

1 Three Worlds Meet

TERMS & NAMES

Christopher
Columbus
conquistador
missions
Columbian
Exchange
slavery

MAIN IDEA

Native American, European, and African cultures came together in the Americas.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Native American, African, and European cultures shaped modern American culture.

ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

Solveig Turpin must climb cliffs and dodge cactus spines to do her work. She searches caves and cliffs for paintings that ancient people left on rock walls. One painting that Turpin found shows a nine-foot-long red panther. She believes it shows a religious leader who turned himself into an animal.

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

This is the Shaman [religious leader] who transforms into the largest and most powerful animal here. . . . I like to call [the shamans] supramen because they were over everything.

Solveig Turpin, quoted in *In Search of Ancient North America*

Archaeologists make theories about the past based on what they learn from artifacts, objects that humans made. They give clues about how ancient people lived. This section discusses the first Americans and the other people who came to America.



Solveig Turpin wears a shirt displaying the rock paintings of ancient peoples as she discusses her work.

The First Americans

Scientists think that the first peoples migrated, or moved, to the Americas from Asia. But scientists disagree about how and when this move took place. During the last ice age, ancient people may have crossed a land bridge that joined Asia and North America. Some scientists who hold this theory believe the earliest Americans arrived 12,000 years ago. Other scientists believe humans came to the Americas about 30,000 years ago. These scientists believe that people came by many routes, over thousands of years.

Over the centuries, many societies developed. From 1200 to 400 B.C., the Olmec people thrived along the Gulf of Mexico. They set up trade routes and built cities. From A.D. 250 to 900, the Maya society developed in southern Mexico and Guatemala. In what is now central Mexico, the Aztecs built a great empire in the 1400s and early 1500s. In the eastern part of what is now the United States lived several groups of people called Mound Builders who built large earthen structures. The last group of Mound Builders, the Mississippians, lived from A.D. 800 to 1700.



By 1500, the peoples of North America had divided into hundreds of cultural groups, speaking 2,000 languages. Their ways of life varied greatly. In the north, the Aleut and the Inuit hunted sea mammals. Many of the peoples of the Great Plains tracked bison.

The dwellings of various Native American groups also differed. The Pueblo of the American Southwest lived in many-storied houses of adobe—dried mud bricks. In the Eastern Woodlands, the Iroquois lived in 300-foot-long houses.

Societies of West Africa

Complex societies also developed in West Africa. From the 700s to the mid-1000s, the kingdom of **Ghana** prospered by controlling the trade of gold and salt. By the 1200s, the kingdom of Mali had taken over most of Ghana's territory. Mali became West Africa's most powerful state. Its wealth also came from control of the gold-salt trade. Eventually, Mali's power decreased. The Songhai (SAWNG•HY) people broke away from its control. In 1464, they began their own empire.

ReadingHistory

A. Finding

Main Ideas

Why did Ghana prosper?

Societies of Europe

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europeans searched for stability. Europeans turned to feudalism to protect themselves. Feudalism is a system in which a king allows lords to use lands that belong to him. In return, the lords owe the king military service and protection for the people living on the land.

ReadingHistory

B. Identifying Problems

What problems were Europeans trying to solve with feudalism?

By the 1000s, feudalism had brought more stability to society. As the economy grew, many serfs ran away to towns and found work. Because so many serfs left the farms, feudalism began to weaken. Then, beginning in 1347, the bubonic plague swept across Europe. It killed about one-fourth of the population and reduced the number of workers. Lords competed for the laborers who survived, so they began to pay wages. As feudal lords lost power, kings grew stronger.

During the 1300s, many Europeans began to question long-held beliefs. This questioning led to the Renaissance. Lasting from the 1300s to about 1600, the Renaissance was a time of increased interest in learning. During the Renaissance, trade grew. European merchants wanted to expand trade and sought new trade routes.

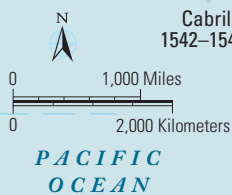
European Exploration

As part of the search for new sea routes, the Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias (DEE-uhs) reached the southern tip of Africa in 1488. Ten years later, another Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama, followed Dias's route. He continued north along the east coast of Africa. Then he sailed east across the Indian Ocean to India. He had found an all-water route to Asia. Spain and other European rivals wanted to take part in the profitable trade with Asia. They began to look for their own water routes to Asia.

European Exploration of the Americas, 1500–1550

Explorers' Routes

- Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- English
- Aztec Empire, 1519
- Inca Empire, 1525



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER Interpreting Maps

- 1. Movement** How many years did it take Cabeza de Vaca to travel from Florida to Central Mexico?
- 2. Region** Which continent did the English and French explore?

AMERICA'S HISTORY MAKERS



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

1451–1506

Christopher Columbus's son Ferdinand wrote that his father "took to the sea at the age of 14 and followed it ever after."

Columbus's early voyages nearly cost him his life. When he was 25, pirates off the coast of Portugal sank his ship. Columbus survived by grabbing a floating oar and swimming to shore.

But he also learned a lot from sailing on Portuguese ships. The sailors taught Columbus about Atlantic wind patterns. This knowledge later helped him on his history-making voyage.

What character traits, shown in Columbus's early life, might have made him a good leader?

Meanwhile, an Italian sailor named **Christopher Columbus** thought he knew a faster way to reach Asia. Instead of sailing around Africa and then east, Columbus decided to sail west across the Atlantic.

In 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain agreed to back Columbus. Preparing to sail, Columbus assembled his ships—the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa María*.

After almost 10 weeks at sea, the ships landed on a Caribbean island. Columbus incorrectly believed that he had reached the Indies, islands in Southeast Asia. The islanders who greeted Columbus and his men were Taino (TY•noh) people, but Columbus mistakenly called them Indians. For three months, Columbus visited several Caribbean islands. After finding gold and precious objects on one of these islands, Columbus became convinced that he had reached Asia. In 1493, he sailed back to Spain. Neither Columbus nor the Spanish rulers suspected that he had landed near continents entirely unknown to Europeans.

Columbus made three more voyages to the Americas but never brought back the treasures he had promised Spain's rulers. But in time, the geographic knowledge Columbus brought back changed European views of the world. Europeans were eager to see if these continents that they had just learned about could make them rich.

Competition for Empire

European countries had three main goals during the age of exploration. First, they wanted to spread Christianity beyond Europe. Second, they wanted to expand their empires. Third, they wanted to become rich.

In the early 1500s, soldiers called **conquistadors**, (kahn•KWIHS•tuh•dawrz) or conquerors, explored the Americas and claimed them for Spain. Hernando Cortés was one of these *conquistadors*. In 1519, he landed on the Central American coast with 508 men. At the time, the Aztec Empire dominated most of Mexico. Weakened by smallpox brought by Europeans, the Aztecs fell to Cortés in 1521.

While Spain was taking control of the Americas, other Europeans were sending out expeditions to find the Northwest Passage that was thought to be a water route through North America to Asia. Searching for this passage, the Italian John Cabot crossed the Atlantic Ocean for the English in 1497. He landed in the area of eastern Canada and claimed the region for England.

France and the Netherlands were also looking for ways to gain wealth through exploration and colonization. In 1608, the French founded a

ReadingHistory

C. Making

Inferences Why do you think Ferdinand and Isabella backed Columbus's voyage?

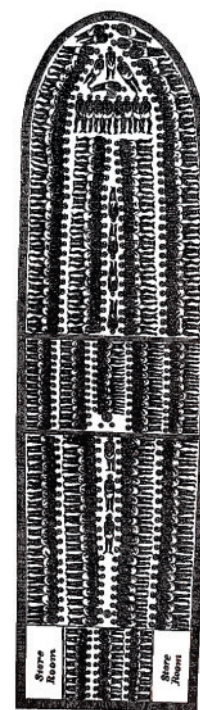
fur-trading post at Quebec. At the same time the Dutch were building a colony called New Netherland. It was located along the Hudson River.

By 1700, the Spanish Empire controlled much of the Americas. In the Spanish colonies, the Catholic Church built **missions**, settlements that included a church, a town, and farmlands. The goal of the missions was to convert Native Americans to Christianity. The Spanish also forced Native Americans to work on plantations, large farms that raised cash crops. The plantations thrived, but many Native Americans died.

The arrival of Europeans in the Americas began a movement of plants, animals, and diseases between the Eastern and Western hemispheres. This movement of living things between hemispheres is called the **Columbian Exchange**. When Europeans came to America, they brought with them germs that caused diseases such as smallpox. Native Americans had no immunity to them. As a result, millions of Native Americans died.

By 1600, **slavery**, the practice of holding a person in bondage for labor, was established in the Americas. Because Native Americans quickly died from overwork and disease, the Spanish and Portuguese enslaved Africans to provide labor. European slave traders shipped Africans to the Americas. On the coast of Africa, local kings gathered captives from inland. The local kings then traded these captives to slave traders for European goods.

The forced removal of people from Africa is called the African Diaspora. Before the slave trade ended in the late 1800s, about 12 million Africans had been enslaved and shipped to the Americas. Of these, perhaps 2 million died during the voyage across the Atlantic, called the middle passage. Once the enslaved Africans arrived in the colonies, they were sold at auction. Most were forced to work in farms or mines. They were also fed and housed poorly. By the 1700s, all the American colonies of European countries had African slaves.



The diagram above shows how slave traders packed enslaved Africans onto slave ships for the middle passage.

ReadingHistory

D. Making

Inferences What might have happened if Native Americans had been immune to European diseases?

Section 1 Assessment

1. Terms & Names

Explain the significance of:

- Christopher Columbus
- *conquistador*
- missions
- Columbian Exchange
- slavery

2. Taking Notes

Use a chart like the one below to list ancient cultures of North America and their locations.

Ancient Culture	Location

3. Main Ideas

- By what land bridge did some ancient people migrate to North America?
- How did the West African kingdom of Ghana prosper?
- What were the three main goals of European voyages of exploration?

4. Critical Thinking

Making Inferences What were the effects of the Columbian Exchange?

THINK ABOUT

- disease
- food
- livestock

ACTIVITY OPTIONS

ART
MATH

Research some aspect of the slave trade, such as the middle passage or the number of people enslaved. Paint a **picture** or draw a **graph** to show what you learned.