HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS ON THE AP® UNITED STATES HISTORY EXAM

Historical thinking skills form the backbone of AP® United States History. On the AP® exam that you take in May, every question will make you apply the same history thinking skills that historians use when they approach their studies. The exam asks you to think like a historian.

Knowing how to navigate through these thinking skills will make a big difference in how you approach the course, how you understand the material, and ultimately how you perform on the exam.

Following you can find a description of each historical thinking skill with examples of how you can apply these skills in your AP® United States History class.

Skill Type I: Chronological Reasoning

1. **Historical Causation**
2. **Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time**
3. **Periodization**

The historical thinking skills remind us that history is more than just a list of everything that happened a long time ago. We try to find meaning and patterns to events that occurred in the past. Part of this process involves describing cause-effect relationships, some of which are long term and some short term. The skill of Historical Causation involves understanding these connections.

Change is the building block of history and one of the reasons why the study of history fascinates so many people. We want to recognize what has changed and then understand why this change happened. Continuity represents the opposite of change. It relates to what has stayed the same over periods of time.

At times historical change can lead to a turning point that frames how we view history. The historical thinking skill of Periodization deals with this issue. Periodization explores why history divides into segments and how we clump these segments together into different periods of history. The AP® United States History course, for example, is divided into nine specific periods whose beginning and ending dates may overlap: 1491–1607, 1607–1754, 1754–1800, 1800–1848, 1844–1877, 1865–1898, 1890–1945, 1945–1980, and 1980–present.

The choice of any specific date, even those used for this course, may favor one interpretation of history over another. For example, political historians may use election cycles or electoral realignments to divide history. Social and cultural historians, in contrast, have selected different frameworks. Thinking historically means that you can understand how these systems of Periodization set up categories and what they might represent about how people view history.

> *Example of Chronological Reasoning:* Consider the American Civil War. Can you examine the long- and short-term historical causes and effects of the Civil War? Can you examine what changed as a result and what stayed the same? Finally, can you examine how the Civil War represents a turning point in United States history?

Skill Type II: Comparison and Contextualization

4. **Comparison**
5. **Contextualization**

Comparison involves looking at similarities and differences. The skill of Comparison can apply to two issues within one area or, more commonly, the same issue in different regions. Historians also use the skill of Comparison to find what is in common and what is different with two accounts of the same event.

Contextualization involves the skill of relating broad historical issues to smaller events and placing a single historical issue into a much larger national or global process. Contextualization is especially important in AP® United States History because the course spans from 1491 to the present. To deal appropriately with all of this information, we need to be able to see the bigger picture and examine how individual case studies might fit into the larger patterns of history.

Example of Comparison and Contextualization: Consider the progressive era and the New Deal. Can you examine the similarities and differences in these two reform periods? Can you examine how specific events in either of these reform periods apply to broader transformations occurring at that time?

Skill Type III: Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence

6. Historical Argumentation
7. Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence

Historical Argumentation involves figuring out a historical question and addressing that question through a clear argument. For example, when you write an essay, you do a great deal more than just regurgitate all of the facts that you know about the question. Ideally, you make an argument that is strong and answers the question. The core of that argument appears as the thesis. You then follow your thesis with evidence. In the document-based question (DBQ), which is required on the AP® exam, much of the evidence flows from the documents themselves, but you will also need to include relevant examples not included in the documents. In the case of the long essay question, you will need to provide the facts. The exam will also include four required short-answer questions that may ask you to identify relevant historical evidence in order to illustrate a main point or support a conclusion. Furthermore, the multiple-choice questions may require you to select historical evidence that best reflects an interpretation or substantiates a point of view.

Historical Argumentation also involves your ability to judge the arguments of others. Can you pick out the thesis statement in other peoples' essays? Can you evaluate how well other people put together their arguments?

Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence connects directly to the skill of Historical Argumentation. This skill involves drawing useful information from different sources. When a document comes from the point of view of an eyewitness to a particular event or period of time, it is considered a primary source. Evidence that comes from someone who did not experience an event firsthand and comes after a particular period of study is considered a secondary source. Secondary sources usually provide some analysis of or commentary on a past event or person and can also come from maps, charts, graphs, and statistical data of all kinds. The document-based question specifically tests your ability to work with primary sources, while multiple-choice questions include both primary and secondary source excerpts.

Primary sources include both written and nonwritten evidence. Government pronouncements, personal letters, diaries, newspaper stories, and official autobiographies are all examples of written evidence. Nonwritten evidence might include photographs and artwork, or artifacts like furniture and tools of daily living. Because the revised AP® United States History course includes more information about North American Indian populations, any document-based questions about that period would likely include nonwritten evidence. The skill of analyzing historical evidence applies equally to written evidence, artistic works, artifacts found in archeological sites, historical photographs, and architectural monuments.

Example of Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence: Consider the illustration on page 123 of *The American Pageant*. Can you examine this depiction of the Boston Massacre in order to draw conclusions about the relationship between the British and the colonists prior to the American Revolution?

Skill Type IV: Historical Interpretation and Synthesis

8. Interpretation
9. Synthesis

Historians try to make sense of the past, and in doing so they form historical arguments. We explored the practice of making these historical arguments in Skill Type III. Understanding the different ways that historians view the past involves the skill of Interpretation.

A college-level course in history goes beyond just knowing what happened. We need to be able to make sense of what happened and create theories dealing with the evidence using chronological thinking, comparisons, and historical context. We then take one more step to see how historians might view these issues differently based on their perspective.

Historians look at history through their own interpretive lens. Some see economics, religion, social class, or the environment as the prime mover of historical events. Certainly people's political views influence how they view the world and consequently their interpretation of history.

For the AP® United States History exam, the skill of Interpretation is handled most directly by the document-based and long essay questions, but it may also be addressed in the short-answer and multiple-choice questions. For example, on the document-based question you need to provide point-of-view analysis for

why a certain person might create a particular document at that specific time and place. Addressing that issue is addressing Interpretation.

Synthesis, the last of the historical thinking skills, involves putting it all together. If you analyze a topic in history by using many historical thinking skills—such as Comparison, Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence, Historical Causation, and Interpretation—you are synthesizing the material. Synthesis can also connect ideas that you have about history to other issues, such as how you view events in the present. You even display the skill of Synthesis when you use ideas from other fields of knowledge to gain insight into history. Finally, the skill of Synthesis relates to the difficult process of trying to relate very different or even contradictory evidence when making a coherent argument.

Example of Interpretation and Synthesis: Consider the effects of the civil rights movement on modern American society. Can you examine how different historians from different political positions might come to different conclusions about how people experienced the civil rights movement? Can you examine how the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth century might provide lessons for modern-day society? Can you describe how other disciplines, such as economics, literature, and urban studies, provide us with a variety of insights about the dramatic changes during the civil rights movement? Finally, can you examine all of this information through the use of multiple historical thinking skills?

The historical thinking skills are similar to skills gained in any aspect of your life, such as athletics, dance, or music. The more you practice, the better you get. An entire year of rigorous study in AP® United States History will get you far. At best, these skills will create habits of mind that will serve you for a lifetime.

PREPARING FOR THE AP® EXAM

Advanced Placement® is a challenging yet stimulating experience. Whether you are taking an AP® course at your school or you are working on AP® independently, the stage is set for a great intellectual experience. As the school year progresses and you burrow deeper and deeper into the coursework, you can see the broad concepts, movements, conflicts, resolutions, and personalities that have shaped the history of the United States. Fleshing out those forces with a growing collection of nuances is exciting. More exciting still is recognizing references to those forces in the media.

But as spring approaches and the College Board examination begins to loom on the horizon, AP® can seem downright intimidating given the enormous scope and extent of the information that is required to score well. If you are intimidated by the College Board examination, you are certainly not alone.

The best way to deal with an AP® examination is to master it, not let it master you. If you manage your time effectively, you will eliminate one major obstacle—learning a considerable amount of material. In addition, if you can think of these tests as a way to show off how your mind works, you have a leg up: attitude *does* help. If you are not one of those students, there is still a lot you can do to sideline your anxiety. Focused review and practice time will help you master the examination so that you can walk in with confidence and get a 5.

Before the Exam

By February, long before the exam, you need to make sure that you are registered to take the test. Many schools take care of the paperwork and handle the fees for their AP® students, but check with your teacher or the AP® coordinator to make sure that you are on the list. This is especially important if you have a documented disability and need test accommodations. If you are studying AP® independently, call AP® Services at the College Board for the name of the local AP® coordinator, who will help you through the registration process.

The evening before the exam is not a great time for partying. Nor is it a great time for cramming. If you like, look over class notes or drift through your textbook, but concentrate on the broad outlines, not the small details, of the course. However, the evening before the exam *is* a great time to get your things together for the next day. Sharpen a fistful of no. 2 pencils with good erasers for the multiple-choice section of the test; set out several black or dark-blue ballpoint pens for the long-essay questions; bring a watch as no cell phones are allowed in the testing room; get a piece of fruit or a snack bar and a bottle of water for the break; make sure you have your Social Security number and whatever photo identification and admission ticket are required. Then relax. And get a good night's sleep. An extra hour of sleep is more valuable than an extra hour of study.

On the day of the examination, make certain to eat breakfast—fuel for the brain. Studies show that students who eat a hot breakfast before testing get higher grades. Be careful not to drink a lot of liquids, necessitating trips to the bathroom during the test. You need energy to power you through the test—and more. You will spend some time waiting while everyone is seated in the right room for the right test. That's before the test has even begun. Including the brief break and all four parts of the test, the United States History exam lasts for more than three hours. So be prepared for a long morning. You do not want to be distracted by a growling stomach or hunger pangs.

Be sure to wear comfortable clothes, taking along a sweater in case the heating or air-conditioning is erratic—and by all means wear your lucky socks if you have some.

You have been on the fast track. Now go get a 5.

TAKING THE AP® EXAM

The AP® United States History exam consists of four parts in two sections. Section I includes Parts A and B. Section I Part A has 55 multiple-choice questions for which you will have 55 minutes to answer; all questions will be organized into sets of two to five questions that will follow along with a stimulus material (a primary or secondary source). Section I Part B consists of four short-answer questions that you will answer in 50 minutes. Section II includes its own Part A and Part B. Section II Part A contains a document-based question assessing Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time as well as your ability to apply your understanding of the documents using the historical thinking skills. You will be given 55 minutes to read the documents and answer the question. Section II Part B consists of two long essay questions that focus on the same historical thinking skill as it applies to two time periods; you will choose to respond to one of these in the allotted 35 minutes. Keep an eye on your watch. Watch alarms are not allowed.

The College Board has identified seven themes that run through a U.S. history course: *Identity (ID)*—how American national identity has been shaped, debated, and defined over time; *Work, Exchange, and Technology (WXT)*—how changes in markets, transportation, labor systems, and technology have been debated and what impact they have had in the role of government, the economy, and society; *Peopling (PEO)*—the effects of migrations to, from, and within North America; *Politics and Power (POL)*—the debate and competition among different political and social groups seeking to influence American values and government; *America in the World (WOR)*—the interaction between events in North America/the United States and contemporary developments in the rest of the world; *Environment and Geography—Physical and Human (ENV)*—the impact of the natural environment on the institutions and values of Americans, as well as the impact of political, economic and demographic changes within the United States on the environment itself; *Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture (CUL)*—reasons for and impacts of the changes in moral, philosophical, and cultural values among the people of the United States (and their colonial predecessors). A theme won't appear in every chapter of the textbook, but it will turn up over and over again in the course. For example, American identity evolved throughout the Revolutionary era, during westward expansion, in the buildup to and aftermath of the Civil War, as Americans turned toward imperialism, and throughout the twentieth century as America contended with conflicts in the wider world. The themes can give you a real assist in writing long essays; they provide the big idea, which you support with your historical facts.

Strategies for the Multiple-Choice Section

Here are some rules of thumb to help you work your way through the multiple-choice questions—your score on this section will make up 40 percent of your final score:

- **Understand the scoring.** Each correct answer is worth 1 point; you will not lose points for incorrect answers. Therefore it is worthwhile to answer every question, even if you have to guess. There are four possible answers for each question. If you cannot narrow down the choices at all, you have a 25 percent chance of guessing correctly. If you can eliminate even just one response, it will always improve your chances of guessing correctly. Your best strategy is to go through the entire multiple-choice section, answering all questions to which you know the answers. If you skip a question, be careful to skip that line on the answer sheet as well. Then go back and work on the questions you skipped. Leave yourself enough time to fill in answers—even guesses—on all unanswered items before the time expires.
- **Read the question and stimulus material carefully**. Pressured for time, many students make the mistake of reading the questions too quickly or merely skimming them. By reading a question carefully, you may already have some idea about the correct answer. You can then look for it in the responses. Be sure to use the stimulus material to help inform your thoughts as you work through each set of questions, and pay attention to connections among test questions within a set for cues to other questions.

- **Eliminate any answer you know is wrong.** You can write on the multiple-choice questions in the test book. As you read through the responses, draw a line through any answer you know is wrong.
- **Read all of the possible answers, then choose the most accurate response.** The AP® exam is written to test your ability to reason about the document you are given as it relates to your knowledge of history. Sometimes there are a few probable answers, but one of them is more specific. For example, a question dealing with the Open Door policy in 1899 may have an answer that seems correct: "It sought to promote U.S. interests overseas." However, there may be an even better answer, one that is more specific to the topic: "To provide the United States access to trade in Asia."
- **Avoid absolute responses.** These answers often include the words *always* or *never*. For example, the statement "Jefferson always rejected the Hamiltonian economic program" is an overstatement in that Jefferson never attempted to eliminate one of the key features of Hamilton's economic program, the Bank of the United States.

Types of Multiple-Choice Questions

There are various kinds of multiple-choice questions, and all will require you to review a primary or secondary source to supplement the question itself. Here are some suggestions for how to approach each kind of stimulus:

Interpreting a Primary Source

Primary sources are a historian's best window on the past and should be read carefully. Particularly when dealing with sources from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, be sure that you understand the author's meaning. Give careful consideration to the intended audience, and if you are familiar with the author or authors listed, be aware of their actions, beliefs, and motivations. Take any dates given to help you place the passage in context.

> "While we have land to labor then, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a workbench, or twirling a distaff.... For the general operations of manufacture, let our workshops remain in Europe.... The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body."
>
> —Thomas Jefferson, 1784

1. Which of the following eighteenth-century political debates is most likely the topic of Jefferson's writing?
   (A) Whether or not to replace the Articles of Confederation with a stronger central government
   (B) Whether or not to declare independence from Britain
   (C) Whether or not to involve the federal government in supporting the national economy
   (D) Whether or not to allow slaves to work in factories in the South

ANSWER: **(C)** In this passage, Jefferson is discussing the problems with industrial work, in line with his belief in the virtue of agricultural work. Jefferson believed that there was little desirability in developing an industrial economy such as Britain's. In 1784, the United States was operating under the Articles of Confederation as an independent nation. A stronger national government was not seriously considered until 1787, and even then Jefferson preferred the decentralized government of the Articles; therefore, A and B are incorrect. Even by the language of the time ("such persons" held to labor, for example, from the Constitution), no mention is made of slavery in this passage; therefore, D is also incorrect.

Interpreting a Secondary Source

Secondary sources reveal historians' thoughts about the past and often present an argument about the causes or impacts of historical events. When presented with one or a pair of sources, first identify the author's argument, and then try to contextualize the issue. What era is being discussed? What was happening at that time?

> "The function of the ideology of mobility was to supply the citizens of nineteenth century America with a scheme for comprehending and accommodating themselves to a new social and economic order....The defining characteristic of this open society was perfect competitiveness, which guaranteed a complete correspondence between social status and merit....A general acceptance of the mobility ideology by the lower class would have served to integrate workmen into the social order, minimizing discontent and directing it at targets other than the society itself."
>
> —Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (1964), pp. 58–59

1. Which of the following groups most clearly did not buy into the ideology of mobility that Thernstrom discusses?
   (A) Labor unions
   (B) Industrial leaders
   (C) Urban reformers
   (D) Believers in Social Darwinism

ANSWER: **(A)** Clues about the "new social and economic order," "competitiveness," and "workmen" help reveal that Thernstrom is discussing the industrial changes in the nineteenth century. The argument he is making is, generally, that society was inherently fair and that the best would rise to the top. This was the basic tenet of Social Darwinism, making D incorrect. Of the groups listed, labor unions most clearly disagreed with this idea; they argued, in fact, that the economic system in place unfairly gave benefits to those who owned capital; thus A is correct. Many industrial leaders believed that they were deserving of their wealth because of superior talent (more Social Darwinism, or the Gospel of Wealth); therefore, B is incorrect. Urban reformers (early progressives seeking to improve industrial conditions) focused on bettering the lives of those at the bottom of the social ladder rather than debating their ability to improve their station, making C a poor choice.

Political Cartoon Questions

These questions require you to interpret a political cartoon. Every political cartoon contains symbolism and a point of view. Examine the cartoon before you read the question and possible responses to determine what each part of the drawing represents and to identify the artist's viewpoint. For example:

THE BIG STICK IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA

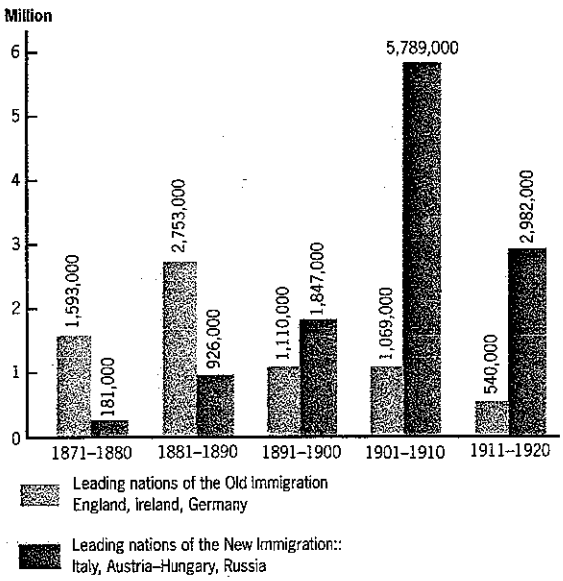
The Granger Collection, New York

1. What is the viewpoint expressed in the above cartoon?
   (A) The United States rejected the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.
   (B) Under Roosevelt the United States allowed European nations to take part in the colonization of South America.
   (C) Roosevelt brought the Caribbean under the control of the United States.
   (D) Roosevelt was protecting the Caribbean nations from U.S. intervention.

ANSWER: **(C)** Roosevelt actually strengthened the Monroe Doctrine with his Roosevelt Corollary. Therefore, A and B are incorrect because one of the primary purposes of the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary was to prevent European intervention in the Western Hemisphere. Because the United States consistently intervened in South American affairs, answer D is incorrect.

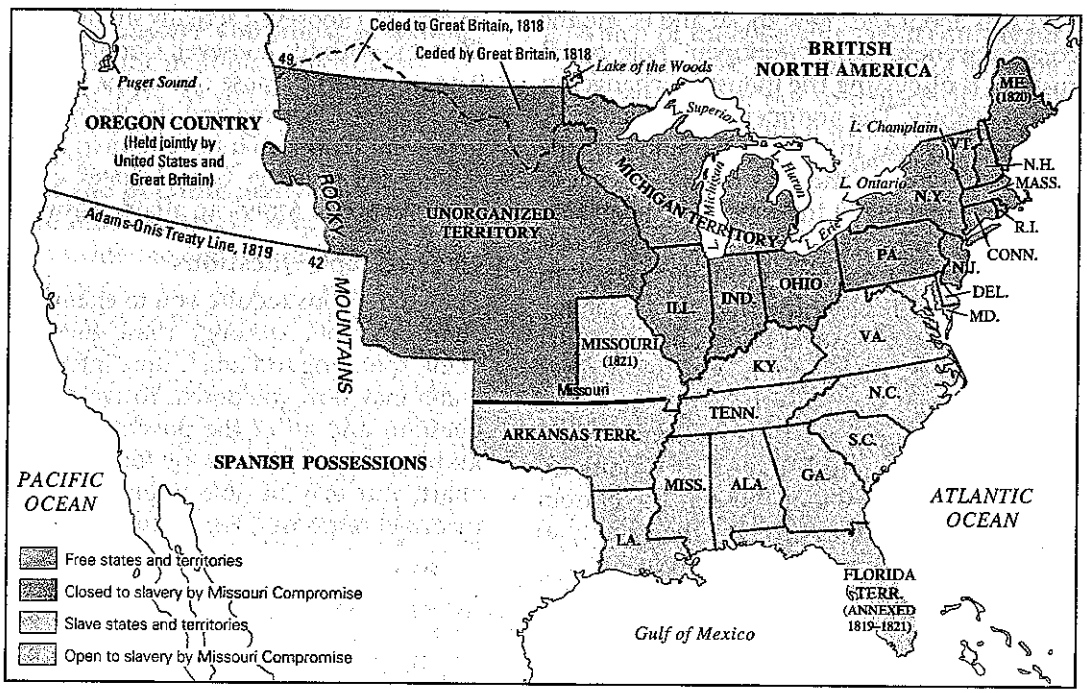
Chart/Graph Questions

These questions require you to examine the data on a chart or graph. Although these questions are not difficult, spending too much time interpreting a chart or graph may slow you down. To avoid this, first read the question and all of the possible answers so that you know what you are looking for. Before you look at the chart, you may be able to eliminate some obviously incorrect responses. For example:



1. Which of the following statements does the chart above best support?
   (A) Immigration remained at the same level from 1871 to 1920.
   (B) The period 1871–1880 witnessed the largest immigration of New Immigrants in the late nineteenth century.
   (C) Most immigrants came from Italy and Germany.
   (D) The period 1891–1900 was the first decade in the late nineteenth century in which the number of New Immigrants exceeded the number of Old Immigrants.

ANSWER: **(D)** After analyzing the table, option A can be eliminated because the measurement bars are not level in *any* period. Option B is incorrect because the total number of New Immigrants in 1871–1880 is the lowest of any decade represented. Option C is incorrect in that there is no way to tell from the table what percentage of the immigrants came from a specific country. Option D, therefore, is correct because the bar for New Immigrants is higher for the first time than the bar for Old Immigrants.



Interpreting a Map

For history students, maps are used to describe not just geography but social and political organization as well. Asked to interpret a map, you can pick up a lot of information just by looking at the key.

1. The map above shows the United States
   (A) at the end of the Revolutionary War.
   (B) following the end of the Mexican War.
   (C) after all of the eastern Native American tribes had been moved to reservations in the West.
   (D) after the passage of the Missouri Compromise.

ANSWER: **(D)** At the end of the Revolutionary War, the United States comprised the thirteen original colonies; therefore, answer A is incorrect. B is incorrect for several reasons, foremost being the absence of Texas and the Mexican Cession on the map. There is no information on the map that indicates it has anything to do with Native American removal; thus, answer C is incorrect.

Short-Answer Questions

You are required to write responses to a total of four short-answer questions in the provided 50 minutes. Your score on this portion will count for 20 percent of your final score. Each question will consist of two or more parts, and at least two of the four questions will contain elements of internal choice, allowing you to demonstrate the knowledge that you know best. Each question will require you to use your knowledge about American history to respond to a stimulus such as a primary or secondary source, a map or image, or a general statement about U.S. history. **You do not need to develop and defend a thesis—however, bulleted answers will automatically receive a zero.** Instead, focus on answering the questions fully (and in complete sentences) and on including evidence or examples to support your response. The questions are designed to give you the freedom to choose from a wide range of possible examples. This means that you can pick from what you might have studied in depth in class or what you might have read more about, rather than worrying about knowing one specific fact or event.

Free-Response Questions

You are required to write essays for two free-response questions in Section II of the United States History examination. Section II Part A presents the document-based question (DBQ). It is mandatory and will count as 25 percent of your final score. For the DBQ, you are given 55 minutes to read the documents, organize your answer, and write your response. The essay will ask you to use your historical thinking skills in addition to analysis of one or more of the themes of American history. In Section II Part B you will respond to one of two long essay questions, both of which will focus on the same historical thinking skill as applied to different time periods.

You will be asked to choose one question to answer in the given 35-minute time period. Your score on this portion will count for 15 percent of your final score.

The Document-Based Question (DBQ)

The DBQ is considered by many students to be the most complex and challenging component of the AP® examination. As its name implies, the DBQ presents you with a wide variety of primary-source information in the form of a series of documents. Primary sources are contemporaneous with a time period or event and include everything from maps, political cartoons, photographs, and illustrations to speeches, essays, books, documentaries, and editorials. Documents will *not* be taken from secondary sources such as textbooks.

All free-response essays require you to utilize your knowledge of the topic, but with the DBQ your essay needs to be grounded on the documents. Your goal is to demonstrate your ability to tease out the thrust and substance of each document and then combine this information with your own general knowledge in an analytical and evaluative essay. The following are necessary for a quality DBQ essay:

- Background—your own knowledge of the topic
- Analysis—your ability to interpret and explain the documents and identify patterns across time periods
- Contextualization—your ability to link your argument to broader historical events and/or processes
- Synthesis—your ability to blend your outside information with the information provided in the documents to explain an issue

Take a look at this abbreviated DBQ, which contains only four documents for explanation purposes:

> Question: Using the documents provided and your knowledge of the period, write an answer to the following question:
>
> *Analyze the factors that determined the degree of success that labor unions had in securing the goals that American workers desired during the years 1865–1900.*

Document 1: The Address of the National Labor [Union] Congress to the Working Men of the United States

Andrew C. Cameron, August 1867

The question of all others which at present engrosses the attention of the American workman, and, in fact, the American people, is the proposed reduction of the hours of daily labor and the substitution of the eight- for the ten-hour system.... As might have been expected, the employing capitalists, aided by a venal press, have set up a howl of rage and protested the adoption of such [an] innovation....

There are, probably, no organizations upon the nature of which so much ignorance exists, even among workingmen, or against which such persistent and systematic opposition has been urged, as trades unions.... [T]heir establishment has been beneficial to the community in general and the working classes in particular....

Source: Excerpted from The Annals of America, *Vol. 10*

Document 2: The Preamble to "The Constitution of the Knights of Labor," adopted 3 January 1878

[W]e] submit to the world the objects sought to be accomplished by our organization....

....

2. To secure to the toilers a proper share of wealth they create....

....

6. ... the adopting of measures providing for the health and safety of those engaged in mining, manufacturing, or building pursuits.

....

11. The prohibition of the employment of children in workshops, mines, and factories....

....

14. The reduction of the hours of labor to eight per day, so that the laborers may have more time for social enjoyment and intellectual improvement....

Source: Excerpted from The Annals of America, *Vol. 10*

Document 3: Earnings, Expenses and Conditions of Workingmen and Their Families

No. 51 [Family number], Machinist, American [birthplace]

EARNINGS

Of father	$540
Of mother	255
Of son, aged sixteen	255
Total	$1050

CONDITION

Family numbers 10—parents and eight children, five girls and three boys, aged from two to sixteen. Four of the children attend school. Father works only 30 weeks in the year, receives $3 per day for his services. They live in a comfortably furnished house, of 7 rooms, have a piano, take an interest in society and domestic affairs, are intelligent, but do not dress very well. Their expenditures are equal to, but do not exceed their income. Father belongs to trades union, and is interested and benefited by and in it.

FOOD

Breakfast—Bread, meat and coffee.
Dinner—Bread, meat, vegetables and tea.
Supper—Bread, meat, vegetables and coffee.

COST OF LIVING

Rent	$300
Fuel	50
Meat	100
Groceries	200
Clothing	160
Boots and shoes	50
Dry goods	25
Books, papers, etc.	15
Trades union	10
Sickness [insurance]	50
Sundries	90
Total	$1050

No. 112 [Family number], Coal Miner, American [birthplace]

EARNINGS

Of father	$250

CONDITION

Family numbers 7—husband, wife, and five children, three girls and two boys, aged from three to nineteen years. Three of them go to the public school. Family live in 2 room tenement, in healthy locality, for which they pay $6 per month rent. The house is scantily furnished, without carpets, but is kept neat and clean. They are compelled to live very economically, and every cent they earn is used to the best advantage. Father had only thirty weeks work during the past year. He belongs to trades union. The figures for cost of living are actual and there is no doubt the family lived on the amount specified.

FOOD

Breakfast—Bread, coffee and salt meat.
Dinner—Meat, bread, coffee and butter.
Supper—Sausage, bread and coffee.

COST OF LIVING

Rent	$72
Fuel	20
Meat	20
Groceries	60
Clothing	28
Boots and shoes	15
Dry goods	20
Trades union	3
Sickness [insurance]	10
Sundries	5
Total	$253

Source: 1884, Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, Third Biennial Report, 1884 (excerpted from Hollitz, Thinking Through the Past, *2nd ed., Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.)*

Document 4: Debs's Claim Is Puerile: Violence the Strikers' Main Reliance to Insure Success

President Debs of the American Railway Union, President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, and other labor leaders who are responsible for strikes, have repeatedly affirmed that during the present [Pullman] strike and in strikes in the past[,] all violent acts were done by men [who were] not strikers.... When several persons were shot by the United States troops, he claimed none of them was a member of the American Railway Union and instanced this fact to prove that the strikers were not the ones who were committing overt acts [of violence] ... and are not accountable for the bloodshed, arson, destruction of property in other ways, hindrance to business, and other losses which the [state] always suffers when a big strike is in progress.

That the contrary is true is proved beyond cavil [frivolous objection] by reference to the history of every big strike ever ordered in this country. In a railway strike success can only be achieved by the forcible detention of trains ..., and the forcible detention of trains means rioting, and perhaps bloodshed.

....

It is because Debs and his ilk cannot, and know they cannot, achieve their communistic ends by the ballot or in any other lawful way that they resort to the use of hurled rocks, blows with clubs, shots fired from ambush, and all the other base acts of a relentless and bloodthirsty guerilla warfare.

Source: New York Times, *11 July 1894 (excerpted from the* Times *through Proquest, an electronic database)*

Steps in organizing and structuring the DBQ essay:

Step 1: Brainstorm ideas that relate to the question.
Step 2: Consider a structure for your response.
Step 3: Analyze each document. What is the meaning of the document? What or who is the source—the Supreme Court, a presidential candidate, a labor leader, a capitalist? The source provides important clues to the position being put forth in the document. As you analyze the meaning or significance of the document, jot down margin notes—generalizations that relate to the document. For example:

- **Margin note for Document 1** Address to the NLU (National Labor Union) in support of the eight-hour day.
- **Margin note for Document 2** Extract from the Knights of Labor constitution regarding higher wages, improved working conditions, and a shortened workday.
- **Margin note for Document 3** Bureau of Labor Statistics cost-of-living figures for union members equals the amount paid in salary for the machinist, slightly less for the coal miner.
- **Margin note for Document 4** Criticism of claim by Eugene Debs, president of the American Railway Union, that acts of violence were not perpetrated by union members and that Debs's union was interfering with the railroads. Suggestion that Debs is communistic.

When you begin to map out your essay, remember that the DBQ calls for a synthesis of the document information and your own knowledge of the topic. With that in mind, start with your own knowledge that the period 1865–1877 was characterized by tensions between labor and the business owners, or capitalists. You will need to point out the conditions—low pay and dangerous work environments—faced by workers. Documents 1, 2, and 3 provide the grist for this point; you might note that the sources for Documents 1 and 2 were partisan, while the source for Document 3 was nonpartisan. To assess the level of success for workers in achieving their objectives, you will need to address factors—in this case, obstacles—such as the role played by government in assisting the capitalist class to put down strikes (for example, the railroad strike of 1877); the influx of millions of immigrants, which drove down wages; and the methods used by businesses and government to undermine union efforts. As you discuss these features, you should refer to the documents that support your own analysis. For example, the degree of success for the American workers in general and unions specifically was in part determined by the attitudes expressed in Document 4, which portrays unions as violent. This turned public opinion against labor unions, therefore limiting their success.

AP® Tip

Do not wait until you've read the documents to develop your own personal knowledge. Even before reading the documents, take a few minutes to brainstorm information that you can recall about the topic. If time permits, organize this information so that you can construct the essay while incorporating the documents into the essay. When the document information is similar to what you have brainstormed, present that knowledge as it is expressed in the documents. Possibly the document material can be used to help you analyze other issues.

Structure of a Free-Response Essay

In writing a free-response essay, whether a DBQ or a general long essay question, you need the following:

- A well-developed thesis that sums up your perspective
- An effective analysis and appropriate use of information
- A lucidly cogent essay that is well structured and lucidly written

Following is one model for organizing your thoughts in preparation for writing the long essay and DBQ essays:

Thesis (opinion)
Supporting Arguments (major reasons, to be developed in the body paragraphs, that defend or support your thesis)
Structured Body Paragraphs

- *Topic Sentence*
  - Supports the thesis
  - Introduces the topic of the paragraph
- *Historical and Factual Information*
  - Facts
  - Details
  - Statistics
  - Quotes
- *Analysis*
  - Explains the separate parts of your arguments
  - Explains the significance of the information you present as it relates to the thesis

Framing the Debate To demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of the issue or question, you need to show that you are aware of both sides of the argument or perspective. This frames the debate for the reader. Thus in the introduction, you want to present the "other" view—the one you are *not* supporting. Make certain, however, that you do not develop the other perspective so fully that the reader is unclear about your thesis. Your objective is to convince the reader that you have a strong thesis and that it is well developed with historical information and analysis.

Outlining For each essay in Section II, the AP® examination has built in time for you to develop an outline. Time spent on your outlines is important for a number of reasons:

- It prevents you from writing an essay that is unorganized because you begin writing whatever comes into your head at the moment.
- It helps you determine your perspective on the issue. If after completing an outline you realize that your information tends to support one view over the other, then this is the perspective you should develop.
- It provides you with a brief brainstorming opportunity before writing the essay.

Once you have outlined your essay, it is time to put pen to paper. Remember that examination readers are looking for a clear thesis backed up with specifics. Concentrate on setting out accurate information in straightforward, concise prose. You cannot mask vague information with elegant prose.

A Long Essay Question and Three Sample Essays

Having established the ingredients of a free-response answer, let us now look at three essays—one excellent, one good, and one poor. Comments following each essay explain ways in which each essay succeeded or failed. All three essays respond to the following long essay question that focuses on the skill of Historical Argumentation:

> *Question:* Analyze the extent to which compromise was no longer possible between the North and South by the 1850s.

Sample Essay 1

By the time Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860, the time for compromise between the North and South had passed. Lincoln's election was the spark that ignited secession. Throughout the antebellum period political leaders had attempted to preserve the Union through compromise and by maintaining the political balance in the Senate. As early as the Constitutional Convention there were indications that the conflicting economies and cultures of the regions would ultimately have to be resolved, either through ongoing political compromise or through war. As late as 1858, just two years before secession, Lincoln had said "a house divided against itself cannot stand." The outbreak of the Civil War was the tragic resolution to the sectional differences and the inability to maintain two different economic, political, and cultural systems under one government.

Territorial expansion played a significant role in straining sectional relations because it involved the debate over the expansion or containment of slavery. In 1820 Congress seemed to have resolved this problem when it passed the Missouri Compromise, which prevented the expansion of slavery north of the 36° 30′ line. For a time, Congress was able to balance representation in the Senate by admitting both a slave state and a free state into the Union. For example, Missouri, a slave state, was admitted at the same time as Maine, a free state.

Compromise could only address the symptoms of the problem; it could not resolve the basic economic, moral, and cultural differences, especially because the two regions had completely different economic systems dominated by opposing dominant social, economic, and political classes: the planter-slaveholder in the South and the industrial capitalist in the North. Economically, Northern manufacturers and the Northern economy required a protective tariff, internal improvements, and a national bank to facilitate commerce, whereas the South wanted low tariffs, state banks, and was opposed to internal improvements. The North's economy and culture rested on the wage-labor system, which was, of course, inconsistent with the South's slave economy and culture. Both sought to expand their systems for a variety of reasons: politically the North and South quarreled over the extension of slavery because the addition of a new slave state or free state meant greater political representation in Congress. This in turn meant that either region, if given the political advantage, could pass legislation that affected not only the future expansion of slavery, but other burning political issues as well, such as the tariff.

Furthermore, the North maintained that the Union had been established as a contract between the people of the United States. Southern political leaders responded that the Union was the result of a compact between the states, and that a state had the authority to nullify federal laws and even secede from the Union. These conflicting political theories made compromise even more difficult to achieve because the South claimed to have the authority to reject any federal law it deemed unconstitutional or a threat to states' rights.

Added to this was the role of Northern abolitionists and Southern defenders of slavery whose justifications for or against the peculiar institution added a moral element to the already significant differences. Thus by the time Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and the Supreme Court handed down the Dred Scott decision in 1857, the possibility of maintaining the Union became increasingly tenuous.

Politically, by the 1850s the two major political parties represented, for the most part, different sections: the Democrats articulated the South's objectives, whereas the Republicans represented an adversarial view. Up until the election of Lincoln, the presidency was occupied either by a Southerner or a Northerner who tended to favor the South's position. Lincoln, a Republican and an advocate of the containment of slavery, represented to the South that the executive branch would now become an obstacle to the South's political objectives, and that its political and economic influence would therefore wane over time. Thus, by the 1850s, conditions for secession were already present, and the time for compromise had, for all intents and purposes, passed.

Comment This essay effectively outlines the divisions that prevailed between the North and South in the antebellum period. Although it by no means completely addresses the issue, given the time constraint (35 minutes), it successfully indicates that while Lincoln's election was the event that finally shattered the Union, deep social, economic, and political divisions had already been festering for decades. The writer articulates the view that the Civil War was the result of irreconcilable differences that could no longer be resolved through compromise. Although listing the features of the *Dred Scott* case would certainly help, the writer successfully synthesizes selective historical content with effective analysis to support the thesis. (Excellent)

Sample Essay 2

Although there were many disputes, differences, and events that made compromise in the decades before the 1850s very difficult, political leaders such as Clay and Calhoun were able to work out solutions that politically resolved the differences between North and South and therefore prevented secession and war. Unfortunately the nation's political leaders were not up to the task in the 1850s. As early as the Constitutional Convention the Framers developed solutions to sectional problems such as the Three-fifths Compromise and the Assumption Bill. In the early nineteenth century, with tensions high over the attempt to expand or limit the spread of slavery, congressional leaders were able to work out the Missouri Compromise, which defined where slavery could and could not expand. In 1850 the United States could have experienced civil war had not political leaders worked out the Compromise of 1850, which strengthened the Fugitive Slave Act in the South's favor but allowed California to enter as a free state. True, the Dred Scott decision effectively eliminated the Missouri Compromise, but political leaders such as Senator Stephen Douglas could not create compromises that would reduce tensions. Instead, they offered the controversial Kansas-Nebraska Act.

The idea of popular sovereignty made compromise almost impossible because Congress could no longer establish areas where slavery could expand and where it could not. Besides, the Kansas-Nebraska Act further enforced the Fugitive Slave Act, which angered Northerners immensely. The only thing holding the Union together at this point was the hope on the part of the

South that it could in the future continue to expand slavery. Lincoln, who was opposed to the expansion of slavery, concerned the South so much that no one in 1860 could find any way to compromise. With Lincoln's election the South seceded. But it didn't have to come to that. The nation's political leaders had failed to do what their predecessors in Congress had been able to achieve: effective compromises.

Comment This essay has a clear thesis: the nation's political leaders in the 1850s were responsible for failing to reduce or resolve the sectional tensions through effective compromises that earlier political leaders had accomplished. The writer cites several important political compromises. The scope of this essay could be broader, however, in that the author does not incorporate the role of territorial expansion into the discussion. Further, the discussion is limited in that no clear differences between the sections are established. Thus the essay focuses only on the controversy over the expansion of slavery and not on its economic and political consequences for the sections. It also depicts the Compromise of 1850 as a workable solution that had no subsequent repercussions. In fact the North was outraged by the Fugitive Slave component of the act. There is also a factual error: the Kansas-Nebraska Act did not strengthen the Fugitive Slave Act. An explanation of popular sovereignty would also add to the quality of this essay. Nevertheless, the writer exhibits a good understanding of the topic and uses information that sustains the thesis throughout the essay. (Good)

Sample Essay 3

Compromise in the 1850s was impossible because the North and South no longer wanted to negotiate. They believed that only through war would their differences be settled. The Missouri Compromise was more effective than the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It prevented war, whereas the Kansas-Nebraska Act made war more possible. Popular sovereignty was not an effective solution either. Now slavery could spread anywhere and the North would be opposed to this. Lincoln was opposed to the spread of slavery, but he was not willing to break up the Union for it. Therefore a better solution to the problem could not be found. If Lincoln opposed the spread of slavery, what other option did the South have but to leave the Union? Also, the North and South viewed slavery differently. The North opposed it as inhumane, but the South claimed it was an institution that benefited both Southern whites and slaves. Had the Framers at the Constitutional Convention addressed the issue of slavery, future generations would not have to find solutions and compromises to this problem. But even if Congress did work out compromises, such as the Missouri Compromise, no one could determine what the Supreme Court would do, such as the Dred Scott case. Lincoln's election was not the cause of the war. True, he was a Northerner, but so were other presidents. Put simply, neither the North nor the South favored compromise by the 1850s because they could not resolve their political differences.

Comment This essay is weak in a number of areas. Although it has a thesis, it is rudimentary; the thesis is not developed in the essay effectively. The writer strings together generalizations that have little connection to one another. Important issues are not explained. For instance, the writer contends that the Missouri Compromise was more effective than the Kansas-Nebraska Act but does not explain how or why the former prevented war. This essay lacks focus, analysis, and sufficient historical information to defend the thesis. (Poor)

A Historiographical Approach

One misconception about historical study is that it is merely a string of facts, meaningless dates, and the names of often long-dead individuals, with little relevance to our lives and the times. Nothing could be further from the truth. Historians study the nature of change. To be sure, facts are an integral component of historical study and discourse, but equally important is the meaning we give to historical information. One interesting approach to the study of history is historiography—the interpretation of information. There are two dominant schools of historiography. One historiographical perspective argues that change is the result of consensus among groups, classes, ethnicities, races, and genders that change is needed; strains, divisions, and class interests exist, but they are not fundamental and have not interfered with the process of consensual change. Those who subscribe to this view are called consensus or traditional historians. Other historians, referred to as revisionist or conflict historians, view conflict among groups, classes, ethnicities, races, and genders as fundamental to change, its wellspring.

As you become immersed in the study of U.S. history at the AP® level, filtering the information you learn through the lens of historiographical analysis can make for a richer experience and provide you with the analytical tools to interpret the nature of change. Analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating the forces that shaped this nation are important aspects of any student's intellectual growth, and they are essential tools for achieving a 5 on the AP® United States History examination when you take it in May.

Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy,
Of value is thy freight, 'tis not the Present only,
The Past is also stored in thee,
Thou holdest not the
venture of thyself alone, not of
the Western continent alone,
Earth's résumé entire floats on thy keel, O ship, is
steadied by thy spars,
With thee Time voyages in trust, the antecedent
nations sink or swim with thee,
With all their ancient struggles, martyrs, heroes, epics,
wars, thou bear'st the other continents,
Theirs, theirs as much as thine, the destination-port
triumphant....

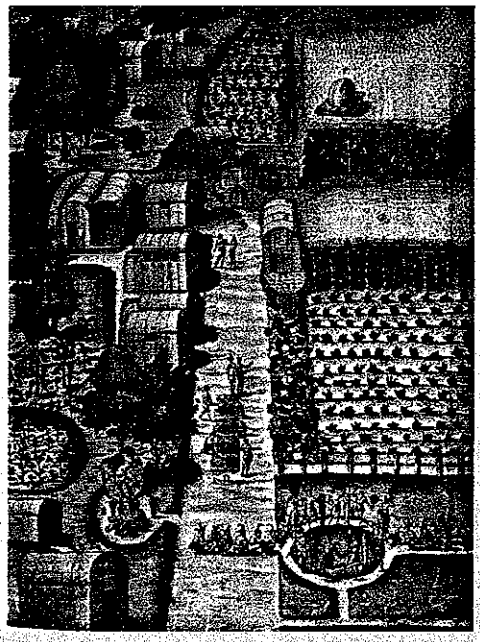
Walt Whitman
"Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood," 1872

Part One

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.



The New York Public Library/Art Resource, NY

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.

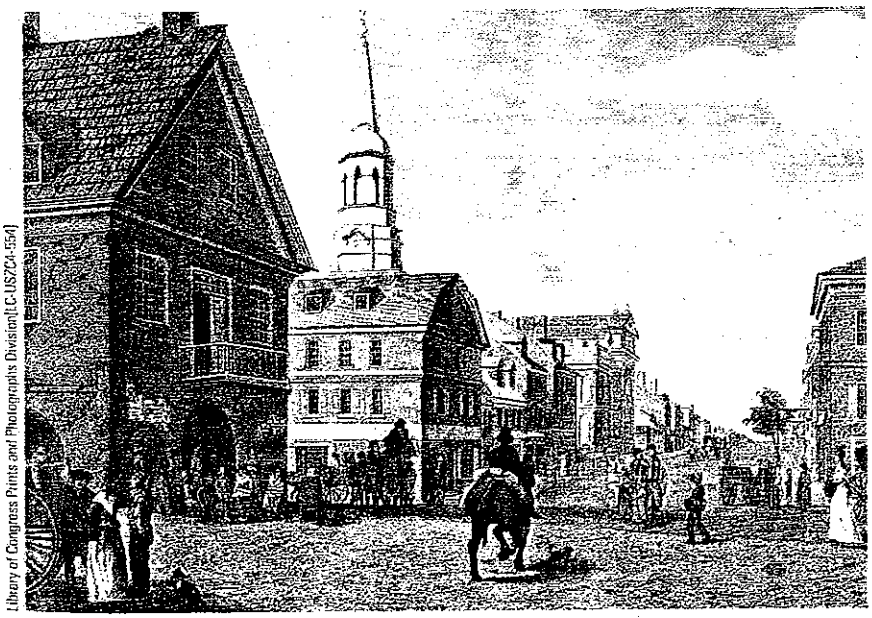
But if the settlement experience gave people a common stock of values, both good and bad, it also divided them. The thirteen colonies were quite different from one another. Puritans carved tight, pious, and relatively democratic communities of small family farms out of rocky-soiled New England. Theirs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

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.



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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.

Focus on AP® Success

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® 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)

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

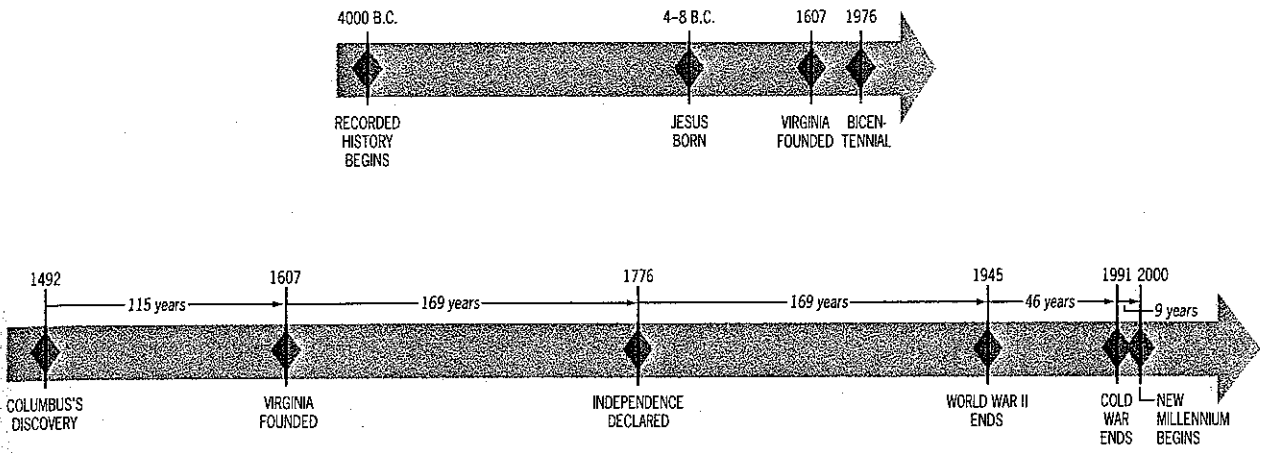


FIGURE 1.1 The Arc of Time

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.

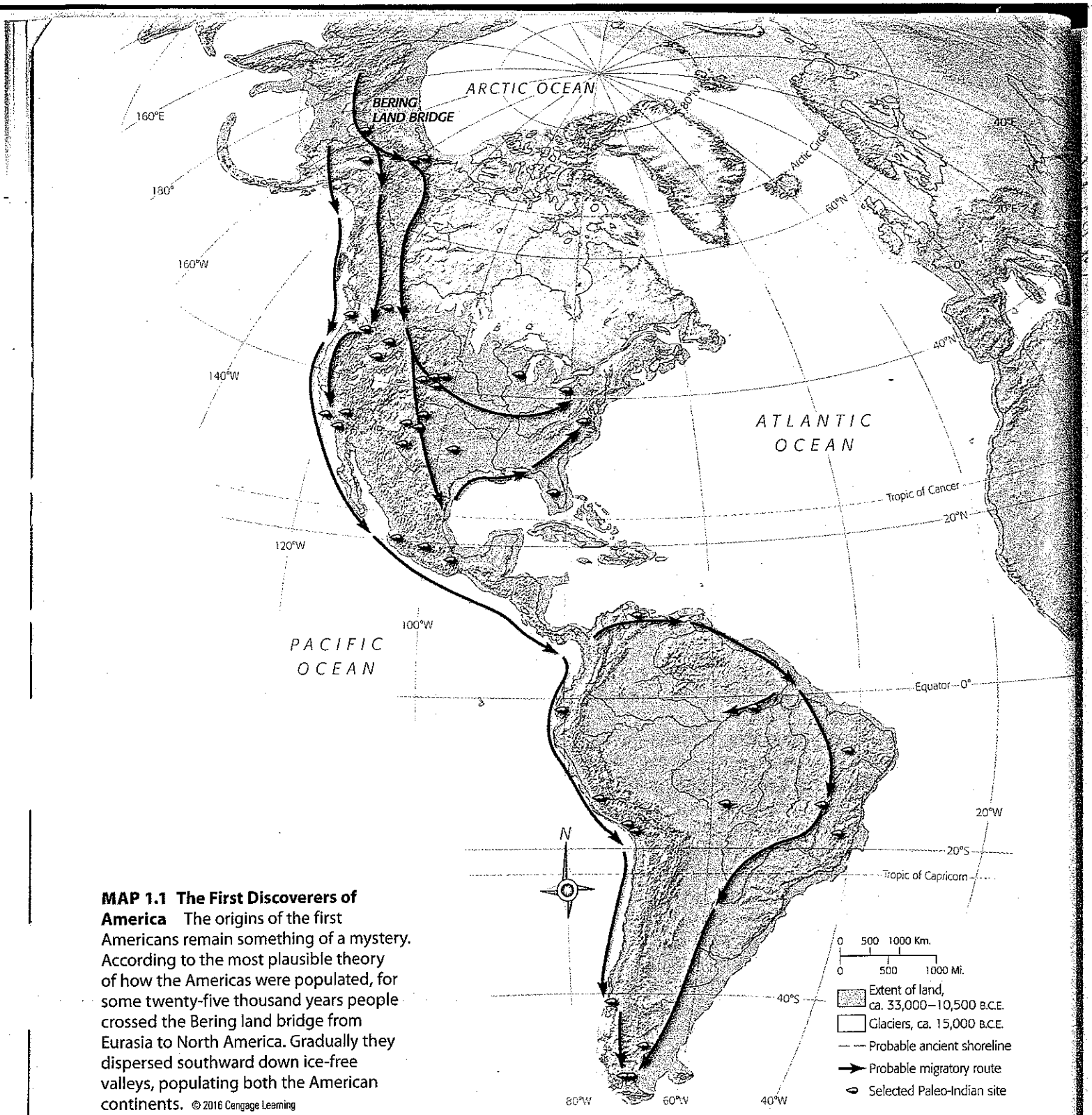
When the glaciers finally retreated about ten thousand years ago, they left the North American landscape transformed and much as we know it today. The weight of the gargantuan ice mantle had depressed the level of the Canadian Shield. The grinding and flushing action of the moving and melting ice had 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



MAP 1.1 The First Discoverers of America The origins of the first Americans remain something of a mystery. According to the most plausible theory of how the Americas were populated, for some twenty-five thousand years people crossed the Bering land bridge from Eurasia to North America. Gradually they dispersed southward down ice-free valleys, populating both the American continents.

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 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

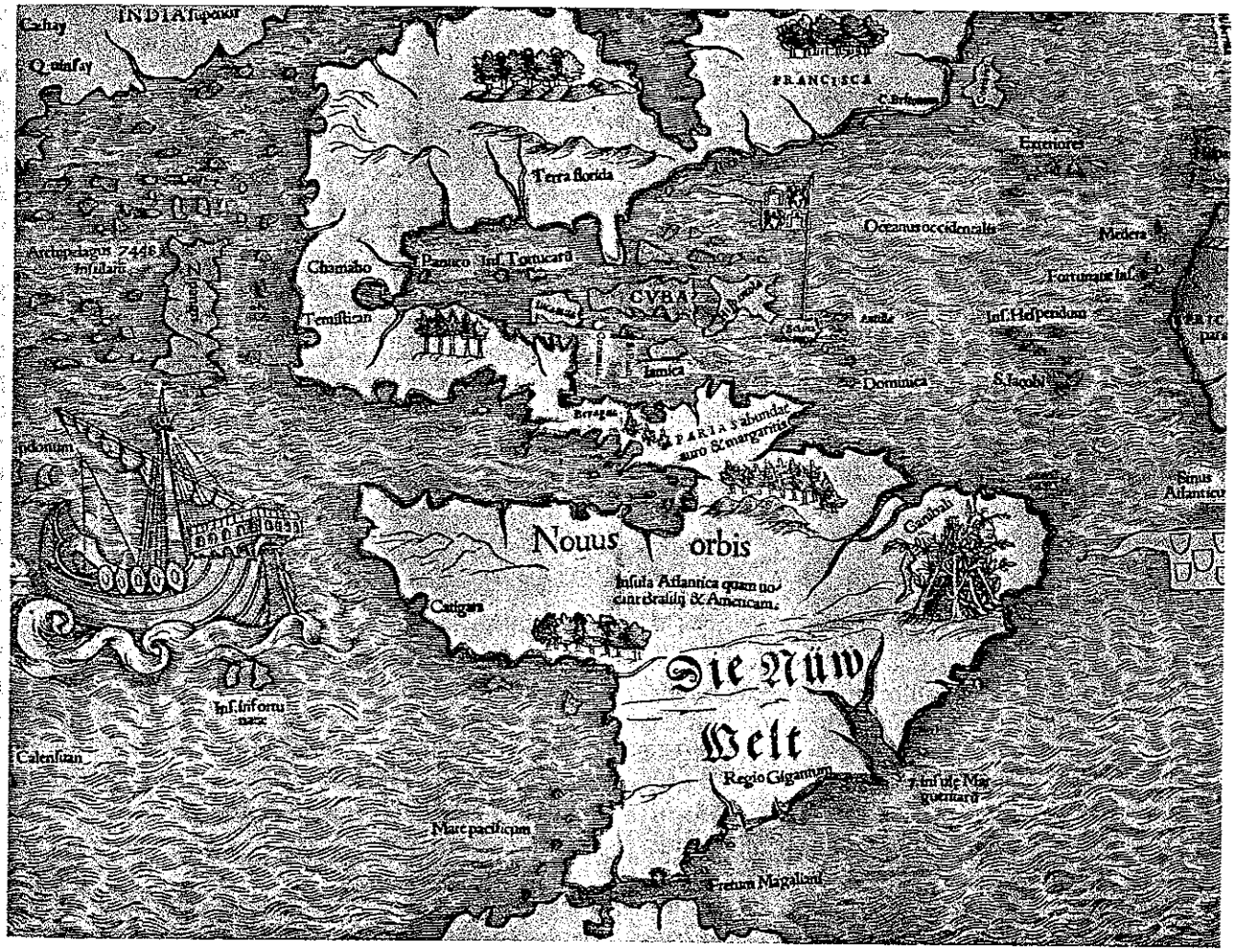
*Much controversy surrounds estimates of the pre-Columbian Native American population. The figures here are from William M. Denevan, ed., *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492*, rev. ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

Examining the Evidence

Making Sense of the New World

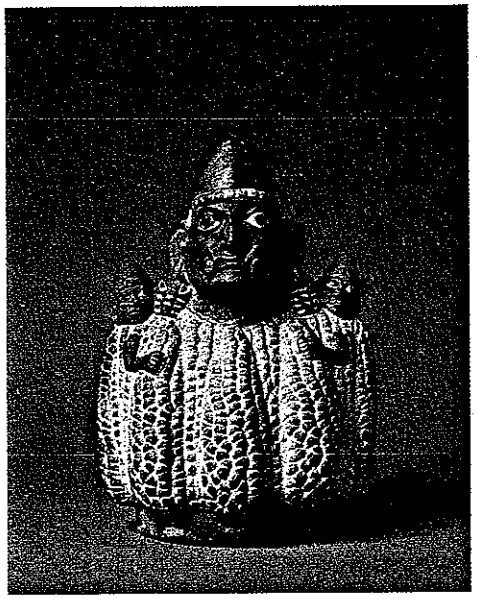
This map from 1546 by Sebastian Münster represents one of the earliest efforts to make geographic sense out of the New World (*Nouus Orbis* and *Die Nüw Welt* on the map). The very phrase *New World* suggests just how staggering a blow to the European imagination was the discovery of the Americas. Europeans 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?



National Archives of Canada

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.



bpk, Berlin/Art Resource, NY

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.

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 multistoried, 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 **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.

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.

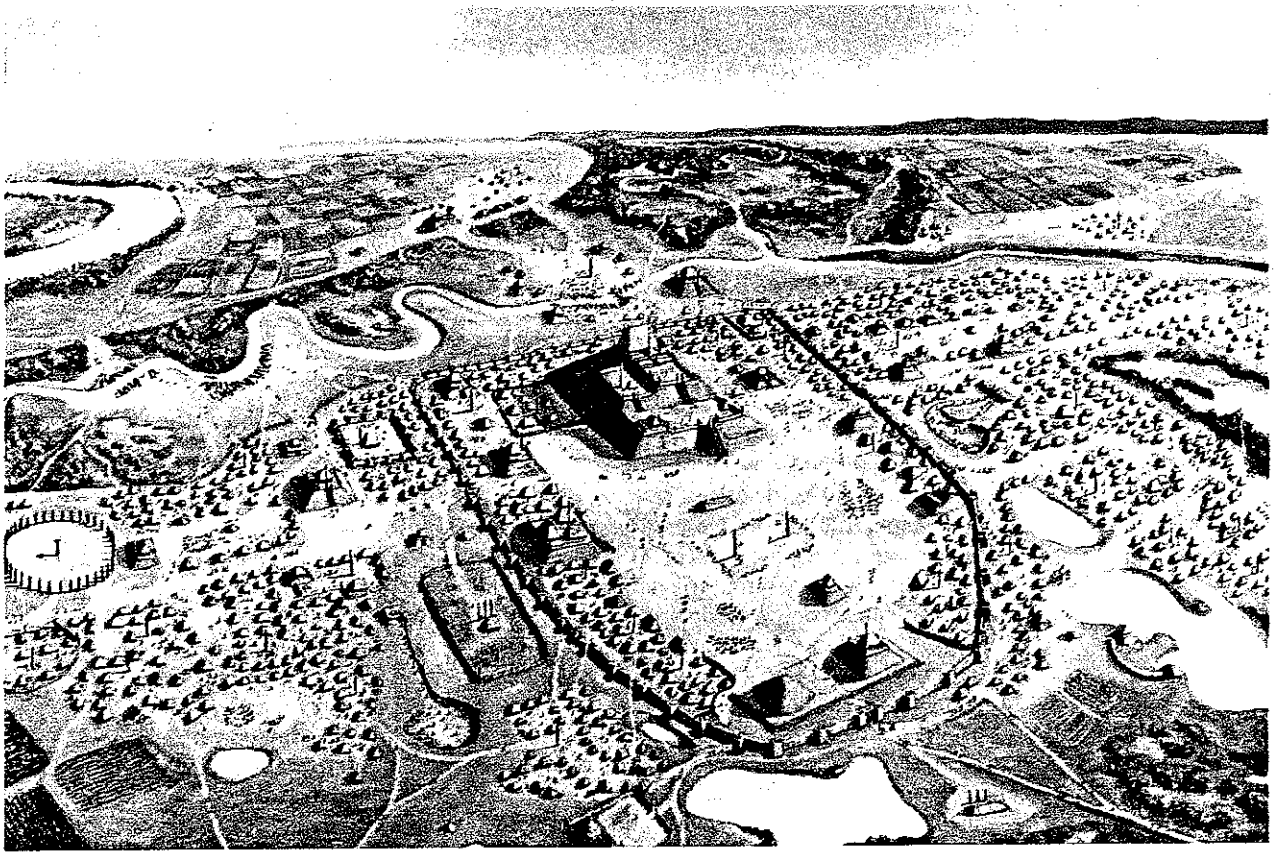
Unlike the Europeans, who would soon arrive with the presumption that humans had dominion over the earth and with the technologies to alter the very face of the land, the Native Americans had neither the desire nor the means to manipulate nature aggressively. They revered the physical world and endowed 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

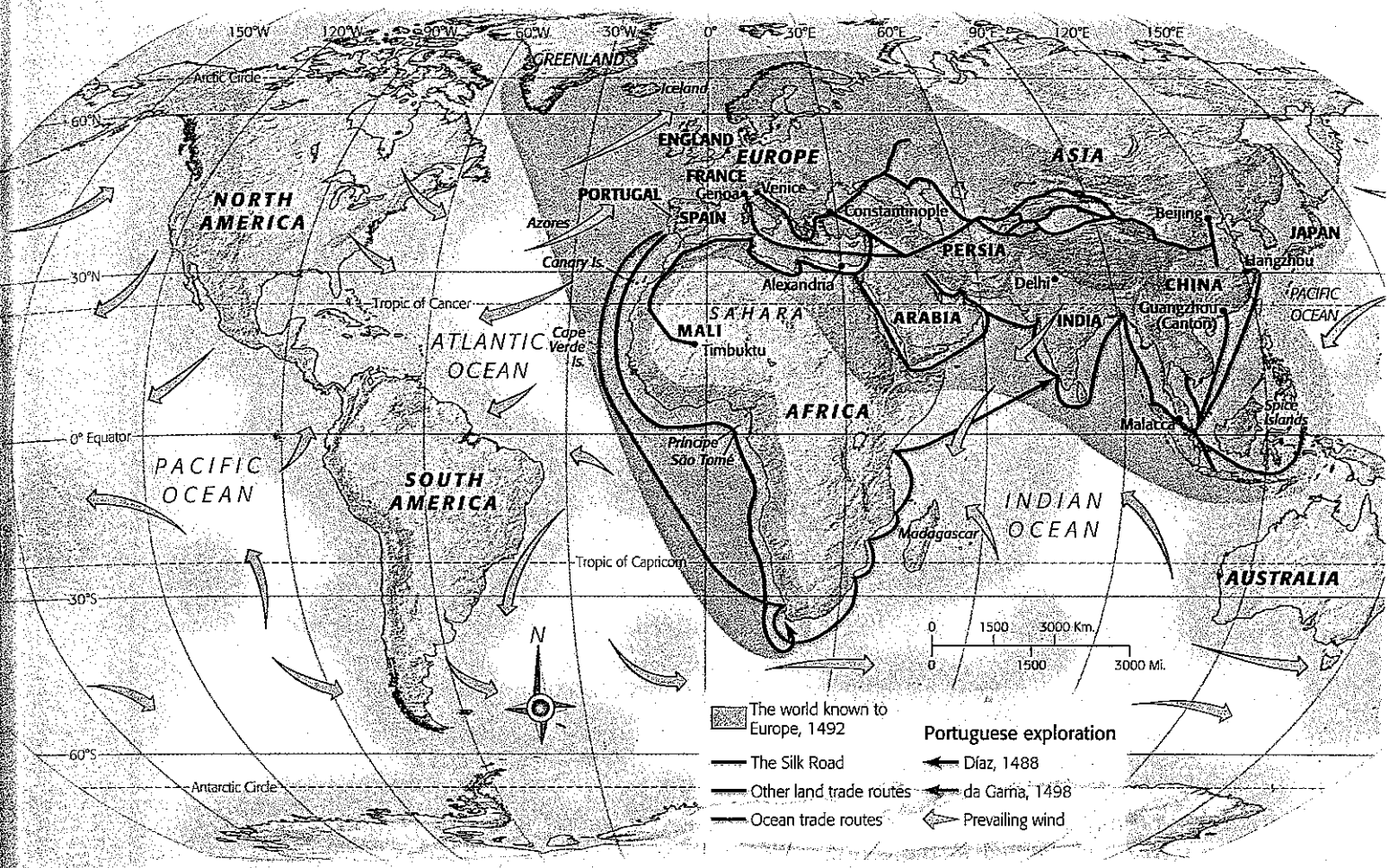
Europeans, for their part, were equally unaware of the existence of the Americas. Blond-bearded Norse seafarers from Scandinavia had chanced upon the northeastern shoulder of North America about 1000 C.E. They landed at a place near L'Anse aux Meadows in present-day Newfoundland that abounded in wild 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 R. Iseminger

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.

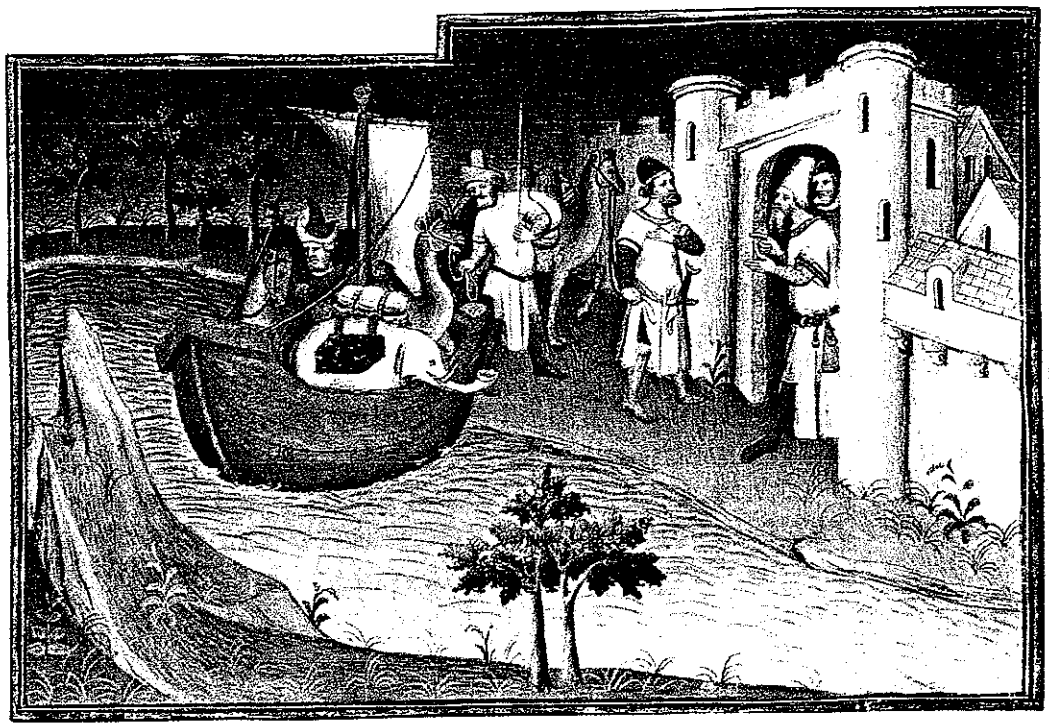
motion the chain of events that led to a drive toward Asia, the penetration of Africa, and the completely accidental discovery of the New World.

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 footloose Marco Polo, an Italian adventurer, returned to Europe in 1295 and began telling tales of his nearly



Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France/The Bridgeman Art Library

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.

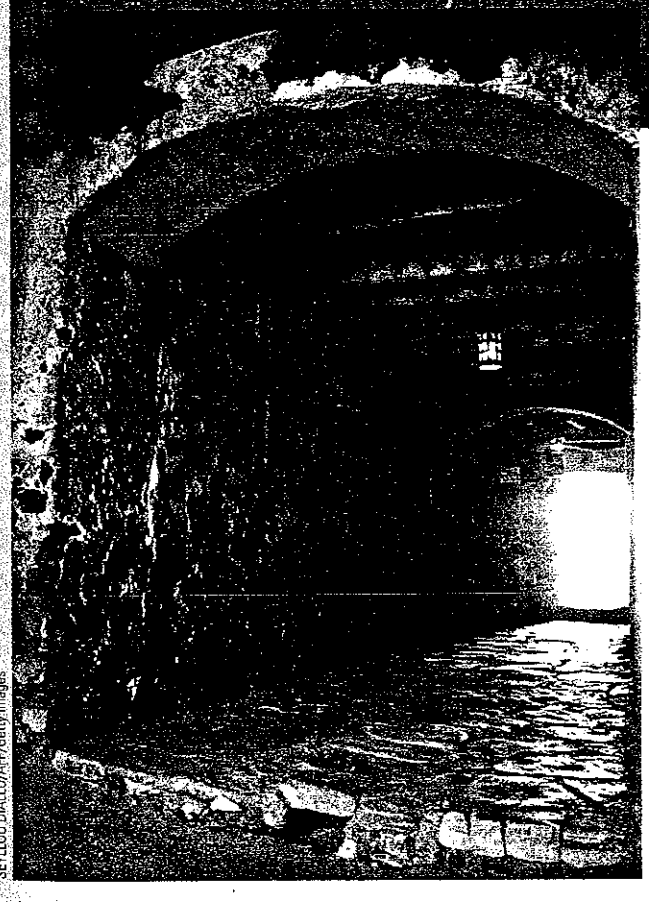
These accumulating pressures eventually brought a breakthrough for European expansion. Before the middle of the fifteenth century, European sailors refused to sail southward along the coast of West Africa because they could not beat their way home against the prevailing northerly winds and south-flowing 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 Principe. The enormous Portuguese appetite for slaves dwarfed the modest scale of the pre-European traffic. Slave trading

Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images



SEYLLOU DIALLO/AFP/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.

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 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. Glorying 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.

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'

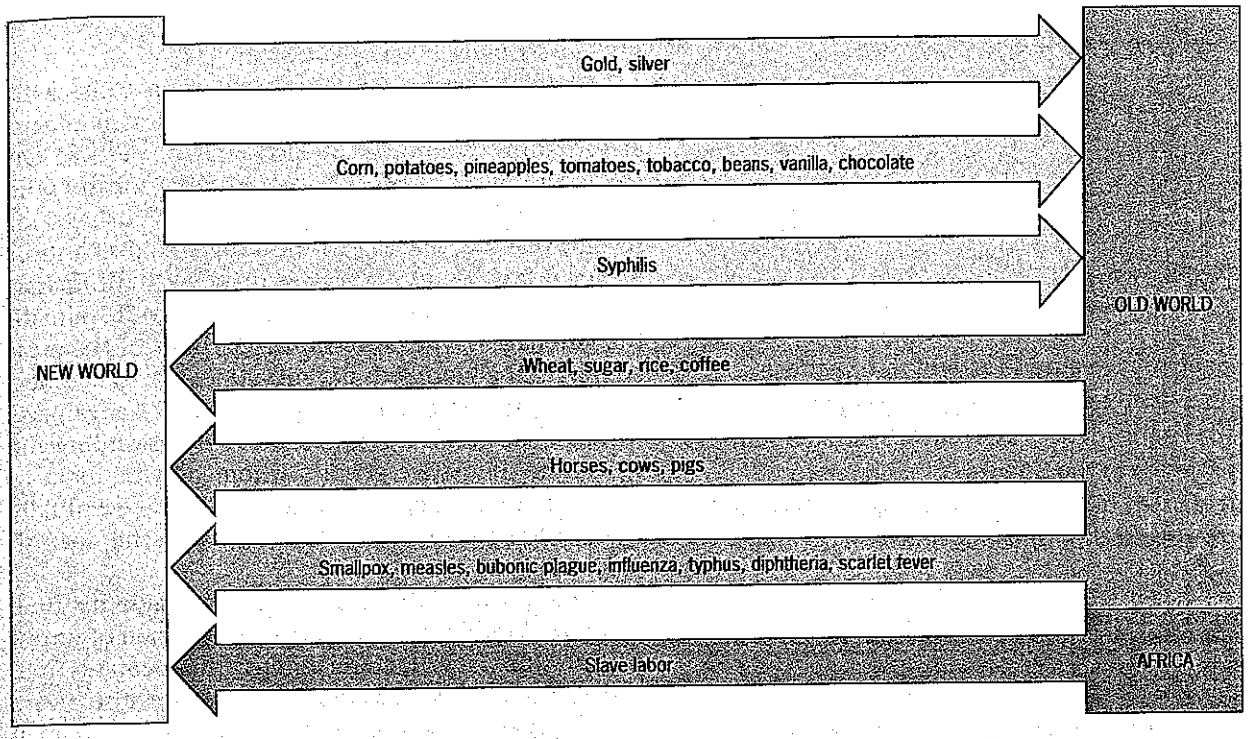


FIGURE 1.2 The Columbian Exchange
Columbus's discovery initiated the kind of explosion in international commerce that a later age would call "globalization."

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 Sepulveda (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."

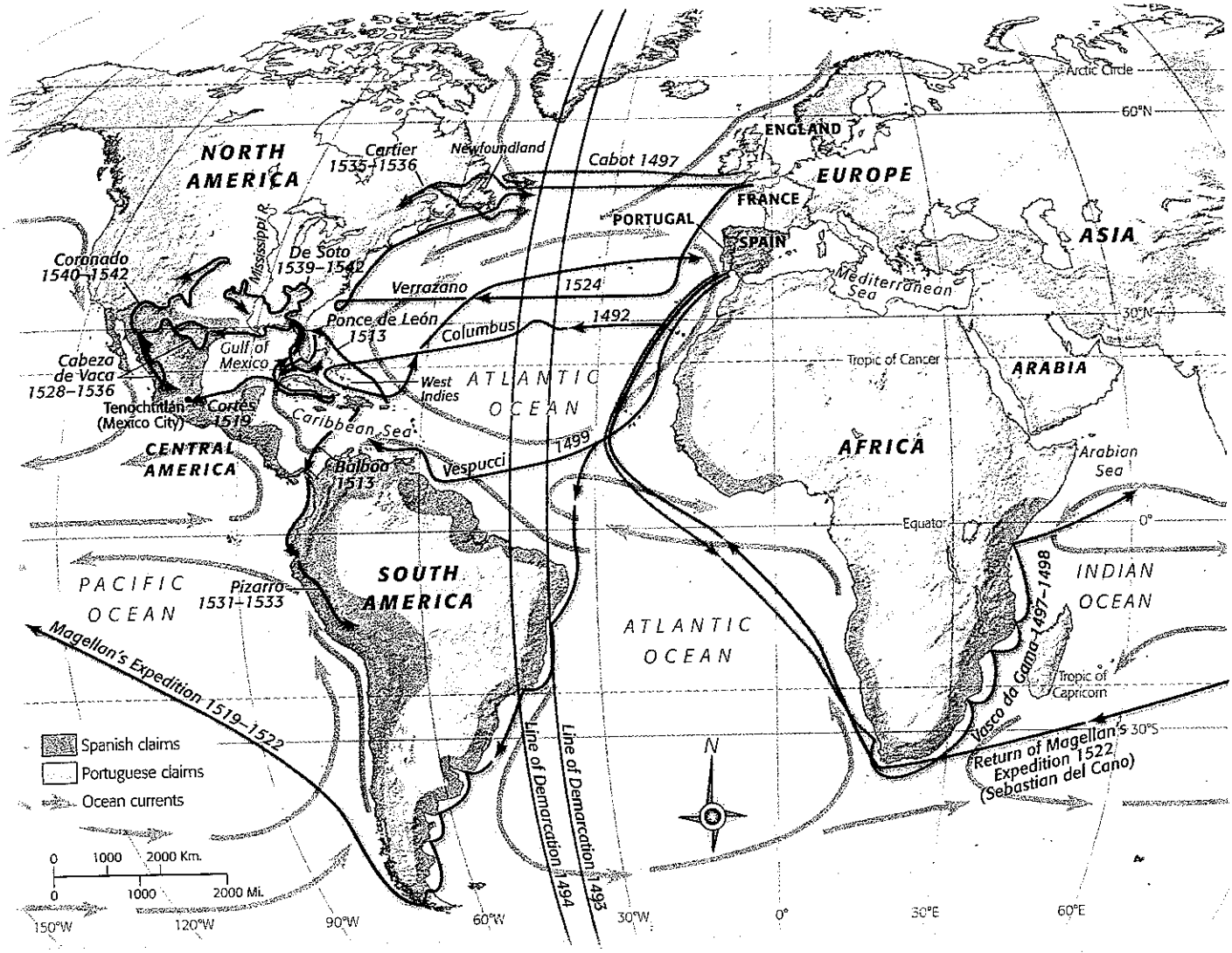
In 1519 Hernán Cortés set sail from Cuba with sixteen fresh horses and several hundred men aboard eleven ships, bound for Mexico and for destiny. On the island of Cozumel off the Yucatán Peninsula, he rescued a Spanish castaway who had been enslaved for several years by the Mayan-speaking Indians. A 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.

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.

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.

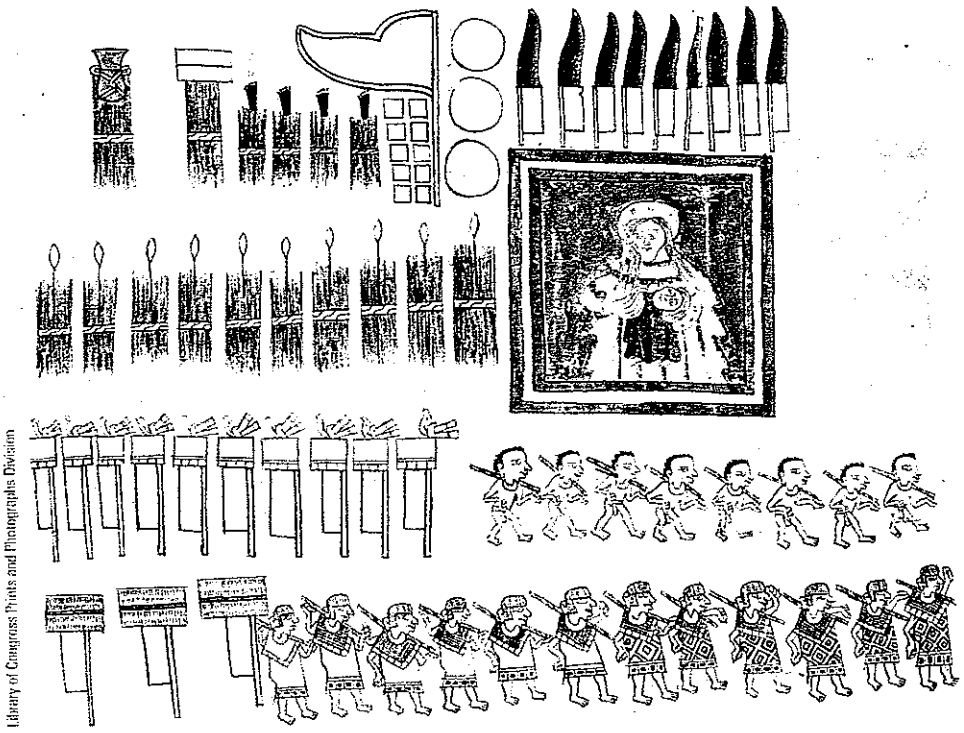
At first Spanish hopes for America focused on the Caribbean and on finding a sea route to Asia. Gradually, however, word filtered back of rich kingdoms on the mainland. Between 1519 and 1540, Spanish *conquistadores* swept across the Americas in two wide arcs of conquest—one driving from Cuba through 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.

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.

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

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



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

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.

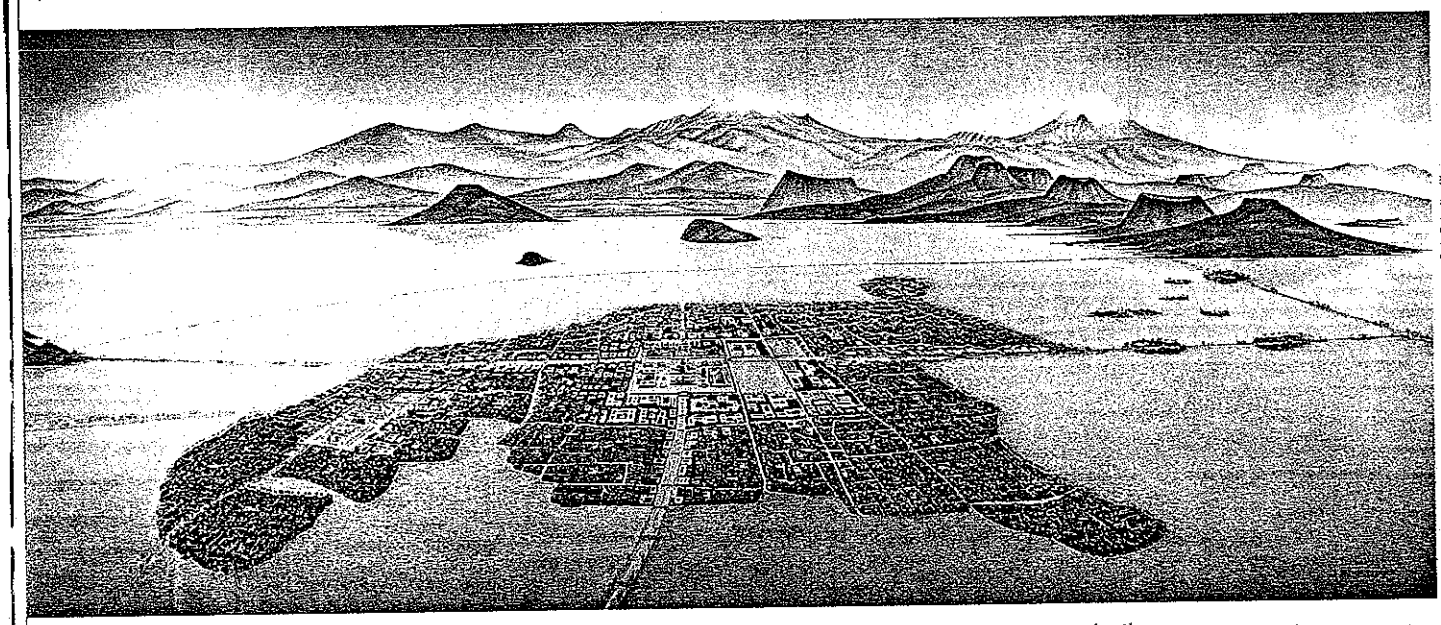
titles and favors by bringing new peoples under the Spanish flag. Others sought to ensure God's favor by spreading Christianity to the pagans. Some men hoped to escape dubious pasts, and others sought the kind of historical adventure experienced by heroes of classical antiquity. Nearly all shared a lust 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 *Dia 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.

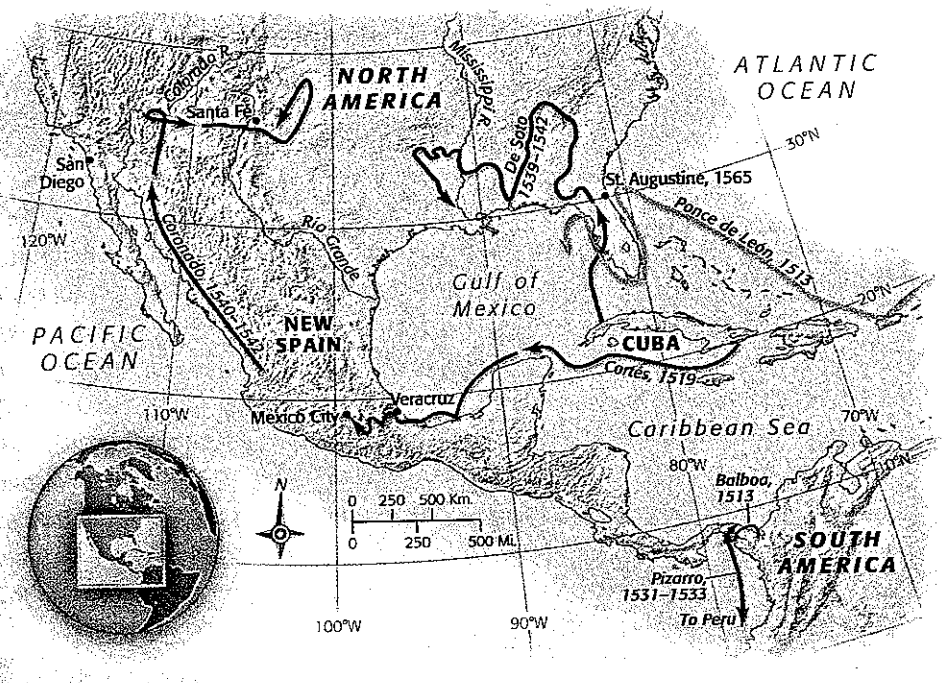
Exploration and Imperial Rivalry

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.

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.

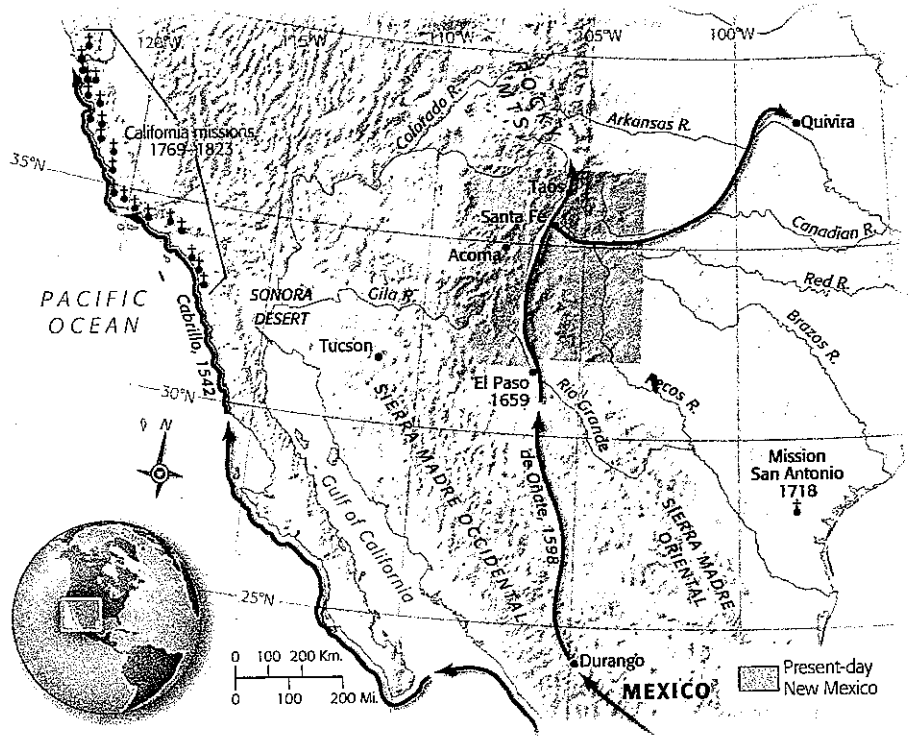
In Mexico the tales of Coronado's expedition of the 1540s to the upper Rio Grande and Colorado River regions continued to beckon the *conquistadores* northward. A dust-begrimed expeditionary column, with eighty-three rumbling wagons and hundreds of grumbling men, traversed the bare Sonora Desert from 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

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)
Incas (6)
Aztecs (6)
nation-states (8)
Cahokia (8)
three-sister farming (8)
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Columbian exchange (14)
Tordesillas, Treaty of (16)
encomienda (16)
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capitalism (18)
mestizos (19)
conquistadores (20)
Battle of Acoma (21)
Popé's Rebellion (21)
Black Legend (22)

PEOPLE TO KNOW

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

CHRONOLOGY

ca. 33,000–8000 B.C.E. First humans cross into Americas from Asia

ca. 5000 B.C.E. Corn is developed as a staple crop in highland Mexico

ca. 4000 B.C.E. First civilized societies develop in the Middle East

ca. 2000 B.C.E. Corn planting reaches present-day American Southwest

ca. 1000 C.E. Norse voyagers discover and briefly settle in northeastern North America
Corn cultivation reaches Midwest and southeastern Atlantic seaboard

ca. 1100 C.E. Height of Mississippian settlement at Cahokia

ca. 1100–1300 C.E. Christian crusades arouse European interest in the East

1295 Marco Polo returns to Europe

late 1400s Spain becomes united

1488 Dias rounds southern tip of Africa

1492 Columbus lands in the Bahamas

1494 Treaty of Tordesillas between Spain and Portugal

1498 Da Gama reaches India
Cabot explores northeastern coast of North America for England

1513 Balboa claims all lands touched by the Pacific Ocean for Spain

1513, 1521 Ponce de León explores Florida

1519–1521 Cortés conquers Mexico for Spain

1522 Magellan's vessel completes circumnavigation of the world

1524 Verrazano explores eastern seaboard of North America for France

1532 Pizarro crushes Incas

1534 Cartier journeys up the St. Lawrence River

1539–1542 De Soto explores the Southeast and discovers the Mississippi River

1540–1542 Coronado explores present-day Southwest

1542 Cabrillo explores California coast for Spain

1565 Spanish build fortress at St. Augustine

late 1500s Iroquois Confederacy founded, according to Iroquois legend

ca. 1598–1609 Spanish under Oñate conquer Pueblo peoples of Rio Grande valley

1609 Spanish found New Mexico

1680 Popé's Rebellion in New Mexico

1680s French expedition down Mississippi River under La Salle

1769 Serra founds first California mission, at San Diego

TO LEARN MORE

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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.