

# Founding the New Nation

ca. 33,000 B.C.E.–1783 C.E.

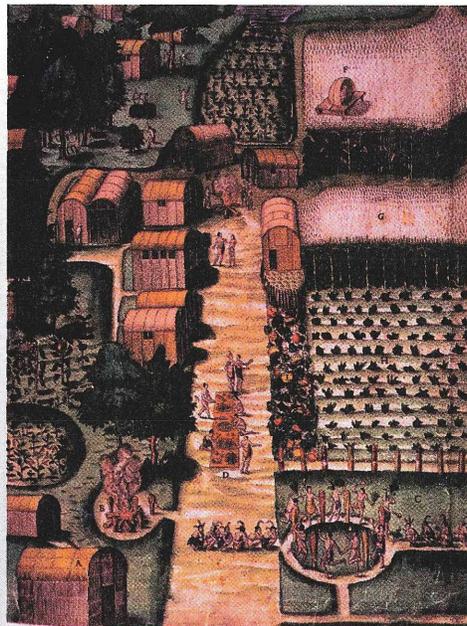
The European explorers who followed Christopher Columbus to North America in the sixteenth century had no notion of founding a new nation. Neither did the first European settlers who peopled the thirteen English colonies on the eastern shores of the continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These original colonists may have fled poverty or religious persecution in the Old World, but they continued to view themselves as Europeans and as subjects of the English king. They regarded America as but the westernmost rim of a transatlantic European world.

Yet life in the New World gradually made the colonists different from their European cousins, and eventually, during the American Revolution, the Americans came to embrace a vision of their country as an independent nation. How did this epochal transformation come about? How did the colonists overcome the conflicts that divided them, unite against Britain, and declare themselves at great cost to be an “American” people?

They had much in common to begin with. Most were English-speaking. Most came determined to

create an agricultural society modeled on English customs. Conditions in the New World deepened their common bonds. Most colonists strove to live lives unfettered by the tyrannies of royal authority, official religion, and social hierarchies that they had left behind. They grew to cherish ideals that became synonymous with American life—reverence for individual liberty, self-government, religious tolerance, and economic opportunity. They also commonly displayed a willingness to subjugate outsiders—first Indians, who were nearly annihilated through war and disease, and then Africans, who were brought in chains to serve as enslaved workers, especially on the tobacco, rice, and indigo plantations of the southern colonies.

But if the settlement experience gave people a common stock of values, both good and bad, it also divided them. The thirteen colonies were quite different from one another. Puritans carved tight, pious, and relatively democratic communities of small family farms out of rocky-soiled New England. There was a close-knit, homogeneous world in comparison to most of the southern colonies,



The New York Public Library/Art Resource, NY

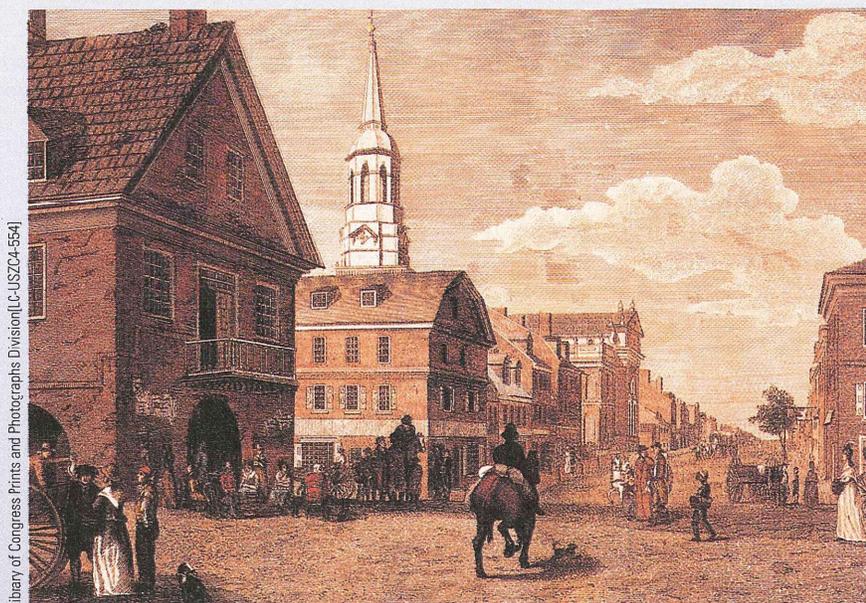
**The Town of Secota, Engraving, by Theodore de Bry, 1590, after John White Painting** John White was an English watercolorist who accompanied the first English expedition to Roanoke Island (later part of Virginia) in 1585. His paintings faithfully recorded the Indian way of life that was now imperiled by the arrival of the Europeans.

where large landholders, mostly Anglicans, built plantations along the coast from which they lorded over a labor force of enslaved blacks and looked down upon the poor white farmers who settled the backcountry. Different still were the middle colonies stretching from New York to Delaware. There diversity reigned. Well-to-do merchants put their stamp on New York City, as Quakers did on Philadelphia, while out in the countryside sprawling estates were interspersed with modest homesteads. Within individual colonies, conflicts festered over economic interests, ethnic rivalries, and religious practices. All those clashes long made it difficult for colonists to imagine that they were a single people with a common destiny, much less that they ought to break free from Britain.

The American colonists in fact had little reason to complain about Britain. Each of the thirteen colonies enjoyed a good deal of self-rule. Many colonists profited from trade within the British Empire. But by the 1760s, this stable arrangement began to crumble, a victim of the imperial rivalry between France and Britain. Their struggle for supremacy in North America began in the late seventeenth century and finally dragged in the colonists during the French and Indian War from 1756 to 1763. That war in one sense strengthened ties with Britain because colonial militias fought triumphantly alongside the British army against their mutual French and Indian enemies. But once the French were driven from the North American continent and new Anglo-Indian peace treaties were forged, the colonists no longer felt that they needed the British army for protection.

Indeed, they increasingly resented British efforts to prevent them from encroaching on Indian lands west of the Appalachians. More important still, after 1763 a financially overstretched British government made the fateful choice of imposing new taxes on colonies that had been accustomed to answering mainly to their own colonial assemblies. By the 1770s issues of taxation, self-rule, western expansion, and trade restrictions brought the crisis of imperial authority to a head. Although as late as 1775 most people in the colonies clung to the hope of some kind of accommodation short of outright independence, royal intransigence soon thrust the colonists into a war of independence that neither antagonist could have anticipated just a few years before.

Eight years of revolutionary war did more than anything in the colonial past to bring Americans together as a nation. Comradeship-in-arms and the struggle to shape a national government forced Americans to subdue their differences as best they could. But the spirit of national unity was hardly universal. One in five colonists sided with the British as "Loyalists," and a generation would pass before the wounds of this first American "civil war" fully healed. Yet in the end, Americans won the Revolution, with no small measure of help from the French, because in every colony people shared a firm belief that they were fighting for the "unalienable rights" of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," in the words of Thomas Jefferson's magnificent Declaration of Independence. Almost two hundred years of living a new life had prepared Americans to found a new nation.



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZC4-554]

**Philadelphia, Corner of Second and High Streets**

Delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 gathered in Philadelphia, the largest city in North America, a vivid symbol of the rise of American society from its precarious beginnings at Jamestown and Plymouth nearly two centuries earlier.

## Chapter 1 New World Beginnings 33,000 B.C.E.–1769 C.E.

### Must Know: Events and People

- Native American populations in North America prior to 1492
- Portuguese and Spanish exploration and conquest
- Columbian exchange
- Patterns of Spanish colonization
- *Encomienda* system
- Pueblo Revolt (called Popé's Rebellion in *The American Pageant* pp. 21–22)

### Must Understand: Key Concepts from Period 1 (1491–1607) and Period 2 (1607–1754)

#### Elements of Key Concept 1.1

- How native populations in North America developed complex societies based on their interactions with the environment and each other (pp. 5–10)
- How maize cultivation in present-day Mexico and the American Southwest and a mix of foraging and hunting in the Northwest and parts of California supported economic development and social diversification among native societies (pp. 8–10)
- Why native populations in the Great Basin and western Great Plains developed mobile lifestyles (pp. 8–10)

#### Elements of Key Concept 1.2

- How European overseas expansion led to the Columbian exchange (pp. 14–15)
- How Spanish and Portuguese exploration and conquest of the Americas led to widespread deadly epidemics, the emergence of racially mixed populations, and a caste system (pp. 16–22)
- How Spanish and Portuguese traders joined with some West Africans to recruit slave labor for the Americas (pp. 11–13)
- How European exploration and conquest were motivated by a desire for new sources of wealth, increased power and status, and converts to Christianity (pp. 18–22)
- How new sources of mineral wealth from the Americas assisted the European shift from feudalism to capitalism (pp. 18–19)

#### Elements of Key Concept 1.3

- How poor understanding of Native Americans on the part of the Spanish and Portuguese led to debates about how to treat them (pp. 16 and 22)
- How European attempts to change Native American beliefs and world-views led to resistance and conflict (pp. 21–22)

### Historical Thinking Skills

#### Periodization

The authors of *The American Pageant* use 33,000 B.C.E. and 1769 C.E. as the beginning and ending dates for “New World Beginnings,” but the first chronological period of study for the AP<sup>®</sup> United States History Exam is from 1491 to 1607, with the understanding that 1491 is a symbolic date for pre-Columbian contacts in North America. As you read this chapter, does 33,000 B.C.E., 1491, or some other date make the most sense to you as the beginning of this time period?

#### Contextualization

Can you place the Columbian exchange in a global context? That is, how do the interactions and adaptations among societies across the Atlantic fit into the larger story of world history? What evidence can you find in the chapter to support your position?

#### Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence

The authors contend that 1492 was a “fateful year” in North American history when “the land and the native peoples alike felt the full shock of the European ‘discovery.’” As you read this chapter, what relevant historical evidence can you find to support, modify, or refute this assertion?

#### Elements of Key Concept 2.1

- How Spain sought to establish tight control over the process of colonization in the Western Hemisphere and convert and/or exploit the native population (pp. 15–22)

#### Elements of Key Concept 2.2

- How Spanish colonizing efforts in North America, particularly after the Pueblo Revolt (i.e., Popé's Rebellion), saw accommodation with some aspects of American Indian culture (p. 21)

AP<sup>®</sup> and Advanced Placement Program<sup>®</sup> are trademarks registered and/or owned by the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

# Developing the Thematic Learning Objectives with Key Concepts

As you read the chapter, expand the following outlines with illustrative examples (i.e., relevant historical evidence):

**Peopling (PEO-1): Explain how and why people moved within the Americas (before contact) and to and within the Americas (after contact and colonization).**

## North American Indians (Key Concept 1.1)

- Settlers migrated across North America over time and developed complex societies by adapting to and transforming their environments (Chapter 1).
- Maize cultivation in present-day Mexico and the American Southwest supported economic development and social diversification (Chapter 1).
- The lack of natural resources in the Great Basin and western Great Plains caused Native American societies to develop largely mobile lifestyles (Chapter 1).

**America in the World (WOR-1): Explain how imperial competition and the exchange of commodities across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean influenced the origins and patterns of development of North American societies in the colonial period.**

## The Columbian Exchange (Key Concept 1.2)

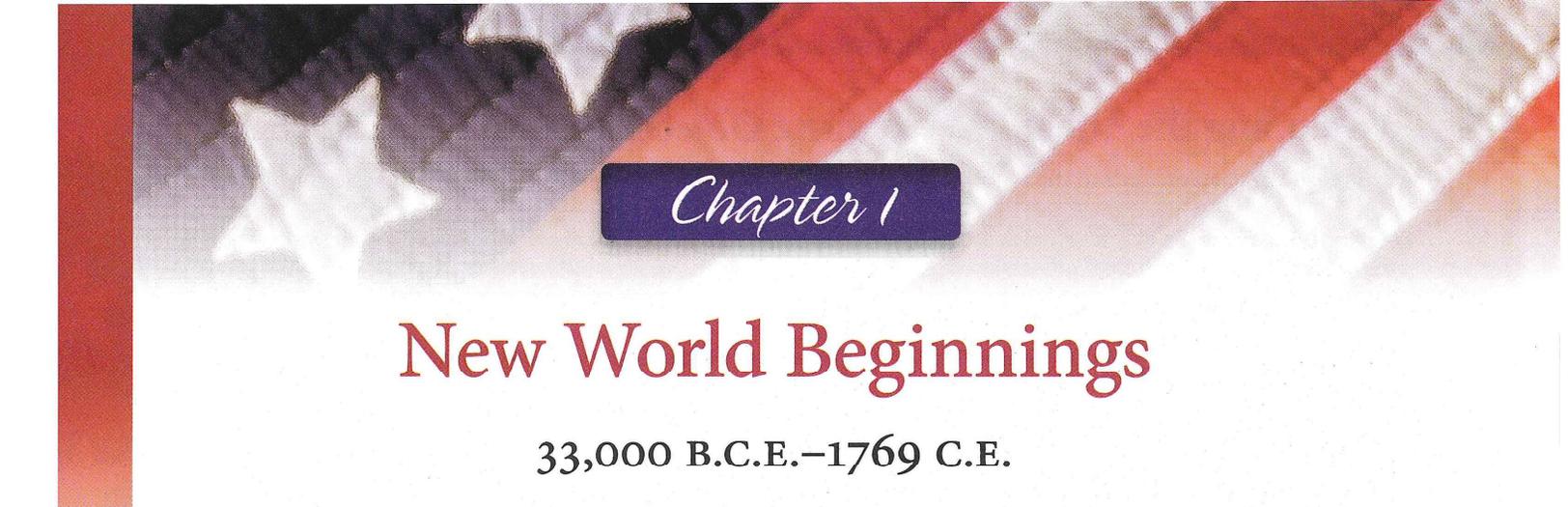
- European overseas expansion resulted in the Columbian exchange (a series of interactions and adaptations among societies across the Atlantic) (Chapter 1).
- Spanish and Portuguese exploration and conquest led to widespread deadly epidemics, emergence of racially mixed populations, and a caste system (Chapter 1).
- Introduction of new crops and livestock by the Spanish had far-reaching effects on native settlement patterns and economic, social, and political development in the Western Hemisphere (Chapter 1).
- New crops from the Americas stimulated European population growth (Chapter 1).
- New sources of mineral wealth facilitated the European shift from feudalism to capitalism (Chapter 1).

**Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture (CUL-1): Compare the cultural values and attitudes of different European, African American, and native peoples in the colonial period and explain how contact affected intergroup relationships and conflicts.**

## Conflicting World-Views (Key Concept 1.3)

- Contacts among Native American Indians, Africans, and Europeans challenged the world-views of each group (Chapter 1).
- Spanish and Portuguese explorers poorly understood the Native Americans and had debates over how to treat and “civilize” them (Chapter 1).
- Many Europeans developed a belief in white superiority to justify treatment of Africans and Native Americans (Chapter 1).
- Native Americans strove to maintain their political and cultural autonomy in the face of European challenges to their independence and core beliefs (Chapter 1).

**Full text of the key concepts may be found in the Correlation of Key Concepts chart on pp. xlii—lx.**



## Chapter 1

# New World Beginnings

33,000 B.C.E.–1769 C.E.

*I have come to believe that this is a mighty continent which was hitherto unknown. . . . Your Highnesses have an Other World here.*

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, 1498

*Several billion years ago*, that whirling speck of cosmic dust known as the earth, fifth in size among the planets, came into being.

About six thousand years ago—only a minute in geological time—recorded history of the Western world began. Certain peoples of the Middle East, developing a written culture, gradually emerged from the haze of the past.

Five hundred years ago—only a few seconds figuratively speaking—European explorers stumbled on the Americas. This dramatic accident forever altered the future of both the Old World and the New, and of Africa and Asia as well (see Figure 1.1).

### The Shaping of North America

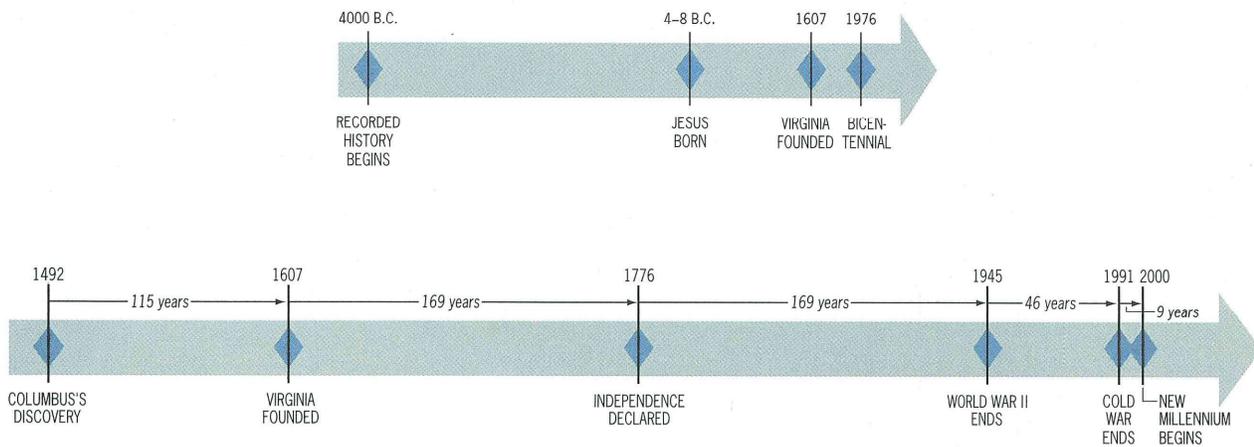
Planet earth took on its present form slowly. Some 225 million years ago, a single supercontinent, called Pangaea by geologists, contained all the world's dry land. Then enormous chunks of terrain began to drift away from this colossal landmass, opening the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, narrowing the Pacific Ocean, and forming the great continents of Eurasia, Africa, Australia, Antarctica, and the Americas. The existence of a single original continent has been proved in part by the discovery of nearly identical species of fish that swim today in long-separated freshwater lakes throughout the world.

Continued shifting and folding of the earth's crust thrust up mountain ranges. The Appalachians were probably formed even before continental separation,

perhaps 350 million years ago. The majestic ranges of western North America—the Rockies, the Sierra Nevada, the Cascades, and the Coast Ranges—arose much more recently, geologically speaking, some 135 million to 25 million years ago. They are truly “American” mountains, born after the continent took on its own separate geological identity.

By about 10 million years ago, nature had sculpted the basic geological shape of North America. The continent was anchored in its northeastern corner by the massive **Canadian Shield**—a zone undergirded by ancient rock, probably the first part of what became the North American landmass to have emerged above sea level. A narrow eastern coastal plain, or “tidewater” region, creased by many river valleys, sloped gently upward to the timeworn ridges of the Appalachians. Those ancient mountains slanted away on their western side into the huge midcontinental basin that rolled downward to the Mississippi Valley bottom and then rose relentlessly to the towering peaks of the Rockies. From the Rocky Mountain crest—the “roof of America”—the land fell off jaggedly into the intermountain Great Basin, bounded by the Rockies on the east and the Sierra and Cascade ranges on the west. The valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and the Willamette–Puget Sound trough seamed the interiors of present-day California, Oregon, and Washington. The land at last met the foaming Pacific, where the Coast Ranges rose steeply from the sea.

Nature laid a chill hand over much of this terrain in the Great Ice Age, beginning about 2 million years ago. Two-mile-thick ice sheets crept from the



**FIGURE 1.1** The Arc of Time © 2016 Cengage Learning

polar regions to blanket parts of Europe, Asia, and the Americas. In North America the great glaciers carpeted most of present-day Canada and the United States as far southward as a line stretching from Pennsylvania through the Ohio Country and the Dakotas to the Pacific Northwest.

When the glaciers finally retreated about ten thousand years ago, they left the North American landscape transformed and much as we know it today. The weight of the gargantuan ice mantle had depressed the level of the Canadian Shield. The grinding and flushing action of the moving and melting ice had scoured away the shield's topsoil, pitting its rocky surface with thousands of shallow depressions into which the melting glaciers flowed to form lakes. The same glacial action scooped out and filled the Great Lakes. They originally drained southward through the Mississippi River system to the Gulf of Mexico. When the melting ice unblocked the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the lake water sought the St. Lawrence River outlet to the Atlantic Ocean, lowering the Great Lakes' level and leaving the Missouri-Mississippi-Ohio system to drain the enormous midcontinental basin between the Appalachians and the Rockies. Similarly, in the West, water from the melting glaciers filled sprawling Lake Bonneville, covering much of present-day Utah, Nevada, and Idaho. It drained to the Pacific Ocean through the Snake and Columbia River systems until diminishing rainfall from the ebbing ice cap lowered the water level, cutting off access to the Snake River outlet. Deprived of both inflow and drainage, the giant lake became a gradually shrinking inland sea. It grew increasingly saline, slowly evaporated, and left an arid, mineral-rich desert. Only the Great Salt Lake remains as a relic of Bonneville's former vastness. Today Lake Bonneville's ancient beaches are visible on

mountainsides up to 1,000 feet above the dry floor of the Great Basin.

## ★ Peopling the Americas

The Great Ice Age shaped more than the geological history of North America. It also contributed to the origins of the continent's human history. Though recent (and still highly controversial) evidence suggests that some early peoples may have reached the Americas in crude boats, most probably came by land. Some thirty-five thousand years ago, the Ice Age congealed much of the world's oceans into massive ice-pack glaciers, lowering the level of the sea. As the sea level dropped, it exposed a land bridge connecting Eurasia with North America in the area of the present-day Bering Sea between Siberia and Alaska. Across that bridge, probably following migratory herds of game, ventured small bands of nomadic Asian hunters—the “immigrant” ancestors of the Native Americans. They continued to trek across the Bering isthmus for some 250 centuries, slowly peopling the American continents (see Map 1.1).

As the Ice Age ended and the glaciers melted, the sea level rose again, inundating the land bridge about ten thousand years ago. Nature thus barred the door to further immigration for many thousands of years, leaving this part of the human family marooned for millennia on the now-isolated American continents.

Time did not stand still for these original Americans. The same climatic warming that melted the ice and drowned the bridge to Eurasia gradually opened ice-free valleys through which vanguard bands groped their way southward and eastward across the Americas. Roaming slowly through this awesome wilderness, they eventually reached the far tip of South America, some



fifteen thousand miles from Siberia. By the time Europeans arrived in America in 1492, perhaps 54 million people inhabited the two American continents.\* Over the centuries they split into countless tribes, evolved

\*Much controversy surrounds estimates of the pre-Columbian Native American population. The figures here are from William M. Denevan, ed., *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492*, rev. ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

more than two thousand separate languages, and developed many diverse religions, cultures, and ways of life.

**Incas** in Peru, **Mayans** in Central America, and **Aztecs** in Mexico shaped stunningly sophisticated civilizations. Their advanced agricultural practices, based primarily on the cultivation of maize, which is Indian corn, fed large populations, perhaps as many

## Examining the Evidence

### Making Sense of the New World

This map from 1546 by Sebastian Münster represents one of the earliest efforts to make geographic sense out of the New World (*Nouus Orbis* and *Die Nüw Welt* on the map). The very phrase *New World* suggests just how staggering a blow to the European imagination was the discovery of the Americas. Europeans reached instinctively for the most expansive of all possible terms—*world*, not simply *places*, or even *continents*—to comprehend Columbus's startling report that lands and peoples previously unimagined lay beyond the horizon of Europe's western sea.

Gradually the immense implications of the New World's existence began to impress themselves on Europe, with consequences for literature, art, politics, the economy, and, of course, cartography. Maps can only be *representations* of reality and are therefore necessarily distortions. This map bears a recognizable resemblance to modern mapmakers' renderings of the American continents, but it also contains gross geographic inaccuracies (note the location of Japan—*Zipangri*—relative to the North American west coast) as well as telling commentaries on

what sixteenth-century Europeans found remarkable (note the Land of Giants—*Regio Gigantum*—and the indication of cannibals—*Canibali*—in present-day Argentina and Brazil, respectively). What further clues to the European mentality of the time does the map offer? In what ways might misconceptions about the geography of the Americas have influenced further exploration and settlement patterns?



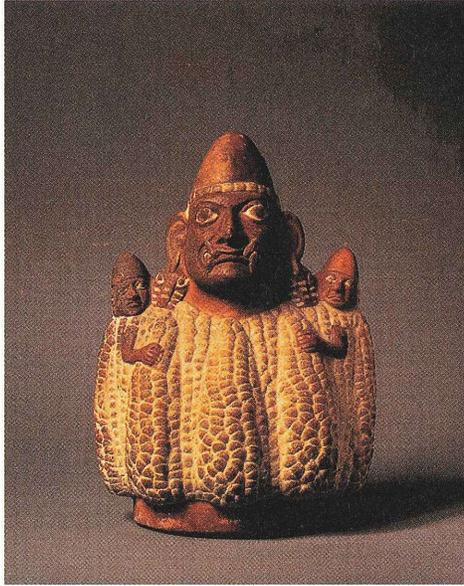
as 20 million in Mexico alone. Although without large draft animals such as horses and oxen, and lacking even the simple technology of the wheel, these peoples built elaborate cities and carried on far-flung commerce. Talented mathematicians, they made strikingly accurate astronomical observations. The Aztecs also routinely sought the favor of their gods by offering human sacrifices, cutting the hearts out of the chests of living victims, who were often captives conquered in battle. By some accounts more than five thousand people were ritually slaughtered to celebrate the crowning of one Aztec chieftain.

## ★ The Earliest Americans

Agriculture, especially corn growing, accounted for the size and sophistication of the Native American civilizations in Mexico and South America. About 5000 B.C.E. hunter-gatherers in highland Mexico developed a wild grass into the staple crop of corn, which became their staff of life and the foundation of the complex, large-scale, centralized Aztec and Incan civilizations that eventually emerged. Cultivation of corn spread across the Americas from the Mexican heartland. Everywhere it was planted, corn began to transform nomadic hunting bands into settled agricultural villagers, but this process went forward slowly and unevenly.

Corn planting reached the present-day American Southwest as early as 2000 B.C.E. and powerfully molded Pueblo culture. The Pueblo peoples in the Rio Grande valley constructed intricate irrigation systems to water their cornfields. They were dwelling in villages of multi-storied, terraced buildings when Spanish explorers made contact with them in the sixteenth century. (*Pueblo* means “village” in Spanish.)

Corn cultivation reached other parts of North America considerably later. The timing of its arrival in different localities explains much about the relative rates of development of different Native American peoples (see Map 1.2). Throughout the continent to the north and east of the land of the Pueblos, social life was less elaborately developed—indeed “societies” in the modern sense of the word scarcely existed. No dense concentrations of population or complex



**Corn Culture** This statue of a corn goddess from the Moche culture of present-day coastal Peru, made between 200 and 600 B.C.E., vividly illustrates the centrality of corn to Native American peoples a thousand years before the rise of the great Incan and Aztec empires that the Europeans later encountered.

**nation-states** comparable to the Aztec empire existed in North America outside of Mexico at the time of the Europeans' arrival—one of the reasons for the relative ease with which the European colonizers subdued the native North Americans.

The Mound Builders of the Ohio River valley, the Mississippian culture of the lower Midwest, and the desert-dwelling Anasazi peoples of the Southwest did sustain some large settlements after the incorporation of corn planting into their ways of life during the first millennium C.E. The Mississippian settlement at **Cahokia**, near present-day East St. Louis, was at one time home to as many as twenty-five thousand people. The Anasazis built an elaborate pueblo of more than six hundred interconnected rooms at Chaco Canyon in modern-day New Mexico. But mysteriously, perhaps due to prolonged

drought, all those ancient cultures fell into decline by about 1300 C.E.

The cultivation of maize, as well as of high-yielding strains of beans and squash, reached the southeastern Atlantic seaboard region of North America about 1000 C.E. These plants made possible **three-sister farming**, with beans growing on the trellis of the cornstalks and squash covering the planting mounds to retain moisture in the soil. The rich diet provided by this environmentally clever farming technique produced some of the highest population densities on the continent, among them the Creek, Choctaw, and Cherokee peoples.

The Iroquois in the northeastern woodlands, inspired by a legendary leader named Hiawatha, created in the sixteenth century perhaps the closest North American approximation to the great empires of Mexico and Peru. The Iroquois Confederacy developed the political and organizational skills to sustain a robust military alliance that menaced its neighbors, Native American and European alike, for well over a century (see “Makers of America: The Iroquois,” pp. 38–39).

But for the most part, the native peoples of North America were living in small, scattered, and impermanent settlements on the eve of the Europeans' arrival. In more settled agricultural groups, women tended the crops while men hunted, fished, gathered fuel, and cleared fields for planting. This pattern of life frequently conferred substantial authority on women,



**MAP 1.2 North American Indian Peoples at the Time of First Contact with Europeans** Because this map depicts the location of various Indian peoples *at the time of their first contact with Europeans*, and because initial contacts ranged from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, it is necessarily subject to considerable chronological skewing and is only a crude approximation of the “original” territory of any given group. The map also cannot capture the fluidity and dynamism of Native American life even before Columbus’s “discovery.” For example, the Navajo and Apache peoples had migrated from present-day northern Canada only shortly before the Spanish first encountered them in the present-day American Southwest in the 1500s. The map also places the Sioux on the Great Plains, where Europeans met up with them in the early nineteenth century—but the Sioux had spilled onto the plains not long before then from the forests surrounding the Great Lakes. The indigenous populations of the southeastern and mid-Atlantic regions are especially difficult to represent accurately in a map like this because pre-Columbian intertribal conflicts had so scrambled the native inhabitants that it is virtually impossible to determine which groups were originally where. © 2016 Cengage Learning

and many North American native peoples, including the Iroquois, developed matrilineal cultures, in which power and possessions passed down the female side of the family line.

Unlike the Europeans, who would soon arrive with the presumption that humans had dominion over the earth and with the technologies to alter the very face of the land, the Native Americans had neither the desire nor the means to manipulate nature aggressively. They revered the physical world and endowed nature with spiritual properties. Yet they did sometimes ignite massive forest fires, deliberately torching thousands of acres of trees to create better hunting habitats, especially for deer. This practice accounted for the open, parklike appearance of the eastern woodlands that so amazed early European explorers.

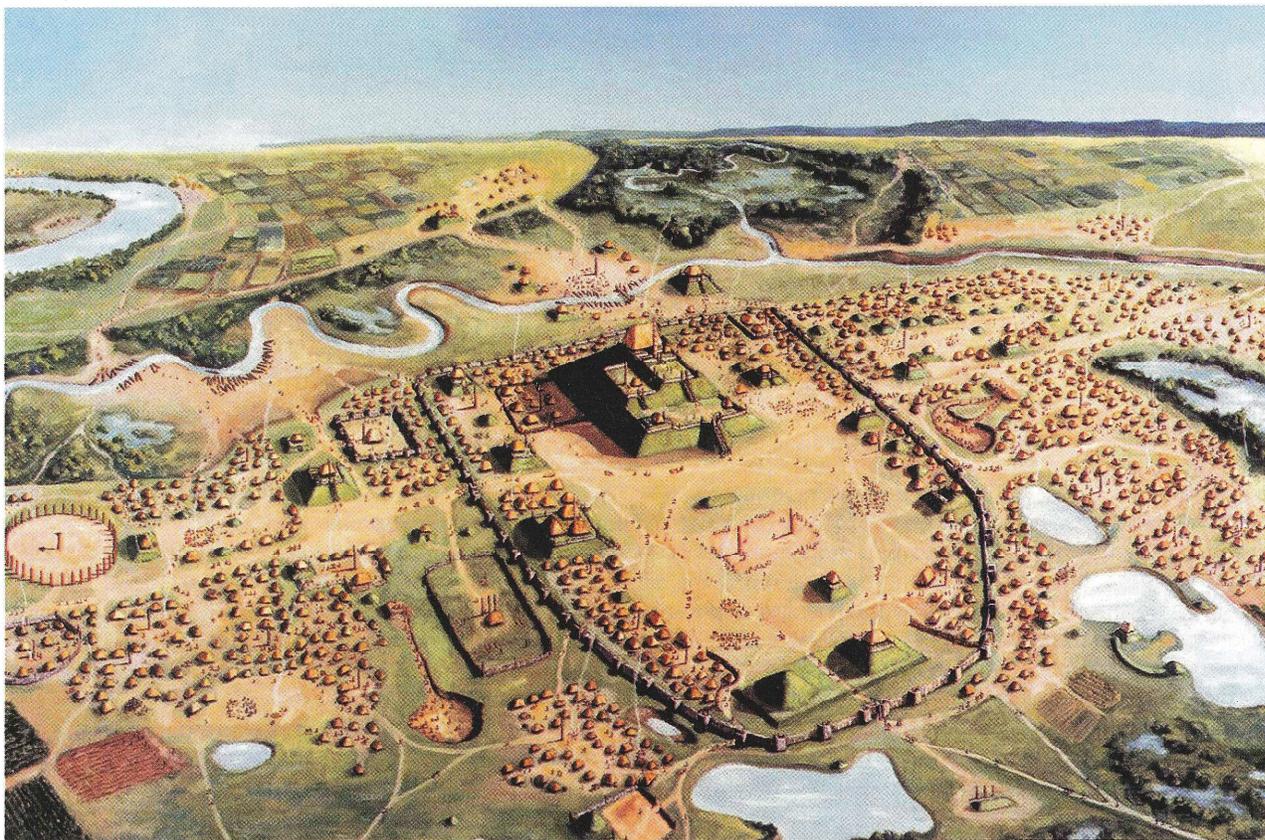
But in a broad sense, the land did not feel the hand of the Native Americans heavy upon it, partly because they were so few in number. They were so thinly spread across the continent that vast areas were virtually untouched by a human presence. In the fateful year 1492, probably no more than 4 million Native Americans padded through the whispering, primeval forests and paddled across the sparkling, virgin waters of the continent north of Mexico. They

were blissfully unaware that the historic isolation of the Americas was about to end forever, as the land and the native peoples alike felt the full shock of the European “discovery.”

### ★ Indirect Discoverers of the New World

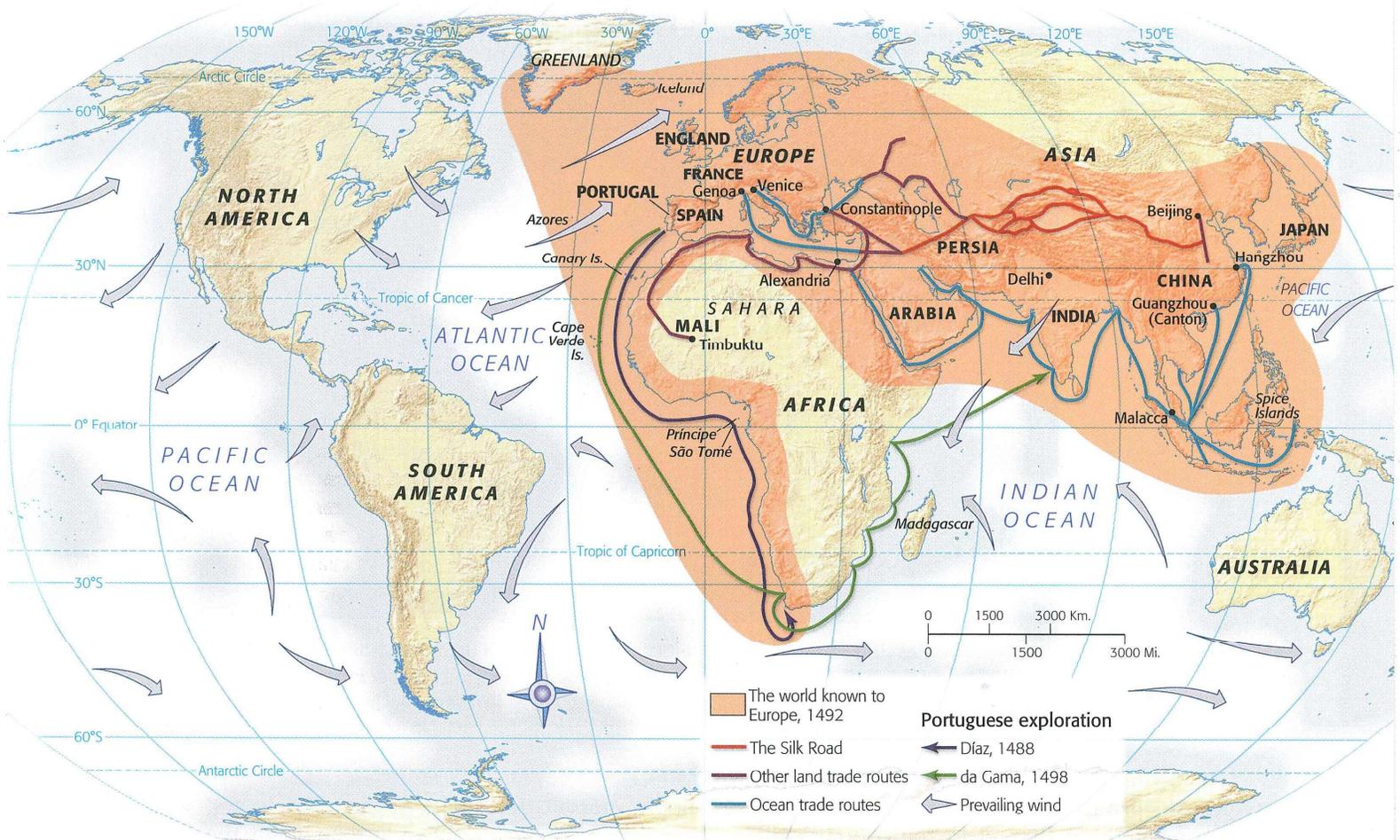
Europeans, for their part, were equally unaware of the existence of the Americas. Blond-bearded Norse seafarers from Scandinavia had chanced upon the northeastern shoulder of North America about 1000 C.E. They landed at a place near L’Anse aux Meadows in present-day Newfoundland that abounded in wild grapes, which led them to name the spot Vinland. But no strong nation-state, yearning to expand, supported these venturesome voyagers. Their flimsy settlements consequently were soon abandoned, and their discovery was forgotten, except in Scandinavian saga and song.

For several centuries thereafter, other restless Europeans, with the growing power of ambitious governments behind them, sought contact with a wider world, whether for conquest or trade. They thus set in



Cahokia Mounds Historic Site, painting by William F. Iseninger

**Cahokia** Houses and mounds dot the landscape in an artist's rendering of ancient Cahokia circa 1150, when its population of twenty thousand exceeded London's.



**MAP 1.3 The World Known to Europe and Major Trade Routes with Asia, 1492** Goods on the early routes passed through so many hands along the way that their ultimate source remained mysterious to Europeans. © 2016 Cengage Learning

motion the chain of events that led to a drive toward Asia, the penetration of Africa, and the completely accidental discovery of the New World.

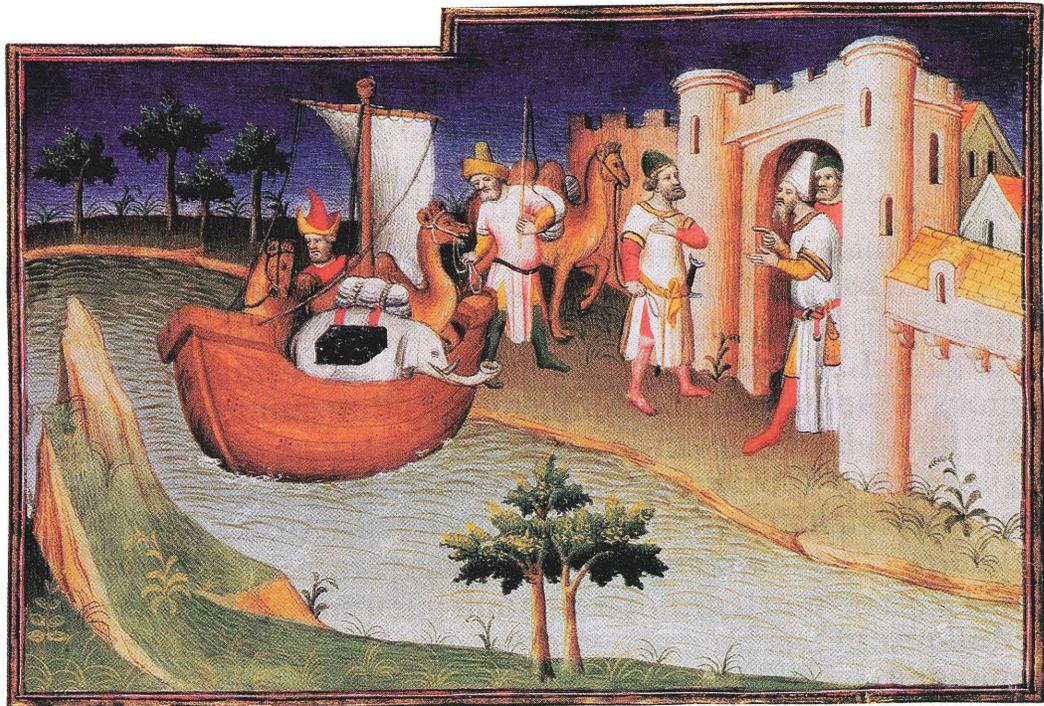
Christian crusaders must rank high among America's indirect discoverers. Clad in shining armor, tens of thousands of these European warriors tried from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries to wrest the Holy Land from Muslim control. Foiled in their military assaults, the crusaders nevertheless acquired a taste for the exotic delights of Asia. Goods that had been virtually unknown in Europe now were craved—silk for clothing, drugs for aching flesh, perfumes for unbathed bodies, colorful draperies for gloomy castles, and spices—especially sugar, a rare luxury in Europe before the crusades—for preserving and flavoring food. Europe's developing sweet tooth would have momentous implications for world history.

The luxuries of the East were prohibitively expensive in Europe. They had to be transported enormous

distances from the Spice Islands (Indonesia), China, and India, in creaking ships and on swaying camel back. The journey led across the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea or along the tortuous caravan routes of Asia or the Arabian Peninsula, ending at the ports of the eastern Mediterranean (see Map 1.3). Muslim **middlemen** exacted a heavy toll en route. By the time the strange-smelling goods reached Italian merchants at Venice and Genoa, they were so costly that purchasers and profits alike were narrowly limited. European consumers and distributors were naturally eager to find a less expensive route to the riches of Asia or to develop alternate sources of supply.

### ★ Europeans Enter Africa

European appetites were further whetted when foot-loose Marco Polo, an Italian adventurer, returned to Europe in 1295 and began telling tales of his nearly



**Marco Polo Passing Through the Strait of Hormuz** This illustration, from the first printed edition of *The Travels of Marco Polo* in 1477, shows the traveler crossing the Persian Gulf between the Arabian Peninsula and Persia (present-day Iran).

twenty-year sojourn in China. Though he may in fact never have seen China (legend to the contrary, the hard evidence is sketchy), he must be regarded as an indirect discoverer of the New World, for his book, with its descriptions of rose-tinted pearls and golden pagodas, stimulated European desires for a cheaper route to the treasures of the East.

These accumulating pressures eventually brought a breakthrough for European expansion. Before the middle of the fifteenth century, European sailors refused to sail southward along the coast of West Africa because they could not beat their way home against the prevailing northerly winds and south-flowing currents. About 1450, Portuguese mariners overcame those obstacles. Not only had they developed the **caravel**, a ship that could sail more closely into the wind, but they had discovered that they could return to Europe by sailing northwesterly from the African coast toward the Azores, where the prevailing westward breezes would carry them home.

The new world of sub-Saharan Africa now came within the grasp of questing Europeans. The northern shore of Africa, as part of the Mediterranean world, had been known to Europe since antiquity. But because sea travel down the African coast had been virtually impossible, Africa south of the forbidding Sahara Desert barrier had remained remote and mysterious. African gold, perhaps two-thirds of Europe's

supply, crossed the Sahara on camelback, and shadowy tales may have reached Europe about the flourishing West African kingdom of Mali in the Niger River valley, with its impressive Islamic university at Timbuktu. But Europeans had no direct access to sub-Saharan Africa until the Portuguese navigators began to creep down the West African coast in the middle of the fifteenth century.

The Portuguese promptly set up trading posts along the African shore for the purchase of gold—and slaves. Arab flesh merchants and Africans themselves had traded slaves for centuries before the Europeans arrived. The slavers routinely charged higher prices for captives from distant sources because they could not easily flee to their native villages or be easily rescued by their kin. Slave brokers also deliberately separated persons from the same tribes and mixed unlike people together to frustrate organized resistance. Thus from its earliest days, slavery by its very nature disrupted African communities and inhibited the expression of regional African cultures and tribal identities.

The Portuguese adopted these Arab and African practices. They built up their own systematic traffic in slaves to work the sugar plantations that Portugal, and later Spain, established on the African coastal islands of Madeira, the Canaries, São Tomé, and Príncipe. The enormous Portuguese appetite for slaves dwarfed the modest scale of the pre-European traffic. Slave trading



Gemma Rapino via Getty Images

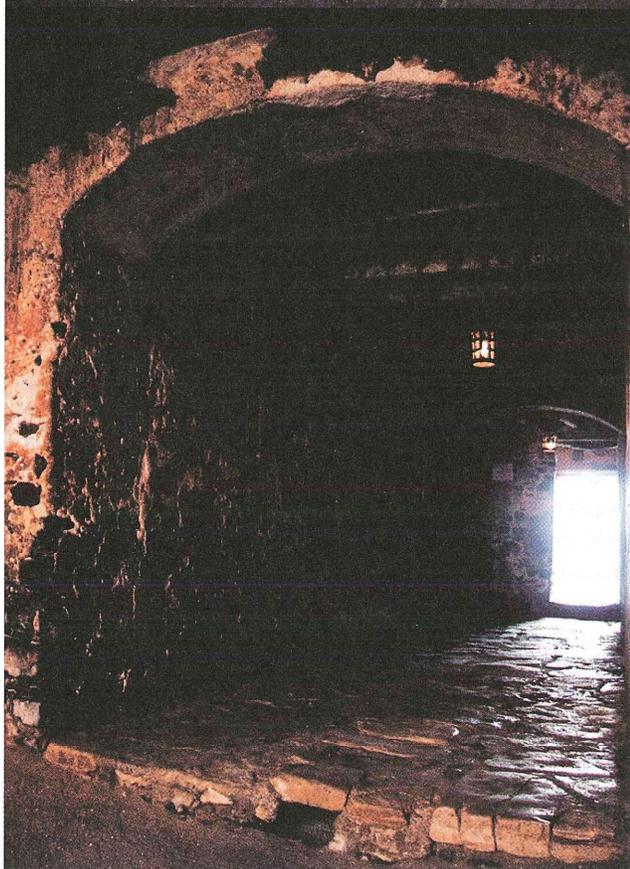
**Gorée Island Slave Fortress** From this holding station off the coast of Senegal, thousands of African captives passed through the “Door of No Return” into a lifetime of slavery in the New World.

the modern **plantation** system, based on large-scale commercial agriculture and the wholesale exploitation of slave labor. This kind of plantation economy would shape the destiny of much of the New World.

The seafaring Portuguese pushed still farther southward in search of the water route to Asia. Edging cautiously down the African coast, Bartholomeu Dias rounded the southernmost tip of the “Dark Continent” in 1488. Ten years later Vasco da Gama finally reached India (hence the name “Indies,” given by Europeans to all the mysterious lands of the Orient) and returned home with a small but tantalizing cargo of jewels and spices.

Meanwhile, the kingdom of Spain became united—an event pregnant with destiny—in the late fifteenth century. This new unity resulted primarily from the marriage of two sovereigns, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, and from the brutal expulsion of the “infidel” Muslim Moors from Spain after centuries of Christian-Islamic warfare. Glorifying in their sudden strength, the Spaniards were eager to outstrip their Portuguese rivals in the race to tap the wealth of the Indies. To the south and east, Portugal controlled the African coast and thus the gateway to the round-Africa water route to India. Of necessity, therefore, Spain looked westward.

became a big business. Some forty thousand Africans were carried away to the Atlantic sugar islands in the last half of the fifteenth century. Millions more were to be wrenched from their home continent after the discovery of the Americas. In these fifteenth-century Portuguese adventures in Africa were to be found the origins of



## ★ Columbus Comes upon a New World

The stage was now set for a cataclysmic shift in the course of history—the history not only of Europe but of all the world. Europeans clamored for more and cheaper products from the lands beyond the Mediterranean. Africa had been established as a source of abundant slave labor for plantation agriculture. The Portuguese voyages had demonstrated the feasibility of long-range ocean navigation. In Spain a modern national state was taking shape, with the unity, wealth, and power to shoulder the formidable tasks of discovery, conquest, and colonization. The dawn of the Renaissance in the fourteenth century nurtured an ambitious spirit of optimism and adventure. Printing presses, introduced about 1450, facilitated the spread of scientific knowledge. The mariner's compass, possibly borrowed from the Arabs, eliminated some of the uncertainties of sea travel. Meanwhile, across the ocean, the unsuspecting New World innocently awaited its European “discoverers.”

Onto this stage stepped Christopher Columbus. This skilled Italian seafarer persuaded the Spanish monarchs to outfit him with three tiny but seaworthy ships, manned by a motley crew. Daringly, he unfurled the sails of his cockleshell craft and headed westward. His superstitious sailors, fearful of venturing into the oceanic unknown, grew increasingly mutinous. After six weeks at sea, failure loomed until, on October 12, 1492, the crew sighted an island in the Bahamas. A new world thus swam within the vision of Europeans.

Columbus's sensational achievement obscures the fact that he was one of the most successful failures in history. Seeking a new water route to the fabled Indies, he in fact had bumped into an enormous land barrier blocking the ocean pathway. For decades thereafter explorers strove to get through it or around it. The truth gradually dawned that sprawling new continents had been discovered. Yet Columbus was at first so certain that he had skirted the rim of the “Indies” that he called the native peoples Indians, a gross geographical misnomer that somehow stuck.

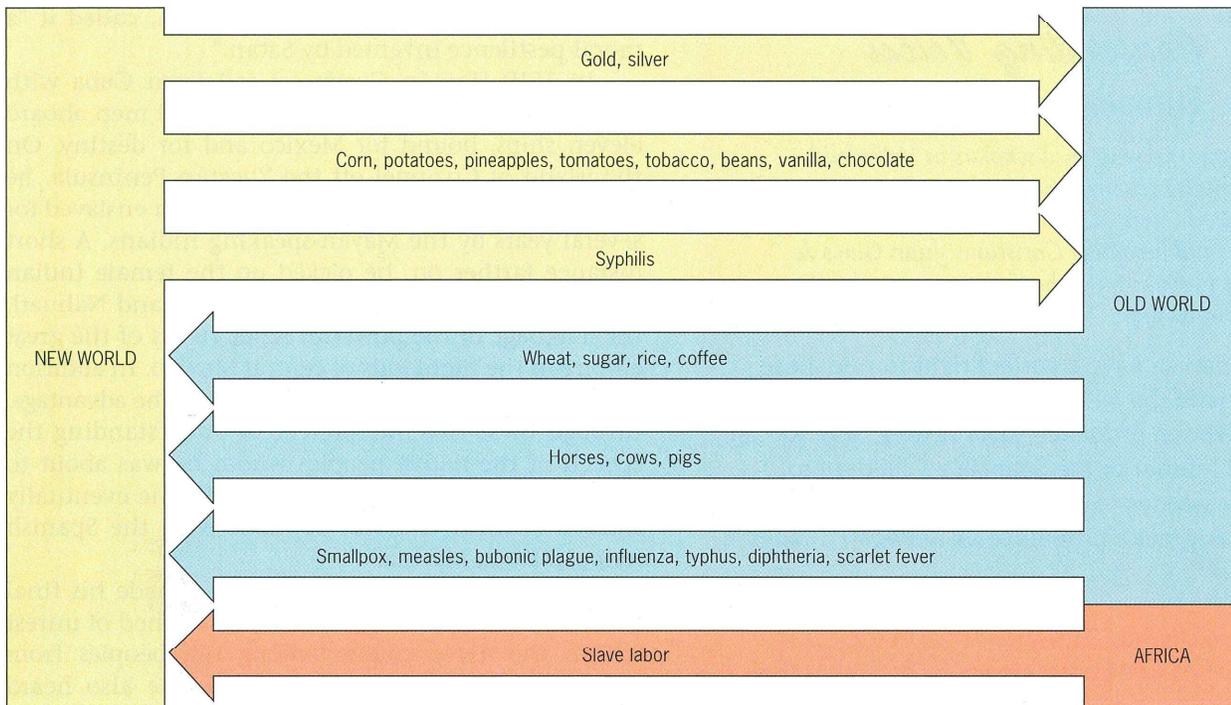
Columbus's discovery would eventually convulse four continents—Europe, Africa, and the two Americas. Thanks to his epochal voyage, an interdependent global economic system emerged on a scale undreamed-of before he set sail. Its workings touched every shore washed by the Atlantic Ocean. Europe provided the markets, the capital, and the technology; Africa furnished the labor; and the New World offered its raw materials, especially its precious metals and its soil for the cultivation of sugar cane. For Europeans as well as for Africans and Native Americans, the world after 1492 would never be the same, for better or worse.

## ★ When Worlds Collide

Two ecosystems—the fragile, naturally evolved networks of relations among organisms in a stable environment—commingled and clashed when Columbus waded ashore. The reverberations from that historic encounter—often called the **Columbian exchange** (see Figure 1.2)—echoed for centuries after 1492. The flora and fauna—as well as the peoples—of the Old and New Worlds had been separated for thousands of years. European explorers marveled at the strange sights that greeted them, including exotic beasts such as iguanas and “snakes with castanets” (rattlesnakes). Native New World plants such as tobacco, maize, beans, tomatoes, and especially the lowly potato eventually revolutionized the international economy as well as the European diet, feeding the rapid population growth of the Old World. These foodstuffs were among the most important Indian gifts to the Europeans and to the rest of the world. Perhaps three-fifths of the crops cultivated around the globe today originated in the Americas. Ironically, the introduction into Africa of New World foodstuffs like maize, manioc, and sweet potatoes may have fed an African population boom that numerically, though not morally, more than offset the losses inflicted by the slave trade.

In exchange the Europeans introduced Old World crops and animals to the Americas. Columbus returned to the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic) in 1493 with seventeen ships that unloaded twelve hundred men and a virtual Noah's Ark of cattle, swine, and horses. The horses soon reached the North American mainland through Mexico. Over the next two centuries, they spread as far as Canada. Southwestern Indian tribes like the Comanche, Apache, and Navajo swiftly adopted the horse; northern tribes like the Lakota, Shoshone, and Blackfeet somewhat later. Horses transformed newly mounted cultures into highly mobile, wide-ranging hunter-warrior societies that roamed the grassy Great Plains in pursuit of the shaggy buffalo and that suppressed unmounted peoples like the Paiute. Columbus also brought seedlings of sugar cane, which thrived in the warm Caribbean climate. A “sugar revolution” consequently took place in the European diet, fueled by the forced migration of millions of Africans to work the canefields and sugar mills of the New World.

Unwittingly, the Europeans also brought other organisms in the dirt on their boots and the dust on their clothes, such as the seeds of Kentucky bluegrass, dandelions, and daisies. Most ominous of all, in their bodies they carried the germs that caused smallpox, yellow fever, and malaria. Old World diseases quickly devastated the Native Americans. During the Indians'

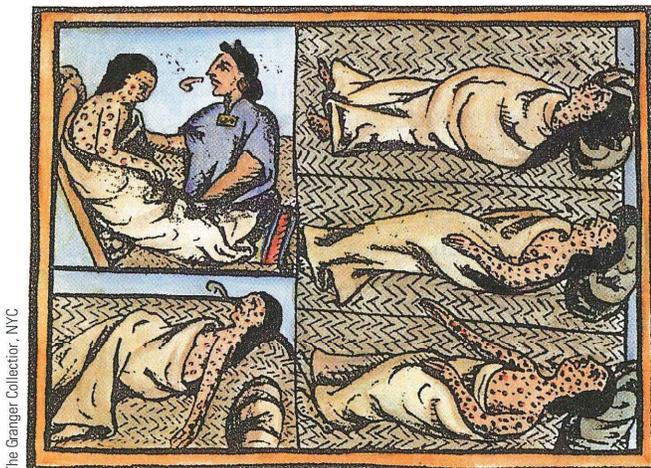


**FIGURE 1.2 The Columbian Exchange**

Columbus's discovery initiated the kind of explosion in international commerce that a later age would call "globalization." © 2016 Cengage Learning

millennia of isolation in the Americas, most of the Old World's killer maladies had disappeared from among them. But generations of freedom from those illnesses had also wiped out protective antibodies. Devoid of natural resistance to Old World sicknesses,

Indians died in droves. Within fifty years of the Spanish arrival, the population of the Taino natives in Hispaniola dwindled from some 1 million people to about 200. Enslavement and armed aggression took their toll, but the deadliest killers were microbes, not muskets. The lethal germs spread among the New World peoples with the speed and force of a hurricane, swiftly sweeping far ahead of the human invaders; most of those afflicted never laid eyes on a European. In the centuries after Columbus's landfall, as many as 90 percent of the Native Americans perished, a demographic catastrophe without parallel in human history. This depopulation was surely not intended by the Spanish, but it was nevertheless so severe that entire cultures and ancient ways of life were extinguished forever. Baffled, enraged, and vengeful, Indian slaves sometimes kneaded tainted blood into their masters' bread, to little effect. Perhaps it was poetic justice that the Indians unintentionally did take a kind of revenge by infecting the early explorers with syphilis, injecting that lethal sexually transmitted disease for the first time into Europe.



The Granger Collection, NYC

**The Scourge of Smallpox** These scenes of Aztec Indians afflicted with smallpox contracted from the Spaniards were drawn by a native artist to illustrate Father Bernardino de Sahagun's remarkable sixteenth-century treatise, "General History of the Things of New Spain," a pioneering work of ethnography and anthropology.

## ★ The Conquest of Mexico and Peru

Gradually, Europeans realized that the American continents held rich prizes, especially the gold and silver of the advanced Indian civilizations in Mexico and

## Contending Voices

### Europeans and Indians

In 1550–1551, two renowned scholars in Valladolid, Spain, formally debated whether the native peoples of the New World were “true men,” capable of governing themselves and becoming Christians. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1489–1573), who had never seen the New World, believed that:

“The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between . . . apes and men.”

The Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566), who had long labored among the Indians, replied:

“I call the Spaniards who plunder that unhappy people torturers. . . . The Indians are our brothers, and Christ has given his life for them. Why, then, do we persecute them with such inhuman savagery when they do not deserve such treatment?”

To what extent did attitudes like those persist over the next several centuries?

Peru. Spain secured its claim to Columbus’s discovery in the **Treaty of Tordesillas** (1494), dividing with Portugal the “heathen lands” of the New World (see Map 1.4). The lion’s share went to Spain, but Portugal received compensating territory in Africa and Asia, as well as title to lands that one day would be Brazil.

The islands of the Caribbean Sea—the West Indies as they came to be called, in yet another perpetuation of Columbus’s geographic confusion—served as offshore bases for staging the Spanish invasion of the mainland Americas. Here supplies could be stored, and men and horses could be rested and acclimated, before proceeding to the conquest of the continents. The loosely organized and vulnerable native communities of the West Indies also provided laboratories for testing the techniques that would eventually subdue the advanced Indian civilizations of Mexico and Peru. The most important such technique was the institution known as the **encomienda**. It allowed the government to “commend,” or give, Indians to certain colonists in return for the promise to try to Christianize them. In all but name, it was slavery. Spanish missionary Bartolomé de Las Casas, appalled

by the *encomienda* system in Hispaniola, called it “a moral pestilence invented by Satan.”

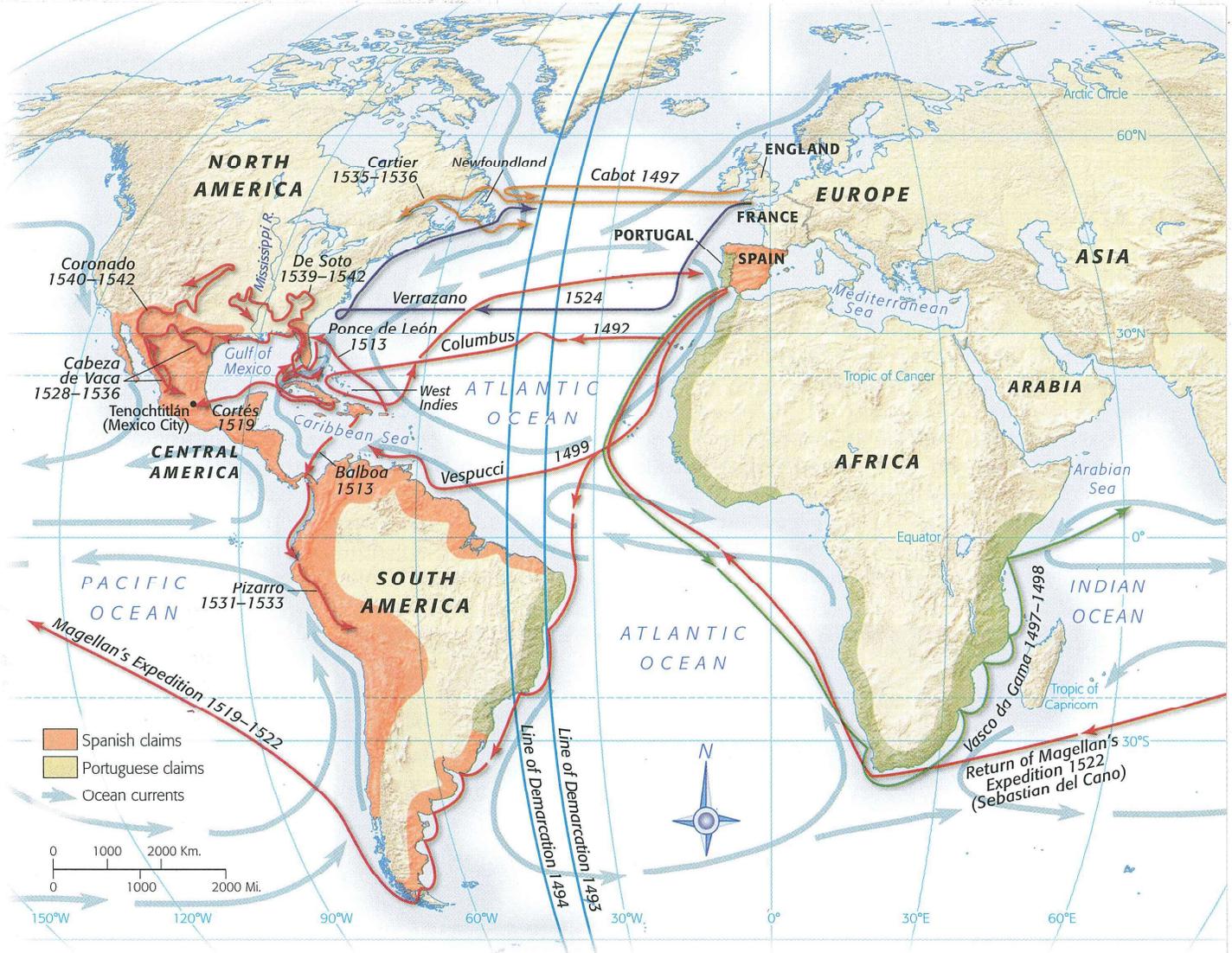
In 1519 Hernán Cortés set sail from Cuba with sixteen fresh horses and several hundred men aboard eleven ships, bound for Mexico and for destiny. On the island of Cozumel off the Yucatán Peninsula, he rescued a Spanish castaway who had been enslaved for several years by the Mayan-speaking Indians. A short distance farther on, he picked up the female Indian slave Malinche, who knew both Mayan and Nahuatl, the language of the powerful Aztec rulers of the great empire in the highlands of central Mexico. In addition to his superior firepower, Cortés now had the advantage, through these two interpreters, of understanding the speech of the native peoples whom he was about to encounter, including the Aztecs. Malinche eventually learned Spanish and was baptized with the Spanish name of Doña Marina.

Near present-day Veracruz, Cortés made his final landfall. Through his interpreters he learned of unrest within the Aztec empire among the peoples from whom the Aztecs demanded tribute. He also heard alluring tales of the gold and other wealth stored up in the legendary Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán. He lusted to tear open the coffers of the Aztec kingdom. To quell his mutinous troops, he boldly burned his ships, cutting off any hope of retreat. Gathering a force of some twenty thousand Indian allies, he marched on Tenochtitlán and toward one of history’s most dramatic and fateful encounters.

As Cortés proceeded, the Aztec chieftain Moctezuma sent ambassadors bearing fabulous gifts to welcome the approaching Spaniards. These only whetted the *conquistador’s* appetite. “We Spanish suffer from a strange disease of the heart,” Cortés allegedly informed the emissaries, “for which the only known remedy is gold.” The ambassadors reported this comment to Moctezuma, along with the astonishing fact that the newcomers rode on the backs of “deer” (horses). The superstitious Moctezuma also believed that Cortés was the god Quetzalcoatl, whose return from the eastern sea was predicted in

Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566), a reform-minded Dominican friar, wrote *The Destruction of the Indies* in 1542 to chronicle the awful fate of the Native Americans and to protest Spanish policies in the New World. He was especially horrified at the catastrophic effects of disease on the native peoples:

“Who of those in future centuries will believe this? I myself who am writing this and saw it and know the most about it can hardly believe that such was possible.”



**MAP 1.4 Principal Voyages of Discovery** Spain, Portugal, France, and England reaped the greatest advantages from the New World, but much of the earliest exploration was done by Italians, notably Christopher Columbus of Genoa. John Cabot, another native of Genoa (his original name was Giovanni Caboto), sailed for England’s King Henry VII. Giovanni da Verrazano was a Florentine employed by France. © 2016 Cengage Learning

Aztec legends. Expectant yet apprehensive, Moctezuma allowed the *conquistadores* to approach his capital unopposed.

As the Spaniards entered the Valley of Mexico, the sight of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán amazed them. With 300,000 inhabitants spread over ten square miles, it rivaled in size and pomp any city in contemporary Europe. The Aztec metropolis rose from an island in the center of a lake, surrounded by floating gardens of extraordinary beauty. It was connected to the mainland by a series of causeways and supplied with fresh water by an artfully designed aqueduct.

Moctezuma treated Cortés hospitably at first, but soon the Spaniards’ hunger for gold and power exhausted their welcome. “They thirsted mightily for

gold; they stuffed themselves with it; they starved for it; they lusted for it like pigs,” said one Aztec. On the *noche triste* (sad night) of June 30, 1520, the Aztecs attacked, driving the Spanish down the causeways from Tenochtitlán in a frantic, bloody retreat. Cortés then laid siege to the city, and it capitulated on August 13, 1521. That same year a smallpox epidemic burned through the Valley of Mexico. The combination of conquest and disease took a grisly toll. The Aztec empire gave way to three centuries of Spanish rule. The temples of Tenochtitlán were destroyed to make way for the Christian cathedrals of Mexico City, built on the site of the ruined Indian capital. And the native population of Mexico, winnowed mercilessly by the invaders’ diseases, shrank from some 20 million to 2 million people in less than a century.

## Makers of America The Spanish Conquistadores

In 1492, the same year that Columbus sighted America, the great Moorish city of Granada, in Spain, fell after a ten-year siege. For five centuries the Christian kingdoms of Spain had been trying to drive the North African Muslim *Moors* (“the Dark Ones,” in Spanish) off the Iberian Peninsula, and with the fall of Granada, they succeeded. But the lengthy *Reconquista* had left its mark on Spanish society. Centuries of military and religious confrontation nurtured an obsession with status and honor, bred religious zealotry and intolerance, and created a large class of men who regarded manual labor and commerce contemptuously. With the *Reconquista* ended, some of these men turned their restless gaze to Spain’s New World frontier.

At first Spanish hopes for America focused on the Caribbean and on finding a sea route to Asia. Gradually, however, word filtered back of rich kingdoms on the mainland. Between 1519 and 1540, Spanish *conquistadores* swept across the Americas in two wide arcs of conquest—one driving from Cuba through Mexico into what is now the southwestern United States; the other starting from Panama and pushing south into Peru. Within half a century of Columbus’s arrival in the Americas, the *conquistadores* had extinguished the great Aztec and Incan empires and claimed for church and crown a territory that extended from Colorado to Argentina, including much of what is now the continental United States.

The military conquest of this vast region was achieved by just ten thousand men, organized in a series of private expeditions. Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro, and other aspiring conquerors signed contracts with the Spanish monarch, raised money from investors, and then went about recruiting an army. Only a small minority of the *conquistadores*—leaders or followers—were nobles. About half were professional soldiers and sailors; the rest comprised peasants, artisans, and members of the middling classes. Most were in their twenties and early thirties, and all knew how to wield a sword.

Diverse motives spurred these motley adventurers. Some hoped to win royal

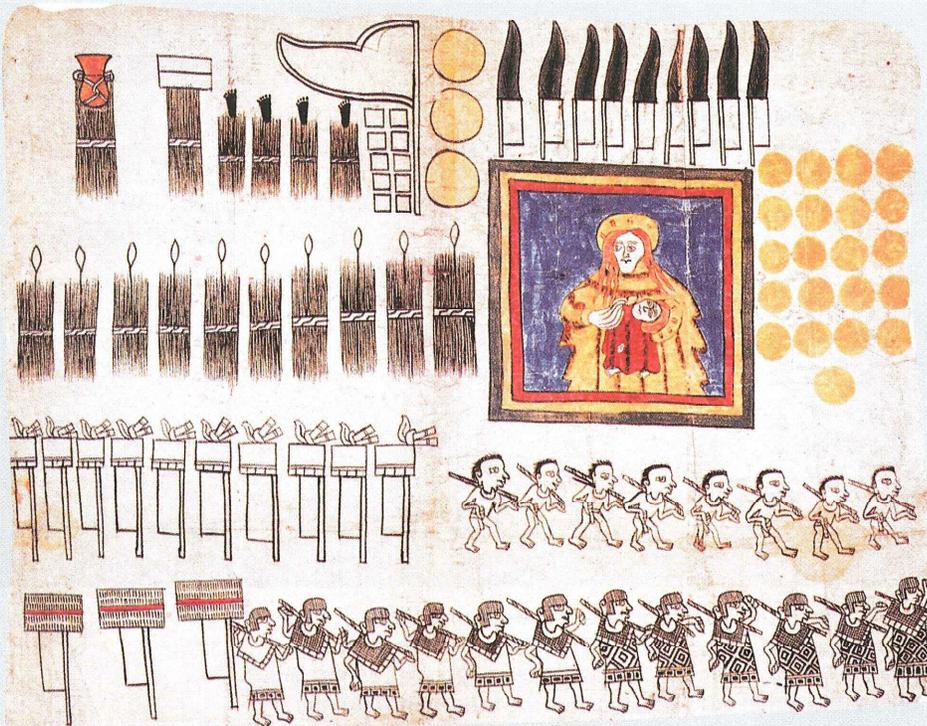


The Granger Collection, NYC—All rights reserved

**Conquistadores, ca. 1534** This illustration for a book called the *Köhler Codex of Nuremberg* may be the earliest depiction of the *conquistadores* in the Americas. It portrays men and horses alike as steadfast and self-assured in their work of conquest.

Shortly thereafter in South America, the iron-fisted conqueror Francisco Pizarro crushed the Incas of Peru in 1532 and added a huge hoard of booty to Spanish coffers. By 1600 Spain was swimming in New World silver, mostly from the fabulously rich mines at Potosí in present-day Bolivia, as well as from Mexico. This flood of precious metal touched off a price revolution in Europe that increased consumer costs by as much as 500 percent in the hundred years

after the mid-sixteenth century. Some scholars see in this ballooning European money supply the fuel that fed the growth of the economic system known as **capitalism**. Certainly, New World bullion helped transform the world economy. It filled the vaults of bankers from Spain to Italy, laying the foundations of the modern banking system. It clinked in the purses of merchants in France and Holland, stimulating the spread of commerce and manufacturing. And it paid



**An Aztec View of the Conquest, 1531** Produced just a dozen years after Cortés's arrival in 1519, this drawing by an Aztec artist pictures the Indians rendering tribute to their conquerors. The inclusion of the banner showing the Madonna and child also illustrates the early incorporation of Christian beliefs by the Indians.

titles and favors by bringing new peoples under the Spanish flag. Others sought to ensure God's favor by spreading Christianity to the pagans. Some men hoped to escape dubious pasts, and others sought the kind of historical adventure experienced by heroes of classical antiquity. Nearly all shared a lust for gold. As one of Cortés's foot soldiers put it, "We came here to serve God and the king, and also to get rich." One historian adds that the *conquistadores* first fell on their knees and then fell upon the aborigines.

Armed with horses and gunpowder and preceded by disease, the *conquistadores* quickly overpowered the Indians. But most never achieved their dreams of glory. Few received titles of nobility, and many of the rank and file remained permanently indebted to the absentee investors who paid for their equipment. Even when an expedition captured exceptionally rich booty, the spoils

were unevenly divided: men from the commander's home region often received more, and men on horseback generally got two shares to the infantryman's one. The *conquistadores* lost still more power as the crown gradually tightened its control in the New World. By the 1530s in Mexico and the 1550s in Peru, colorless colonial administrators had replaced the freebooting *conquistadores*.

Nevertheless, the *conquistadores* achieved a kind of immortality. Because of a scarcity of Spanish women in the early days of the conquest, many of the *conquistadores* married Indian women. The soldiers who conquered Paraguay received three native women each, and Cortés's soldiers in Mexico—who were forbidden to consort with pagan women—quickly had their lovers baptized into the Catholic faith. Their offspring, the "new race" of *mestizos*, formed a cultural and a biological bridge between Latin America's European and Indian races.

for much of the burgeoning international trade with Asia, whose sellers had little use for any European good except silver.

Yet the invaders brought more than conquest and death. They brought crops and animals, language and laws, customs and religion, all of which proved adaptable to the peoples of the Americas. Especially in Mexico, they intermarried with the surviving Indians, creating a distinctive culture of *mestizos*,

people of mixed Indian and European heritage. To this day Mexico remains a unique blend of the Old World and the New, producing both ambivalence and pride among its people. Cortés's translator, Malinche, for example, has given her name to the Mexican language in the word *malinchista*, or "traitor." But Mexicans also celebrate Columbus Day as the *Día de la Raza*—the birthday of a wholly new race of people.



Museo Nacional De Antropología/INHA, Mexico, photo by Bob Schalkwijk

**Artist's Rendering of Tenochtitlán** Amid tribal strife in the fourteenth century, the Aztecs built a capital on a small island in a lake in the central Valley of Mexico. From here they oversaw the most powerful empire yet to arise in Mesoamerica. Two main temples stood at the city's sacred center, one dedicated to Tlaloc, the ancient rain god, and the other to Huitzilopochtli, the tribal god, who was believed to require human hearts for sustenance.

## ★ Exploration and Imperial Rivalry

In the service of God, as well as in search of gold and glory, Spanish *conquistadores* (conquerors) continued to fan out across the New World and beyond (see “Makers of America: The Spanish *Conquistadores*,” pp. 18–19). On Spain's long roster of notable deeds, two spectacular exploits must be headlined. Vasco Nuñez Balboa, hailed as the European discoverer of the Pacific Ocean, waded into the foaming waves off Panama in 1513 and boldly claimed for his king all the lands washed by that sea (see Map 1.5). Ferdinand Magellan started from Spain in 1519 with five tiny ships. After beating through the storm-lashed strait off the tip of South America that still bears his name, he was slain by the inhabitants of the Philippines. His one remaining vessel creaked home in 1522, completing the first circumnavigation of the globe.

Other ambitious Spaniards ventured into North America. In 1513 and 1521, Juan Ponce de León explored Florida, which he at first thought was an island. Seeking gold—and probably not the mythical “fountain of youth”—he instead met with death by an Indian arrow. In 1540–1542 Francisco Coronado, in quest of fabled golden cities that turned out to be adobe pueblos, wandered with a clanking cavalcade through Arizona and New Mexico, penetrating as far east as Kansas. En route his expedition discovered two awesome natural wonders: the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River and enormous herds of buffalo (bison). Hernando de Soto, with six hundred armored men,

undertook a fantastic gold-seeking expedition during 1539–1542. Floundering through marshes and pine barrens from Florida westward, he discovered and crossed the majestic Mississippi River just north of its junction with the Arkansas River. After brutally mistreating the Indians with iron collars and fierce dogs, he at length died of fever and wounds. His troops secretly disposed of his remains at night in the Mississippi, lest the Indians exhume and abuse their abuser's corpse.

Spain's colonial empire grew swiftly and impressively. Within about half a century of Columbus's landfall, hundreds of Spanish cities and towns flourished in the Americas, especially in the great silver-producing centers of Peru and Mexico. Some 160,000 Spaniards, mostly men, had subjugated millions of Indians. Majestic cathedrals dotted the land, printing presses turned out books, and scholars founded distinguished universities, including those at Mexico City and Lima, Peru, both established in 1551, eighty-five years before Harvard, the first college established in the English colonies.

But how secure were these imperial possessions? Other powers were already sniffing around the edges of the Spanish domain, eager to bite off their share of the promised wealth of the new lands. The upstart English sent Giovanni Caboto (known in English as John Cabot) to explore the northeastern coast of North America in 1497 and 1498. The French king dispatched another Italian mariner, Giovanni da Verrazano, to probe the eastern seaboard in 1524. Ten years later the Frenchman Jacques Cartier journeyed hundreds of miles up the St. Lawrence River.



**MAP 1.5 Principal Early Spanish Explorations and Conquests** Note that Coronado traversed northern Texas and Oklahoma. In present-day eastern Kansas, he found, instead of the great golden city he sought, a drab encampment, probably of Wichita Indians. © 2016 Cengage Learning

To safeguard the northern periphery of their New World domain against such encroachments and to convert more Indian souls to Christianity, the Spanish began to fortify and settle their North American borderlands. In a move to block French ambitions and to protect the sea-lanes to the Caribbean, the Spanish erected a fortress at St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565, thus founding the oldest continually inhabited European settlement in the future United States.

In Mexico the tales of Coronado's expedition of the 1540s to the upper Rio Grande and Colorado River regions continued to beckon the *conquistadores* northward. A dust-begrimed expeditionary column, with eighty-three rumbling wagons and hundreds of grumbling men, traversed the bare Sonora Desert from Mexico into the Rio Grande valley in 1598. Led by Don Juan de Oñate, the Spaniards cruelly abused the Pueblo peoples they encountered. In the **Battle of Acoma** in 1599, the victorious Spanish severed one foot of each surviving Indian. They proclaimed the area to be the province of New Mexico in 1609 and founded its capital at Santa Fé the following year (see Map 1.6).

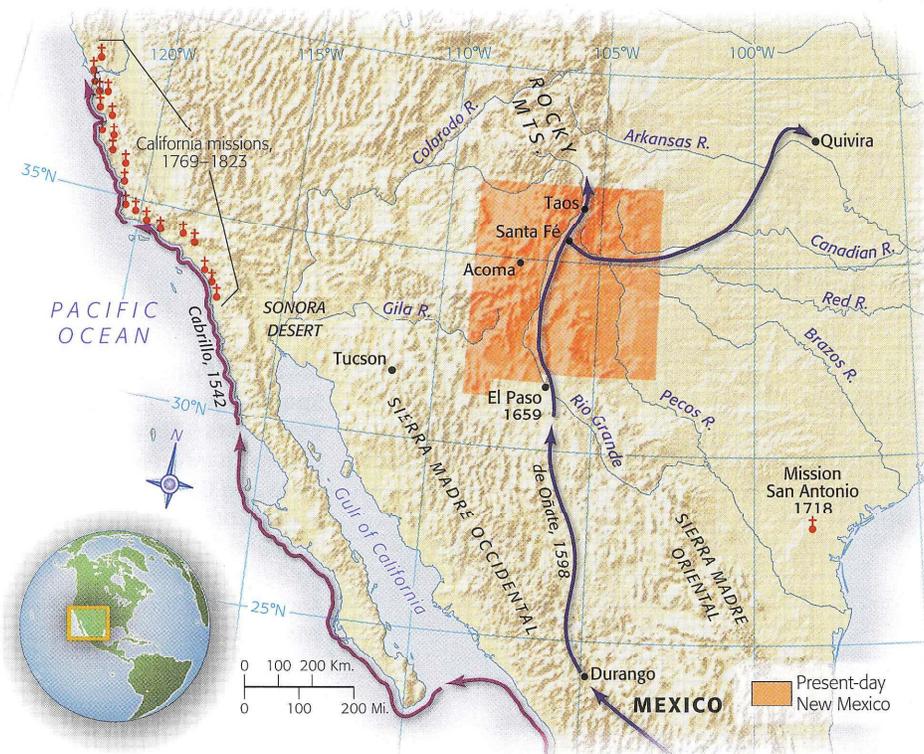
The Spanish settlers in New Mexico found a few furs and precious little gold, but they did discover a wealth of souls to be harvested for the Christian religion. The Roman Catholic mission became the central institution in colonial New Mexico until the missionaries' efforts to suppress native religious customs provoked an Indian uprising called **Popé's Rebellion** in 1680. The Pueblo rebels destroyed every Catholic church in the province and killed a score of priests and hundreds of Spanish settlers. In a reversal of Cortés's treatment of the Aztec temples more than a century earlier, the Indians rebuilt a *kiva*, or ceremonial religious chamber,

on the ruins of the Spanish plaza at Santa Fé. It took nearly half a century for the Spanish fully to reclaim New Mexico from the insurrectionary Indians.

Meanwhile, as a further hedge against the ever-threatening French, who had sent an expedition under Robert de La Salle down the Mississippi River in the 1680s, the Spanish began around 1716 to establish settlements in Texas. Some refugees from the Pueblo uprising trickled into Texas, and a few missions were established there, including the one at San Antonio later known as the Alamo. But for at least another century, the Spanish presence remained weak in this distant northeastern outpost of Spain's Mexican empire.

To the west, in California, no serious foreign threat loomed, and Spain directed its attention there only belatedly. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo had explored the California coast in 1542, but he failed to find San Francisco Bay or anything else of much interest. For some two centuries thereafter, California slumbered undisturbed by European intruders. Then in 1769 Spanish missionaries led by Father Junipero Serra founded at San Diego the first of a chain of twenty-one missions that wound up the coast as far as Sonoma, north of San Francisco Bay. Father Serra's brown-robed Franciscan friars toiled with zealous devotion to Christianize the 300,000 native Californians. They gathered the seminomadic Indians into fortified missions and taught them horticulture and basic crafts. These "mission Indians" did adopt Christianity, but they also lost contact with their native cultures and often lost their lives as well, as the white man's diseases doomed these biologically vulnerable peoples.

The misdeeds of the Spanish in the New World obscured their substantial achievements and helped



**MAP 1.6** Spain's North American Frontier, 1542–1823

© 2016 Cengage Learning

give birth to the **Black Legend**. This false concept held that the conquerors merely tortured and butchered the Indians (“killing for Christ”), stole their gold, infected them with smallpox, and left little but misery behind. The Spanish invaders did indeed kill, enslave, and infect countless natives, but they also erected a colossal empire, sprawling from California and Florida to Tierra del Fuego. They grafted their culture, laws, religion, and language onto a wide array of native societies, laying the foundations for a score of Spanish-speaking nations.

Clearly, the Spaniards, who had more than a century’s head start over the English, were genuine empire builders and cultural innovators in the New World. As compared with their Anglo-Saxon rivals, their colonial establishment was larger and richer, and it was destined to endure more than a quarter of a century longer. And in the last analysis, the Spanish paid the Native Americans the high compliment of

fusing with them through marriage and incorporating indigenous culture into their own, rather than shunning and eventually isolating the Indians as their English adversaries would do.



The Granger Collection, NYC

**Arrival of Cortés, with Dona Marina, at Tenochtitlán in 1519** This painting by a Mexican artist depicts Cortés in the dress of a Spanish gentleman. His translator Malinche, whose Christian name was Marina, is given an honorable place at the front of the procession. She eventually married one of Cortés’s soldiers, with whom she traveled to Spain and was received by the Spanish court.

# Chapter Review

## KEY TERMS

Canadian Shield (4)	Tordesillas, Treaty of (16)
Incas (6)	<i>encomienda</i> (16)
Aztecs (6)	<i>noche triste</i> (17)
nation-states (8)	capitalism (18)
Cahokia (8)	<i>mestizos</i> (19)
three-sister farming (8)	<i>conquistadores</i> (20)
middlemen (11)	Battle of Acoma (21)
caravel (12)	Popé's Rebellion (21)
plantation (13)	Black Legend (22)
Columbian exchange (14)	

## PEOPLE TO KNOW

Ferdinand of Aragon	Malinche (Doña Marina)
Isabella of Castile	Moctezuma
Christopher Columbus	Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot)
Francisco Coronado	Robert de La Salle
Francisco Pizarro	Father Junipero Serra
Bartolomé de Las Casas	
Hernán Cortés	

## CHRONOLOGY

<b>ca. 33,000–8000 B.C.E.</b>	First humans cross into Americas from Asia	<b>1513, 1521</b>	Ponce de León explores Florida
<b>ca. 5000 B.C.E.</b>	Corn is developed as a staple crop in highland Mexico	<b>1519–1521</b>	Cortés conquers Mexico for Spain
<b>ca. 4000 B.C.E.</b>	First civilized societies develop in the Middle East	<b>1522</b>	Magellan's vessel completes circumnavigation of the world
<b>ca. 2000 B.C.E.</b>	Corn planting reaches present-day American Southwest	<b>1524</b>	Verrazano explores eastern seaboard of North America for France
<b>ca. 1000 c.e.</b>	Norse voyagers discover and briefly settle in northeastern North America Corn cultivation reaches Midwest and southeastern Atlantic seaboard	<b>1532</b>	Pizarro crushes Incas
<b>ca. 1100 c.e.</b>	Height of Mississippian settlement at Cahokia	<b>1534</b>	Cartier journeys up the St. Lawrence River
<b>ca. 1100–1300 c.e.</b>	Christian crusades arouse European interest in the East	<b>1539–1542</b>	De Soto explores the Southeast and discovers the Mississippi River
<b>1295</b>	Marco Polo returns to Europe	<b>1540–1542</b>	Coronado explores present-day Southwest
<b>late 1400s</b>	Spain becomes united	<b>1542</b>	Cabrillo explores California coast for Spain
<b>1488</b>	Dias rounds southern tip of Africa	<b>1565</b>	Spanish build fortress at St. Augustine
<b>1492</b>	Columbus lands in the Bahamas	<b>late 1500s</b>	Iroquois Confederacy founded, according to Iroquois legend
<b>1494</b>	Treaty of Tordesillas between Spain and Portugal	<b>ca. 1598–1609</b>	Spanish under Oñate conquer Pueblo peoples of Rio Grande valley
<b>1498</b>	Da Gama reaches India Cabot explores northeastern coast of North America for England	<b>1609</b>	Spanish found New Mexico
<b>1513</b>	Balboa claims all lands touched by the Pacific Ocean for Spain	<b>1680</b>	Popé's Rebellion in New Mexico
		<b>1680s</b>	French expedition down Mississippi River under La Salle
		<b>1769</b>	Serra founds first California mission, at San Diego

## TO LEARN MORE

Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America* (2000)

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

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (1998)

Tom Dillehay, *The Settlement of the Americas: A New Prehistory* (2000)

J. H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World* (2006)

Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850* (2005)

Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land* (1975)

Alice Beck Keyhoe, *America Before the European Invasions* (2002)

Anthony Pagden, *Peoples and Empires: A Short History of European Migration, Exploration, and Conquest, from Greece to the Present* (2003)

Andrés Reséndez, *A Land So Strange: The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca* (2007)

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (1992)

David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (2005)

**A complete, annotated bibliography for this chapter—along with brief descriptions of the People to Know—may be found on the *American Pageant* website. The key terms are defined in the glossary at the end of the text.**