

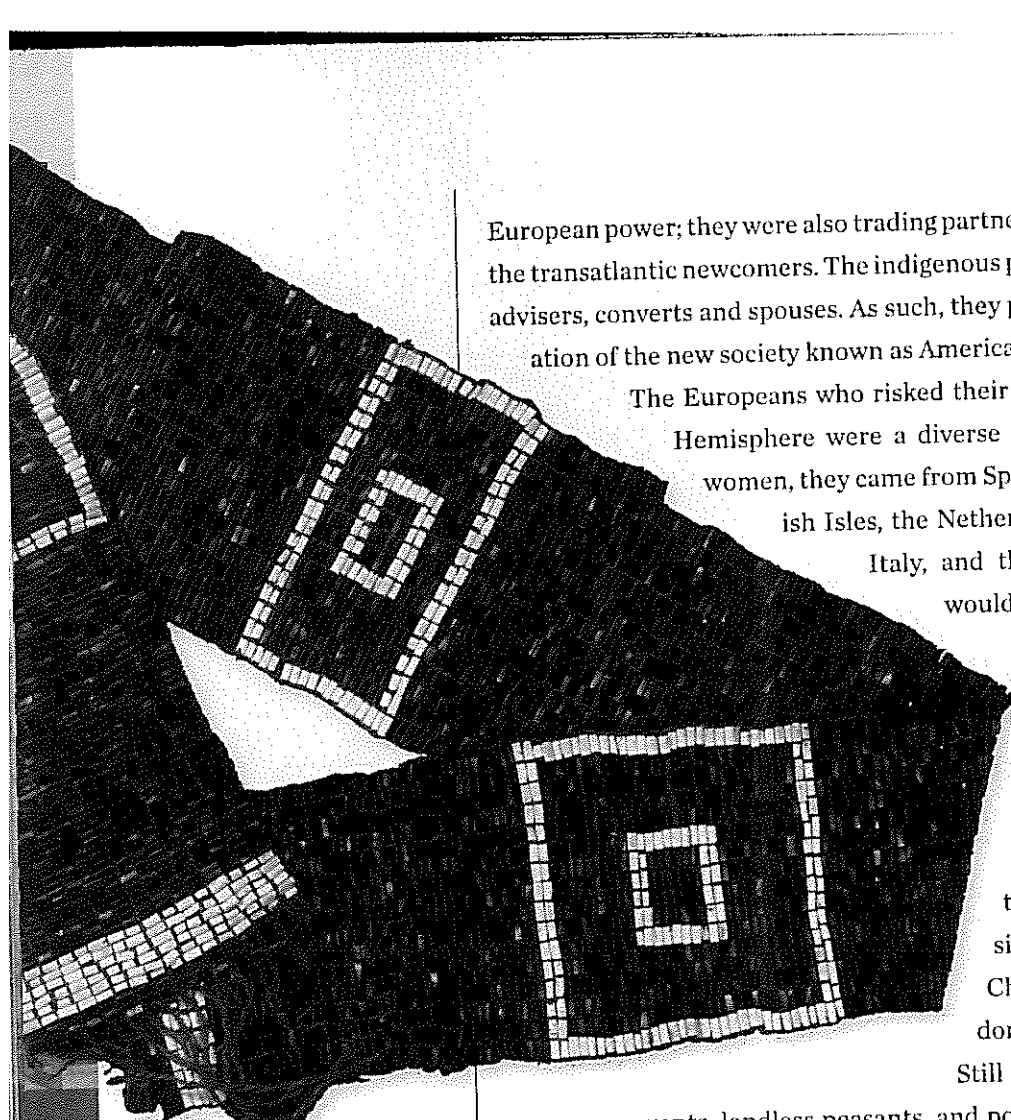
# An Old “New” World

History is filled with ironies. Luck and accidents — the unexpected happenings of life — often shape events more than intentions. Long before Christopher Columbus lucked upon the Caribbean Sea in an effort to find a westward passage to the Indies (east Asia), the indigenous peoples he mislabeled “Indians” had occupied and transformed the lands of the Western Hemisphere (also called the Americas—North, Central, and South).

The “New World” he encountered was *new* only to the Europeans who began exploring, conquering, and exploiting the region at the end of the fifteenth century. By 1492, when Columbus began his famous voyage west from Spain, there were millions of Native Americans living in the Western Hemisphere. Over thousands of years, they had developed diverse and often highly sophisticated societies, some rooted in agriculture and others focused on trade or conquest.

The Native American peoples were decimated and transformed by the arrival of Europeans and Africans. Very different societies collided, each having its own distinct heritage and worldview. Indians were exploited, infected, enslaved, displaced, and exterminated.

Yet the conventional story of tragic conquest oversimplifies the complex process by which Indians, Europeans, and Africans interacted in the Western Hemisphere. The Native Americans were more than passive victims of



European power; they were also trading partners and both allies and rivals of the transatlantic newcomers. The indigenous peoples became neighbors and advisers, converts and spouses. As such, they participated jointly in the creation of the new society known as America.

The Europeans who risked their lives to settle in the Western Hemisphere were a diverse lot. Young and old, men and women, they came from Spain, Portugal, France, the British Isles, the Netherlands (Holland), Scandinavia, Italy, and the German states. (Germany would not become a united nation until 1871.)

A variety of motives inspired them to undertake the dangerous transatlantic voyage. Some were adventurers and fortune seekers eager to gain glory and find gold and silver. Others were passionate Christians eager to create kingdoms of God in the New World.

Still others were prisoners, debtors, servants, landless peasants, and political or religious exiles. Many were simply seeking a piece of land, higher wages, and greater economic opportunity. A settler in Pennsylvania noted that "poor people (both men and women) of all kinds can here get three times the wages for their labor than they can in England."

Yet such wages never attracted enough workers to keep up with the rapidly expanding colonial economies, so the Europeans early in the seventeenth century turned to Africa for their labor needs. European nations—especially Portugal and Spain—had been transporting captive Africans to the Western Hemisphere, from Chile to Canada, throughout the sixteenth century. Thereafter, the English and Dutch joined the effort to use enslaved Africans for the hardest labor in the colonies. Few Europeans during the colonial era saw the contradiction between the promise of freedom in America for themselves and the expanding institution of race-based slavery.

The intermingling of people, cultures, and ecosystems from the continents of Africa, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere gave colonial American society its distinctive vitality and variety. The shared quest for a better life gave America much of its drama—and conflict.

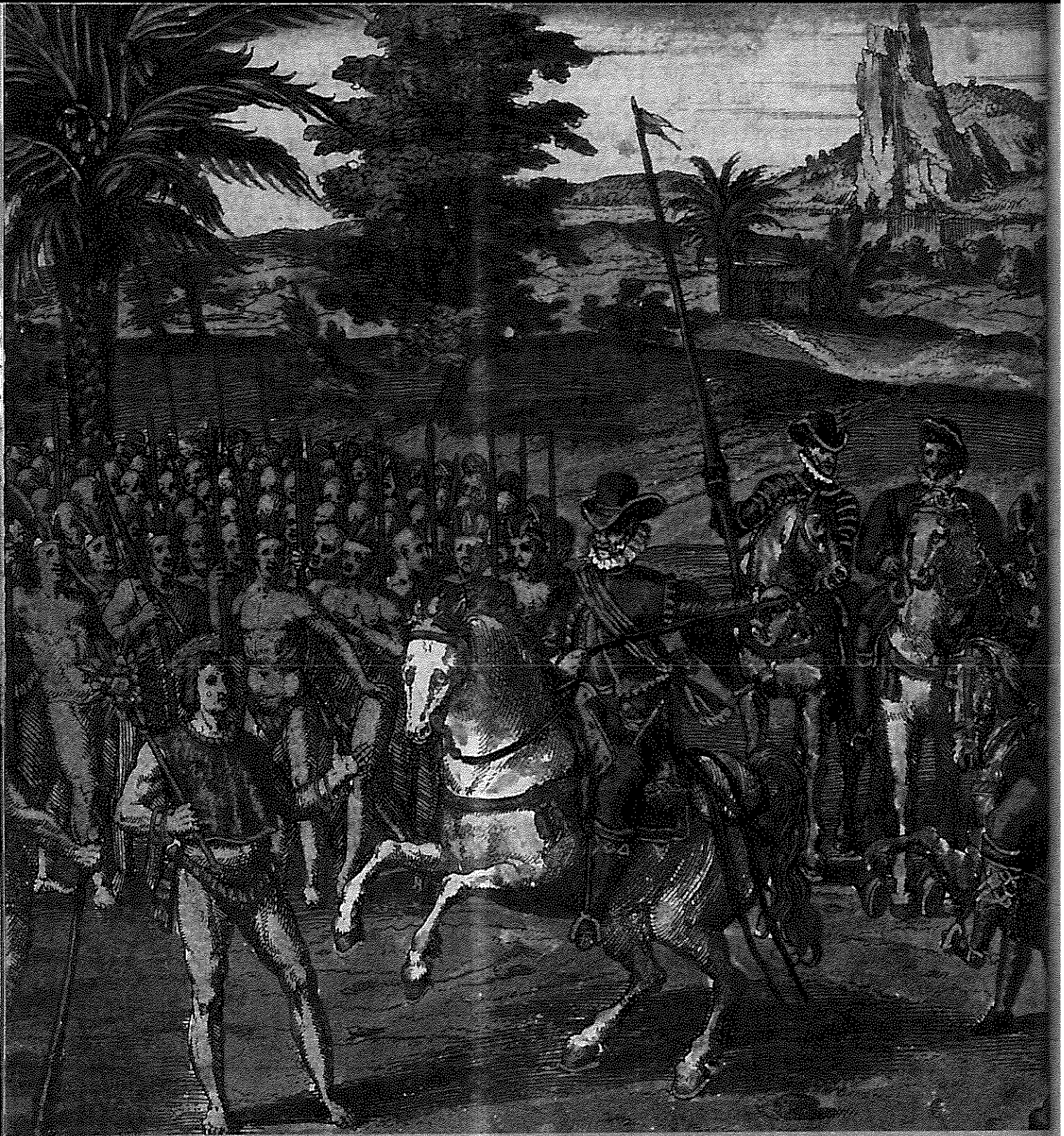
During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fierce rivalries among the Spanish, French, English, and Dutch triggered costly wars fought in Europe and around the world. European monarchs struggled to manage often-unruly colonies, which, they discovered, played crucial roles in their frequent European wars.

Many of the colonists had brought with them to America a feisty independence, which led them to resent government interference in their affairs. A British official in North Carolina reported that the settlers were “without any Law or Order. Impudence is so very high, as to be past bearing.”

The colonists and their British rulers maintained an uneasy partnership throughout the seventeenth century. But as the royal authorities tightened their control during the mid-eighteenth century, they met resistance from colonists, which exploded into revolution.







**DE SOTO AND THE INCAS** This 1596 color engraving shows Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto's first encounter with King Atahualpa of the Inca Empire. Although artist Theodor de Bry never set foot in North America, his engravings reflect Spanish perceptions of Native Americans in the sixteenth century.

# The Collision of Cultures

## IN THE 16TH CENTURY

**D**ebate still rages about when and how the first humans arrived in North America. Until recently, archaeologists had assumed that ancient peoples from northeast Asia, some 12,000 to 45,000 years ago, were the first arrivals in the Western Hemisphere. Those Asian wanderers (“nomads”) who hunted the massive woolly mammoths and other big game animals had journeyed over a thousand miles across “Beringia,” a wide, grassy plain connecting Siberia with Alaska, when global sea levels were much lower than today.

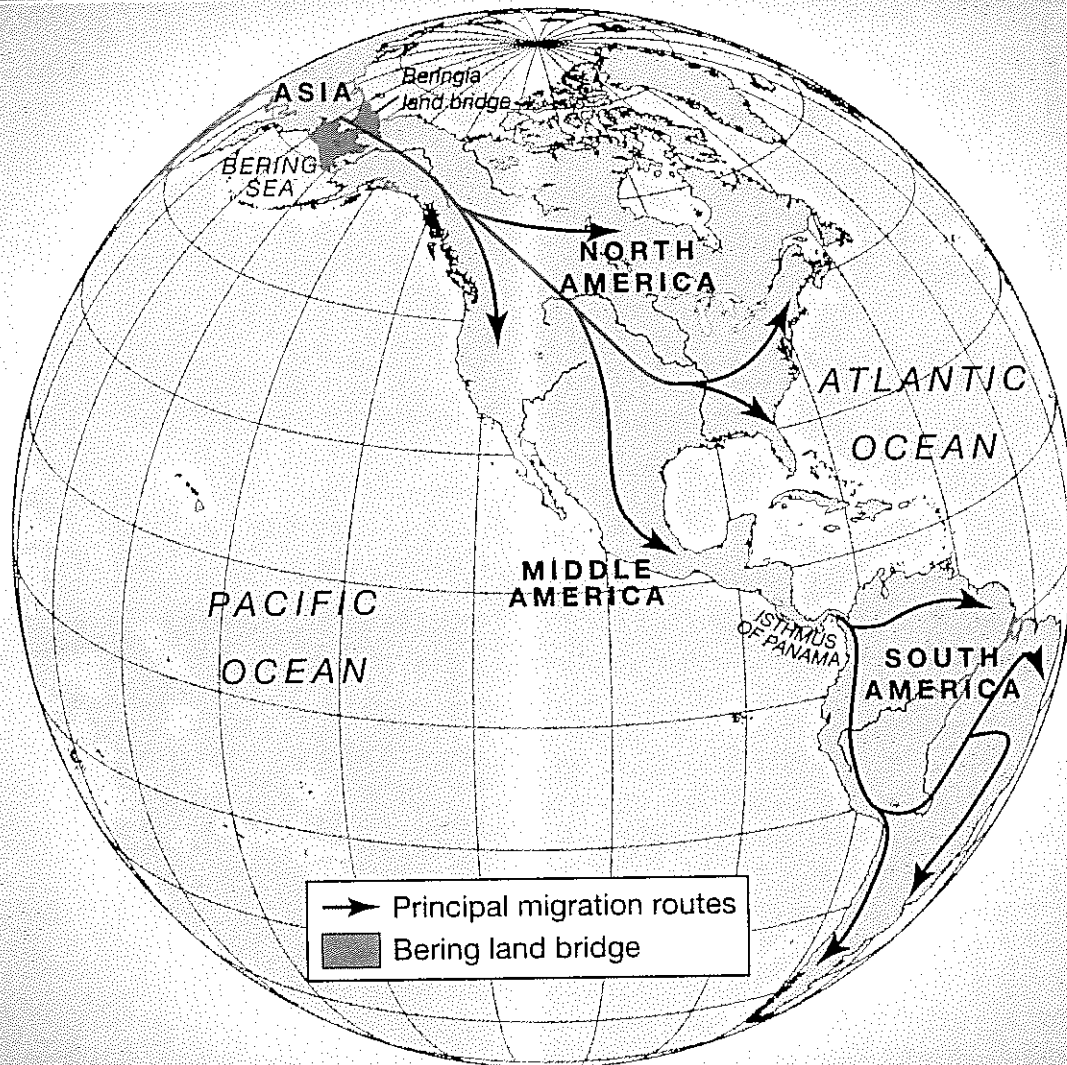
Archaeologists call these first peoples Paleo-Indians (Old or Ancient Indians). Over thousands of years, as the climate warmed and the glaciers melted, a steady stream of small groups fanned out southward on foot or in small boats across the entire Western Hemisphere, from the Arctic Circle in the north to the southern tip of South America. They lived in mobile huts with wooden frames covered by animal skins or grasses (“thatch”). Paleo-Indians were skilled “hunter-gatherers” (as well as stone toolmakers and warriors) whose weapons were clubs, knives, and spears. Their food consisted of large mammals and edible wild plants, berries, and seeds.

Recent archaeological discoveries in Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Chile suggest that prehistoric humans may have arrived on boats from

### CORE OBJECTIVES INQUIRY

1. Explain why there were so many diverse human societies in the Americas before Europeans arrived.
2. Summarize the major developments in Europe that enabled the Age of Exploration.
3. Describe how the Spanish were able to conquer and colonize the Americas.
4. Assess the impact of the Columbian Exchange between the “Old” and “New” Worlds.
5. Analyze the legacy of the Spanish form of colonization on North American history.

## THE FIRST MIGRATION



- When did people first cross the Bering Sea?
- What evidence have archaeologists and anthropologists found from the lives of the first people in America?
- Why did those people travel to North America?

various parts of Asia—and some may even have crossed the Atlantic Ocean from southwestern Europe. Regardless of when ancient people first set foot on the North American continent, the region eventually became a crossroads for various peoples from around the globe: Europeans, Africans, Asians, and others—all of whom brought with them distinctive backgrounds, cultures, technologies, and motivations that, taken together, helped form the American mosaic.

## Early Cultures in the Americas

For at least 20,000 years before the arrival of Europeans, Native Americans had occupied the vastness of North America undisturbed by outside invaders. By the time Christopher Columbus happened upon the Western Hemisphere, the hundreds of Indian societies living in North America may have numbered over 10 million people. They lived in a diverse array of communities in which more than 300 languages were spoken.

Archaeologists have labeled the earliest arrivals in North America the *Clovis* peoples, named after a site in New Mexico where ancient hunters around 9500 B.C.E. (before the Common Era) killed tusked woolly mammoths (fourteen feet tall) using distinctive “Clovis” stone spear points that made hunting large mammals much more efficient. Clovis people lived in small bands of five to ten families. Over many centuries, as the post-Ice Age climate warmed, sea levels rose, growing seasons lengthened, and snowfall and rainfall lessened, leading many lakes to dry up into deserts. The largest mammals—mammoth, mastodons, giant bison, single-hump camels, huge beavers—eventually died out. Hunters then began stalking smaller, yet more abundant mammals: deer, antelope, elk, moose, and caribou.

As the climate grew hotter and drier through global warming, grasslands gave way to forests, which provided plants and small animals for human consumption. The ancient Indians adapted to the diverse new environments—coastal forests, grassy plains, southwestern deserts, eastern woodlands—by developing new ways to survive and flourish. Some continued to hunt large mammals, while others fished and trapped small animals; some gathered wild plants and herbs and collected acorns and seeds, while others farmed. Many did some of each. Contrary to the romantic myth of early Indian civilizations living in perfect harmony with nature and one another, indigenous peoples often engaged in warfare and exploited the environment by burning large wooded areas in order to plant fields. They also developed their own nature-centered religions, mastered the use of fire, and improved technology such as spear points, basketry, and pottery.

By about 5000 B.C.E., people living in Mexico began adapting to the warmer climate by transforming themselves into farming societies. They became expert at growing the plant foods that would become the primary crops of the hemisphere: chiefly **maize (corn)** to be ground into flour, beans, and squash but also chili peppers, avocados, and pumpkins. More food spurred population growth, the construction of cities, and new industries. Agricultural societies grew larger and more complex, with their own distinctive social, economic, and political institutions.

### The Mayas, Incas, and Mexica

Around 1500 B.C.E., farming towns first appeared in Mexico, enabling people to live in one place rather than move with the seasons. The more settled life in turn provided time for the cultivation of religion, art and crafts, science,

#### CORE OBJECTIVE

1. Explain why there were so many diverse human societies in the Americas before Europeans arrived.

Global warming and climatic and environmental diversity

Agricultural revolution

**maize (corn)** The primary grain crop in Mesoamerica, yielding small kernels often ground into cornmeal. Easy to grow in a broad range of conditions, it enabled a global population explosion after being brought to Europe, Africa, and Asia.



**MAYAN SOCIETY** A fresco depicting a dressing ceremony of a high priest. He stands in the center garbed in a jaguar skin and embroidered belt, surrounded by his less elaborately clad attendants. **What does this image reveal about the social hierarchy of Mayan society?**



governmental administration—and frequent warfare. Agriculture supported the development of densely populated cities complete with gigantic pyramids, temples, and palaces in Middle America (*Mesoamerica*, what is now Mexico and Central America).

The Mayas, who dominated Central America for more than 600 years, also developed a rich written language and elaborate works of art. They used sophisticated mathematics and astronomy to create a yearly calendar more accurate than the one the Europeans were using at the time of Columbus. Mayan civilization was highly developed, featuring sprawling cities, hierarchical government, terraced farms, spectacular pyramids, and a cohesive ideology.

In about A.D. 900 the complex Mayan culture collapsed. Why it disappeared remains a mystery, but a major factor was ecological. The Mayas overexploited the rain forest, upon whose fragile ecosystem they depended. As an archaeologist has explained, “Too many farmers grew too many crops



on too much of the landscape.” Widespread deforestation led to hillside erosion and a catastrophic loss of nutrient-rich farmland.

Overpopulation added to the strain on Mayan society, prompting civil wars. Mayan war parties destroyed each other’s cities and took prisoners to be sacrificed to the gods in theatrical rituals. Whatever the reasons for the weakening of Mayan society, it succumbed to the Toltecs, a warlike people who conquered most of the region in the tenth century. Around A.D. 1200, however, the Toltecs mysteriously withdrew after a series of droughts, fires, and invasions.

Farther south, as many as 12 million people speaking at least twenty different languages made up the sprawling Inca Empire. By the fifteenth century, the Incas’ vast realm stretched some 2,500 miles along the Andes Mountains in the western part of South America, transforming their mountainous empire into a flowering civilization with fertile farms fed by irrigation systems, enduring stone buildings, and interconnected networks of paved roads.

During the late thirteenth century, the **Mexica** (Me-SHEE-ka)—whom Europeans later called Aztecs (“People from Aztlán,” the place they claimed as their homeland)—began drifting southward to the central highlands of Mexico. Displaying tireless energy and shocking ruthlessness, they eventually took control of the entire region, where they built in the fourteenth century the spectacular city of Tenochtitlán on an island in Lake Tetzaco, the site of present-day Mexico City.

Tenochtitlán would become the largest city in the Western Hemisphere by the end of the fifteenth century. It served as the capital of a sophisticated **Aztec Empire** ruled by a semidivine emperor and divided into two social classes: the nobility/priesthood (about 5 percent of the population) and the commoners—merchants, craftsmen, farmers, and slaves.

Warfare was a sacred ritual for the Mexica. Gradually, they expanded their control over neighboring societies in central Mexico, forcing them to pay tribute in goods and services each year and developing a thriving trade in gold, silver, copper, and pearls as well as agricultural products. Towering stone temples, broad paved avenues, thriving markets, and some 70,000 adobe huts dominated the capital city of Tenochtitlán.

Like most agricultural peoples, the Mexica were intensely spiritual. Their religious beliefs focused on the interconnection between nature and human life and the sacredness of natural elements—the sun, moon, stars, rain, mountains, rivers, and animals. Mexica believed that the gods had sacrificed themselves at the beginning of creation to benefit humankind. To repay their debt to the gods and to ensure good harvests and victory in battle, the Mexica, like most Mesoamericans, regularly offered ritual sacrifices of live people—captive warriors, slaves, women, and children. In elaborate weekly ceremonies, priests used stone knives to cut out the beating hearts of victims. To the Mexica, human blood and hearts provided the sun god with the vital energy to enable fertile crops. The constant need for

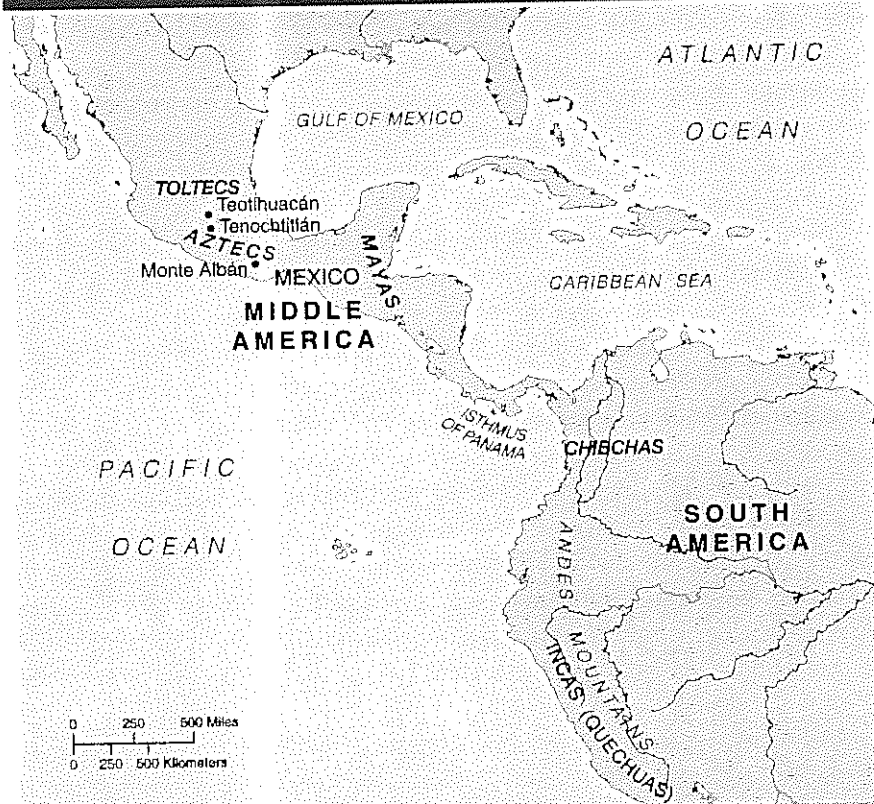
Vast empires and monumental cities

Religion, war, tribute, and trade

**Mexica** Otherwise known as Aztecs, a Mesoamerican people of northern Mexico who founded the vast Aztec Empire in the fourteenth century, later conquered by the Spanish under Hernán Cortés in 1521.

**Aztec Empire** Established in the fourteenth century under the imperialistic Mexica, or Aztecs, in the valley of Mexico.

### PRE-COLUMBIAN INDIAN CIVILIZATIONS IN MIDDLE AND SOUTH AMERICA



- What were the major pre-Columbian civilizations?
- What factors caused the demise of the Mayan civilization?
- What was the importance of the Mexica city of Tenochtitlán?

more human sacrifices fed the Mexica's relentless warfare against other indigenous groups. A Mexica song celebrated their warrior code: "Proud of itself / is the city of Mexico-Tenochtitlán / Here no one fears to die in war. / This is our glory."

#### North American Civilizations before 1500

Diverse regional societies

North of Mexico, numerous indigenous civilizations existed in the present-day United States. They shared several fundamental spiritual myths and social beliefs, especially concerning the sacredness of nature, the necessity of communal living, and respect for elders, but the different societies developed in different ways at different times and in different places. In North America alone, there were probably 10 million Native Americans organized into 240 different societies speaking many different languages when the Europeans arrived.

Native Americans had well-defined social roles. Men were hunters and warriors, while women tended children, made clothes, blankets, jewelry, and pottery. Women also dried animal skins, wove baskets, and gathered, grew, and cooked food. Extended family groups often lived together in a lodge or tipi (a Sioux word meaning “dwelling”).

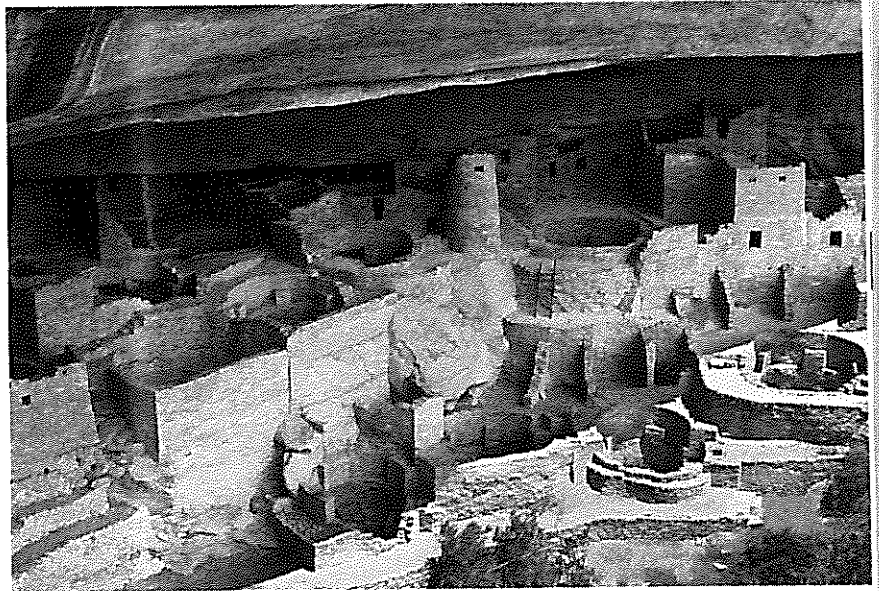
The dry Southwest (what is now Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah) hosted corn-growing societies, elements of which exist today and heirs to which (the Hopis, Zunis, and others) still live in the multistory cliffside villages (called *pueblos* by the Spanish) erected by their distant ancestors. About 500 C.E., the Hohokam people from present-day Mexico migrated to southern and central Arizona, where they constructed hundreds of miles of irrigation canals to water their crops. They also crafted decorative pottery and turquoise jewelry, and they constructed temple mounds (earthen pyramids used for sacred ceremonies).

The most widespread and best known of the Southwest pueblo cultures were the Anasazi (Ancient Ones). In ancient times they developed extensive settlements in the “Four Corners” region where the modern-day states of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah meet. Anasazi society was remarkable for *not* having a rigid class structure. The religious leaders and warriors worked much as the rest of the people did. And the Anasazi engaged in warfare only as a means of self-defense. (*Hopi* means “Peaceful People.”)

Along the heavily forested northwest Pacific coast, where shellfish, salmon, seals, whales, deer, and edible wild plants were abundant, there was little need for farming. In fact, many of the Pacific Northwest peoples needed to work only two days to provide enough food for a week.

Such social density enabled the Pacific peoples to develop intricate religious rituals and sophisticated woodworking skills, aspects of which were embodied in the carved totem poles they created and erected. For shelter, they built large, earthen-floored, cedar-plank houses up to 100 feet long, where whole bands of families lived together. Socially, the Indian bands along the Northwest Pacific coast were hierarchical, divided into slaves, commoners, and chiefs. Seashells were used as money. An abundance of food, a mild climate, and a prosperous trading network made the Pacific coast the most densely populated of all the regions in North America.

The peoples living on the Great Plains (Plains Indians), a vast, flat land of cold winters and hot summers west of the Mississippi River, and in the Great Basin (present-day Utah and Nevada) included the Arapaho, Blackfeet,



**CLIFF DWELLINGS** Ruins of Anasazi cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado. Why might the Southwestern societies have built their villages deep into cliff faces?

Southwest pueblo cultures



**GREAT SERPENT MOUND** At over 1,300 feet in length and three feet high, this snake-shaped burial mound in Adams County, Ohio, is the largest of its kind in the world.

Eastern "mound builders"

**burial mounds** A funereal tradition, practiced in the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys by the Adena-Hopewell cultures, of erecting massive mounds of earth over graves, often shaped in the designs of serpents and other animals.

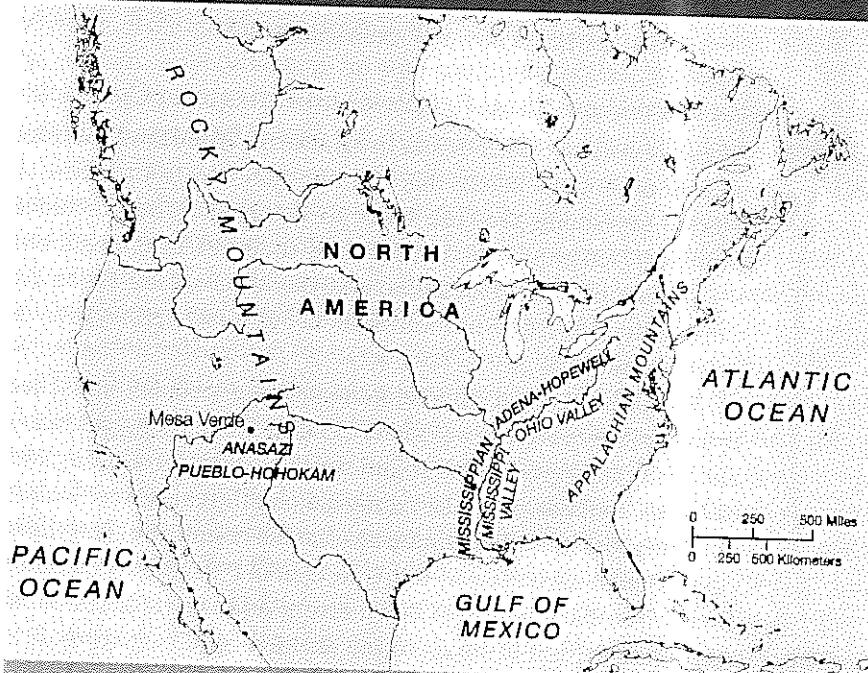
Cheyenne, Comanche, Crow, Apache, and Sioux. They were nomadic hunter-gatherers, following on foot enormous herds of bison across a sea of grassland, collecting seeds, nuts, roots, and berries as they roamed.

East of the Great Plains, in the vast woodlands from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean that would eventually become the American South and Midwest, several "mound-building" cultures flourished as predominantly agricultural societies growing corn, beans, and squash. First the Adena and later the Hopewell peoples (both names derive from archaeological sites) developed thriving communities along rivers in the Ohio Valley between 800 B.C.E. and 400 C.E. The Adena-Hopewell cultures focused on agriculture, including tobacco. They left behind enormous earthworks and 200 elaborate **burial mounds** shaped like great snakes, birds, and other animals, several of which were nearly a quarter mile long.

By the sixth century, however, the Hopewell culture disappeared, giving way to a new phase of Native American development east of the Mississippi River, the Mississippian culture, which flourished from 800 to 1500 C.E. The Mississippians, centered in the southern Mississippi Valley, were also mound-building and corn-growing peoples who built substantial towns around central plazas and temples.



## PRE-COLUMBIAN INDIAN CIVILIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA



- What were the three dominant pre-Columbian civilizations in North America?
- Where was the Adena-Hopewell culture centered?
- How was the Mississippian civilization similar to that of the Mayas or Aztecs?
- What made the Anasazi culture different from the other North American cultures?

The largest of these advanced regional centers, called *chiefdoms*, was **Cahokia** (1050–1250 C.E.), in southwest Illinois, just a few miles across the Mississippi River from what is now St. Louis, Missouri. There the Mississippians constructed an enormous, intricately planned farming settlement with pole-and-thatch houses, temples (where humans were sacrificed to the gods), monumental public buildings, spacious ceremonial plazas, and over a hundred flat-topped earthen pyramids with thatch-roofed temples on top. Cahokia hosted 15,000 people on some 3,200 acres, making it the largest city north of Mexico.

Yet Cahokia mysteriously vanished after 1400. What caused its collapse remains a mystery, but the most likely reason was environmental. The over-cutting of trees to make fortress walls may have set in motion ecological changes that doomed the community when a massive earthquake struck around 1200 C.E. The loss of trees led to widespread flooding and the erosion of topsoil, which finally forced people to look for better lands for corn

**Cahokia** The largest chiefdom of the Mississippian Indian culture located in present-day Illinois and the site of a sophisticated farming settlement that supported up to 15,000 inhabitants.



**ALGONQUIAN CHIEF IN WAR PAINT** This sketch from the notebook of English settler John White depicts a Native American chief.

#### Eastern Woodland peoples

Various Native American peoples, particularly the Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Muskogean regional groups, who once dominated the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to Louisiana.

growing elsewhere. As Cahokia disappeared, however, its former residents carried with them its cultural traditions, thereby spreading its advanced ways of life to other areas across the Midwest and into what is now the American South.

#### Eastern Woodland Peoples and European Contact

After the collapse of Cahokia, the **Eastern Woodland peoples** rose to dominance along the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to Florida and along the Gulf coast to Louisiana. They included three regional groups distinguished by their different languages: the Algonquian, the Iroquoian, and the Muskogean. These are the societies the English would first encounter when they arrived in North America.

The hundreds of Algonquian-speaking peoples stretched from the New England seaboard to lands along the Great Lakes and into the Upper Midwest and south to New Jersey, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The Algonquians along the coast were skilled at fishing; the inland Algonquians excelled at hunting. They used canoes made of hollowed-out tree trunks (“dugouts”) or made from birch bark to travel down rivers and across lakes. Most Algonquians lived in small, round shelters called *wigwams* or in multifamily “longhouses.” Their villages typically ranged in size from 500 to 2,000 inhabitants, but they often moved their villages with the seasons.

The Algonquians foraged for wild food (nuts, berries, and fruits) and practiced agriculture to some extent, regularly burning dense forests to improve soil fertility and provide grazing room for deer. To prepare their vegetable gardens, women broke up the ground with hoes tipped with clamshells or the shoulder blades from deer. In the spring, they planted corn, beans, and squash in mounds. As the cornstalks rose, the tendrils from the climbing bean plants wrapped around them for support. Once the crops ripened, women made *succotash*, a nutritious meal combining corn, beans, and squash.

West and south of the Algonquians were the Iroquoian-speaking peoples (including the Seneca, Onondaga, Mohawk, Oneida, and Cayuga nations, as well as the Cherokee and Tuscarora to the south), whose lands spread from upstate New York southward through Pennsylvania and into the upland regions of the Carolinas and Georgia. The Iroquois built no great mounds or pyramids. They were farmers who lived together in extended family groups (“clans”), sharing bark-covered longhouses in towns of 3,000 or more people. The most important crops were corn and squash, both of which figure prominently in Iroquois mythology.

Unlike the patriarchal Algonquian culture in which men were dominant, in Iroquoian society women held the key leadership roles (hence such cultures are called matriarchal). As an Iroquois elder explained, “In our society,

women are the center of all things. Nature, we believe, has given women the ability to create; therefore, it is only natural that women be in positions of power to protect this function." Men and women were not treated as equals, however. Rather, the two genders operated in two separate social domains. No woman could be a chief; no man could head a clan. Women selected the chiefs, controlled the distribution of property, and planted as well as harvested the crops. After marriage, the man moved in with the wife's family.

War between rival groups of Native Americans, especially the Algonquians and Iroquois, was commonplace, usually as a means of settling feuds or gaining slaves. Success in fighting was a warrior's highest honor. As a Cherokee explained in the eighteenth century, "We cannot live without war. Should we make peace with the Tuscaroras, we must immediately look out for some other nation with whom we can engage in our beloved occupation."

The third major Native American group in the Eastern Woodland included the southern peoples along the Gulf coast who spoke the Muskogean language: the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole, Natchez, Apalachee, and Timucua. Like the Iroquois, these Muskogean-speaking peoples were often matrilineal societies, meaning that ancestry was traced only through the mother's line, but they had a more rigid class structure. The Muskogean lived in towns arranged around a central plaza. In the Lower South (the current states of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama) many of their thatch-roofed houses had no walls because of the heat.

Over thousands of years, the indigenous North Americans had displayed remarkable resilience, adapting to the uncertainties of frequent warfare, changing climate, and varying environments. They would display similar resilience in the face of the challenges created by the arrival of Europeans. In the process of adapting their heritage and ways of life to unwanted new realities, the Native Americans played a significant role in shaping America.

## The Expansion of Europe

The European exploration of the Western Hemisphere resulted from several key developments in the "Old World" during the fifteenth century. Dramatic intellectual changes and scientific discoveries affected religion, warfare, family life, and the economy. In addition, the resurgence of the old vices—greed, conquest, exploitation, oppression, racism, and slavery—would help fuel European expansion abroad.

By the end of the fifteenth century, medieval feudalism's static agrarian social system, whereby peasant serfs worked for local nobles in order to live on and farm the land, had largely died out. People were no longer forced to remain in the same locality and keep the same social status in which they were born. A new "middle class" of profit-hungry bankers, merchants, and investors emerged, men who were committed to a more dynamic commercial economy driven by innovations in banking, currency, accounting, and insurance.

Warfare and rivalries

### CORE OBJECTIVE

**2.** Summarize the major developments in Europe that enabled the Age of Exploration.

Rise of a middle class

Powerful new nations

The growing trade-based economy in Europe freed monarchs from their dependence on feudal nobles, enabling the monarchs to unify the scattered cities ruled by princes (principalities) into larger kingdoms with stronger, more centralized governments. The rise of towns, cities, and a merchant class provided monarchs with new tax revenues, and lesser agrarian-based nobles were displaced by the emergence of powerful new commercial *nations* governed by these centralized monarchical bureaucracies with the power to collect taxes.

### The Renaissance

At the same time, the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Roman texts during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries spurred the *Renaissance* (rebirth), an intellectual revolution that transformed the arts as well as traditional attitudes toward religion and science. The Renaissance began in Italy and spread across western Europe, bringing with it a more *secular* outlook that took greater interest in humanity than in religion.

Renaissance thinkers embraced intellectual curiosity and scientific inquiry. Educated people throughout Europe began to challenge medieval beliefs as well as the absolute authority of rulers and priests. They discussed controversial new ideas about politics, religion, and science; engaged in scientific research; and unleashed their artistic creativity—all in an effort to deepen their understanding of the natural world and human life, what colleges now call the humanities.

Innovations in shipbuilding, navigation, and weaponry lead to global revolution in maritime trade

This “rebirth” of learning began a long process of demystifying the biblical-centered view of the world by using scientific research to identify the natural laws that governed the universe. The Renaissance also involved the practical application of new ideas that enabled the Age of Exploration. New knowledge and new technologies made possible the construction of stronger, larger sailing ships armed with cannons and capable of oceanic voyages. The development of more-accurate magnetic compasses, maps, and navigational instruments enabled sailors to determine their location by reference to the sun or stars. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries also witnessed the invention of gunpowder, cannons, and firearms—and the printing press.

### The Rise of Global Trade

By the end of the fifteenth century, trade between western European nations and the Middle East and Asia became more important than ever. The Portuguese, blessed with expert sailors and fast new three-masted ships with multiple sails called *caravels*, launched the Age of Exploration during the fifteenth century. At the behest of Prince Henry the Navigator, a visionary ruler, Portuguese ships explored the Azores and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic. They also roamed far down the west coast of Africa in search of coveted grains, gold, ivory, spices (cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and ginger), and slaves. By the end of the fifteenth century, these profit-seeking mariners continued all the way



around Africa in search of the fabled Indies (India and Southeast Asia), as well as China and Japan, rich with spices, silk cloth, and other exotic trade goods.

By 1500 C.E., four powerful nations had emerged in western Europe: England, France, Portugal, and Spain. The marriage of King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile in 1469 resulted in the unification of their homelands into a single nation, Spain. Both Spanish monarchs were aggressive Christian expansionists. By 1492, they had forcibly expelled all Jews who did not convert to Christianity and were making plans for exploring west across the Atlantic Ocean.

## The Voyages of Columbus

These were the circumstances that led Christopher Columbus's efforts to find a faster route to Japan and China by exploring west across the Atlantic. Born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451, the son of a weaver, Columbus took to the sea at an early age, teaching himself geography, navigation, and Latin. By the 1480s, he was eager to spread Christianity across the globe. The tall, blue-eyed Columbus initially asked Portugal to finance his explorations, but he was rebuffed. The dogged Columbus eventually persuaded Ferdinand and Isabella to finance his voyage. The legend that the queen had to sell the crown jewels to finance the voyage is as false as the fable that Columbus set out to prove the earth was round rather than flat. Most educated Europeans at the time knew that the earth was round.

On August 3, 1492, Columbus and ninety men and boys from eight different nations, set sail on three tiny ships, the *Santa María*, the *Pinta*, and the *Niña*. From Palos, Spain, they sailed first to Lisbon, Portugal, and then headed west. For weeks they journeyed across the open sea, hoping to sight land at any moment, only to be disappointed. By early October, the worried sailors grew rebellious at the "madness" of sailing blindly and threatened to take over the ships and turn back. Columbus was forced to promise that they would turn back if land were not sighted within three days.

Then, at dawn on October 12, a sailor stationed at the masthead yelled, "*Tierra! Tierra!*" ("Land! Land!"). He had spied "a white stretch of land" on an island in the Bahamas east of Florida that Columbus named San Salvador (Blessed Savior). Columbus mistakenly concluded that they must be near the Indies, so he called the island people "*Indios*." He reported that they went without clothes, painted their faces, wore necklaces, were "very timid" and "affectionate," had no "weapons," and would make "good subjects." At every encounter with these people, known as Tainos or Arawaks, he used sign language to ask if they had any gold. If they did, the Spaniards seized it; if they did not, the Europeans forced them to search for it.

After leaving San Salvador, Columbus continued to search for a passage to the Indies through the Bahamas and westward to Cuba, which he thought was part of Asia. There Columbus went ashore, sword in one hand, cross in the other, exclaiming that this was the "most beautiful land human

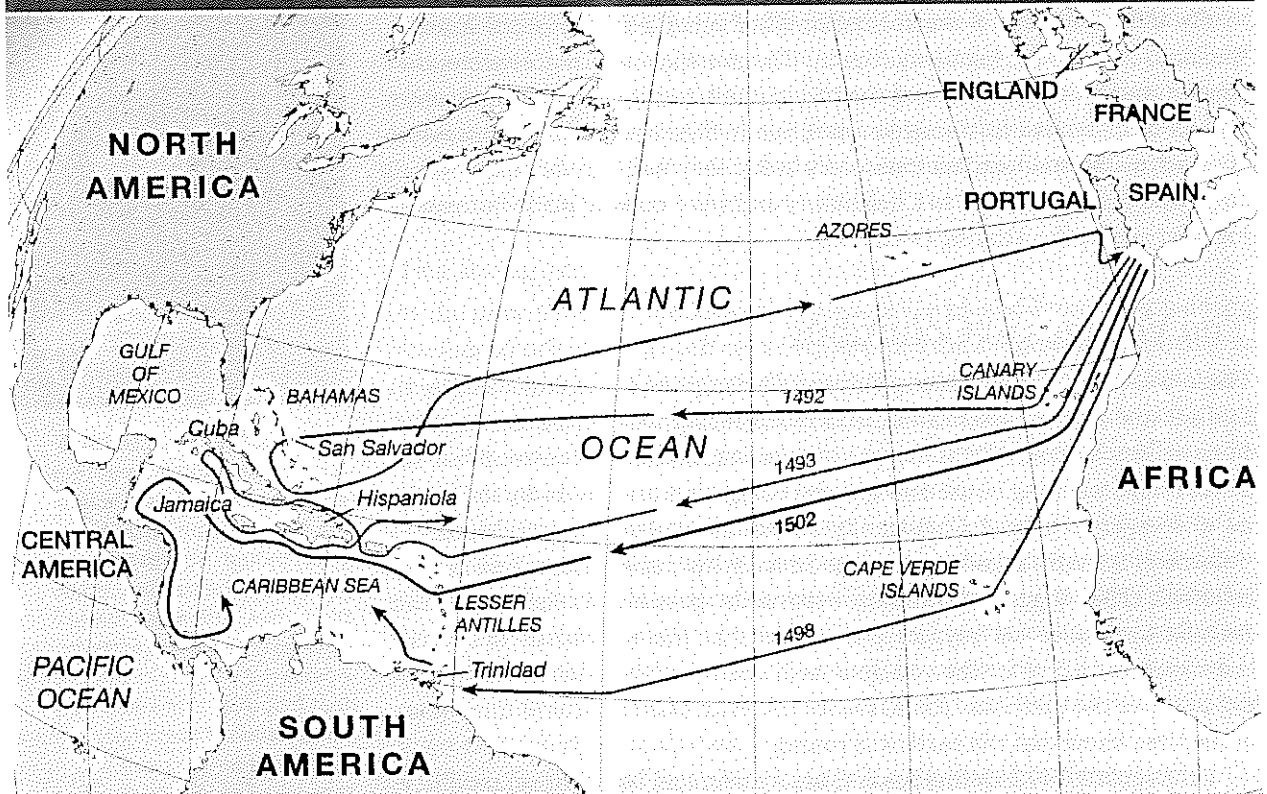


### CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

A prominent and momentous explorer, Columbus reached the island of San Salvador in 1492, though he was under the impression he had landed by the Indies. Columbus made several trips back and forth across the Atlantic in the decade that followed, motivated by a combination of missionary zeal and the desire for the glory and riches that would come with the discovery of a new trade route to Asia.

Lust for gold

## COLUMBUS'S VOYAGES



- How many voyages did Columbus make to the Americas?
- Where did Columbus think he had landed?
- What happened to the colony that Columbus left on Hispaniola in 1493?

eyes have ever beheld." He then sailed eastward to the island he named Hispaniola (later divided into Haiti and the Dominican Republic). There he met indigenous people who wore gold jewelry and introduced him to smoking tobacco.

At the end of 1492, Columbus, still convinced he had reached an outer island of Japan, sailed back to Spain after leaving about forty men on Hispaniola and capturing ten Arawaks to present as gifts to the king and queen. Upon reaching Spain, Columbus received a hero's welcome as he described a fascinating new world he had discovered, one alive with wonder, danger, and riches. "In thirty-three days," he reported, "I reached the *Indies*." Thanks to the newly invented printing press, news of his westward voyage spread rapidly across Europe. The Spanish monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, told Columbus to prepare for a second voyage, instructing him to "treat the Indians very well and lovingly and abstain from doing them any injury." Columbus and his men would repeatedly defy this order.

The Spanish monarchs wanted to strengthen their legal claim to the New World in case rival Portugal decided to send ships across the Atlantic. With the help of the Catholic pope (a Spaniard), rivals Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), dividing the non-Christian world, with most of the New World given to Spain and with Africa and what would become Brazil granted to Portugal. In practice, this meant that while Spain developed its American empire in the sixteenth century, Portugal provided it with most of its enslaved African laborers.

Treaty of Tordesillas (1494)

Flush with the fame resulting from his first voyage, Columbus returned across the Atlantic in 1493 with seventeen ships, 1,400 men, and a few women. Also on board were Catholic priests and monks eager to convert the Indians to Christianity. Upon reaching the Caribbean, Columbus discovered that the men he had left behind on Hispaniola had lost their senses, raping women, robbing villages, and, as Columbus's son later added, "committing a thousand excesses for which they were mortally hated by the Indians."

Even more ghastly, however, was a hidden killer on board the Spanish ships. The Europeans carried with them a range of infectious diseases—smallpox, measles, mumps, typhus—that were unknown in the Americas and proved disastrous for the indigenous peoples, for they had no natural immunities to them. As many as 90 percent of the Native Americans were eventually killed by European-borne diseases. Proportionally, it was the worst human death toll in history.

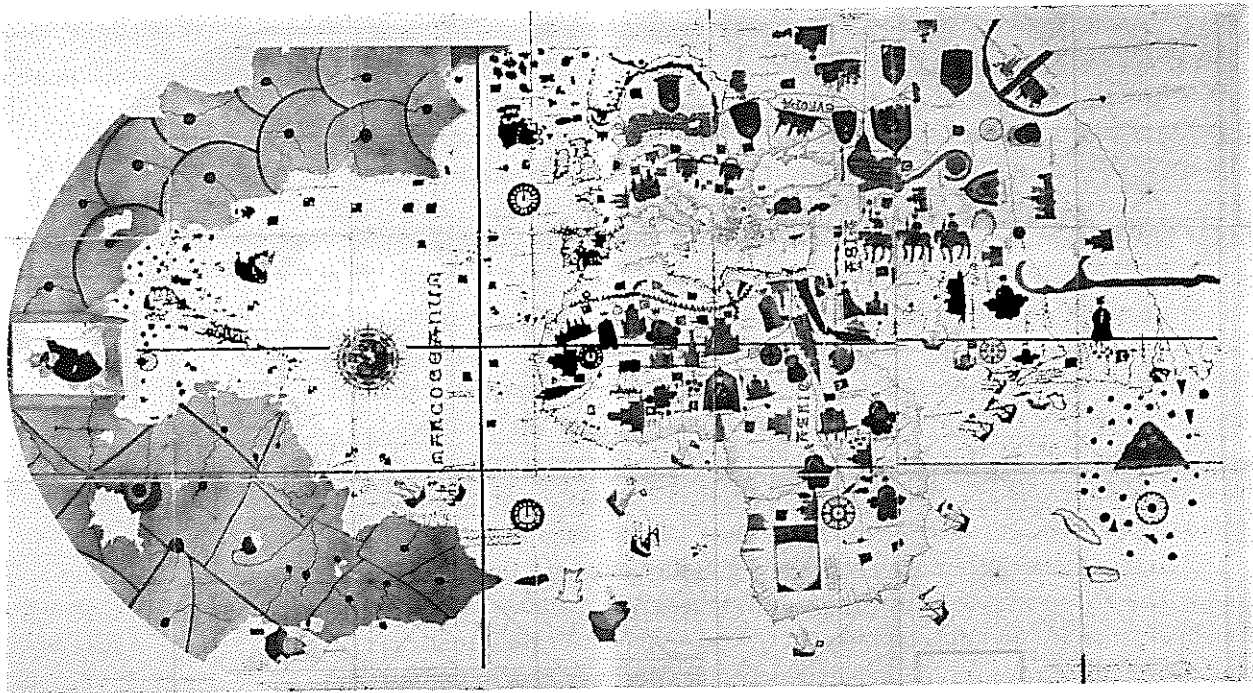
Columbus would make two more voyages to the Caribbean, each time sending back to Spain hundreds of enslaved Indians. To the end of his life, he insisted that his ships had discovered the outlying parts of Asia, not a new continent. By one of history's greatest ironies, this led Europeans to name the New World not for Columbus but for another Italian sailor-explorer, Amerigo Vespucci, a talented merchant turned explorer. In 1499, with the support of Portugal's monarchy, Vespucci sailed west across the Atlantic, navigating by his knowledge of the sun and stars. He landed at Brazil and then sailed along 3,000 miles of the South American coastline in hopes of finding Asia. In the end, Vespucci reported that South America was so large that it must be a *new* continent he called the "New World," rather than Asia, as Columbus still believed. In 1507, a German mapmaker paid tribute to Vespucci's navigational skills by labeling the New World using the feminine variant of the explorer's first name: America.

Vespucci's New World continent

### Professional Explorers

News of the remarkable voyages of Columbus and Vespucci stimulated many other expeditions to the Western Hemisphere. Over the next two centuries, Spain, Portugal, France, Britain, the Netherlands, and Russia would dispatch ships and claim territory in the Americas by "right of discovery."

The first explorer to sight the North American continent was John Cabot, an Italian sponsored by King Henry VII of England. Cabot's landfall



**THE OLD AND NEW WORLDS** The *mappa mundi*, or “map of the world,” was drawn by Juan de la Cosa in 1500 and is the first known European map to include the “New World.” An explorer himself, de la Cosa made many trips across the Atlantic, some of them in the company of Columbus and Vespucci. According to this map, what misconceptions did European explorers have about the world’s geography?

in 1497 at what the king called “the new founde lande,” in present-day Canada, gave England the basis for a later claim to *all* North America.

The English were then unaware that Norsemen (“Vikings”) from Scandinavia had in fact been the first Europeans to “discover” and colonize areas of North America. As early as the tenth century, Norsemen had explored Greenland, a vast island off the northeast coast of North America, and established settlements there that lasted for almost 500 years.

The Spanish were determined to keep the English and any other Europeans out of the New World they claimed for themselves. In 1505, a Spanish ship unloaded pigs and goats in Puerto Rico, intending them to grow and multiply in anticipation of settling a colony there. It would be the first European settlement on what would much later become a territory of the United States of America.

### Religious Conflict in Europe

At the same time that the European explorers were crossing the Atlantic, powerful religious conflicts were tearing Europe apart in ways that would greatly influence settlement in the New World. The Protestant Reformation became one of the most powerful forces reshaping Europe—and its colonies.



When Columbus sailed west in 1492, Roman Catholicism had long been the unifying force of Europe. All of Europe acknowledged the thousand-year-old supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church and its pope in Rome. The brutal efforts of the Spanish to convert Indians to **Roman Catholicism** illustrated the murderous intensity with which Europeans embraced religious life in the sixteenth century. Spiritual concerns inspired, comforted, and united people. People believed in heaven and hell, devils and witches, demons and angels, magic and miracles. And Christians were willing to kill and die for their beliefs.

Yet the enforced unity of Catholic Europe began to crack on October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther (1483–1546), an obscure thirty-three-year-old German monk who taught at the University of Wittenberg, nailed ninety-five “theses” to the door of All Saints’ Church. His purpose was to generate a debate about the “corrupt” Catholic Church. Little did he know that his rebellious ideas would launch one of history’s fiercest spiritual dramas, the **Protestant Reformation**, or that his ideas would change the course of history.

Luther was a profound and combative spiritual thinker, a true spiritual revolutionary who fractured Christianity by undermining the authority of the Catholic Church. He called the pope “the greatest thief and robber that has appeared or can appear on earth.” Luther especially criticized the widespread sale of *indulgences* (whereby priests would forgive sins in exchange for money). For centuries, the Catholic Church had used the revenue from indulgences to raise armies and build cathedrals. Luther condemned indulgences as a crass form of thievery. God alone, through the grace and sheer mercy of Christ, he insisted, offered people salvation; people could not earn everlasting life through *good works*, nor could they buy it with money. As Luther exclaimed, “By faith alone are you saved!”

Through this simple but revolutionary doctrine, Luther sought to revitalize Christianity’s original faith and spirituality. The common people, he insisted, represented a “priesthood of all believers.” Because God was responsible for the salvation of each believer, priests, bishops, and the huge Catholic bureaucracy were no longer necessary. Luther’s insistence on what he called “personal thinking” over the authority of priests and bishops became the Reformation’s great contribution to the evolution of the Christian faith.

Luther democratized Christianity by urging believers to learn to read and write so that they could read the Bible for themselves rather than blindly follow the dictates of Catholic priests and the distant pope in Rome. To enable Christians to be their own “priests,” Luther produced the first Bible in a German translation.



**MARTIN LUTHER** A theologian and critic of the Catholic Church, Luther is best remembered for his ninety-five “theses,” an incendiary document that served as a catalyst for the Protestant Revolution.

**Roman Catholicism** The Christian faith and religious practices of the Roman Catholic Church, which exerted great political, economic, and social influence on much of western Europe and, through the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, on the Americas.

**Protestant Reformation** Sixteenth-century religious movement initiated by Martin Luther, a German monk whose public criticism of corruption in the Roman Catholic Church and whose teaching that Christians can communicate directly with God gained a wide following.

## Protestant Reformation

Pope Leo X and other horrified Catholic officials lashed out at Luther's "dangerous doctrines," calling him a "wild boar" and "a leper with a brain of brass and a nose of iron." Luther fought back with equal fury, declaring that he was "born to war." In 1520, he charged in an open letter to the pope that the Catholic Church, "once the holiest of all, had become the most licentious den of thieves, the most shameless of brothels, the kingdom of sin, death, and hell." Luther refused to abide by any papal decrees, declaring that he was bound only by his conscience. "I will recant nothing!" The "die is cast!" Luther stressed, "and I will have no reconciliation with the Pope for all eternity."

When the pope expelled Luther from the Catholic Church in 1521 and the Holy Roman emperor sentenced him to death, civil war erupted throughout the German principalities (the various German-speaking regions did not become a united nation until 1871). A powerful German prince protected Luther from the church's wrath.

## Wars and upheavals

What had begun as a religious movement now became a political reformation spanning the entire continent of Europe. Luther was no longer simply an outspoken priest; he was a spiritual revolutionary, a folk hero, and a political prophet, encouraging German princes and dukes to separate themselves from the Italian papacy. A settlement between warring Lutherans and Catholics did not come until 1555, when each prince was allowed by the Treaty of Augsburg to determine the religion of his subjects.

Soon after Martin Luther began his revolt against the shortcomings of Catholicism, Swiss Protestants also challenged papal authority. In Geneva, the movement looked to John Calvin (1509–1564), a brilliant French scholar who had fled to that city and brought it under the sway of his powerful beliefs. In his great theological work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), Calvin set forth a stern doctrine. All people, he taught, were damned by Adam's original sin, but the sacrifice of Christ on the cross made possible the redemption of those whom God had "elected" and thus had predestined to salvation from the beginning of time.

Intoxicated by godliness and driven by a reforming spirit, Calvin set about transforming Geneva into a strictly regulated godly city. He insisted upon strict morality and hard work, values that especially suited the rising middle class. Moreover, he taught that God valued every form of work, however menial it might be. Calvin also permitted lay members a share in the governance of the church through a body of elders and ministers called the presbytery. At the same time, however, Calvin ruled Geneva like a tyrant, demanding absolute obedience. He ordered fifty-eight people put to death and banished many more.

Calvinism spread like wildfire across France, Scotland, and the Netherlands and even penetrated Lutheran Germany. It formed the basis for the German Reformed Church, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Presbyterians in Scotland, some of the Puritans in England (and eventually America), and the Huguenots in France.

Through these and other groups, John Calvin exerted a greater effect upon religious belief and practice in the English colonies than did any other leader of the Reformation. His insistence on the freedom of individual believers, as well as his recognition that monarchs and political officials were sinful like everyone else, helped contribute to the evolving ideas in Europe of representative democracy and the importance of separating church power from state (governmental) power, ideas that crossed the Atlantic and formed the foundation of American religious and political life.

The Catholic Church resisted the emergence of new "protestant" faiths by launching a "Counter-Reformation" that reaffirmed basic Catholic beliefs while addressing some of the concerns about priestly abuses raised by Luther, Calvin, and others. In Spain, the monarchy created an "Inquisition" to root out protestants and heretics. In 1534, a Spanish soldier named Ignatius de Loyola organized the Society of Jesus, a militant new monastic order created to revitalize Catholicism around the world. Its members, the black-robed Jesuits, fanned out across Europe and the Americas as courageous Catholic missionaries and teachers.

Catholic Counter-Reformation

Despite such Catholic efforts to blunt the appeal of Protestantism, the Reformation succeeded in permanently fragmenting Christianity. It spread rapidly across northern Europe during the sixteenth century. Most of Germany, along with Scandinavia, became Lutheran, often calling themselves the "Protesting Estates," from which derived the label "Protestants." The Reformation thus became in part a theological dispute, in part a political movement, and in part a *catalyst* for social change, civil strife, and imperial warfare.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Catholics and Protestants persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and killed each other in large numbers in Europe—and in the Americas. Protestants also warred against rival Protestants. Every major international conflict became, to some extent, a religious holy war between Catholic and Protestant nations. Equally important, the Protestant worldview, with its emphasis on the freedom of the individual conscience and personal Bible reading, would play a major role in the colonization of America and the development of the American character.

### The Reformation in England

In England, the Reformation followed a unique course. The Church of England, or the Anglican Church, emerged through a gradual process of integrating Calvinism with English Catholicism. In early modern England, the church and government were united and mutually supportive. The monarchy required people to attend religious services and to pay taxes to support the church. English rulers also supervised the church officials and often instructed religious leaders to preach sermons in support of particular government policies. As one English king explained, "People are governed by the pulpit more than the sword in time of peace."

Purely political reasons initially led to the rejection of papal authority in England. Henry VIII, who ruled between 1509 and 1547, won from the pope the title Defender of the Faith for refuting Martin Luther's rebellious ideas. Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, his brother's widow, had produced no male heir, however, and for him to marry again required that he convince the pope to annul, or cancel, his marriage. Catherine, however, was the aunt of Charles V, king of Spain and ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, whose support was vital to the Catholic Church. The pope refused to grant an annulment. In a fit of rage, Henry severed England's nearly 900-year-old connection with the Catholic Church. He then named a new archbishop of Canterbury, who granted the annulment, thus freeing Henry to marry his mistress, Anne Boleyn.

In one of history's greatest ironies, Anne Boleyn gave birth not to the male heir that Henry demanded but to a daughter named Elizabeth (1533–1603). The disappointed king took vengeance on his wife, accusing her of adultery, ordering her beheaded, and declaring the infant princess Elizabeth a bastard.

Yet the unwanted Elizabeth, tutored by distinguished scholars, grew up to be quick-witted and nimble, cunning and courageous, a woman so strong,



**QUEEN ELIZABETH** The *Armada Portrait*, painted in 1588 by George Gower, portrays Queen Elizabeth at the height of her reign. A scene in the background features England's victory over the attacking Spanish fleet, the Armada, while in the foreground Elizabeth's right hand rests on a globe, signifying the English expansion into the New World.

a ruler so skillful, a monarch so charismatic, that she united a small, fragmented, and poor island society into a nation of global ambition. After the bloody reigns of her Protestant half brother, Edward VI, and her zealously Catholic half sister, Mary I, Queen of Scots, she ascended to the throne in 1558, at the age of twenty-five.

Over the next forty-five years, Elizabeth proved to be the greatest female ruler in history. Her long reign was punctuated by political turmoil, religious strife, economic crises, menacing threats, and foreign wars. Yet Queen Elizabeth, an unmarried Protestant in a still Catholic- and male-dominated Europe, a monarch who escaped numerous assassination attempts and persecuted as well as executed Catholics, ruled confidently over England's golden age. She once told Parliament to remember her as "a Queen, having reigned, lived, and died a virgin." To the end, she was married only to England. "We all loved her," wrote her godson, "for she said she loved us."

## The Spanish Empire

During the sixteenth century, Catholic Spaniards used a mixture of courage, cruelty, piety, and greed to create the world's most powerful empire. At its height, it encompassed much of Europe, most of the Americas, parts of Africa, and various trading outposts in Asia. But it was the gold and silver looted from the Americas that fueled the engine of Spain's "Golden Empire." By plundering, conquering, and colonizing the Americas and enslaving the indigenous peoples, the Spanish planted Christianity in the Western Hemisphere and gained the resources to rule the world.

The Caribbean Sea served as the gateway through which Spanish power entered the Americas. After establishing colonies on Hispaniola, including Santo Domingo, which became the capital of the West Indies, the Spanish proceeded eastward to Puerto Rico (1508) and westward to Cuba (1511–1514). Their motives, as one soldier explained, were "to serve God and the king, and also to get rich."

Many of the Europeans in the first wave of settlement in the New World died of malnutrition or disease. But the Native Americans suffered far more casualties, for they were ill equipped to resist the European invaders. Disunity everywhere—civil disorder, rebellion, and tribal warfare—left them vulnerable to division and foreign conquest. Attacks by well-armed soldiers and deadly germs from Europe overwhelmed entire indigenous societies.

### A Clash of Cultures

The often-violent encounter between Spaniards and Native Americans involved more than a clash between different cultures. It also involved contrasting forms of technological development. The Indians of Mexico used wooden canoes for water transportation, while the Europeans crossed the seas in

#### CORE OBJECTIVE

**3.** Describe how the Spanish were able to conquer and colonize the Americas.

Spanish foothold in the Caribbean

Lethal weapons and warhorses



much larger, heavily armed sailing vessels. The Spanish ships carried not only human cargo but also warhorses and fighting dogs, long steel swords, cross-bows, firearms, explosives, and armor. The wood-tipped arrows and tomahawks used by Native Americans were no match. “The most essential thing in new lands is horses,” reported one Spanish soldier. “They instill the greatest fear in the enemy and make the Indians respect the leaders of the army.”

Rivals collaborate against the Mexica

### Cortés’s Conquest

The most dramatic European conquest of a major Indian civilization on the North American mainland occurred in Mexico. On February 18, 1519, Hernán Cortés, driven by audacious dreams of gold and glory, set sail for Mexico from Cuba. He had grown weary of seeking a fortune in Cuba, explaining that “I came here to get rich, not to till the soil like a peasant.” His fleet of eleven ships carried nearly 600 soldiers and sailors. Also on board were 200 indigenous Cubans, sixteen warhorses, greyhound fighting dogs, and cannons. After the Spanish landed on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, Cortés, greatly benefiting from the services of an Indian woman, Doña Marina, as an interpreter (she would later bear Cortés a son), convinced the local Totomacs to join his assault against the Mexica, their hated rivals. To prevent any of his soldiers, called **conquistadores** (conquerors), from deserting, Cortés had the ships scuttled, sparing one vessel to carry the expected gold back to Spain.

With his small army and Indian allies, Cortés brashly set out to conquer the sprawling Mexica (Aztec) Empire, which extended from central Mexico to what is today Guatemala. The nearly 200-mile trek of Cortés’s army through the mountains to the magnificent Mexica capital of Tenochtitlán took nearly three months.

### Spanish Invaders

As the Spanish invaders marched across Mexico, they heard fabulous accounts of the splendor and riches of Tenochtitlán. With more than 200,000 inhabitants, it was the largest city in the Americas and much larger than most European cities. Cortés wrote the Spanish king that the imperial palace was “so marvelous that there is nothing like it in Spain.” The market square, he added, was larger than those in any European city. Every day, 60,000 people gathered there to buy food and other items. Graced by wide canals, stunning gardens, and formidable stone streets, houses, and pyramids, the lake-encircled capital seemed unconquerable, but Cortés made the most of his assets. Through a combination of threats and deceptions, Cortés and his Indian allies entered Tenochtitlán peacefully and captured the emperor, Montezuma II. Cortés explained to the Aztec ruler why the invasion was necessary: “We Spaniards have a disease of the heart that only gold can cure.”

After taking the Mexicas’ gold and silver, the Spanish forced them to mine more of the precious metals. Then, in the spring of 1520, disgruntled Mexica

**conquistadores** Spanish term for “conquerors,” applied to Spanish and Portuguese soldiers who conquered lands held by indigenous peoples in central and southern America as well as the current states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.



**CORTÉS IN MEXICO** A page from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, a historical narrative from the sixteenth century. The scene, in which Cortés is shown seated on a throne, depicts the arrival of the Spanish in Tlaxcala.

decided that Montezuma was a traitor. They rebelled, stoned him to death, and attacked the Spaniards. Forced to retreat to the mainland, the Spaniards lost about a third of their men. Their 20,000 Indian allies remained loyal, however, and Cortés regrouped his forces. For months, sporadic fighting continued. In 1521, having been reinforced with more soldiers from Cuba and thousands more Native Americans eager to defeat the despised Mexica, he surrounded the imperial city for eighty-five days, cutting off its access to water and food and allowing a smallpox epidemic to devastate the inhabitants.

For three months, the Mexica bravely defended their capital. Then the siege came to a bloody end. The ravages of smallpox and starvation, as well as the support of 75,000 anti-Mexica Indian allies, help explain how such a small force of determined Spaniards was able to vanquish a proud nation of nearly 1 million people. After 15,000 Mexica were slaughtered, the others surrendered. A merciless Cortés ordered the leaders hanged and the priests devoured by dogs. In two years, Cortés and his disciplined army had conquered a fabled empire that had taken centuries to develop.

Cortés's conquest of Mexico established the model for waves of plundering conquistadores to follow. Within twenty years, Spain had established a vast empire in Mexico and the Caribbean, which Cortés called "New Spain,"

Cortés conquers the Mexica, and Pizarro invades the Inca

based on a pattern of ruthless violence and enslavement of the indigenous peoples followed by oppressive rule over them—just as the Mexica had done in forming their own empire.

In 1531, another Spaniard, Francisco Pizarro, led a band of soldiers down the Pacific coast of Central and South America from Panama toward Peru, where they brutally subdued the Inca Empire. From Peru, Spain extended its control southward through Chile by about 1553 and north, to present-day Colombia, by 1538.

### Spanish America

The crusading conquistadores transferred to Hispanic America a socioeconomic system known as the *encomienda*, whereby favored officers were transformed into privileged landowners who controlled Indian villages. As *encomenderos*, they protected the villages in exchange for the Indians' providing them with goods and labor. Hispanic America therefore developed a society of extremes: wealthy conquistadores, *encomenderos*, and priests at one end of the spectrum and Indians held in poverty at the other end.

#### CORE OBJECTIVE

4. Assess the impact of the Columbian Exchange on the "Old" and "New" Worlds.

## The Columbian Exchange

The first European contacts with the Native Americans of the Western Hemisphere unleashed an unprecedented and unintended **Columbian Exchange**, now sometimes called the Great Biological Exchange—a worldwide transfer of plants, animals, and diseases that ultimately worked in favor of the Europeans at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

If anything, the plants, animals, insects, and microbes of the two worlds were more different from each other than were the peoples and their ways of life. Europeans had never seen creatures such as iguanas, bison, cougars, armadillos, opossums, sloths, and hummingbirds. Turkeys, guinea pigs, llamas, and alpacas were also new to Europeans. Nor did the Native Americans know of horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, chickens, and rats, which soon arrived from Europe in abundance.

The exchange of plant life between the Americas and Europe/Africa transformed the diets of both hemispheres. Before Columbus's voyage, three foods were unknown in Europe: maize (corn), potatoes (sweet and white), and many kinds of beans (snap, kidney, lima, and others). The white potato, although commonly called Irish, originated in South America. Explorers brought it back to Europe, where it thrived. The "Irish potato" was eventually transported to North America by Scots-Irish immigrants during the early eighteenth century. Other Western Hemisphere food plants included peanuts, squash, peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins, pineapples, sassafras, papayas, guavas, avocados, cacao (the source of chocolate), and chicle (for chewing gum). Europeans in turn introduced rice, wheat, barley, oats, wine grapes,

**encomienda** A land-grant system under which Spanish army officers (*conquistadores*) were awarded large parcels of land taken from Native Americans.

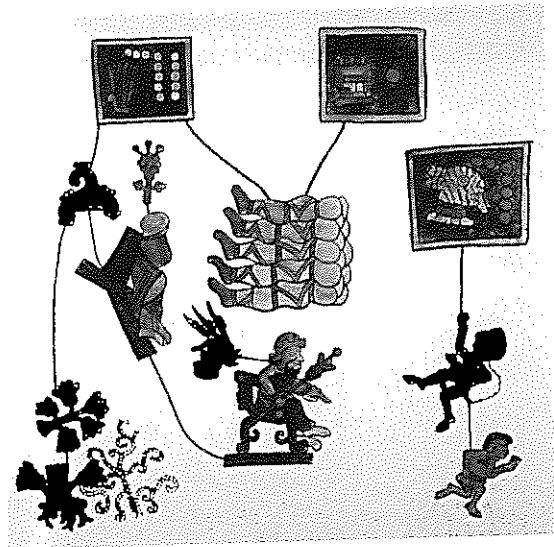
#### Columbian Exchange

The transfer of biological and social elements, such as plants, animals, people, diseases, and cultural practices, among Europe, the Americas, and Africa in the wake of Christopher Columbus's voyages to the New World.

melons, coffee, olives, bananas, “Kentucky” bluegrass, daisies, and dandelions to the Americas.

The beauty of the biological exchange was that the food plants were more complementary than competitive. Corn, it turned out, could flourish almost anywhere in the world. The nutritious food crops exported from the Americas, especially the potato, helped nourish a worldwide population explosion probably greater than any since the invention of agriculture. The new food crops spurred a dramatic increase in the European population that in turn provided the restless, adventurous young people who would colonize the New World.

By far, however, the most significant aspect of the biological exchange was the transmission of **infectious diseases**. During the three centuries after Columbus’s first voyage, Europeans and Africans brought with them deadly diseases that Native Americans had never encountered: smallpox, typhus, malaria, mumps, chickenpox, and measles. The results were catastrophic. Far more people—tens of millions—died from smallpox than from combat. By 1568, just seventy-five years after Columbus’s first voyage, infectious diseases had killed 80–90 percent of the Indian population—the greatest loss of human life in history.



**SMALLPOX** The infectious diseases colonists carried with them to the New World decimated the Native American population. In this illustration, Aztec victims of the 1538 smallpox epidemic are covered in shrouds (center) as two others lie dying (at right).

## Spanish Exploration in North America

### CORE OBJECTIVE

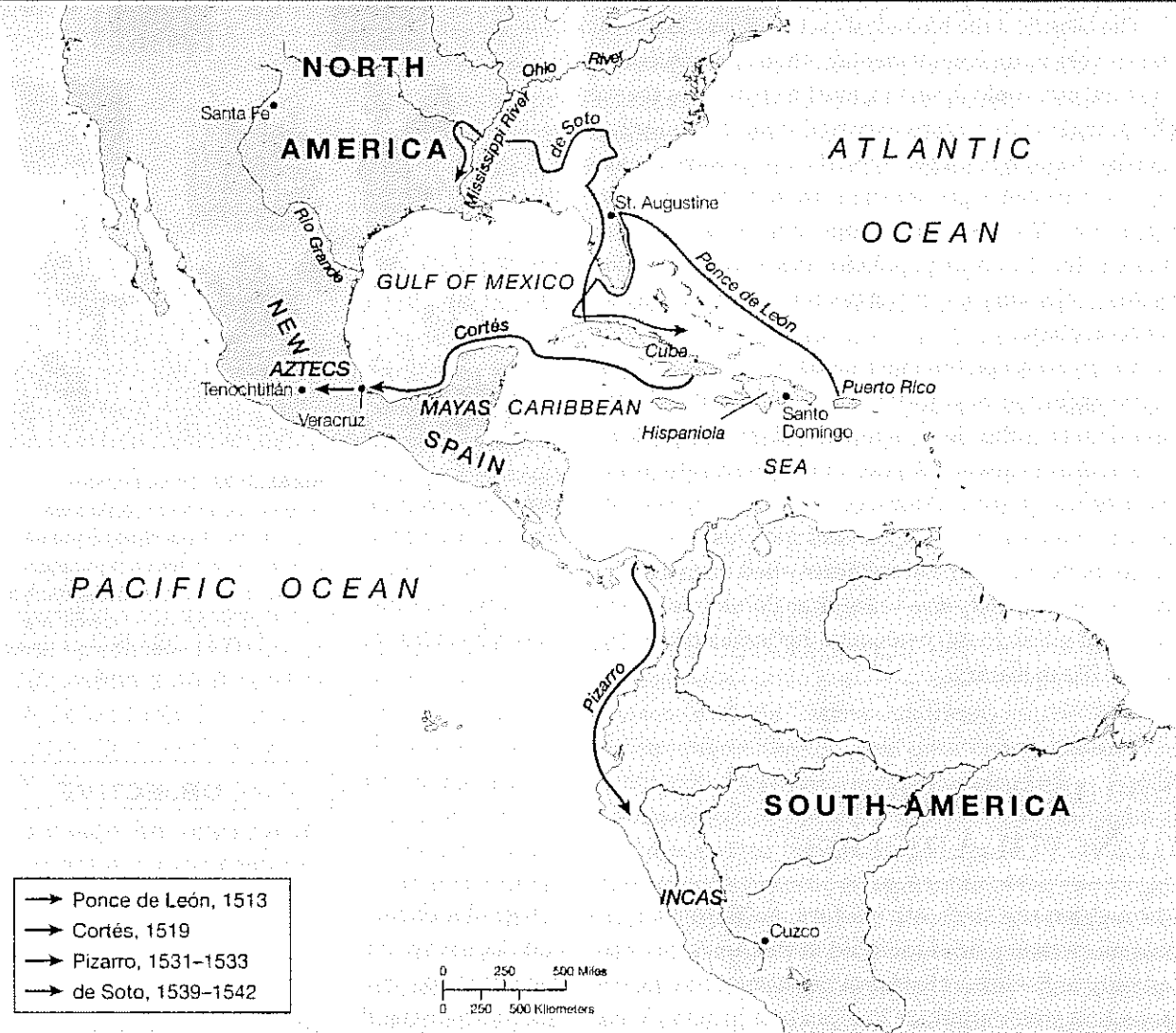
**5.** Analyze the legacy of Spanish colonization on North American history.

Throughout the sixteenth century, no European power other than Spain held more than a brief foothold in the Americas. Spain had the advantage not only of having arrived first but also of having stumbled onto those regions that would produce the quickest profits. While France and England were preoccupied with political disputes and religious conflict, Catholic Spain had forged an authoritarian national and religious unity that enabled it to dominate Europe as well as the New World. The treasures seized from Mexico and Peru added to Spain’s power, but the single-minded focus on gold and silver also tempted the Spanish government to live beyond its means. Between 1557 and 1662, the kings of Spain were forced to declare bankruptcy ten times.

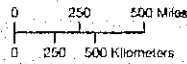
For most of the colonial period, much of what is now the United States, from the Southwest across the continent to Florida, an area larger than western Europe, was claimed by Spain, and Spanish culture etched a lasting imprint upon America’s future ways of life. Spain’s crusade to spread Hispanic power, culture, and Catholicism across the Americas lasted more than three centuries. New Spain was centered in Mexico, but its frontier outposts in

**infectious diseases** Also called contagious diseases, illnesses that can pass from one person to another by way of invasive biological organisms able to reproduce in the bodily tissues of their hosts. Europeans unwittingly brought many such diseases to the Americas, devastating the Native American peoples.

**SPANISH EXPLORATIONS OF THE MAINLAND**



- Ponce de León, 1513
- Cortés, 1519
- Pizarro, 1531-1533
- de Soto, 1539-1542



- What were the Spanish conquistadores' goals for exploring the Americas?
- How did Cortés conquer the Aztecs?
- Why did the Spanish first explore North America, and why did they establish St. Augustine, the first European settlement in what would become the United States?

North America extended from California to Virginia and from Florida to Alaska. Hispanic place-names—San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Fe, San Antonio, Pensacola, and St. Augustine—survive to this day, as do Hispanic influences in art, architecture, literature, music, law, and food.

In 1513, Juan Ponce de León, then governor of Puerto Rico, made the earliest known European exploration of Florida, hoping to find gold and

Three centuries of Spanish domination and Hispanic influence



Indian slaves. Meanwhile, Spanish explorers sailed along the Gulf of Mexico coast from Florida to Mexico, scouted the Atlantic coast all the way to Canada, and established a short-lived colony on the Carolina coast.

In 1539, Hernando de Soto and 600 conquistadores landed on Florida's west coast, traveled north as far as western North Carolina, and then moved westward across Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and the Mississippi River. Along the way, they encountered many large Indian towns and vast cornfields. After crossing the Mississippi, they went up the Arkansas River, looting and destroying Indian villages along the way, leaving behind shattered lives and burnt communities. In the spring of 1542, de Soto died near Natchez, Mississippi; the next year, the survivors among his party floated down the Mississippi River, and 311 of the original adventurers made their way to Spanish Mexico.

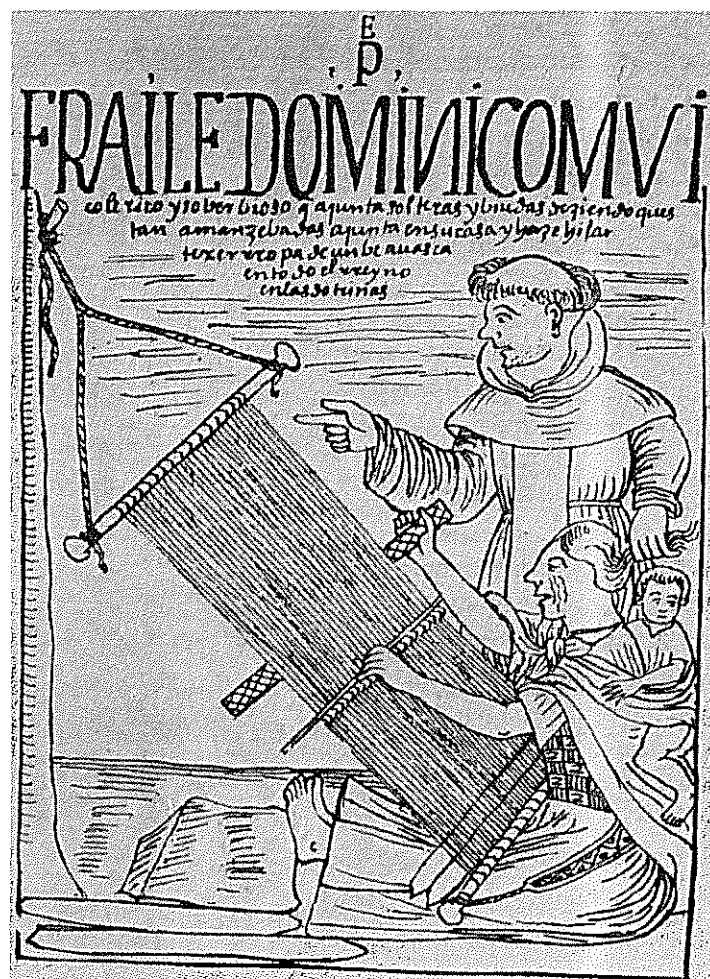
The Spanish established provinces in North America not so much as commercial enterprises but as defensive buffers protecting their more profitable empires in Mexico and South America. In 1565, Pedro Menendez de Aviles, a Spanish smuggler, led a ragtag group of 1,500 soldiers and colonists in founding an outpost on the Florida coast, St. Augustine, which became the first permanent European settlement in the present-day United States. It included a fort, church, hospital, fish market, and over a hundred shops and houses—all built decades before the first English settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth. While other early American outposts failed, St. Augustine, the only Hispanic settlement in Florida until Pensacola was founded in 1698, survived as a defensive base perched on the southern edge of a continent.

### The Spanish Southwest

The Spanish eventually established other permanent settlements in what are now New Mexico, Texas, and California. Missionaries built Catholic missions, where they imposed Christianity on the Indians and treated them like slaves. After about ten years, a mission would be secularized: its lands would be divided among the converted Indians, the mission chapel would become a parish church, and the inhabitants would be given full Spanish citizenship—including the privilege of paying taxes. The soldiers who were sent to protect the missions were housed in *presidios*, or forts.

The land that would later be called **New Mexico** was a center of Catholic missionary activity in the American Southwest. In 1598, Juan de Oñate, the rich son of a Spanish mining family in Mexico, received a land grant for the territory north of Mexico above the Rio Grande. He then recruited soldiers and hundreds of Mexican Indians and *mestizos* (the offspring of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers), including women, children, and priests. The caravan of colonists, including animals and carts carrying supplies, began moving north from the mountains above Mexico City. After walking over 800 miles in seven months, they established the colony of New Mexico near present-day Santa Fe (“Holy Faith” in Spanish), and sent

**New Mexico** A region in the American Southwest, originally established by the Spanish, who settled there in the sixteenth century, founded Catholic missions, and exploited the region's indigenous peoples.



**CULTURAL CONFLICT** This Peruvian illustration, from a 1612–1615 manuscript by Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, shows a Dominican Catholic friar forcing an indigenous woman to weave. What does this image show about the Spanish missionary's treatment of the indigenous peoples?

out expeditions to search for gold and silver. Oñate told the local Indians, called Pueblos, that they now belonged to Spain, but he promised that the Spaniards would bring them peace, justice, prosperity, and protection. If they embraced Christianity, Oñate added, the Indians would receive “an eternal life of great bliss” instead of “cruel and everlasting torment.”

Some Indians welcomed the Spanish missionaries as “powerful witches” capable of easing their burdens. Others tried to use the European invaders as allies against rival Indian groups. Still others saw no alternative but to submit. The Indians living in Spanish New Mexico were required to pay tribute to their *encomenderos* and perform personal tasks for them, including sexual favors.

Before the end of New Mexico's first year as a colony, in December 1598, the Pueblos revolted, killing several soldiers. During three days of relentless fighting, vengeful Spanish soldiers killed 500 Pueblo men and 300 women and children. Survivors were enslaved. To discourage rebelliousness, Oñate ordered that all Pueblo men over the age of twenty-five have one foot cut off. Children were taken from their parents into a Catholic mission, where, Oñate pledged, they would “attain the knowledge of God and the salvation of their souls.”

Spanish New Mexico expanded very slowly. The hoped-for deposits of gold and silver were never found, and a lack of rain for farming blunted the interest of potential colonists. In 1608, the government decided to turn New Mexico into a royal province. The following year it dispatched a royal governor, and in 1610, as the first English settlers were struggling to survive at Jamestown, in Virginia, the Spanish moved the province's capital to Santa Fe, the first permanent seat of government in the present-day United States. By 1630, there were fifty Catholic churches and monasteries in New Mexico, as well as some 3,000 Spaniards.

Roman Catholic missionaries in New Mexico claimed that 86,000 Pueblos had been converted to Christianity during the seventeenth century. In fact, however, few of the coerced conversions were genuine. Resentment among the Pueblos against Spanish Catholic authority increased with time.

Catholicism in New Spain and the Pueblo Revolt (1680)

“The heathen,” reported a Spanish soldier, “have conceived a mortal hatred for our holy faith and enmity [hatred] for the Spanish nation.”

In 1680, a powerful Indian leader named Popé organized what is called the Pueblo Revolt, a massive rebellion against the Spanish. The Pueblo rebels burned Catholic churches; tortured, mutilated, and executed priests; destroyed all relics of Christianity, and banned the Spanish language. More than 400 Spaniards were killed out of a population of 2,500. Terrified survivors fled down the Rio Grande to El Paso. Popé then established Santa Fe as the capital of his confederacy.

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 was the greatest defeat that Indians ever inflicted on European efforts to conquer the New World. It took fourteen years and four military campaigns for the Spanish to reestablish control over New Mexico.

### Horses and the Great Plains

Another major consequence of the Pueblo Revolt was the opportunity it gave Indians to take hundreds of Spanish horses (Spanish authorities had made it illegal for Indians to own horses). The Pueblos in turn established a thriving horse trade with Navajos, Apaches, Comanches, and others who became expert and ferocious horseback warriors. By 1690, horses were in Texas, and they soon spread across the Great Plains, the vast, rolling grasslands extending from the Missouri Valley in the east to the base of the Rocky Mountains in the west.

Prior to the arrival of horses, Native Americans hunted on foot and used dogs as their beasts of burden. Dogs are carnivores, however, and it was always difficult to find enough meat to feed them. The introduction of the **horse** changed everything, though, providing the Plains Indians with a new source of mobility and power. Horses are grazing animals, and the vast grasslands of the Great Plains offered plenty of forage. Horses could also haul up to seven times as much weight as dogs, and their speed and endurance made the indigenous people much more effective hunters and warriors. They relieved women of many burdensome duties and allowed warriors to make crushing raids against other tribes. Horses grew so valuable that they became a form of Indian currency and a sign of wealth and prestige.

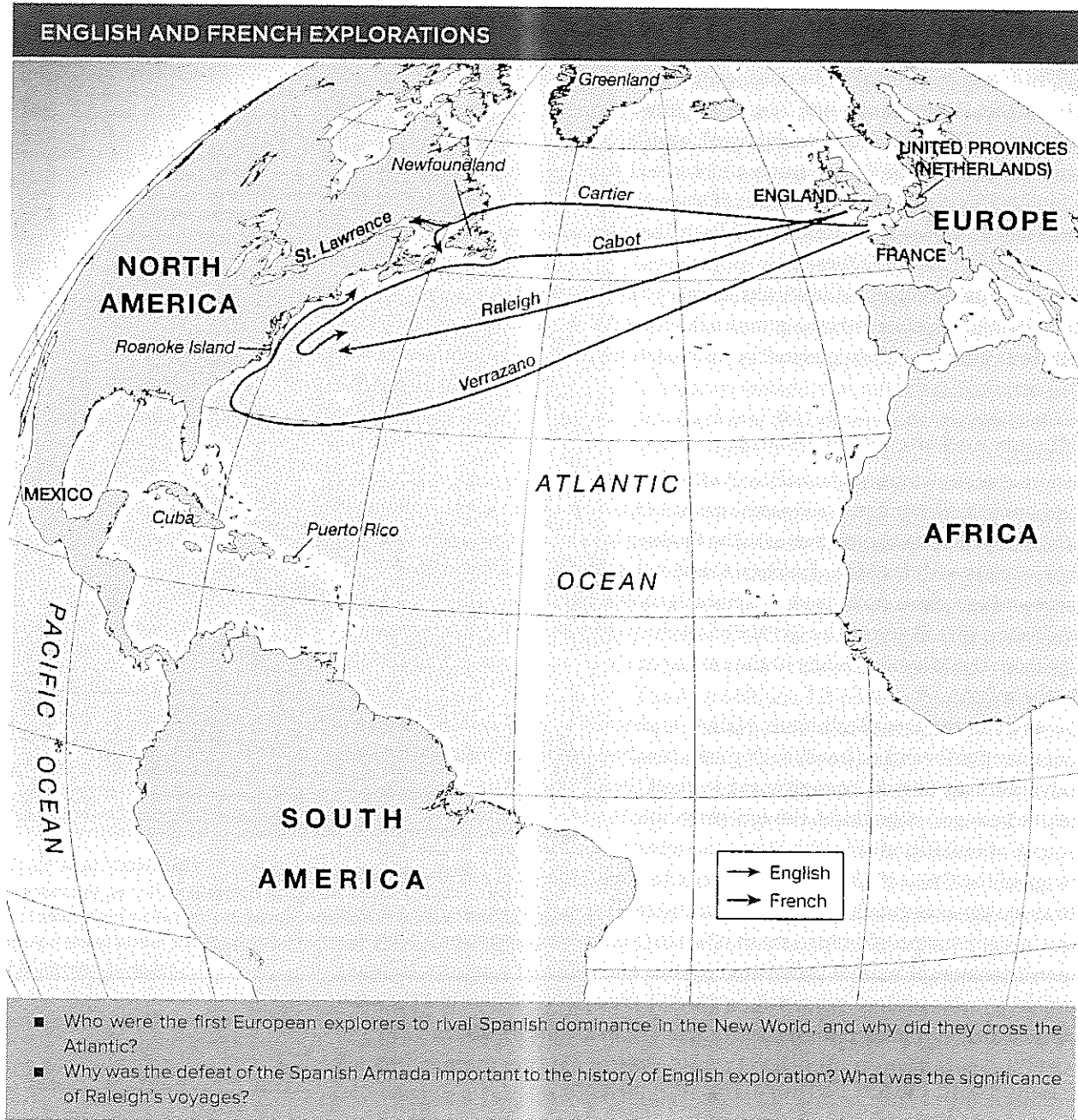
### French and Dutch Exploration of America

Catholic Spain's conquests in the Western Hemisphere spurred Portugal, France, England, and the Netherlands (Holland) to begin their own exploration and exploitation of the New World. The French were the first to pose a serious threat to New Spain. Spanish treasure ships sailing home from Mexico, Peru, and the Caribbean islands offered tempting targets for French privateers (privately owned warships) and pirates. The French also began looking for a passage to Asia through the Americas. In 1524, the French king sent the Italian Giovanni da Verrazano westward across the Atlantic. Upon sighting land (probably at Cape Fear, North Carolina), Verrazano ranged

Horses and bison

Spanish rivals for New World wealth

**horse** The Spanish introduced horses to the Americas, eventually transforming many Native American cultures.



along the coast as far north as Maine. On a second voyage, in 1528, he was killed in the West Indies by Carib Indians.

Unlike the Verrazano voyages, those of Jacques Cartier, beginning in the next decade, led to the first French effort at colonization in North America. During three voyages, Cartier explored the Gulf of St. Lawrence and ventured up the St. Lawrence River, now the boundary between Canada and

New York. Twice he got as far as present-day Montreal, and twice he wintered at the site of Quebec, near which a short-lived French colony appeared in 1541–1542. From that time forward, however, French kings lost interest in Canada for over a half century.

Greater threats to Spanish power arose from the Dutch and the English. The United Provinces of the Netherlands, which had passed by inheritance to the Spanish king but had become largely Protestant, rebelled against Spanish Catholic rule in 1567. A long, bloody struggle for independence ensued in which Protestant England aided the Dutch.

Almost from the beginning of the Protestant Dutch revolt against Catholic Spain, the Dutch plundered Spanish treasure ships in the Atlantic and carried on illegal trade with Spain's colonies. While England's Queen Elizabeth, a Protestant, steered a tortuous course to avoid open war with Spain, she secretly encouraged both Dutch and English privateers ("sea dogs") to attack Spanish ships and their colonies in the Americas.

### The Defeat of the Armada

The English raids on Spanish shipping continued for twenty years before open war erupted between the two nations. Determined to conquer England, Philip II, the king of Catholic Spain who was Queen Elizabeth's brother-in-law and fiercest opponent, assembled in 1588 the massive **Spanish Armada**: 132 warships, 8,000 sailors, and 18,000 soldiers—the greatest invasion fleet in history to that point. On May 28, 1588, the Armada sailed north, determined to conquer the English and restore them to Catholicism. As the battle unfolded, the larger Spanish warships could not compete with the speed and agility of the smaller English ships. The English chased the Armada through the English Channel before a terrible storm swept the Spanish fleet into the North Sea, destroying dozens of the world's finest warships. The shipwrecked soldiers or sailors who made it to shore were executed on the spot. England's stunning defeat of Catholic Spain's fearsome Armada strengthened the Protestant cause across Europe.

The great naval victory was the climactic event of Queen Elizabeth's long reign. England at the end of the sixteenth century was surging with new power and optimism, filled with a youthful zest for exploring new worlds. The defeat of the Spanish Armada marked the beginning of England's global naval supremacy and cleared the way for English colonization of America. English colonists could now make their way to North America without fear of Spanish interference.

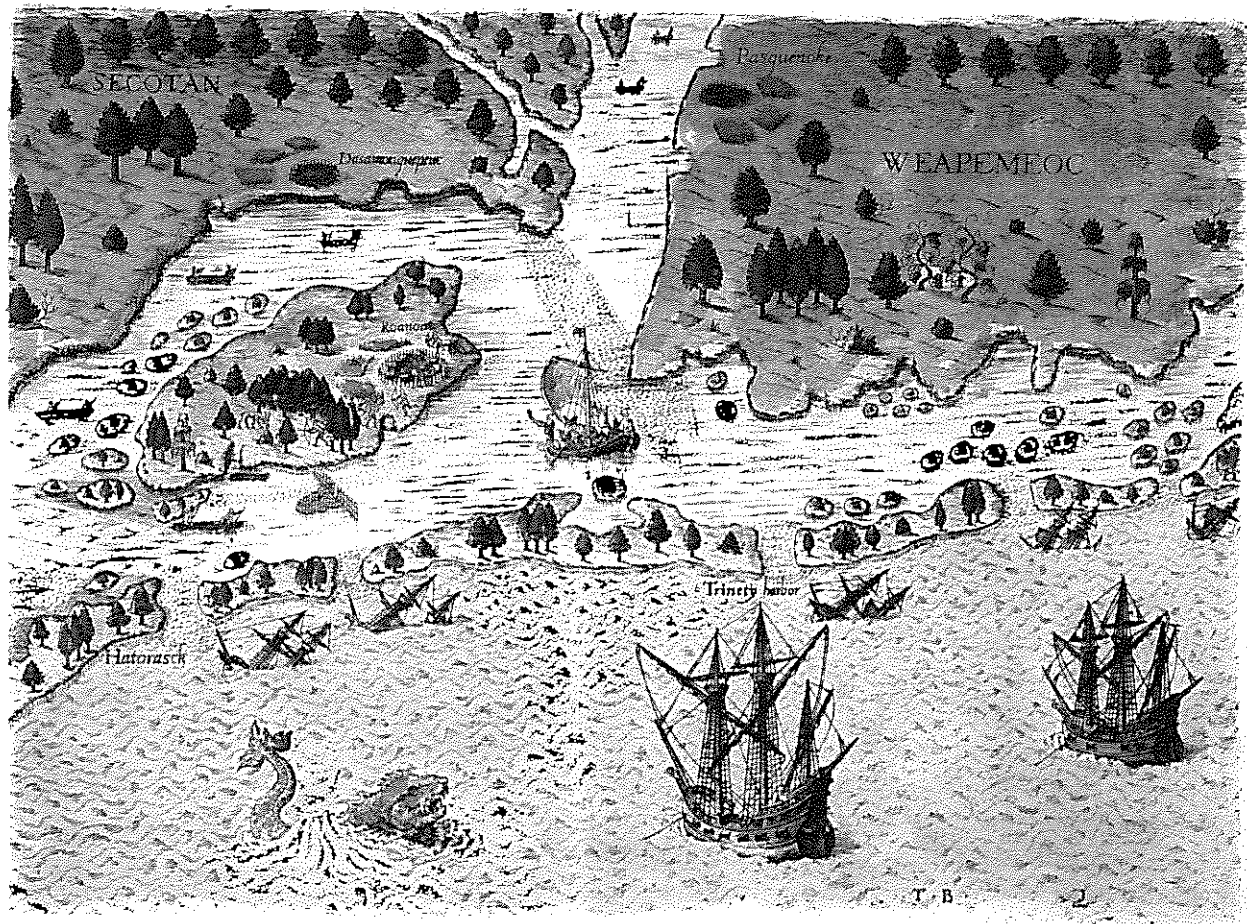
### English Exploration of America

English efforts to colonize America began a few years before the great battle with the Spanish Armada. In 1584, Queen Elizabeth asked Sir Walter Raleigh, a favorite of the queen, to organize a colonizing mission. Raleigh's expedition discovered the Outer Banks of North Carolina and landed at Roanoke Island. Raleigh named the area Virginia, in honor of childless Queen Elizabeth,

The English defeat the Spanish Armada (1588).

**Spanish Armada** A massive Spanish fleet of 130 warships that was defeated at Plymouth in 1588 by the English navy during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.





**THE ENGLISH IN VIRGINIA** This map depicts the arrival of English explorers on the Outer Banks. Roanoke Island and its colony are on the left.

the “Virgin Queen,” who herself chose the name. After several false starts, Raleigh in 1587 sponsored another expedition of about a hundred colonists, including 26 women and children, led by Governor John White. White spent a month on Roanoke Island and then returned to England for supplies, leaving behind his daughter, Eleanor, and his granddaughter, Virginia Dare, the first English child born in the New World. White’s journey back to Virginia was delayed because of the naval war with Spain. When he finally returned to America in 1590, he discovered that the Roanoke outpost had been abandoned and looted.

The lost Roanoke colony

No trace of the “lost colonists” was ever found. Indians may have killed them, or hostile Spaniards—who had certainly planned to attack—may have done the job. The most recent evidence indicates that the “Lost Colony” suffered from a horrible drought that prevented them from growing enough food to survive. While some of the colonists may have gone south, the main

group of them appears to have gone north, to the southern shores of Chesapeake Bay, where they lived for some years until they were killed by local Indians.

There was not a single English colonist in North America when the great Queen Elizabeth died in 1603. The Spanish controlled the only colonial outposts on the continent. That would soon change, however. Inspired by the success of the Spanish in exploiting the Americas, and emboldened by their defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the English—as well as the French and the Dutch—would soon develop American colonial empires of their own, quite different from that of the Spanish.

### New Spain at Its Height

During the sixteenth century, Spanish America (called New Spain) gradually developed into a settled society. From the outset, the Spanish behaved more like occupying rulers than permanent settlers, carefully regulating every detail of colonial administration and life. They were less interested in creating self-sustaining colonial communities than they were devoted to taking gold and silver and to enslaving the indigenous peoples and converting them to Christianity. Between 1545 and 1660, the Spanish forced Native Americans and Africans to mine 7 million pounds of silver in the New World, twice as much silver as existed in all of Europe in 1492.

The legacy of New Spain is, therefore, decidedly mixed. While connecting the cultures of Europe and the Americas, the Spanish explorers, conquistadores, and priests imposed on the Indians the Catholic faith as well as a cruel system of economic exploitation and dependence. That system created terrible disparities in wealth, education, and opportunity that would trigger repeated revolts and political instability. Bartolomé de Las Casas, a courageous Spanish priest in Mexico who tirelessly called for humane treatment of the Indians, concluded, “The Spaniards have shown not the slightest consideration for these people, treating them (and I speak from first-hand experience, having been there from the outset) . . . as piles of dung in the middle of the road. They have had as little concern for their souls as for their bodies.”

New Spain's legacy



Reviewing the

# CORE OBJECTIVES

INQUIZITIVE

## ■ Native American Societies

Asian hunter-gatherers came across the Bering Strait by foot and settled the length and breadth of the Americas, forming groups with diverse cultures, languages, and customs. Global warming enabled an agricultural revolution, particularly the growing of *maize*, that allowed former hunter-gatherer peoples like the *Mexica* to settle and build empires in the *Aztec Empire*. Some North American peoples developed an elaborate continental trading network and impressive cities like *Cahokia*. The *Eastern Woodland peoples* included both patriarchal and matriarchal societies as well as extensive language-based alliances. The Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Muskogean were among the major Indian nations. Warfare was an important cultural component, leading to shifting rivalries and alliances among indigenous communities and with European settlers.

## ■ Age of Exploration

By the 1490s, Europeans were experiencing a renewed curiosity about the world. Warfare, plagues, and famine undermined the old agricultural feudal system in Europe, and in its place arose a middle class that monarchs could tax. Powerful new nations replaced the landed estates and cities ruled by princes. A revival of interest in antiquity led to the development of modern science and the creation of better maps and navigation techniques, as well as new weapons and ships. Navies became the critical

component of global trade and world power. When the Spanish began to colonize the New World, the conversion of Indians to *Roman Catholicism* was important, but the search for gold and silver was primary. The national rivalries sparked by the *Protestant Reformation* in Europe shaped the course of conquest in the Americas.

## ■ Conquering and Colonizing the Americas

Spanish *conquistadores* such as Hernán Cortés used their advantages in military technology, including steel, gunpowder, and domesticated animals such as *horses*, in order to conquer the powerful Aztec and Inca Empires. European diseases, first introduced by Columbus's voyages, did even more to ensure Spanish victories. The Spanish *encomienda* system demanded goods and labor from the indigenous peoples. As the Indian population declined, the Portuguese and Spanish began to import enslaved Africans into the Americas.

## ■ Columbian Exchange

Contact between the Old World and the New resulted in a great biological exchange, sometimes called the *Columbian Exchange*. Crops such as *maize*, beans, and potatoes became staples in the Old World. Native Americans incorporated into their culture such Eurasian animals as the *horse* and pig. But the invaders also carried *infectious diseases* that set off pandemics of smallpox, plague, and other illnesses to which Indians had no immunity. The Americas were depopulated and cultures destroyed.

■ **Spanish Legacy** Spain left a lasting legacy in the borderlands from California to Florida. Spanish horses eventually transformed Indian life on the plains. Catholic missionaries contributed to the destruction of the old ways of life by exterminating “heathen” beliefs in the Southwest, a practice that

led to open rebellion in *New Mexico* in 1598 and 1680. Spain’s rival European nation-states began competing for gold and glory in the New World. England’s defeat of the *Spanish Armada* cleared the path for English dominance in North America.

## KEY TERMS

- maize (corn) p. 9
- Mexica p. 11
- Aztec Empire p. 11
- burial mounds p. 14
- Cahokia p. 15
- Eastern Woodlands peoples p. 16
- Roman Catholicism p. 23
- Protestant Reformation p. 23
- conquistadores p. 28
- encomienda p. 30
- Columbian Exchange p. 30
- infectious diseases p. 31
- New Mexico p. 33
- horse p. 35
- Spanish Armada p. 37

## CHRONOLOGY

- by 22,000 B.C.E. Humans have migrated to the Americas
- 5000 B.C.E. The agricultural revolution begins in Mexico
- 1050–1250 C.E. The city of Cahokia flourishes in North America
- 1325 The Mexica (Aztec) Empire is established in Central Mexico
- 1492 Columbus leads first voyage of discovery in the Americas
- 1503 Spaniards bring the first enslaved Africans to the Americas
- 1517 Martin Luther launches the Protestant Reformation
- 1519 Cortés begins the Spanish conquest of Mexico
- 1531 Pizarro subdues the Inca Empire in South America for Spain
- 1565 Spaniards build settlement at St. Augustine, the first permanent European outpost in the present-day United States
- 1584–1587 Raleigh’s Roanoke Island venture
- 1588 The English navy defeats the Spanish Armada.
- 1680 Pueblo Revolt

## INQUIZITIVE

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