

Chapter 1: New World Beginnings (33,000 B.C. - A.D. 1769)

*225 Million Years Ago - Pangaea started to break apart.

*10 Million Years Ago - North America was shaped by nature - Canadian Shield

*2 Million Years Ago- Great Ice Age

*35,000 Years Ago - The oceans were glaciers and the sea level dropped, leaving an isthmus connecting Asia and North America. The Bering Isthmus was crossed by people going into North America.

*10,000 Years Ago - Ice started to retreat and melt, raising the sea levels and covering up the Bering Isthmus.

Peopling the Americas

Evidence suggests that early people may have come to the Americas in crude boats, or across the Bering Isthmus.

By the time Columbus arrived in America in 1492, over 54 million people may have been living in North & South America.

The Earliest Americans

Unlike in Mexico with the Aztecs, dense populations did not exist in North America. This may have made it easier for the Europeans to colonize the continent.

Europeans Enter Africa

People of Europe were able to reach sub-Saharan Africa around 1450 when the Portuguese invented the caravel, a ship that could sail into the wind. This ship allowed sailors to sail back up the western coast of Africa and back to Europe.

The Portuguese set up trading posts along the African beaches trading with slaves and gold, trading habits that were originally done by the Arabs and Africans.

The Portuguese shipped the slaves back to Spain and Portugal where they worked on the sugar plantations.

Columbus Comes upon a New World

Columbus was actually looking for a new trading route with the Indies when he stumbled upon the Americas.

When Worlds Collide

Possibly 3/5 of the crops cultivated around the world today originated in the Americas.

The Columbian Exchange refers to the increase of global commerce (globalization).

Within 50 years of the Spanish arrival in Hispaniola, the Taino natives decreased from 1 million people to 200 people due to diseases brought by the Spanish.

In centuries following Columbus's landing in the Americas, as much as 90% of the Indians had died due to the diseases.

The Spanish Conquistadores

In the 1500's, Spain became the dominant exploring and colonizing power. The Treaty of Tordesillas divided the Americas between the Spanish and the Portuguese.

The Spanish conquerors came to the Americas in the service of God as well as in search of gold and glory.

Due to the gold and silver deposits found in the New World, the European economy was transformed.

The islands of the Caribbean Sea served as offshore bases for the staging of the Spanish invasion of the mainland Americas.

By the 1530s in Mexico and the 1550s in Peru, colorless colonial administrators had replaced the conquistadores.

Some of the conquistadores wed Indian women and had children. These offspring were known as mestizos and formed a cultural and biological bridge between Latin America's European and Indian races.

The Conquest of Mexico

In about **1519**, Hernan Cortes set sail from Cuba with men and horses. Along the way, he picked up two translators - A Spanish prisoner of Mayan-speaking Indians, and an Indian slave named Malinche.

The Spaniards arrived at **Tenochtitlan**, the Aztec capital with the intention of stealing all of the gold and other riches; they were amazed by the beauty of the capitol.

On **June 30, 1520**, the Aztecs attacked the Spanish because of the Spaniards' lust for riches. The Spanish countered, though, and took over the capital and the rest of the Aztec empire on **August 13, 1521**.

Due to the rule of the Spanish, the Indian population in Mexico went from 20 million to 2 million in less than a century.

The Spread of Spanish America

In **1565**, the Spanish built a fortress at St. Augustine, Florida to protect the sea-lanes to the Caribbean.

In **1680**, after the Spanish captured an area known today as New Mexico in **1609**, the natives launched a rebellion known as **Pope's Rebellion**. The natives burned down churches and killed priests. They rebuilt a **kiva**, or ceremonial religious chamber, on the ruins of the Spanish plaza at Santa Fe.

The misdeeds of the Spanish in the New World led to the birth of the "**Black Legend**." This false concept stated that the conquerors just tortured and killed the Indians, stole their gold, infected them with smallpox, and left little but misery behind.