

Period #1: Age of Exploration 1491-1607

I. New World Beginnings 1491-1769

A. 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
B. 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.
C. 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.
D. Columbus Comes Upon a New World	Columbus was actually looking for a new trading route with the Indies when he stumbled upon the Americas. 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.
E. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru	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 . Encomienda : The process by which the Spanish government allowed Indians to be enslaved by colonists as long as the colonists promised to Christianize them. 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. The Spanish arrived in Tenochtitlan , the Aztec capital, with the intention of stealing all of the gold and other riches. 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 influx of precious metal from South America helped grow the European economy. 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.

F. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry

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.

G. Chronology

1295	Marco Polo returns to Europe.
Late 1400s	Spain becomes united.
1488	Diaz 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	Ponce de Leon explores Florida.
1519-1521	Cortes 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	Cabrillo 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.
1598-1609	Spanish under Onate conquer pueblo peoples of Rio Grande valley.
1609	Spanish found New Mexico.
1680s	French exploration down Mississippi River under La Salle.
1769	Serra founds first California mission, at San Diego.

Summary: