch the trade winds and move more quickly across the high seas.

The Granger Collection, New York.



acquired Madeira and the Cape Verde Islands, along with a set of tiny islands off Africa's Guinea Coast.

Sugar, like Asian spices, commanded high prices in Europe, so the conquerors of the Atlantic islands began to cultivate sugar cane on them on large plantations worked by slave labor. In the Canaries, the Spanish first enslaved the native inhabitants. When disease and exhaustion reduced their numbers, the Spanish brought in African slaves, often purchased from Portuguese traders.

These island societies, in which a small European master class dominated a much larger population of native peoples or imported African slaves, were to provide a model for Spain's and Portugal's later exploitation of their American colonies. As early as 1494, Christopher Columbus wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to suggest that Caribbean islanders could be sold as slaves in order to cover the costs of exploration.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Columbus was not the first European to believe that he could reach Asia by sailing westward. The idea developed logically during the fifteenth century as mariners gained knowledge and experience from their exploits in the Atlantic and around Africa. Columbus himself may have gained valuable experience on a voyage to Iceland. He also read widely in geographical treatises and paid close attention to the stories and rumors that circulated among mariners.

Most Europeans knew that the world was round, but most also scoffed at the idea of a westward voyage to Asia, believing that it would take so long, it would exhaust any ship's supplies. Columbus's confidence that he could make the voyage grew from a mistaken calculation of the earth's circumference as 18,000 (rather than 24,000) miles, which led him to conclude that Asia lay just 3,500 miles west of the Canary Islands. Columbus first sought financial support from the king of Portugal, whose advisers warned him that he would starve at sea before reaching Asia. Undaunted, he turned to Portugal's rival, Spain.

Columbus tried to convince Ferdinand and Isabella that his plan suited Spain's national goals: Spain could grow rich from Asian trade, send Christian missionaries to Asia (a goal in keeping with the religious ideals of the *reconquista*), and perhaps enlist the Great Khan of China as an ally in the long struggle with Islam. If he failed, the "enterprise of the Indies" would cost little. The Spanish monarchs nonetheless kept Columbus waiting nearly seven years—until 1492, when the last Muslim stronghold at Granada fell to Spanish forces—before they gave him their support.

After thirty-three days at sea, Columbus and his men made landfall. Although puzzled not to find the fabled cities of China or Japan, they still believed they had reached Asia. Three more voyages, between 1493 and 1504, however, failed to yield clear evidence of an Asian landfall or substantiate Columbus's reports of "great mines of gold and other metals" and spices in abundance.

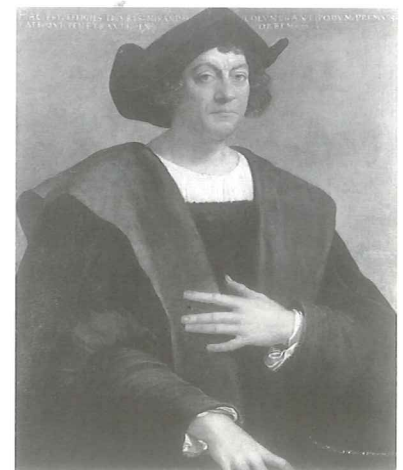
Obsessed with the wealth he had promised himself and others, Columbus and his men turned violent, sacking the villages of Tainos and Caribs and demanding tribute in gold. The Spanish forced native gangs to pan rivers for the precious nuggets. Dissatisfied with the meager results, Columbus sought to enslave islanders, a desperate attempt to show that the Indies could yield a profit. Queen Isabella initially opposed the enslavement of people she considered to be new Spanish subjects. Within thirty years of Columbus's first voyage, however, Spanish exploitation of native labor had brought the populations of many Caribbean islands close to extinction.

Columbus died in Spain in 1506, still convinced he had found Asia. What he had done was to set in motion a process that would transform both sides of the Atlantic. It would eventually bring wealth to many Europeans and immense suffering to Native Americans and Africans.

QUICK REVIEW

Christopher Columbus

- ◆ Most Europeans knew the earth was round.
- ◆ Columbus convinced the Spanish monarchs to support his voyage.
- ◆ Columbus died in 1506 still believing he had found Asia.



Christopher Columbus by Italian artist Sebastiano del Piombo. The explorer is dressed in the finery of a prosperous Italian Renaissance gentleman including a tricorn hat and sumptuous mantle. 1519 oil on canvas.

Ewing Galloway, Index Stock Imagery, Inc.



SPANISH CONQUEST AND COLONIZATION

Of all European nations, Spain was best suited to take advantage of Columbus's discovery. Its experience with the *reconquista* gave it both a religious justification for conquest (bringing Christianity to nonbelievers) and an army of seasoned soldiers—*conquistadores*. In addition, during the *reconquista* and the conquest of the Canary Islands, Spain's rulers had developed efficient techniques for controlling newly conquered lands that could be applied to New World colonies.

The Spanish first established outposts on Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica (see Map 1-3, p. 21). The conquistadores, who were more interested in finding gold and slaves than in creating permanent settlements, attacked Taino and Carib villages and killed or captured the inhabitants. By 1524, the Tainos had all but died out; the Caribs survived on more isolated islands until the eighteenth century. Spanish soldiers then ventured to the mainland. Juan Ponce de León led an expedition to Florida in 1513. In that same year, Vasco Núñez de Balboa arrived in Central America, crossing the isthmus of Panama to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1519, Hernán Cortés led a force of six hundred men to the coast of Mexico. "I and my companions," he declared, "suffer from a disease of the heart which can be cured only with gold." By 1521, Cortés and his men had conquered the powerful Aztec empire. The Spanish soldiers also discovered riches beyond their wildest dreams. They "picked up the gold and fingered it like monkeys," reported one Aztec witness. They were "transported by joy, as if their hearts were illuminated and made new."

The swift, decisive Spanish victory over a more numerous enemy depended on several factors. Spanish guns and horses often enabled them to overwhelm larger groups of Aztec foot soldiers armed with spears and wooden swords edged with obsidian. Cortés also benefited from divisions within the Aztec empire, acquiring indispensable allies among subject Indians who resented Aztec domination. Cortés led only six hundred Spanish soldiers but eventually gained 200,000 Indian allies eager to throw off Aztec rule.

An even more significant contribution to this quick victory was the fact that Indians lacked resistance to European diseases. One of Cortés's men was infected with smallpox, which soon devastated the native population. Nearly 40 percent of the inhabitants of central Mexico died of smallpox within a year. Other diseases followed, including typhus, measles, and influenza. By 1600, the population of Mexico may have declined from over 15 million to less than a million people.

Aztec society and culture collapsed in the face of appalling mortality. One survivor recalled, "The sick were so utterly helpless that they could only lie on their beds like corpses, unable to move their limbs or even their heads. . . . If they did move their bodies, they screamed with pain." Early in their bid to gain control of the Aztec empire, the Spanish seized Moctezuma, the Aztec king, and eventually put him to death. His successor died of disease less than three months after gaining the throne.

In 1532, Francisco Pizarro and 180 men discovered the Inca empire high in the Peruvian Andes. Taking advantage of a civil war within the empire following its ruler's death, the Spaniards captured Cuzco, the Inca capital, and established a new one at Lima.

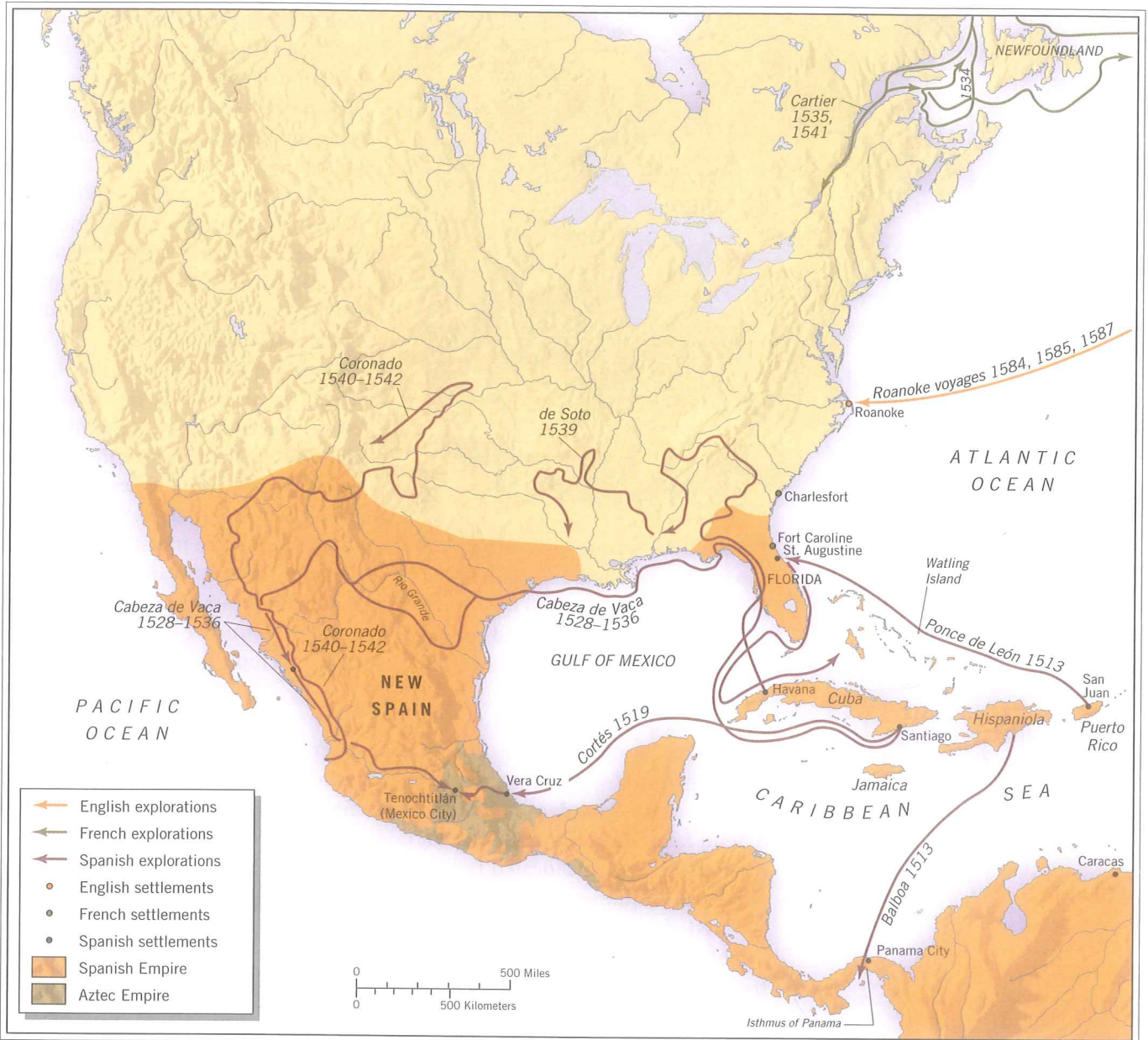
By 1550, Spain's New World empire extended from the Caribbean through Mexico to Peru. It was administered from Spain by the Council of the Indies. The council aimed to project royal authority into every village in New Spain in order to maintain political control and extract as much wealth as possible from the land and its people.

For more than a century, Spanish ships crossed the Atlantic carrying seemingly limitless treasure from the colonies. The colonial rulers subjected the native inhabitants of New Spain to compulsory tribute payments and forced labor.



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

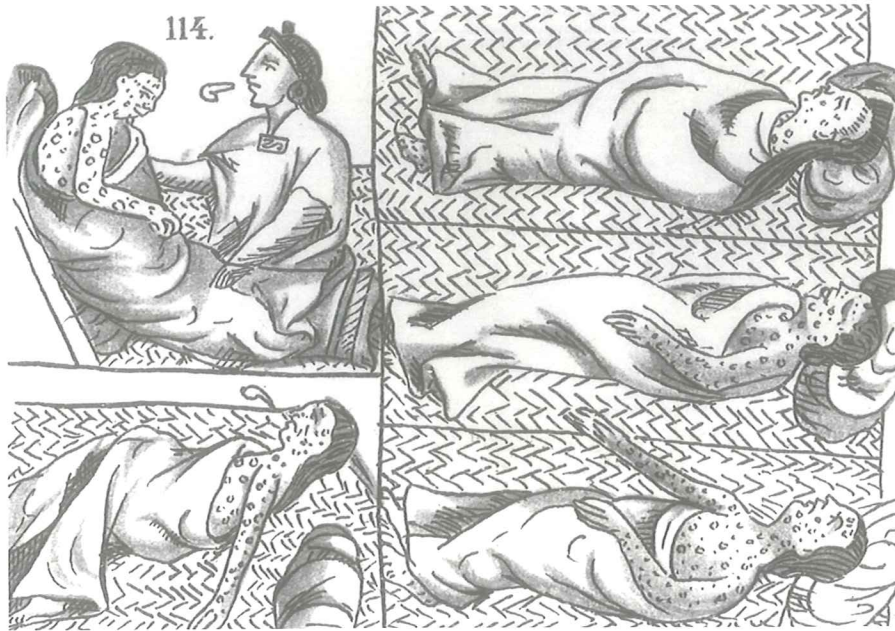
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MAP 1-3

Spanish, English, and French Settlements in North America in the Sixteenth Century By the end of the sixteenth century, only Spain had established permanent settlements in North America. French outposts in Canada and at Fort Caroline, as well as the English settlement at Roanoke, failed to thrive. European rivalries for North America, however, would intensify after 1600.

BASED ON this map, what factors might help to explain why Spain was more successful in the establishment of permanent settlements before 1600 than either France or England? Do you think geographic location (climate, terrain, etc.) may have played a role?



Smallpox wreaked havoc among Native Americans who lacked biological resistance to European diseases. This drawing by Aztec illustrators shows Aztec victims of a smallpox epidemic that struck Tenochtitlán in 1520. Historians estimate that up to 40 percent of the population of central Mexico died within a year. This catastrophic decline weakened the Aztecs' ability to resist the Spanish conquest of their land.

The Granger Collection, New York.



1-5
Bartolomé de las Casas,
"Of the Island of Hispaniola"
(1542)

Tens of thousands of Indians toiled in silver mines in Peru and Bolivia and on sugar plantations in the Caribbean. When necessary, Spaniards imported African slaves to supplement a native labor force ravaged by disease and exhaustion.

The desire for gold eventually lured Spaniards farther into North America. In 1528, an expedition to Florida ended in the deaths of nearly all Spanish intruders when they provoked an attack by Apalachee Indians [see *American Views*, "Cabeza de Vaca among the Indians (1530)" p. 5]. In 1539, Hernán de Soto led an expedition from Florida to the Mississippi River. Along the way, the Spaniards harassed native peoples, demanding provisions, burning villages, and capturing

women to be servants and concubines. They also exposed the Indians to deadly European diseases. The expedition kept up its rampage for three years, turning toward Mexico only after de Soto died in 1542. In these same years, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led three hundred troops on an equally destructive expedition through present-day Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado on a futile search for gold and precious stones.

The failure to find gold and silver halted the Spanish attempt to extend their empire to the north. By the end of the sixteenth century, they maintained just two precarious footholds north of Mexico. One was at St. Augustine, on Florida's Atlantic coast. Founded in 1565, this fortified outpost served as a naval base to defend Spanish treasure fleets from raids by English and French privateers. The other settlement was located far to the west in what is now New Mexico. Juan de Oñate, on a futile search for silver mines, claimed the region for Spain in 1598 and proceeded to antagonize the area's inhabitants. Having earned the enmity of the Pueblo people—astonishing even his own superiors with his brutality—Oñate barely managed to keep his tiny colony together.

The conquistadores' bloody tactics aroused protest back in Spain. The Indians' most eloquent advocate was Bartolomé de Las Casas, a Dominican priest shamed by his own role (as a layman) in the conquest of Hispaniola. Las Casas wrote *In Defense of the Indians*, including graphic descriptions of native sufferings. Instead of eliciting Spanish reforms, however, his work inspired Protestant Europeans to create the "Black Legend," an exaggerated story according to which a fanatical Catholic Spain sought to spread its control at any cost.

Meanwhile, between 1500 and 1650, an estimated 181 tons of gold and 16,000 tons of silver were shipped from the New World to Spain, making it the richest and most powerful state in Europe. But this influx of American treasure had unforeseen consequences that would soon undermine Spanish predominance.

In 1492, the Spanish crown expelled from Spain all Jews who refused to become Christians. The refugees included many leading merchants who had contributed significantly to Spain's economy. The remaining Christian merchants, now awash in American riches, saw no reason to invest in new trade or productive enterprises that might have sustained the economy once the flow of New World treasure diminished. As a result, Spain's economy eventually stagnated.



OVERVIEW

THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

	From Old World to New World	From New World to Old World
Diseases	Smallpox, measles, plague, typhus, influenza, yellow fever, diphtheria, scarlet fever	Syphilis
Animals	Horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, donkeys, mules, black rats, honeybees, cockroaches	Turkeys
Plants	Wheat, sugar, barley, coffee, rice, dandelion and other weeds	Maize, beans, peanut, potato, sweet potato, manioc, squash, papaya, guava, tomato, avocado, pineapple, chili pepper, cocoa, apples, peaches, pears, plums

Source: Adapted from Alfred Crosby Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972).

The flood of American gold and silver also inflated prices throughout Europe, hurting workers, whose wages failed to rise as fast, and aristocrats, dependent on fixed rents from their estates. Most damaging, Spain's monarchs wasted their American wealth fighting expensive wars in Europe that ultimately only weakened the nation. By 1600, some disillusioned Spaniards were arguing that the conquest had brought more problems than benefits to their country.

THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

Spain's long-term economic decline was just one of many consequences of the conquest of the New World. In the long run, the biological consequences of contact—what one historian has called the **Columbian exchange**—proved to be the most momentous (see the overview table “The Columbian Exchange”).

The most catastrophic result of the exchange was the exposure of Native Americans to Old World diseases. Epidemics of smallpox, measles, typhus, and influenza struck Native Americans with great force, killing half, and sometimes as much as 90 percent, of the people in communities exposed to them. The only American disease to infect the Old World was syphilis, which appeared in Spain just after Columbus returned from his first voyage.

The Columbian exchange also introduced Old World livestock to the New World. Columbus brought horses, sheep, cattle, pigs, and goats with him on his second voyage in 1493. Native Americans had few domesticated animals and initially marveled at these large beasts. However, with few natural predators to limit their numbers, livestock populations boomed in the New World, competing with native mammals, such as bison, for good grazing. The use of horses also often gave European soldiers a decisive military advantage in conflicts with Indians.

But the introduction of European livestock created opportunities for Yaquis, Pueblos, and other peoples in the American Southwest, who began to raise cattle and sheep. By the eighteenth century, Plains Indians had not only adopted horses but also become exceptionally skilled riders. The men found it much easier to hunt buffalo on horseback than on foot, and the women valued horses as beasts of burden.



1-9
The Columbian Exchange (1590)

Columbian exchange The transatlantic exchange of plants, animals, and diseases that occurred after the first European contact with the Americas.



European ships carried unintentional passengers as well, including the black rat and honeybees, both previously unknown in the New World. Ships also brought weeds such as thistles and dandelions, whose seeds were often embedded in hay for animal fodder.

Europeans brought a variety of seeds and plants in order to grow familiar foods. Columbus's men planted wheat, chickpeas, melons, onions, and fruit trees on Caribbean islands. European plants did not always fare well, at least not everywhere in the New World, so Europeans learned to cultivate native foods, such as corn, tomatoes, squash, beans, and potatoes, as well as nonfood plants such as tobacco and cotton. They carried many of these plants back to Europe, enriching Old World diets with new foods.

COMPETITION FOR A CONTINENT

HOW DID the French, English, and Spanish fare in their early efforts in the New World?

In 1494, the pope resolved the conflicting claims of Portugal and Spain for New World territory with the **Treaty of Tordesillas**. The treaty drew a north-south line approximately 1,100 miles west of the Cape Verde Islands. Spain received all lands west of the line, while Portugal held sway to the east. This limited Portugal's New World empire to Brazil, where settlers followed the precedent of the Atlantic island colonies and established sugar plantations worked by slave labor. But the treaty also protected Portugal's claims in Africa and Asia, which lay east of the line.

France and England, of course, rejected the papal grant of the Western Hemisphere to Spain and Portugal. Initially, domestic troubles—largely sparked by the Protestant Reformation—distracted the two countries from the pursuit of empire. By the close of the sixteenth century, both France and England insisted on their rights to New World lands, but neither had created a permanent settlement to support its claim.

EARLY FRENCH EFFORTS IN NORTH AMERICA

France was a relative latecomer to New World exploration. Preoccupied with European affairs, France's rulers paid little attention to America until news of Corté's exploits in Mexico arrived in the 1520s.

In 1524, King Francis I sponsored a voyage by Giovanni de Verrazano, an Italian navigator, who mapped the North American coast from present-day South Carolina to Maine. During the 1530s and 1540s, the French mariner Jacques Cartier made three voyages in search of rich mines to rival those of Mexico and Peru. He explored the St. Lawrence River up to what is now Montreal, hoping to discover a water route through the continent to Asia (what came to be called the Northwest Passage). On his second voyage, in 1535, he and his crew almost froze to death and suffered from scurvy, a disease caused by a lack of Vitamin C. Some of the men survived because the Iroquois showed them how to make a vitamin-rich concoction of boiled white cedar needles and bark.

On his third voyage, in 1541, Cartier was to serve under the command of a nobleman, Jean François de la Rocque, sieur de Roberval, who was commissioned by the king to establish a permanent settlement in Canada. Unable to recruit colonists, he finally set sail in 1542, taking convicts as settlers. Cartier had sailed ahead, gathered samples of what he thought were gold and diamonds, and returned to France without Roberval's permission.

Roberval's expedition was poorly organized, and his cruel treatment of the convicts provoked several uprisings. The Iroquois, suspicious of repeated French intrusions on their lands, saw no reason to help them. A year after they arrived in Canada, Roberval and the surviving colonists were back in France. Their return

Treaty of Tordesillas Treaty negotiated by the pope in 1494 to resolve the territorial claims of Spain and Portugal.



coincided with news that the gold brought back by Cartier was iron pyrite (fool's gold) and the diamonds were quartz crystals.

Disappointed with their Canadian expeditions, the French made a few brief forays to the south, establishing outposts in what is now South Carolina in 1562 and Florida in 1564. They soon abandoned the Carolina colony (though not before the starving settlers resorted to cannibalism), and Spanish forces captured the Florida fort. Then, back in France, civil war broke out between Catholics and Protestants. Renewed interest in colonization would have to await the return of peace at home.

ENGLISH ATTEMPTS IN THE NEW WORLD

The English were quicker than the French to stake a claim to the New World but no more successful at colonization. In 1497, King Henry VII sent John Cabot, an Italian mariner, to explore eastern Canada on England's behalf, but neither Henry nor his wealthier subjects would invest the funds necessary to follow up on Cabot's discoveries.

The lapse in English activity in the New World stemmed from religious troubles at home. Between 1534 and 1558, England changed its official religion several times. King Henry VIII took up the Protestant cause when the pope refused to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. In 1534, Henry declared himself the head of a separate Church of England and seized the Catholic Church's English property. But in 1553, Mary—daughter of the spurned Catherine of Aragon—became queen and tried to bring England back to Catholicism. She had nearly three hundred Protestants burned at the stake for their beliefs (earning her the nickname “Bloody Mary”), and many others went into exile in Europe.

After Mary's death in 1558, her half-sister Elizabeth, a committed Protestant, became queen, restoring Protestantism as the state religion, bringing stability to the nation, and renewing England's interest in the New World. She and her subjects saw colonization not only as a way to gain wealth and political advantage but also as a Protestant crusade against Catholic domination.

England's first target for colonization, however, was not America but Ireland. Located less than sixty miles west of England and populated by Catholics, Ireland threatened to become a base from which Spain or another Catholic power might invade England. Elizabeth launched a series of brutal expeditions that destroyed Irish villages and slaughtered the inhabitants. Several veterans of these campaigns later took part in New World colonization and drew on their Irish experience for guidance.

The English transferred their assumptions about Irish “savages” to Native Americans. Englishmen in America frequently observed similarities between Indians and the Irish. “The natives of New England,” noted one Englishman, “are accustomed to build their houses much like the wild Irish.” When Indians resisted conquest, the English recalled the Irish example, claiming that native “savagery” required brutal suppression.

The Irish experience also influenced English ideas about colonial settlement. English conquerors set up “plantations” surrounded by palisades on seized Irish lands, importing Protestant tenants from England and Scotland to farm the land. Native Irish people were excluded. English colonists in America followed this precedent when they established plantations that separated English and native peoples.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, a notoriously cruel veteran of the Irish campaigns, composed a treatise to convince Queen Elizabeth to support New World colonization. The queen authorized several exploratory voyages, including Martin Frobisher's three trips in 1576–1578 in search of the Northwest Passage to Asia. Frobisher failed to find the elusive passage and sent back shiploads of glittering ore that proved to be fool's gold. Elizabeth had better luck in allowing privateers, such as John Hawkins and Francis Drake, to raid Spanish ships and New World ports for gold and silver.



1-10

Thomas Harriot, *The Algonquian Peoples of the Atlantic Coast* (1588)



Meanwhile, Gilbert continued to promote New World settlement, arguing that it would increase England's trade and provide a place for the nation's unemployed people. Like many of his contemporaries, Gilbert believed that England's "surplus" population threatened social order. The population was indeed growing, and economic changes often made it difficult for people to support themselves. Gilbert suggested offering free land in America to English families willing to emigrate.

In 1578, Gilbert received permission to set up a colony along the North American coast. It took him five years to organize an expedition to Newfoundland, which he claimed for England. After sailing southward seeking a more favorable site for a colony, Gilbert headed home, only to be lost at sea during an Atlantic storm. His half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh (another veteran of the Irish wars), immediately took up the cause of English colonization.

In 1585 Raleigh sent men to build a settlement on Roanoke Island off the Carolina coast. Most colonists were soldiers fresh from Ireland who refused to grow their own food, insisting that the Roanoke Indians should feed them. When the local chief, Wingina, organized native resistance, they killed him. Eventually, the colonists, disappointed not to have found gold or precious stones and exhausted by a harsh winter, returned to England in 1586.

Two members of these early expeditions, however, left a more positive legacy. Thomas Hariot studied the Roanoke and Croatoan Indians and identified plants and animals in the area, hoping that some might prove to be profitable commodities. John White drew maps and painted a series of watercolors depicting the natives and the coastal landscape. When Raleigh tried once more, in 1587, to found a colony, he chose White to be its leader.

This attempt also failed. The ship captain dumped the settlers—who, for the first time, included women and children—on Roanoke Island so that he could pursue Spanish treasure ships. White waited until his granddaughter, Virginia Dare (the first English child born in America), was safely born and then sailed to England for supplies. But the outbreak of war with Spain delayed his return for three years. Spain had gathered an immense fleet to invade England, and all English ships were needed for defense. Although England defeated the Armada in 1588, White could not obtain a relief ship for Roanoke until 1590.

White found the colony deserted. Digging through the ruins of the village, he found "my books torn from the covers, the frames of some of my pictures and Maps rotten and spoiled with rain." He also saw the word *CROATOAN* carved on a post and assumed that the colonists had moved to nearby Croatoan Island. But bad weather prevented him from searching there. For years, English and Spanish mariners reported seeing white people along the coast of Chesapeake Bay. But no Roanoke colonists were ever found.

England's interest in colonization did not wane. In 1584, Richard Hakluyt had aroused enthusiasm for America by writing the "Discourse of Western Planting" for the queen and her advisors. He argued that England would prosper from the expansion of trade and the sale of New World commodities. Once the Indians were civilized, Hakluyt added, they would eagerly purchase English goods. Equally important, England could plant Protestant Christianity in the New World and prevent the power of "the Spanish king from flowing over all the face . . . of America."

Hakluyt's arguments fired the imaginations of many people, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada emboldened England to challenge Spain's New World dominance. The experience of Roanoke should have tempered that enthusiasm. The colony's fate underscored the need for adequate funding, the unsuitability of soldiers as colonists, and the need to maintain good relations with the Indians. But the English were slow to learn these lessons. As it was, the sixteenth century ended with no permanent English settlement in the New World.



FROM THEN TO NOW

The Disappearance of Cod off the Grand Banks

Not long after John Cabot returned from his voyage to America in 1497, rumors began to swirl in port towns and European capitals alike. The Italian mariner who had sailed on behalf of England, it was said, had discovered astonishingly rich fishing grounds. One envious diplomat reported to the duke of Milan that Cabot and his men had caught enormous numbers of cod simply by dropping weighted baskets into the sea. As it happened, Basque fishermen sailing from ports in northern Spain and south-western France already knew about these fishing grounds. But Cabot's discovery spread the news and soon fishermen from all over western Europe scrambled to capture some of the bounty for themselves. By the 1550s, over a hundred ships a year traveled from French ports alone to fish in the waters of the Grand Banks off the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador.

In 1994, on the eve of the five-hundredth anniversary of Cabot's historic voyage, Brian Tobin, a Canadian fisheries minister, reported that cod had become so scarce in the Grand Banks that fishing was no longer commercially viable. He announced that a moratorium on Atlantic cod fishing, first declared in 1992, would have to be extended. This measure was the latest in a series of efforts to address the decline in the cod population. In 1977, Canada's government had prohibited foreign fishing vessels from working within 200 miles of the Canadian coast. Nine years later, foreign boats fishing just beyond the 200-mile limit were no longer allowed to visit the city of St. John's in Newfoundland for repairs and supplies. Although these measures were designed mainly to protect Canadian fisheries from competition rather than to address issues of conservation, they clearly recognized that a valuable resource was in grave danger.

How had such abundant codfish stocks declined so dramatically? Ecological and historical factors combined to produce this result. Cod prefer to swim near the ocean floor in shallow waters, and migrate to even shallower places rich in plankton and krill—such as the Grand Banks—when they are ready to spawn. These locations are particularly vulnerable to climatic change, and that in turn affects the cod. Ten years after Canada declared the moratorium on fishing, cod populations on the Grand Banks have yet to rebound. Some scientists

speculate that the depletion of the Earth's ozone layer may be allowing ultraviolet rays to penetrate shallower ocean waters, killing off young cod at a high rate.

Centuries of fishing have also taken their toll. Cabot's voyage sparked tremendous interest in the Grand Banks fisheries. By the middle of the sixteenth century, 60 percent of all the fish eaten in Europe was cod, and most of it came from the Grand Banks region. English and French fishing enterprises found particularly lucrative markets in Mediterranean countries, whose primarily Catholic populations had to abstain from eating meat on Fridays and during the six weeks of Lent because of religious restrictions. By the eighteenth century, New England colonists, plying the waters off their own coast as well as near the Grand Banks, had initiated a thriving trade with the West Indies, where planters purchased relatively cheap salted cod to feed their slaves. After the Revolution, victorious Americans insisted that Great Britain recognize their "right to take fish of every kind on the Grand Bank." This provision became part of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, testifying to the continued significance of the fishing industry.

Economic competition also encouraged technological developments: By the early nineteenth century, most fishermen had switched from using handlines—single baited hooks fastened to a weight and dropped in the water—to longlines, consisting of ropes anywhere from half a mile to four or more miles long, with baited hooks attached every three feet or so. Gill nets, positioned just above the ocean floor to catch "ground feeders" like cod, eventually made enormous catches possible. These changes, combined with the transition from sailing vessels to boats using first steam power and then diesel fuel, spelled doom for the once-plentiful supplies of cod on the Grand Banks.

Experts differ on whether cod populations can recover. In addition to the possible effects of climatic change, cod continue to be threatened by overfishing. In February of 2002, Canadian officials investigated reports of foreign boats ignoring the moratorium on cod and infringing on the 200-mile limit. The long-term legacy of John Cabot's voyage may well be the disappearance of the resource that drew him and so many early European adventurers to North America in the first place.



WHAT WERE the consequences of contact between the Old and New Worlds?



CONCLUSION

After Columbus's first voyage, Europeans, eager for wealth and power, came by the thousands to a continent that just a hundred years earlier they had not dreamed existed. Africans came in even greater numbers to the Caribbean, Mexico, and Brazil, forced to labor for white masters in unfamiliar lands. In many parts of the Americas, native peoples encountered white and black strangers whose presence often destroyed their accustomed ways of life.

In 1600 only Spain had established North American colonies. Though its New World dominance seemed secure, even Spain had struggled to expand north of Mexico. Virtually the entire continent north of the Rio Grande remained firmly in Indian hands. Except in Mexico and the Caribbean, Europeans had merely touched the continent's shores. In 1600, native peoples still greatly outnumbered European and African immigrants. The next century, however, brought powerful challenges both to native control and to the Spanish monopoly of settlement.

SUMMARY

Native American Societies Before 1492 On the eve of contact, Native American societies were coexisting much as they had over the centuries before, having developed distinctive cultures based on the regions in which they lived. As many Native American societies continued in their development of agriculture, others concentrated on fishing and tracking game. Mayan and Aztec societies were among a series of complex, literate, urban cultures making up Mesoamerican civilizations from central Mexico into Central America.

West African Societies West African societies, although they had developed trade networks with Europe and the Middle East, still consisted mostly of farmers, not merchants. Family connections helped define each person's place in society, and religious beliefs magnified the powerful influence of family on African life. Though slavery was not yet a major source of export, slavery had long been a part of West African society.

Western Europe on the Eve of Exploration In Western Europe, recovery from the Hundred Years' War and the Black Death meant a redefinition of labor and productivity. In some parts of Europe, economic improvement encouraged an extraordinary movement known as the Renaissance—a "rebirth" of interest in the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome. European society was patriarchal, with men dominating political and economic life. And, by the end of the fifteenth century, after more than one hundred years of incessant conflict, a measure of stability had returned to Western Europe.

Contact Portugal, Spain, France, and England were competing to establish footholds on other continents in an intense scramble for riches and dominance as the fifteenth century came to a close. Explorers like Columbus and Ponce de Leon crossed the Atlantic in search of new lands. The dawn of European exploration changed both sides of the Atlantic forever.

Competition for a New Continent In 1494, the pope resolved the conflicting claims of Portugal and Spain for New World territory with the Treaty of Tordesillas. France and England, of course, rejected the grant and insisted on their rights to New World land. Although the English were quicker than the French to stake a claim to the New World, neither was very successful at early colonization. However, England's interest in colonization did not wane, and, although the sixteenth century ended with no permanent English settlement in the New World, such a settlement was not far away.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did the Aztecs describe the Spanish ships off the coast of Mexico to Moctezuma? What details most captured their attention?
 2. What were the similarities and differences between men's and women's roles in Native American, West African, and European societies? How did differences lead to misunderstandings?
 3. Many of the first European colonizers in North America were military veterans. How did this affect their relations with Indian peoples?
 4. Why did Spain so quickly become the dominant colonial power in North America? What advantages did it enjoy over France and England?
 5. How did religion affect early European overseas colonization? Did religious factors encourage or interfere with European expansion?
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KEY TERMS

Aztecs (p. 9)	predestination (p. 17)	Reformation (p. 17)
Cahokia (p. 10)	Protestants (p. 17)	Tordesillas, Treaty of (p. 24)
Columbian exchange (p. 23)	reconquista (p. 17)	

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

- 🏛️ **Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Collinsville, Illinois.** This site, occupied from A.D. 600–1500, was the largest Mississippian community in eastern North America. It now includes numerous exhibits, and archaeological excavations continue in the vicinity. The website, www.siu.edu/CAHOKIAMOUNDS, contains information and photos of archaeological excavations, as well as a link to a virtual tour.
- 🏛️ **Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Mashantucket, Connecticut.** This tribally owned and operated complex offers a view of eastern Woodlands Indian life, focusing on the Pequots of eastern Connecticut. Exhibits include dioramas, films, interactive programs, and a reconstructed sixteenth-century Pequot village. The homepage for the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center is: www.mashantucket.com
- 🏛️ **Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado.** Occupied by Ancestral Puebloan peoples as early as A.D. 550, the area contains a variety of sites, from early pithouses to spectacular cliff dwellings. The official National Park webpage for Mesa Verde is www.nps.gov/meve. Information on individual houses and sites within the park, plus travel and lodging information can be found at: www.mesa.verde.national-park.com
- 🏛️ **St. Augustine, Florida.** Founded in 1565, St. Augustine is the site of the first permanent Spanish settlement in North America. Today the restored community resembles a Spanish colonial town, with narrow, winding streets and seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings. The site also contains the restored Castillo de San Marcos, now a national park. The official website for Historic St. Augustine, www.oldcity.com/his2.html, provides considerable information about the origins and development of the Spanish settlement.

🌐 For additional study resources for this chapter, go to:
www.prenhall.com/goldfield/chapter1