

European Interests in the Americas

- 3 G's
- Gold Glory and God
- Seek a new route to Asia
- New interest sparked when Spanish came in contact with the Incas and the Aztecs
- Why? Gold and Silver
- Use the Natives as slave

Interactions of Cultures

- Contact with Europeans not good for natives
- Why? Europeans have superior weapons
- Natives decimated by old world Diseases
 - Populations declined, dissipated or forced to submit to new rulers and religion

Why did Europeans Want to explore?

- New Route to Asia
- Skip the middle man
- Finally, possible? New Inventions,
 - Astrolabe- improved by Muslims
 - Caravel developed by the Portuguese
 - Lateen Sail – Allows to sail against the wind
- Convert others to Christianity
- Wealth, especially Gold and Silver

Disease and Demographic Catastrophe

- Eastern and Western Hemispheres almost completely Isolated from Each other
- Native Americans or indigenous peoples had no exposure to germs and disease the Europeans brought. EX: Smallpox, measles and Influenzas
 - Indigenous population fell by more than 50% through disease alone in less than 100 years.
 - Some areas lost as much as 90%
 - This is one the greatest demographic disasters in history
- Gunpowder, metal weapons and horses were instrumental in bring Natives under control - Disease was responsible for the majority of deaths
- Conquistador: a conqueror, especially one of the Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru in the 16th century. EX: Francisco Pizarro, Hernan Cortes, and Columbus

Columbian Exchange

- **Columbian Exchange::** also known as the **Columbian interchange**, named for Christopher Columbus, was the widespread transfer of plants, animals, disease, culture, human populations, technology, and ideas between the Americas, West Africa, and the Old World in the 15th and 16th centuries.
- New Crops and livestock in both directions
- Mesoamericans ate little meat until the exchange
- Brought to Mesoamerica by the Columbian exchange: Pigs horses and cows, wheat and grapes, vermin such as mosquitoes and rats
- Brought to Europe: maize, potatoes, tomatoes, beans, peppers and cacao
 - New food promoted new population growth in Europe
- Africa: Yams and manioc (Cassava: the root of a tropical tree)
- See chart on p. 304 AMSCO

ECONOMIC CHANGES

- Coercive Labor: **labor** or work that is gained through use of force or threats.
- The Encomienda system: Encomenderos (Landowners) Compelled indigenous people to work for food and shelter.- Harsh conditions

Silver

- Mexico and Peru
- Mercury is used to separate Mercury from its ore
- Spanish needed laborers
 - Transformed the mita system into Coerced labor system
- Spanish prospectors became wealthy
- Strengthened the Spanish economy
- Mercantilism in the Spanish colonies in the Americas: increased government control of the economy through higher tariffs
- A percentage of the export of Silver went to the Spanish crown
 - Build an impressive military and established trade routes

Trade across the Pacific

- China began using Silver as its main form of currency
- By the early 17th Century silver had become a dominant force in the global economic system

Sugar

- Spanish/Spanish America profited from Silver
- Portuguese Empire: Sugar
 - Sugarcane
 - As a result of disease, not enough labors
 - Portuguese
 - imported Slaves from Africa especially the Kongo Kingdom and the Swahili coast
 - Sugar trade in Brazil demanded the constant import of slaves
 - Slaves died from harsh working conditions, poor nutrition, lack of adequate shelter and tropical heat and the disease that came with the heat
 - As a result of the working conditions plantation owners lost between 5 and 10% of their slave each year.
 - Eventually Sugar surpassed silver as the main money maker for European Empires
 - Cash Crop: Grown for sale rather than sustenance. EX Sugar and Tabaco

POLITICAL CHANGES**The Fall of the Aztec Empire**

- 1519 Hernan Cortes took the Aztecs
- Aztecs offer Cortes gold – this just made them more determined
- 1521 – Cortes with the help the Aztecs conquered people conquered the Aztecs
- Cortes founded New Spain and build Mexico City on the ruins of Tenochtitlan
- Melted down Aztec treasure and sent back to Spain

Demise of the Incan Empire

- 1532, Francisco Pizarro attacked the Inca in Peru
 - Captured Atahualpa- Ransomed him for a room full of Gold.
 - Inca complied
 - 1533 Spanish kill Atahualpa anyway

Other Regions of the Americas

- Line of Demarcation: Any territory discovered on the east side of the **line** was to be controlled by Portugal, while any lands found on the west side of the **line** were to be ruled over by Spain.
- Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494: **agreement** between **Spain** and **Portugal** aimed at settling conflicts over lands newly discovered or explored by Christopher **Columbus** and other late 15th-century voyagers.

Colonial Administration

- Spain:
 - Appointed Viceroy: Local rules in colonies
 - Established Audiencias: Court system to keep Viceroy honest
 - Slow transportation and slow communication: Spain did not focus on affairs of New Spain
 - Creoles had political dominance in New
 - Wanted their independence from Spain

Cultural and Social Changes

- Land-based empire different from European Empires in the Americas
- Spanish and Portuguese eras
 - Based social structure
 - Many of the cultural traditions

Cultural Changes

- Cortes ordered the burning of book
 - Result: Very few original accounts
 - Most information comes from the POV Spanish and missionaries
 - Bias and lack of familiarity of the local language (Nahatl) many
 - On reliable source: 1545, Spanish priest, Bernardino de Sahagun
 - Book: Florentine Codex
 - Spanish and Portuguese transplanted their languages and religion
 - Spanish – Latin America
 - Portuguese – Brazil

Religion in Latin America

- Missionaries from Europe to New World:
 - Dominicans
 - Jesuits
 - Franciscans
- Religious Syncretism: exhibits blending of two or more **religious** belief systems into a new system, or the incorporation into a **religious** tradition of beliefs from unrelated traditions.
 - Catholic Saints days that coincided with days honored by the indigenous were especially celebrated
 - Virgin of Guadalupe: Cult developed
 - Vodun: Catholicism and animism combined (VooDoo)

Social Changes

- Top Peninsulares: People born on the Iberian Peninsular
- Creoles: people of European decent, born in Americas
- Mestizo: European and Indigenous
- Mulattoes: European and African
- Slaves: Bottom made up of Indigenous and Africans peoples
- Skin color became a signifier of power and status

French Colonies

- French, English, Dutch looked for Northwest passage
- French Explorer Jacques Cartier: Part of Canada for France
- Valuable Riches in Americas, no need to go to Asia
 - Furs and Natural resources
- 1608 established a trading post : Quebec
- LaSalle: Explored the Great lakes and followed the Mississippi Rive to the Gulf of Mexico
- French did not settle permanently like England and Spain
 - Result: New France had a much small population
 - Traded for furs: captured by the Natives

English Colonies

- John Cabot: Claimed land from Newfoundland south to Chesapeake Bay
- No real seas power to protect themselves from Spanish
- England defeated the Spanish
 - Declared themselves a major sea power
- 1607 Jamestown: First permanent English settlement

Early Challenges

- London Company: Joint-stock Company- owned Jamestown
- Many of the settlers die
- The London Company replaced settle by offering a free passage to America
- Tobacco: Cash Crop originally grown by American Indians
- Profitable for Colony
- 1620 growing tobacco for Europe
- Took land to create plantations
- Fought with Native Americas until 1640s

Servants and slaves

- Indentured Servants: Someone who contracted work for an employer without pay for a set number of years in exchange for passage to Americas
- 1619 First African Brought to Americas were indentured Servants
 - Later laws in Virginia changes Enslaving Africans
- Indentured servants remain much more common in the Northern States

The Dutch Experience

- Henry Hudson: Sailed up Hudson River Dutch claimed Hudson River Valley – New Amsterdam
- Used for node for Transatlantic trade
 - Fur from trappers, Tobacco from Colonists went to Netherlands
 - Manufactured goods to Americas

Environmental Impact

- Most changes resulted from the Columbian Exchange
- Agricultural lands used more intensively
- EX: Cut down trees and cleared land to plant year after year
 - Result: Deforestation and soil depletion
 - Europeans lived more densely
 - Result: Stain on water resource and increase of pollution