

## European Nations Settle North America

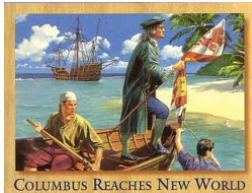


*Apocalypso*



## The Voyages of Columbus

Christopher Columbus and his men made a daring voyage from Spain on August 3, 1492 aboard the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María.

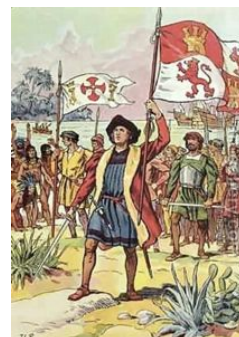


Land was sighted in the early hours of October 12, 1492 and Columbus and his crew were ashore by dawn.



Thinking he had reached the East Indies, Columbus called the Taino, the surprised inhabitants who greeted him, “los indios,” a name that was then mistakenly applied to all the native peoples of the Americas.

Columbus claimed the island for Spain. He named it San Salvador, or “Holy Savior.”



## Other Explorers Take to the Seas



In 1500, Pedro Álvares Cabral claimed modern-day Brazil for Portugal.



In 1501, Amerigo Vespucci returned from explorations of South America claiming that the land was part of a “new” world.” In 1507, the new continent was named “America” in his honor.



In the early 1500s, Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa crossed modern-day Panama to become the first European to reach the Pacific.

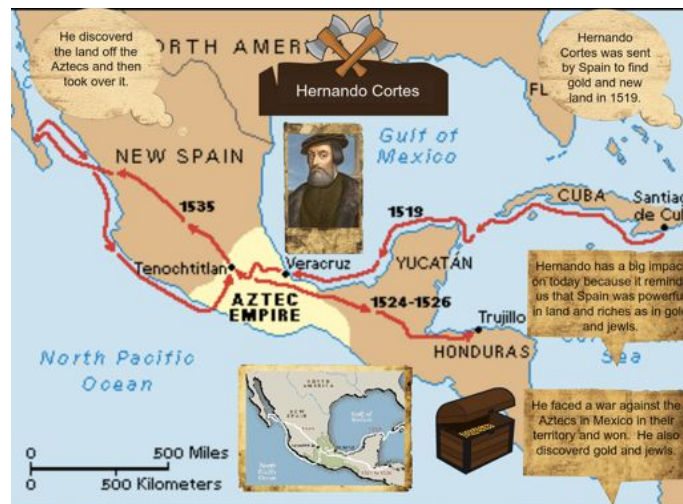
In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan convinced the king of Spain to fund a voyage around the southern end of South America and into the Pacific. The fleet sailed for months without seeing land and food supplies soon ran out.

Magellan and his crew eventually reached the Philippines but became involved in a local war and Magellan was killed. Only 18 of Magellan’s original crew and one ship arrived back in Spain in 1522, nearly three years after they had left.

They were the first persons to circumnavigate, or sail around, the world.

## Cortés Discovers the Aztecs

In 1519 Hernando Cortés claimed North American lands for Spain, becoming the first conquistador of the New World.



After marching for weeks through difficult mountain passes, Cortés and his force of roughly 600 men finally reached the Aztec Empire and their magnificent capital of Tenochtitlán. The Aztec emperor, Montezuma II, convinced that Cortés was a god, agreed to give the Spanish explorer a share of the empire’s existing gold supply.

## Cortés Conquers the Aztecs

Cortés, not satisfied, admitted that he and his comrades had a “disease of the heart that only gold can cure.”



In 1520, Cortés’s men killed many Aztecs while they were celebrating a religious festival. The Aztecs rebelled and drove out Cortés’s forces.

Despite being greatly outnumbered, the Spanish had the advantage of superior weaponry and the aid of a native woman translator named Malinche who helped Cortés recruit some natives to fight on his side.

The Aztecs died by the hundreds of thousands from European diseases that they had never been exposed to (no immunity).

Cortés and his men struck back, conquering the Aztecs in 1521.

## Pizarro Subdues the Inca



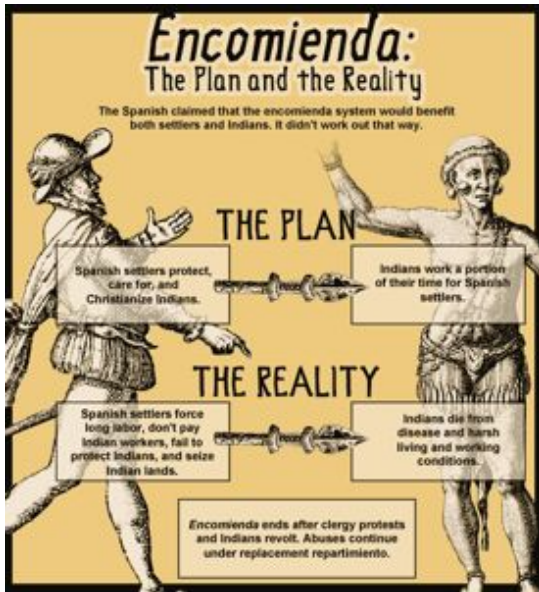
In 1532, another conquistador, Francisco Pizarro, marched a small force into South America. Pizarro and his army of about 200 met Atahualpa, the leader of the Incan Empire, and several thousand mostly unarmed men. The Spaniards waited in ambush, crushed the Incan force, and kidnapped Atahualpa.

Atahualpa paid a ransom of a room “filled once with gold and twice with silver” in exchange for his release. After receiving the ransom, the Spanish strangled the Incan king. Pizarro then marched on the Incan capital, Cuzco, and captured it without a struggle in 1533.

By the middle of the 16th century, Spain had created an American empire that included New Spain (Mexico and parts of Guatemala), as well as other lands in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

# Spain's Pattern of Conquest

The Spanish settlers in the Americas were mostly men known as *peninsulares* who lived among the natives.



The Native Americans were forced to work within a system known as *encomienda*, in which natives worked for Spanish landlords who had received the rights to the natives' labor from Spanish authorities.

The holders of *encomiendas* promised the Spanish rulers that they would respect the workers and convert them to Catholicism.

In truth, many abused the natives and worked them to death, especially inside dangerous mines.

Relationships were forged between Spanish settlers and native women. These relationships created a large *mestizo* population, or people with mixed Spanish and Native American ancestry.

# Conquistadors Push North



In 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León landed on the coast of modern-day Florida and claimed it for Spain.

In 1540–1541, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led an expedition throughout much of present-day Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, searching for another wealthy empire to conquer. Coronado found little gold amidst the dry deserts of the Southwest so the Spanish monarchy assigned mostly priests to explore and colonize this portion of the future United States.



## Treatment of the Natives

In converting the natives, Spanish priests and soldiers sometimes burned their sacred objects and prohibited native rituals.

The Spanish also forced natives to work and sometimes abused them. By the end of the 17th century, natives in New Mexico fought Spanish rule.



Spanish priests worked to spread Christianity but also pushed for better treatment of Native Americans. Holy men such as Dominican monk Bartolomé de Las Casas spoke out against the cruel treatment of natives, particularly criticizing the harsh pattern of labor that emerged under the encomienda system.

The Spanish government abolished the encomienda system in 1542.

## Native Resistance

In the winter of 1609–1610, settlers entered Spain's northern holdings, called New Mexico, and built the city Santa Fe, or "Holy Faith." In the next two decades, a string of missions, forts, and small ranches dotted the lands of New Mexico among the natives, known as the Pueblo.



*The most important cause of the Pueblo Revolt was probably the attempt of the Spanish to destroy their religion, banning traditional dances and religious icons such as these kachina dolls.*

In 1680, Pueblo leader Popé led a well-organized rebellion against the Spanish. More than 8,000 warriors drove the Spanish back into New Spain. The southwest region of the future United States once again belonged to its original inhabitants.

*video*