

CHAPTER REVIEW

SUMMARY

- **Native American Societies** Hunter-gatherers came across the Bering Strait by foot and settled the length and breadth of the Americas, forming groups with diverse cultures, languages, and lifestyles. Global warming enabled an agricultural revolution, particularly of *maize*, that allowed former hunter-gather peoples to settle and build empires, such as that of the *Mexica*, whose *Aztec Empire* included subjugated peoples and a vast system of trade and tribute. Some North American peoples developed an elaborate continental trading network and impressive cities like *Cahokia*; their *burial mounds* reveal a complex and stratified social organization. The *Eastern Woodlands peoples* that the Europeans would first encounter included both patriarchal and matriarchal societies as well as extensive language-based alliances. The Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Muskogean were among the major Indian nations. Warfare was an important cultural component, leading to shifting rivalries and alliances among tribes and with European settlers.
- **Age of Exploration** By the 1490s, Europeans were experiencing a renewed curiosity about the world. Warfare, plagues, and famine undermined the old agricultural feudal system in Europe, and in its place arose a middle class that monarchs could tax. Powerful new nations replaced the land estates and cities ruled by princes. Scientific and technological advances led to the creation of better maps and navigation techniques, as well as new weapons and ships. Navies became the critical component of global trade and world power. When the Spanish began to colonize the New World, the conversion of Indians to Roman Catholicism was important, but the search for gold and silver was primary. The rivalries of the *Protestant Reformation* in Europe shaped the course of conquest in the Americas.
- **Conquering and Colonizing the Americas** Spanish *conquistadores* such as Hernán Cortés were able to exploit their advantages in military technology, including steel, gunpowder, and domesticated animals such as the horse, in order to conquer the powerful Aztec and Inca Empires. European diseases, first introduced by Columbus, did even more to ensure Spanish victories. The Spanish *encomienda* system demanded goods and labor from their new subjects. As the Indian population declined, the Spanish began to import enslaved Africans.
- **Columbian Exchange** Contact between the Old World and the New resulted in the *Columbian Exchange*, sometimes called the Great Biological Exchange. Crops such as *maize*, beans, and potatoes became staples in the Old World. Native peoples incorporated into their culture such Eurasian animals as the horse and pig. But the invaders also carried *infectious diseases* that set off pandemics of smallpox, plague, and other illnesses to which Indians had no immunity. The Americas were depopulated and cultures destroyed.

- **Spanish Legacy** Spain left a lasting legacy in the borderlands from California to Florida. Catholic missionaries contributed to the destruction of the old ways of life by exterminating “heathen” beliefs in the Southwest, a practice that led to open rebellion in *New Mexico* in 1598 and 1680. Spain’s rival European nation-states began competing for gold and glory in the New World. England’s defeat of the *Spanish Armada* cleared the path for English dominance in North America.

CHRONOLOGY

by 12,000 B.C.E.	Humans have migrated to the Americas
5000 B.C.E.	Agricultural revolution begins in Mexico
1050–1250 C.E.	The city of Cahokia flourishes in North America
1325	Mexica (Aztec) Empire founded in Central Mexico
1492	Columbus makes his first voyage of discovery in the Americas
1503	Spaniards bring first African slaves to the Americas
1517	Martin Luther launches the Protestant Reformation
1519	Cortés begins the Spanish conquest of Mexico
1531	Pizarro subdues the Inca Empire in South America for Spain
1565	Spaniards found St. Augustine, the first permanent European outpost in the present-day United States
1584–1587	Raleigh’s Roanoke Island venture
1588	The English navy defeats the Spanish Armada
1680	Pueblo Revolt

KEY TERMS

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