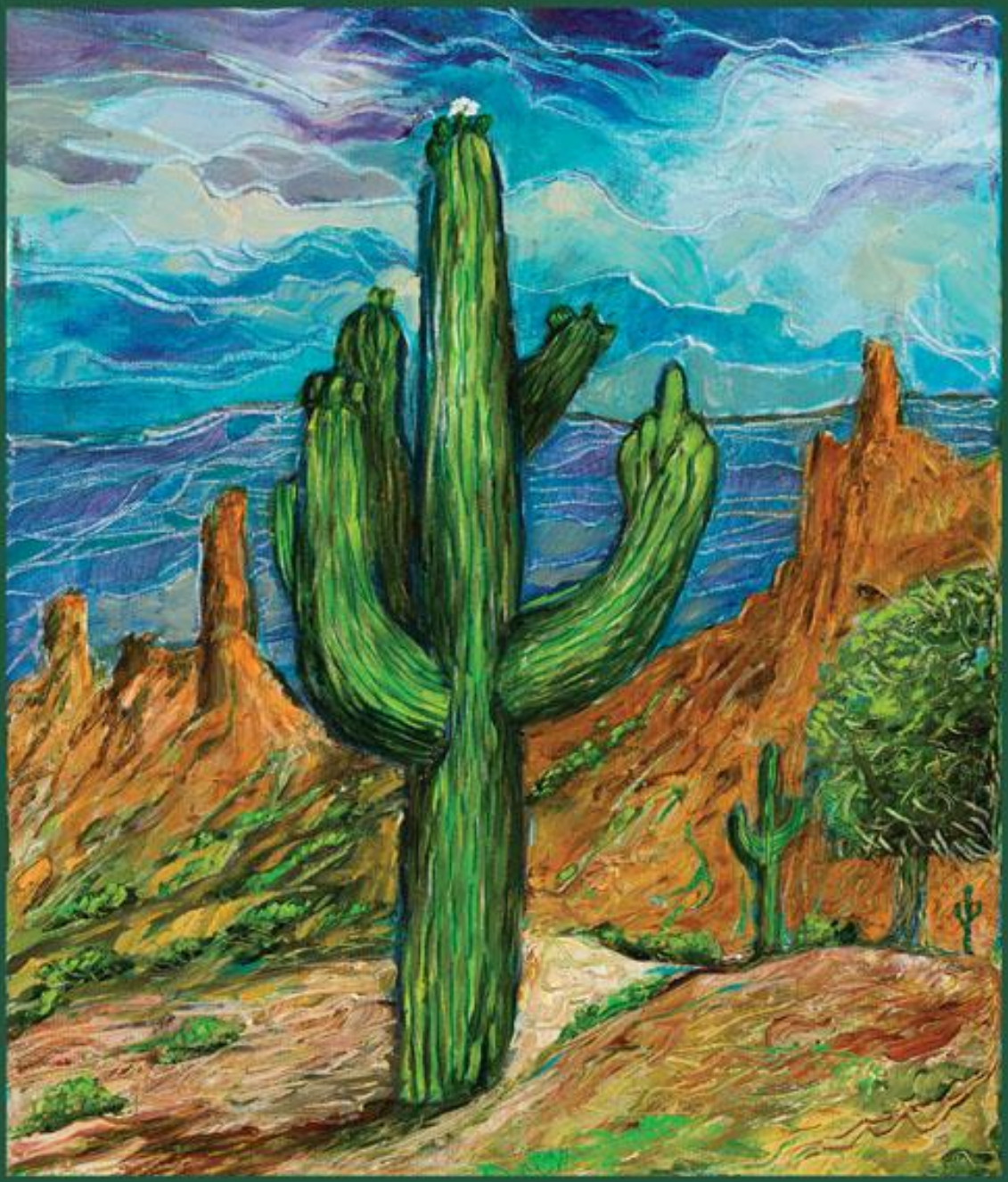
OCCUPIED AMERICA

A History of Chicanos

Ninth Edition



Pearson

RODOLFO F. ACUÑA

Occupied America

A History of Chicanos

Ninth Edition

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Preface

The first edition of *Occupied America* (1972) opened:

> Mexicans—Chicanos—in the United States today are an oppressed people. They are citizens, but their citizenship is second-class at best. They are exploited and manipulated by those with more power. And, sadly, many believe that the only way to get along in Anglo-America is to become "Americanized" themselves. Awareness of their history—of their contributions and struggles, of the fact that they were not the "treacherous enemy" that Anglo-American histories have said they were—can restore pride and a sense of heritage to a people who have been oppressed for so long. In short, awareness can help them to liberate themselves.[1]

The book immediately got caught up in controversy from those who claimed that I had made a mistake and should have called it *Occupied Mexico* since the land once belonged to Mexico. I responded that I was referring to the invasion of the continents that are America. Next some Chicanos objected to the internal colonial model insisting that, according to the Marxist paradigm, Chicanos were not internally colonized. I was surprised to find Chicano graduate students at the forefront of the criticism. Many of these detractors were at the time enamored with the theories of Immanuel Wallerstein's World Systems Analysis that emphasized globalization and colonialism.[2] I realized that the misunderstanding was epistemological. Most were Americanist that is they were sociologists and social scientists whose area of study was the United States. In Latin America, the internal colonial model had kicked around since the 1950s. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova and Andre Gunder Frank refer to Internal Colonialism as did other Third World intellectuals.[3]

It was not that I did not want engage in the debate, but anyone who knows me knows that teaching is my first love. I had been a public school teacher for seven years and a junior college teacher for three years. I had recently committed myself to starting the Chicano Studies Department at San Fernando Valley State and my teaching and activism prepared me to work on curriculum development. Realizing that the detractors were mostly Americanist, I chose to withdraw from the intellectual fray and concentrate on Chicana/o Studies that at the moment was more important and productive.[4]

With this edition I chose to return to the past and reintroduce the theme of colonialism from the vantage point of the colonized. In doing this I choose not to dwell on theory, rather to peel the onion a metaphor for the colonized person and his or her colonial mentality and search for the truth and unravel the myths, lies, and peel the onion that has formed us over 500 years of colonialism. This seems apropos with the demise of Europe's system of direct colonialism and the surge of who I choose to call the colonized. In doing so I touch on systematic inequality of Mexican Americans/Latinos in the policies and practices of American institutions and the lies history tells, and deal with subordination, not least of which includes cultural production and finance.

In engaging this theme I must pay tribute Franz Fanon. Fanon was a West Indian who received his doctorate in psychiatry in Paris. He went to Algeria and found that he could not practice because he did not understand the Algerian culture, he had to learn about the different layers of the onion to become a psychiatrist and a revolutionary.

In this cognitive dissonance theory, Fanon stresses attitude change and behaviors. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon wrote:

> Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn't fit in with the core belief.[5]

Franz Fanon makes it clear that colonization is possible only with the complicity of members of the colonized. Fanon gives us a glimpse into the complexity of race.[6]

I return to the classroom and my life experiences for answers. My friend René Martínez, a former teacher in the Tucson Mexican American program, quotes an African proverb to his students: "Until the lions have their historians [storytellers], tales of the hunted will always glorify the hunter," adding that in the Mexican American program,[7] "We talk about how we come from the lion's perspective, from the story that's never told [and] which continues to be left out." An example is the story of the First Peoples of the Americas and the history of people other than those of Western European heritage. Hopefully this book will question the hunter and form a counternarrative that is closer to the truth

Occupied America is about the history of the Chicana/o or Mexican in the United States. Biases are difficult to root out—as in the case of propaganda films of World War II, the distortions are woven into the nation's historical memory and are kept alive by schools and the media. For instance, Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential biographer Jon Meacham is often a guest contributor on MSNBC; his presidential biography of Andrew Jackson, *American Lion*, won the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for biography or autobiography. From the Lion's perspective, Meacham's book celebrates Jackson and lacks a healthy skepticism that is essential in the search for the truth.[8]

Meacham, like most successful American historians, is popular; he smiles and adheres to the American paradigm and the canons of the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians.

In *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*, University of Chicago historian Peter Novick argues that "there is no such thing as 'truth in history'." Historical objectivity, according to Novick is "incoherent" and "dubious" and that "most historians generally write about their colleagues the way Arthur Schlesinger Jr., writes about the Kennedys." According to Novick, historians ignore the flaws such as "racism and ultra-patriotism" of their protagonists. Novick continues that professional, political, psychological, and cultural pressures control historians. These pressures determine their epistemological interpretation and their philosophical and professional biases.[9]

The social sciences exercise far-reaching powers over research. For many years based on the discovery of several pre-Clovis sites near Clovis, New Mexico in the 1920s and 1930s, archaeologists insisted that the Clovis people were the first humans to inhabit the hemisphere and laid the foundation for Indigenous arrivals about 13,500 years ago. The official story became that Ice Age hunters from Siberia crossed into North America. "Armed with stone weapons, called Clovis points, these hunters spread rapidly across the continent and feasted on animals" unknown before to humans.[10] The theory was almost immediately challenged; however, the Clovis hypothesis or myth persisted up until recently. Anyone challenging the model was professionally ostracized.[11] The Clovis-first paradigm was the dominant hypothesis from the early twentieth century until recently, when other antiquities forced archeologists to take another look. The preponderance of evidence is that humans arrived thousands of years before the accepted arrival date from Asia. The new school holds that other sites predated Clovis and it cast doubt on the accepted paradigm.[12]

For years archaeologists dismissed Native American social scientists accounts of the Indigenous Peoples. The great Native American historian Jack Forbes took a broadside at European perspective in his book titled *The American Discovery of Europe*.[13]

Forbes wrote:

> Most PEOPLE have probably never heard of the idea that ancient Americans might have traveled to other parts of the globe, so strong is the fixation with the "newness" of America. "Mainstream" archaeology in the twentieth century exhibited hostility toward any ideas that suggest a remote antiquity for humans in the Americas, or to the idea that Americans might have "spilled over" into Siberia and other parts of Eurasia.[14]

Forbes did not raise the question to get tangled in controversy, but to show the probabilities of the footsteps pointing the other way and how the Eurocentric bias in history limits possibilities of 100 million people being discovered.

What Is New in This Edition?

The simple proposition of the book is that a lie is a lie. This is the ninth edition and most probably my last edition of *Occupied America*. At 86 I have a strong sense of my own mortality. So this book is about language, the truth, and an effort to be more precise than in previous editions. A lie is a lie. The urgency brought about by the election of Donald Trump to the presidency and his attack on the truth and the popularization of propaganda news "alternative facts" have made it more difficult to find the truth. As will be discussed, a distortion of history is more American than apple pie, although the distortion of the truth is common among nations. The change was obvious since the end of World War II when the United States became a global power and its imperial pretensions expanded. Notions of grandeur and a distortion of the truth propped up claims of moral authority. The Eisenhower Doctrine (1950s) accelerated interventions throughout the globe and put the Monroe Doctrine on steroids.

These events and those that followed put us on the road to the election of Trump and the world of doublespeak. *Gore v. Bush* (2000) accelerated the decline of democracy and brought on Middle Eastern Wars and the great recession in 2008. They heightened the irrational and unrelenting racist nativism and came after 40 years of the decline of the American Empire. Many Americans did not understand or resented this loss in moral authority as well as were incapable of dealing with an of control inferiority complex.

By the twenty-first century many Americans came to realize that the United States got whipped by the tiny nation of Vietnam as it had by North Korea. The wars bankrupted America and the nation's infrastructure was sadly neglected. Public sector jobs declined, real wages fell and no longer could fathers sustain the family as women were *forced* to work to survive. Economist and Secretary of Labor under Bill Clinton (1993 to 1997) Robert Reich singled out for women working outside the home it was not a matter of choice, it covered up the wage gap.[15] Finally, by the twenty-first century, it was no longer possible for lower-middle-class Americans to afford to buy a home. The educational crisis of the early 1990s shut out higher education as the stairway to the middle class—it cost too much. On a positive note, the decade produced the Dream Act movement that was built on the pro–foreign-born of the Chicana/o generation. By their fathers' standards Americans were losers; this realization hit white males particularly hard. The natural outcome was scapegoating non-whites.

In the 1980s I met a young lady who had just gotten out of a mental sanatorium. A racist but loving white family had adopted her. When she grew up, they told her that she was adopted and was Mexican. She said she could cope with being Mexican, but could not cope with not being white. Today empires throughout the world are coping with the reality of not being great, not being benevolent and indeed,

being exploiters. My generation of Americans grew up with the illusion that everyone loved Americans.[16] It was a lie.

The first of the Trump Years drove home the importance of being blunt and not hiding behind language. Distorted news and national biases must be challenged. A lie is a lie. Although I am no longer religious I acknowledge the importance of my early education. I recognize the importance of epistemology (the theory of knowledge) that places an emphasis on methods, validity, and scope of the question and investigates what distinguishes belief from opinion. The study of Latin and the figuring out syllogisms taught me the art of negation.

A note of caution: The book will abstain from using the term *Indian* or *Indio* unless quoting a source or within the context of an event. In the United States and Mexico, the word *Indio/Indian* has been used pejoratively. It is a product of Spanish conquest and colonialism and was constructed as a lie. Indio/Indian often means that the person is dumb or slow. In the United States, it accompanies names such as "Indian giver" or "Redskin." The First People and their descendants will be referred to as Indigenous Peoples, which is what they are.

In discussing identity, it must be remembered that America is not the name of a single nation. But for better or for worse, it is the name of two continents. More than a 100,000 people lived here and they had no say in what it was called. It was named after Amerigo Vespucci—an Italian Florentine explorer, financier, navigator, and cartographer who in 1502 drew a map of Brazil and the West Indies that showed that the colonizers were not in Asia. Columbus mistakenly called the people Indians because he thought he had reached India, so it was with the reasoning that Vespucci "discovered America." (In honor of Amerigo the name of two continents became America.)[17]

I use various terms to refer to Mexican Americans. I continue to use the term Chicana/o because that is what I call myself, but I try to limit it to a particular generation and time in history. The U.S. Census uses the terms Latinas/os or Hispanics as do most studies. As a historian I am of the opinion that this leads to a fake identity. It includes everyone from Latin America, Spain, Italy, and France.

Occupied America chooses to spell Mexican American without a hyphen. If written with a hyphen, the word Mexican becomes an adjective. The experiences of Mexican Americans within the United States make the word Mexican American a noun. A hyphen should not qualify their identity. The nationality of Mexican Americans hangs around their necks and should remind them that they are a colonized people. Mexico is part of their American national identity. Mexico is not an insignificant part of our future. As we keep repeating, it is the 10th largest nation in the world. In the United States, the Mexican American population larger than Canada and most American states. Mexico is among the top 10 global leaders in engineering and computer science graduates.[18]

The failure to communicate has produced what Stuart Chase called "The Tyranny of Words." Mexican Americans and other Latinos use the tag Hispanic. However, this term is in error. It refers to people from Spain, of a Spanish nationality. They were the people who invaded Mexico and began imposing what Stuart Chase calls a caste system *The Tyranny of Words*. The truth is that people from Spain are Hispanics, and people from Mexico are Mexicans.

The term Latino refers to anyone whose language derives from Latin—it includes Spaniards, Portuguese, French, Latin Americans, Romanians, and Italians. The name dates to the 1860s when Napoleon III of France coined the term "Latin America." Napoleon wanted to make his puppet Maximilian Emperor of Mexico. Napoleon pushed the notion of a cultural affinity between France and Latin America. In using the ethnic identification of Hispanic and Latino they may have good intentions, but they weaken the individual national identity of each Spanish-speaking group. A people without an identity are a people without a history. Mexicans, Guatemalans, Salvadorans, and others have histories.[19] Latinas/os are of different nationalities like Asian Americans. They are not one nationality and the lack of specificity leads to a distortion of history. For example, Argentinians were not at the Alamo but some people would substitute Hispanics for Mexicans rewriting history. The word Latino comes from "Latin America." It referred to a cultural kinship with France. Supporters of the term Latino argue that times have changed and national identities as we once knew them are outdated and that the term Latino is more inclusive. Others prefer Hispanic that has similar etymological problems. Hispanic refers to Spanish people. It refers to their language and culture. Hispanic is popular among professional and national organizations. In my day, to say you were Spanish was like denying that you were Mexican. It has gotten to the point that I have heard some people say that they were eating Hispanic Food. My reaction is what is wrong with the "M-word"? This challenge is getting more involved as Mexican American youth refuse to be European and are searching for an Indigenous identity.

There are 33 different nationalities in Latin America where the Spanish, Italians, and Portuguese do not use Latino—it would offend the social order. They differentiate Spaniards from Mexicans. However, in the United States we lump everyone together as if we all belonged to a single nationality. This makes it difficult to ferret out Mexican data from the Census and other reports. I try to adjust and use the terms Mexican American, Mexican/Latino, and U.S. Mexican. I feel it is important to know and respect the identity of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Puerto Ricans, and others. It helps unravel the lie. Making them generic Latinos/Hispanics will hurt them. A lie is a lie.

Acknowledgments

I dedicate this book to my wife Guadalupe Compeán. It is because of her that I have lived this long, not only physically but intellectually. I have always had a tendency to escape into a shell; Lupe forces me to engage. I owe her an intellectual debt. Also to my daughter Angela who is always correcting my 1950s language expressions, my sons Walter and Frank, and my grandsons and granddaughters. Thanks to my family, colleagues, students, community, and those who struggle for justice and care. As you get older you think a lot about the past. I remember my father and his stories. He was a reserved man, but one story stands out. When he first came to the United States in the early 1920s he did not know a word of English and for six months the only thing he ate was ham and eggs. My father was a tailor and I remember him telling me that it was easier to make a suit from scratch than make alterations. I remembered my father's advice working through the nine editions.

Lastly, to my mother who went blind at the age of five. She never went to school and taught herself to read using a gigantic magnifying glass. When I was child, boys never did the dishes or housework. However, because of my mother's health, I washed dishes and scrubbed floors. It was an important lesson in life. My parents were immigrants who added layers to my onion and while many of the layers were positive, many of the layers had to be peeled away.

It would be remiss if I did not thank Sergio Hernández for his beautiful rendition of the Saguaro Cactus found in the Arizona and Sonoran Deserts. The giant saguaro is the symbol of resistance to Spanish and American Colonialism. Some stand 40-60 ft high. For thousands of years, people have the saguaro lived in harmony with the First People such as the Hohokam resisted Spanish and American Occupations; i.e., conquistadores, homesteaders and ranchers. Thank you Sergio.

Notes

1 Rodolfo F, Acuña, *Occupied America: The Chicano's Struggle Toward Liberation* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972).
2 Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
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10 "Young Americans," *Nature,* 485, 6, May 2, 2012, http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v485/n7396/full/485006b.html?foxtrotcallback=true.
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13 Jack D. Forbes, *The American Discovery of Europe* (University of Illinois Press, 2011).

14 Forbes, Ibid., p. 80.

15 Robert Reich, "Inequality for All," Moyers & Company, Nov. 20, 2013, https://www.youtub.com/watch?v=O_LkMWP2Q2A.

16 Traveling through Europe in the post–World War II era, many Americans were shocked to know that Europeans did not love them. After all they had liberated them, they thought, from the Germans. Instead of trying to find the truth as to why, they would say that it was because Europeans were jealous.

17 Jessie Szalay, "Amerigo Vespucci: Facts, Biography & Naming of America," *LiveScience*, September 20, 2017, https://www.livescience.com/42510-ameri-go-vespucci.html.

18 Jared Wade, "Mexico Is a World Leader in Engineering and Computer Science Grads," *MexicoIt*, June 3, 2016. http://www.mexico-it.net/mexico-become-world-leader-engineering-computer-science-graduates/.

19 "Carta a Napoleón III sobre la influencia francesa en América," *El Clamor Público*, Los Ángeles, sábado 19 de marzo de 1859, http://www.filosofia.org/hem/185/1859c19.htm. Why did Napoleon III coin the term "Latin America?" English Language & Usage, https://english.stackexchange.com/questions/16003/why-did-napoleon-iii-coin-the-term-latin-america. Jessie Szalay, "Amerigo Vespucci: Facts, Biography & Naming of America," *LiveScience*, September 20, 2017, https://www.livescience.com/42510-ameri-go-vespucci.html.

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Chapter 1

A Cradle of Civilization: Not Just Pyramids, Explorers, and Heroes

Learning Objectives

1.1 Describe Mesoamerican civilization/s at the end of the Formative period.

1.2 Outline the history and development of Maya civilization.

1.3 Explain how Teotihuacán and the Tolteca influenced Mesoamerica and each other.

1.4 Describe the importance of corn in the development of civilizations of Mesoamerica and North America.

When I was preparing my classes, I previewed several documentaries on the Maya writing system. "Cracking The Maya Code" was of particular interest;[1] it was a fascinating account of how archaeologists learned to decipher ancient Maya script. The documentary, however, neglected to show how the ability to read glyphs was lost in the first place: The Spaniards burned or destroyed hundreds, if not thousands of Maya books because they believed they were works of the devil. The recovery of this knowledge required years, and thousands of hours spent deciphering the script. For me the obvious question was: Why were Maya speakers not used to interpret the Maya language until the last phases? The narrative became a saga of white people hundreds of years later saving the day instead of addressing the fact that it was Europeans—in this case, Spaniards—who destroyed a culture and vast amounts of knowledge.

The contributions of Indigenous Peoples have been purposely minimized and until recently, many scholars, for instance, erroneously said that Náhuatl books were based entirely on oral traditions denying that the Náhuatl People had a written language. Their writing was pictographic and ideographic with a significant number of logograms and syllabic signs. Náhuatl was the language of Azteca/Mexica and the Tolteca from the Central Highlands of Mexico.[2] Their books were considered sacred, and were written on cloth "on which diviners cast maize grains or beans to perform a divination."[3]

Europeans Did Not Discover Writing

A common cultural trait of Mesoamerican groups is writing. Indigenous writing systems existed centuries before the European colonization. The Olmeca, Maya, and Zapoteca/Mixteca in present-day Oaxaca developed writing systems.[4] Hundreds of years of neglect led to an incredible loss of knowledge about the Mesoamerican People. The Zapoteca, for example, developed a 365-day solar calendar (called yza) and a 260-day sacred calendar (called piye). Unlike Mixteca and Azteca scripts, Zapoteca writing was much more textual, possibly capable of representing sentences. "When the Spanish conquistadores arrived in Oaxaca in the 16th century CE, the Zapoteca script was long forgotten, although the Zapoteca language continues to be spoken to this date."[5]

The primary culture of Mexico and the Americas remains Indigenous. Many western scholars sleight the histories of the Indigenous Peoples. Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations did not need Europeans to give them civilization; they are two of the world's six cradles rivaling those in China, the Indus Valley, Mesopotamia, and the Nile River. The Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations share with them similar features and importance.[6]

The Cradles of Civilizations

1.1 Describe Mesoamerican civilization/s at the end of the Formative period.

The popular story is that most humans clustered in hunting and food gathering societies until about 12,000 years ago. Worldwide, people followed a similar pattern and began settling in sedentary farming communities around 8000 BCE. These communities formed laws based on mores and folkways. Slowly, six cradles of civilization formed independently in China, the Indus Valley, Mesopotamia, the Nile, the Andean region of South America, and Mesoamerica.[7] Food surpluses made possible specialization of labor and the development of complex social institutions such as organized religion and education. Trade and a writing system facilitated the cross fertilization of cultures.

The Time Line organizes the evolution of knowledge accumulated by Mesoamericans into time periods and shows the stages of human development.

40000 BCE	8000 BCE	2000 BCE	CE 200	CE 900	CE 1519

Stages of Evolution		
40000 BCE–8000 BCE	*Paleoindian*	*Hunting and gathering*. Characterized by bands of hunters and by seed and fruit gatherers.
8000 BCE–2000 BCE	*Archaic*	*Incipient agriculture.* Domestication of maize and other plants. Earliest corn grown in Tehuacán circa 5000 BCE.
2000 BCE–CE 200	*Formative Preclassic*	Intensification of farming and growth of villages. Olmeca chiefdom stands out. Reliance on maize and the spread of a religious tradition that focuses on the earth and fertility. Organizational evolution, 1200–400 BCE: numerous chiefdoms evolve through Mesoamerica. The Maya appear during this period. Monte Albán is established circa 400 BCE–CE 200. Rapid population growth, a market system, and agricultural intensification occur. Development of solar calendar. Villages grow into centers.
CE 200–900	*Classic*	*The Golden Age of Mesoamerica*. The evolution of state-level societies. The emergence of kings. Priests become more important. Complex irrigation, population growth, and highly stratified society. Excellent ceramics, sculpture, and murals. Building of huge pyramids. Teotihuacán had more than 150,000 people, making it the largest city outside China.
CE 900–1519	*Postclassic*	*Growth of City-states and Confederations*. Civil, market, and commercial elements become more important. The Azteca and Tarascan confederations emerge as dominant powers. Cyclical conquests. Use of metals, increased trade, and warfare.

SOURCES: Robert M. Carmack, Janine Gasco, and Gary H. Gossen, *The Legacy of Mesoamerica: History and Culture of a Native American Civilization* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), 48–49; also see Michael C, Meyer, William L. Sherman, and Susan M. Deeds, *The Course of Mexican History*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford Press, 1998), 4.

The Corn People: An Overview

It is not precisely known when the first modern humans migrated to the Americas. Evidence exists that humans were present in the Americas long before 13,500 years ago. For instance, archaeologists discovered 14,550-year-old stone tools and butchered mastodon bones in Florida—1,000 years earlier than previously thought possible.[8] Currently, scientists believe that the migration to the Americas began about 20,000–30,000 years ago. According to some accounts, humans reached the New World by 15000 BCE. The probability further exists that people might have migrated back to Asia from the Americas, with the last migrations ceasing when the Bering Strait's ice bridge melted around 9000 BCE. According to linguists, the languages spoken in North America and Siberia are related,[9] but some linguists raise the notion that language spread from south to north instead of from north to south.[10]

Linguistic evidence has been uncovered during the past 25 years that points to a much earlier colonization than previously theorized. Linguists say that the sheer number of distinct language families in the Americas leads to this conclusion. They suggest a much broader diversity than does the archaeological evidence. "[T]he linguistic evidence consistently yields rates of diversification and spread that clearly imply a much greater age for the American population than the genetic, archaeological, and paleo climatological evidence suggests."[11] Direct migration was mostly to high-latitude coastal areas.[12]

According to archaeologist Robert J. Sharer, the earliest known villages in the Americas appeared along the coasts as early as 12,500 years ago.[13] But it was not until around 7000 BCE that the hunters and fruit gatherers began to farm: to alter and control their environment. In the Valley of Mexico, the climate changed, and water sources, game, and

flora became scarcer. As the population grew, the people were forced to turn to agriculture or perish. The cultivation of maize (corn) made the evolution of the Valley possible. The origin probably occurred in the central Valley of Mexico as early as 9,000 years ago. Corn was the primary dietary staple throughout Mesoamerica, and then spread northward and southward.[14] Maize, beans, and squash formed the basis of their diet.

Maize unified Native American cultures. Recent studies show that people traveled with the seed to various places in the Americas. Archaeologists discovered the remains of the largest human settlement in the American Southwest dating from 760 BCE to 200 BCE; it included evidence of maize farming.[15] The widespread nature of the maize culture supports the theory that Mesoamerican farmers brought corn into the Southwest. Corn spread a way of life that extended from the present-day Southwest along what is now U.S. Highway 10 into the eastern half of the United States, eventually becoming a staple throughout much of North America.[16] The symbolic significance of maize and its role is evident in ceremony and ritual throughout Mesoamerica and the Southwest. Maize was found in modern-day Peru as early as CE 450. *Science Daily* reports that "[some] of the oldest known corncobs, husks, stalks and tassels, dating from 6,700 to 3,000 years ago were found at Paredones and Huaca Prieta, two mound sites on Peru's arid northern coast."[17]

The European invasion endangered the corn cultures to the point of extinction. This threat continues today in places like the remote mountains of Oaxaca, Mexico, where traces of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have compromised the native corn. Mexico banned commercial planting of transgenic corn in 1998. However, it imports about 6.2 million tons of corn a year, mostly from the United States. About a quarter of the U.S. commercial corn crop contains GMOs, and after harvest it is mixed with conventional corn. Mexican corn contains low levels of GMOs. This concerns Mexicans since GMO foods and seed are an environmental threat to wild plants and species such as the monarch butterfly.[18]

The Olmeca 1500 BCE–500 BCE

Around 3000 BCE, a qualitative change took place in the life of the corn people. Agriculture surpluses and the concentration of population encouraged specialization of labor. Shamans became more important in society. Tools became more sophisticated and pottery more crafted. History shows the development of Agricultural civilization occurring at about the same time as in North Africa and Asia, where the "cradle of civilization" is traditionally believed to have been located. A dependence on maize agriculture and a growing population began to form Mesoamerican identity.[19]

Because the Olmeca civilization was so advanced, some people speculate that the Olmeca suddenly arrived from Africa—or even from outer space! Most scholars, however, agree that Olmeca, known as the mother culture of Mexico, was the product of the cross-fertilization of indigenous cultures.[20] The Olmeca built the first kingdoms establishing the worldview and political symbolism that were inherited by the Maya.[21]

The Olmeca culture was one of the world's first tropical lowland civilizations, an antecedent to Maya "Classic" culture. They created villages and cities in the Gulf Coast lowlands in present-day southeastern Veracruz and Tabasco and in northern Central America.

By 2000 BCE, the production of maize and other domesticated crops was sufficient to support whole villages. A second breakthrough occurred with the introduction of pottery throughout the region. The earliest pottery came from the Oco, who lived on the Pacific coast of Chiapas and Guatemala. Although not much is known about the Oco, their pottery is found from Veracruz to El Salvador and Honduras. The development of pottery allowed the storage of food surpluses, encouraging the Olmeca and other Mesoamericans to form small villages. Little evidence of social ranking and craft specialization exists in the early villages, which evolved from an egalitarian community into a hierarchical agrarian society of toolmakers, potters, and sculptors. As they evolved, the Olmeca became more patriarchal.

The Olmeca began to build villages on the Gulf Coast as early as 1500 BCE. By 1150 BCE they formed settlements of thousands of people, constructed large formal temples built on earthen mounds, and carved colossal nine-feet-high stone heads. An example of the splendor of the Olmeca was San Lorenzo, an urban center with public buildings, a drainage system, and a ball court.

La Venta (population 18,000), a major ceremonial site in Tabasco, eclipsed San Lorenzo (population 2,500) as the center of the Olmeca civilization in about 900 BCE.[22] Tres Zapotes (population 3,000) would eventually overtake La Venta. By the Middle Formative period, other chiefdoms emerged throughout Mesoamerica. Trade networks linked the Olmeca to contemporaries in Oaxaca and Central Mexico. In the Valley of Oaxaca, San José Mogote functioned as a primary center, as did Chalcatzingo in the present-day state of Morelos. Priestly elite dominated the primary Olmeca settlements. As time marched on, the shaman class played an ever-increasing role in the lives of the people. From these centers, they ruled dispersed populations of farmers, who periodically assembled at the ceremonial and trade sites to meet labor obligations, attend ceremonies, and patronize the marketplace. The elites had greater access to valuable trade goods and occupied larger homes than the common people. The elites were buried in larger tombs.

The Olmeca left behind archaeological evidence of their hieroglyphic script and the foundations for the complex Mayan and Zapotecan calendars. They developed three calendars: a ritual calendar with a 260-day cycle that was

used for religious purposes; a solar calendar with 18 months of 20 days, plus 5 days tacked on (corresponding to our 365-day calendar); and a combination of the two calendars in which religious days determined tasks such as the naming of a newborn infant.[23]

The development of the calendar required an advanced knowledge of mathematics. There is considerable difference of opinion about whether the Olmeca or the Maya discovered the concept of the number *zero* circa 200 BCE. (The Hindus discovered the zero in the fifth century CE, and not until CE 1202 did Arab mathematicians export the concept to Europe.[24]) Before the time of Christ, the Olmeca used a more accurate calendar than the West today. Pre-Columbian astronomy, too, was far ahead of Europe's. The writing system of the Olmeca is still being deciphered. These hieroglyphic texts represent more than a history; they also constitute literature.[25] Other Olmeca legacies are the ball game and the feathered-serpent cult of Quetzalcóatl that they shared with most Mesoamerican cultures.[26]

Increased agricultural surpluses and trade gave the Olmeca the luxury of developing advanced art forms. Although they are best known for the massive carved full-rounded heads, they also crafted smaller figurines of polished jade. Religion and the natural world inspired the subject matter for Olmeca art.

The Olmeca culture also passed its organizational forms, religion, and art to the Maya, Teotihuacán, and later Azteca societies. About 300 BCE, Olmeca civilization mysteriously vanished. In truth, it continued to exist from 150 BCE to CE 450, in what scholars call the Epi-Olmeca period.[27]

The Maya

1.2 Outline the history and development of Maya civilization.

Mayan agricultural villages appeared about 1800 BCE. The Maya formed a trade network that interacted with other chiefdoms in the Gulf Coast, Oaxaca, and Central Mexico. Merchants from Teotihuacán lived in Maya centers such as Tikal at least from the first century CE.[28] They constructed raised fields, dug irrigation canals, and reclaimed wetlands. As their population increased, they built larger ceremonial centers. As in the case of other Mesoamerican societies, rulers took control of religious rituals and the belief system.

From CE 250 to 900, the Maya lived in an area roughly half the size of Texas (today the Mexican states of Yucatán, Campeche, Quintana Roo, parts of Chiapas, Tabasco, Guatemala, Belize, western Honduras, and El Salvador). The divine *ahauob*, the "divine lord," ruled millions of farmers, craftsmen, merchants, warriors, and nobles and presided over capitals studded with pyramids, temples, palaces, and vast open plazas serviced by urban populations numbering in the tens of thousands.[29] The Maya built temple-pyramids, monuments, and palaces of limestone masonry in dozens of states. Their calendars continued at the center of time science.[30]

In the ninth century CE, the Maya Classic culture sharply declined, probably due to revolts, warfare, disease, and/or crop failure. Overpopulation partially explains the internal strife as well as growing dissatisfaction with their leadership. Meanwhile, scholars look for answers. In a limestone cavern in northern Guatemala, through narrow tunnels frequented 12 centuries ago, there are black carbon images of a sacred ball game, musicians, dwarfs contemplating shells, homosexual lovers locked in embrace, and columns of intricately entwined hieroglyphs, showing an extremely complex society.

The decipherment of the glyphs raises questions. For example, little doubt exists about the presence of homosexuality; the question is how society formed attitudes toward homosexuality.[31] Research in this area is just beginning and, like past literature on the subject, it comes from highly biased sources. Richard Trexler argues that Spaniards would often feminize their enemies in warfare, calling them sodomites and pederasts. Trexler says that European notions formed much of what we know about homosexuality. In the case of the invasion and subjugation of the Mesoamericans, the Spaniards' homophobia suggested to them their own moral supremacy. Sodomy "was seen as either a sign of insufficient civilization or a sign of moral decay."[32]

Maya Hieroglyphic Writing

The decoding of hieroglyphic writing is leading to a greater understanding of the Maya culture, including the identification of dynasties of rulers and an understanding of how the various people interacted.[33] DNA evidence from bones of the ancient Maya suggests that the common people seldom lived beyond the age of 40: Many died in infancy and early childhood. Men and women in the ruling class were physically larger—as much as four inches taller. Furthermore, the evidence shows that the ruling class sometimes lived remarkably long lives. One of the greatest rulers of the ancient city of Yaxchilán, Shield Jaguar, lived almost 100 years.

Maya glyphs show that the ball game played throughout Mesoamerica was a means of communicating with the gods. It was a substitute for war.[34] Revered by both the Maya and the Azteca, the game had deep religious significance. It was played by small groups in an outdoor stone court; the objective was to pass a large rubber ball through a stone ring at opposite ends of the court.[35]

The Maya based their numerical system of counting on the fingers and toes; for example, in Quiché, a branch of Maya culture, the word for the number 20 symbolized "a whole person." This method of counting also reflects

decimal divisions. The Maya used a system based on the number 20, with only three symbols: a bar for *five*, a dot for *one*, and a stylized shell for *zero*. As we have discussed, the Maya, if not the Olmeca, were probably the first people to develop the mathematical concept of zero.[36]

The astronomy of the Maya was not limited to observation of the stars and approximate predictions of the movements of the heavenly bodies. Using sophisticated numerical systems and various tabular calculations in conjunction with the hieroglyphic script, Maya astronomers calculated figures running into millions.[37]

At the time of the Spanish conquest, the Maya still wrote in glyphs—not only on stone slate but in handmade books. In 1566 in the Yucatán, Friar Diego de Landa read a great number of Maya books. According to him, because the books were about the indigenous antiquities and sciences, which he believed were based on superstitions and falsehoods of the devil, he burned them. However, not all of the Maya books were burned; some were sent to Europe as part of the booty Cortés seized from the Native Americans. The Spaniards could not decipher them, and over the years, most crumbled into dust or were thrown out as trash. In summary, most Maya codices, or books, were destroyed. Much of what we know about the Maya is speculation—the conquerors burned the Mayans' documents.

Maya Society

Like other Mesoamerican societies, the Maya lived within the matrix of the community. "Both nuclear and extended families were found among the Maya."[38] Couples would generally marry in their late teens or early twenties. The Maya organized into extended families.[39] "The Maya governance had several powerful leaders who performed the task of maintaining harmony and order. There was a proper hierarchical structure followed throughout the kingdom."[40] This structure evolved over thousands of years.

The inheritor of supreme authority was established through primogeniture, which resulted in the rule by clan elders. Kings based their legitimacy on their membership in a clan. The kings erected monuments to commemorate their victories and to record their lineage.[41]

During the Late Classic period, Tikal, a kingdom of around 500,000 people, was the largest known Maya center. It covered about 14 square miles and included more than 3,000 structures. It made alliances with other city-states but also often used force to expand their territory.[42]

The glyphs on a prominent Tikal building reveal the names of notable women such as Bird Claw, Jaguar Seat, Twelve Macaw, and the Woman of Tikal.[43] These women, although buried in honored places, were present only through a relationship with an important male. The differences between males and females changed with time. Scholars suggest that there was more equality before CE 25 than after. As in most advanced civilizations, class differences existed, and over time, one's position in society became hereditary. There was a distinct divide between high-ranking members of Tikal society and the poor that widened over time.

The glyphs reveal few actual Maya woman rulers. During the sixth and seventh centuries, two woman monarchs, Lady Kanal-Ikal and Lady Zac-Kuk, ruled in Palenque. Both were the descendants of kings and thus legitimate rulers. They inherited the throne and passed it to their children. Lady Zac-Kuk was the granddaughter of Lady Kanal-Ikal and was the mother of the Great Pacal, who built grand buildings as testimony to his mother's greatness. Indeed, Pacal inherited his legitimacy through Lady Kanal-Ikal's line of ancestry. She lived for 25 years into his reign. Pacal died in his nineties.[44]

Shifts occurred in the role of Maya women that were affected by warfare and exposure to other societies. Increasingly, they participated in rituals connecting the supernatural world and politics. History is the study of documents, but because colonizers destroyed Indigenous documents, the truth cannot be firmly established. Much of what we know is theory.

The Decline of Maya Civilization

After CE 909, the Maya built fewer new temples, and fewer cities, except in the northern Yucatán, at sites such as Chichén Itzá and Tulum. Governed by priests, Chichén Itzá was founded about CE 400. The architecture suggests a religious dominance and there are many representations of the god Chaac, the Maya rain god, on the buildings. With the arrival of the Itzá from Central Mexico about CE 850, the city was rebuilt and images of the god Kukulcán, the plumed serpent, became numerous. The Itzá were politically and commercially aggressive rulers.[45] Chichén Itzá, the dominant Maya center in the Yucatán Peninsula during the early Postclassic period, was closely linked to the Tula people in the north, and was influenced by that culture. The importance of the center declined after the late twelfth century, when a rival Maya group sacked it. Tulum and other coastal cities were important centers for sea-based commerce.[46]

Glyphs may someday partially answer questions about the Maya, who built their civilization in a hostile and fragile rain forest. It stands to reason that the most intricate details were transcribed in the Mayan books that the Spaniards destroyed. These documents could have answered questions such as, how did six million Maya coexist in this difficult environment? What we know is that for a time, these civilizations met the challenge, and they developed an advanced knowledge of astronomy and mathematics that allowed them to increase production of food and other necessities. They constructed a mosaic of

sunken gardens, fruit trees, and terraces—a system that used rainfall and fertile soil, and shaped the jungle to their advantage without permanently harming it. Maya farmers dug canals and built raised fields in the swamps for intensive agriculture.[47] Until recently, archaeologists assumed the Maya used a slash-and-burn method where farmers cut and burned the jungle-planted crops for a few years and then moved on when nutrients were depleted.[48] A true slash-and-burn method would have supported only about 65 people per square mile. By CE 600, the Maya population density reached about 125 people per square mile.

After hundreds of years of relative prosperity and power, the urban infrastructure of many Maya cities broke down. The drop in the food supply increased the gap between the lower and the elite classes and between city-states. Today, Mesoamerican scholars generally agree that no single factor caused this fall. But by the Late Classic period, populations suffered from malnutrition and other chronic diseases. The environment simply could not sustain the large population indefinitely.[49]

Growing social gaps and war played roles in the decline. These factors, however, cannot be compared to the Spanish colonial class domination that included racial subjugation. In the Maya world, the common person labored in the fields, maintaining a complex agricultural network, while priests resided in empty ceremonial centers. The nobles plainly exploited the commoner—the warrior, temple builder, and farmer. The Maya organized construction crews of *corvee*, or unpaid labor, and over time the growth of this system magnified class hostilities. In addition, there was a sharp decrease in rainfall between CE 800 and 1000—one of the most severe climate changes in 10,000 years—at roughly the same time as the Maya decline in the ninth century. The drought aggravated tensions: The result was that cities, villages, and fields were burned and wars increased.[50] The absence of documents prevents specificity.

Although the cities of the Maya lowlands shared a common culture, they lacked political unity. Each region had a capital city and numerous smaller subject cities, towns, and villages. Furthermore, increased trade and competition led to warfare. The Maya civilization, however, endured for more than 1,000 years. In the Postclassic period, the Maya experienced a gradual breakdown of its social structures, marked by a decline of the priest class and the growing political and cultural influences of a rising merchant class.[51]

Until recently, scholars portrayed Maya society as peaceful. They reached this conclusion based on glyphs. However, archaeologists have recently developed another view of the Maya, based on glyphs showing the practice of human sacrifice and bloodletting.[52] The current interpretation is that the Maya believed that the gods controlled the natural elements, and that the gods demanded bloodletting.[53] Allegedly, human sacrifice was limited to prisoners, slaves, and orphaned or illegitimate children purchased for the occasion. Generally, it was more common to sacrifice animals. This bloodletting and human sacrifice placated the gods and assured the Maya that their crops would grow and their children would be born healthy. As drought and a drop in the food supply took their toll, there was a corresponding increase in human sacrifice to appease the gods and to assure success in warfare. An analogy can be made between human sacrifice and war and the Christian Bible.

Teotihuacán

1.3 Explain how Teotihuacán and the Tolteca influenced Mesoamerica and each other.

Teotihuacán (400 BCE–CE 700), the "city of the gods," was an ancient commercial and religious center in the central Valley of Mexico. It was located in the Valley of Teotihuacán in a pocket-like extension of the Valley of Mexico, becoming the primary center of Mesoamerican civilization around 200 BCE. By the end of the Formative Preclassic period, it concentrated sufficient authority and technology to make quantitative and qualitative leaps in progress and power, and it accumulated influence throughout the region.[54] The civic–religious complex laid the foundation for the development. At its height, at the end of the sixth century CE, Teotihuacán covered about eight square miles and housed more than 150,000 inhabitants, making it the largest city in the world outside China.[55]

In the Early Classic period, the people of Teotihuacán lived in apartment compounds. There were more than 2,000 separate residential structures within the city. Commerce linked outlying villages to the core city. As with peasants in other societies, these workers contributed labor, food, and other products for urban elites and state institutions. A strong central government gave control to the elites over peasants in the city and countryside. The ruling elite forcibly moved the rural peasants into the city during the Early Classic period. A highly centralized state conquered a territory that covered most of the central Mexican highlands.

Urbanism and Trade

Teotihuacán was a major manufacturing center in the Early Classic period. The products of its craft workers spread over much of Mesoamerica, as far south as Honduras. The pottery represented Teotihuacán's highest present day achievement. Its hallmark featured a cylindrical vessel with three slab legs and a cover. Vessels shaped like modern flower vases and cream pitchers graced the city. Artifacts from other civilizations also added to the city's splendor. Teotihuacán was so revered that Azteca royalty annually made pilgrimages to the city.[56]

Teotihuacán was the hub of trade networks from Central America to today's southwestern United States.

It grew to a population of 100,000–200,000. Without trade, Mesoamerica would have remained at the chiefdom stage, instead of evolving into a sophisticated world system that stressed material production and common ideas.

Teotihuacán suffered from internal civil strife in the seventh century, and again at the beginning of the tenth century. In about CE 600–650, unknown invaders burned the civic ceremonial center of the city, marking a turning point in its history. From Teotihuacán sprang a network of societies, such as the city of Xochicalco, later associated with the Tolteca people. Teotihuacán was also a center of long-distance trade that maintained robust mercantile contact with other regions.[57] Even after its decline, Teotihuacán was a great city of 30,000 inhabitants until about CE 950. Without its dominance, Mesoamerican societies were less centralized, breaking into dozens of city-states, which competed for trade and influence.

The Tolteca

The secularization of Mesoamerica characterized the Post-classic period. Religion remained important but the roles of the civil and commercial sectors increased, leading to the expansion of market systems and long-distance exchanges. A Toltec Domain emerged in what is today Central Mexico in about the tenth century CE.[58]

The Tolteca were a dominant force during the period from about CE 900 to 1150. A subgroup of the Chichimeca, a Nahua-speaking people from the northern desert, the Tolteca controlled the Valley of Mexico.[59] Their capital was Tula (Tollan), about 40 miles north of present-day Mexico City. Founded in the ninth century, Tula incorporated part of the heritage of Teotihuacán, although it is generally associated with Tolteca culture. Tolteca refugees migrated to Teotihuacán after its fall in CE 700, adopting many of its cultural features. Topiltzin Ce Acatl Quetzalcóatl (Our Prince One-Reed Feathered Serpent) ruled Tula from CE 923 to 947. Ce Acatl is often confused with the Azteca deity Quetzalcóatl, the feathered serpent who for 1,000 years was part of Mesoamerican mythology.

The Tolteca developed a set of cosmological concepts, practiced religious rites including human sacrifice, and built grand temples to their gods. In the courtyards of Tula, supporting the roof of the great Temple of Quetzalcóatl, stood 15-foot columns in the form of stylized human figures, that is, enormous statues of warriors standing stiffly under the weight of their weapons and wearing rigid crowns of eagle feathers. Processions or military marches, and eagles and jaguars devouring human hearts are portrayed. The Plumed Serpent, formerly interpreted in Teotihuacán as the benevolent divinity of agricultural plenty, in Tula became a god of the Morning Star, the archer-god with fearsome arrows.

Tula was not at the crossroads of the international trade networks. In the mid-1100s, the Tolteca collapsed, perhaps under attack by nomadic tribes, and Tula was abandoned. By that time the Tolteca extended their sphere of influence into what is now Central America. This culture was transposed to Yucatán, where it was superimposed on Maya tradition, evolving and becoming more flexible and elegant. A hybrid art form of dazzling brilliance developed and lasted for two centuries. The Tolteca influence can be seen in a cross-cultural fusion of deities depicted in Mayan glyphs, frescos, and designs.

Tula was the axis of the Tolteca civilization. It controlled most of Central Mexico, the Yucatán Peninsula, and the Gulf Coast, and it is speculated that its interests extended to Chiapas and the Pacific coast. The Tolteca expanded trade with people as far away as Zacatecas, Veracruz, and Puebla; New Mexico and Arizona; and Costa Rica and Guatemala. They aggressively assimilated with the peoples that they had ties with, often appropriating their customs. For instance, by the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century, the Mayan culture was in decline. The Itzá began to substitute their gods and architectural styles. The Tolteca built the Observatory, Kukulcán's Pyramid, the Temple of the Warriors, the Ball Court, and the Group of the Thousand Columns. The architecture and artifacts became representative of cross-fertilization between the two cultural areas.[60]

Other Corn Civilizations

1.4 Describe the importance of corn in the development of civilizations of Mesoamerica and North America.

The Zapoteca were the original occupants of the Valley of Oaxaca. About 4,000 years ago, Oaxaca's people settled in agricultural villages. Interaction with common ancestors played an important role in integrating autonomous villages. Between 500 BCE and 100 BCE, a highly centralized, urbanized state emerged, with Monte Albán as the principal center.[61] Great plazas, pyramids, a ball court, and underground passageways graced the city. The Zapoteca and the Olmeca engaged in long-distance trading that dates to the time of San Lorenzo. The Zapoteca later enjoyed good relations with the city of Teotihuacán.

Zapoteca society was religious; it held that a supreme being created everything, although not alone, and there was no beginning and no end of the universe. Like other Mesoamerican societies, the Zapoteca wrote in hieroglyphics and were obsessed with astronomical observation. Their 365- and 260-day calendars set a rhythm for their lives, with the latter serving as a religious guide and marking the birthdays of its adherents.

The Zapoteca script was the earliest known writing system in Mesoamerica that used a logo-syllabic system (the use of a single symbol for an entire word). These written symbols were the building blocks of words. It was

developed around 600 BCE. Over time, however, it eroded. The importance of the writing system is that it is an archaeological record of the genesis of inequalities and marks the evolution of a society. In most cases the conquistadores wiped out written evidence in Mesoamerica preventing a full appreciation of this civilization.

"The Mexican state of Oaxaca was the heartland of one of the oldest and most enduring Mesoamerican polities."[62] Between 300 BCE and CE 700, the ancient Zapoteca state flourished. Zapoteca script spread and other groups appropriated it. It flourished for about 1,500 years, declining after the collapse of Monte Albán but eventually became the "Mixteca-Puebla" (CE 1250–1550)[63].

After CE 650, Monte Albán declined and other strong city-states emerged in the valley. Mitla, in the eastern part of the Oaxaca valley took on greater importance.[64] Mitla is the best-known Postclassical site, continuously occupied since the Early Formative period, and is thought to have been a Zapoteca religious center. Despite the growth of other societies, the Zapoteca remained a major player in the region.

Meanwhile, in the highlands, the Mixteca increased their influence, and by the eleventh century they interacted with the Zapoteca-speaking people of the valley. There was a high degree of assimilation and intermarriage between the Mixteca and the Zapoteca nobility. The Mixteca are known to have engaged in a highly ritualized form of warfare and they were known for military prowess. Despite their influence, the Mixteca, like the Zapoteca before them, were not a dominant power. They established the kingdom of Tututepec on the coast, which was important enough to extract tribute from other kingdoms. By forging strong bonds with other city-states through intermarriage and war, the Mixteca expanded their power.[65]

The Mixteca developed their own unique art style. However, they were influenced by the Zapoteca, and the two cultures created a synthesis. The creations of their goldsmiths and their manuscript illuminations are exceptional. Mixteca books or codices constitute an illustrated encyclopedia, reflecting religious beliefs and rites and the history of the aboriginal dynasties and national heroes. The style and color range of the illustrations, as well as the symbols linked to the ritual calendar, are also found in their murals.[66] The history depicted in the codices is a sacred history, showing an abundance of deities and rituals. The Mixteca also excelled in ceramics, which became highly prized ware in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Mexico.

The Tarasco

By the twelfth century, the Tarasco people, also known as the Purépecha, ruled a vast territory in West Mexico, centered in present-day Michoacán. Where they came from is unknown. They were probably part of the Chichimeca migration. The Chichimeca were part of nomadic groups from the northern frontier that migrated to what is today Central Mexico. The Tarasco were considered uncivilized by the older tribes. The Azteca along with the Tarasco were part of Nahua migration. The Tarasco civilization was formed the political unification of some eight city-states located within the Párzcuaro basin.[67] The Tarasco occupied the region for more than 1,600 years (150 BCE–CE 1530). Their development resembled that of other Mesoamerican cultures. Ceramic artifacts link the Tarasco to the old traditions of Chupicuaro (present-day Guanajuato). Their pottery and metalwork styles are unique, although they borrowed heavily from surrounding societies. This borrowing was common. For example, ceramics found in the present-day northern Mexican states of Zacatecas and Durango bear resemblance to the Hohokam ceramic found in what is today Arizona.

The capital city of the Tarasco Tzintzuntzán was built on the shores of Lake Pátzuaro and dominated by a huge platform that supported five round temples. The Tarasco raised a well-trained army and from Tzintzuntzán forged a powerful realm. However, Tarasco military prowess did not tell the whole story. Their language and culture dominated the region, with many of the surrounding villages assimilating into it. They were excellent craftspeople, and they invaded other people for honey, cotton, feathers, copal, and deposits of salt, gold, and copper. Tarasco lords were placed in conquered lands and collected tributes in goods.

Unlike other Mesoamericans, the Tarasco were not known as renowned traders. Nevertheless, historians speculate that they engaged in long-distance trading by sea, reaching South America. Tarasco society was socially stratified between nobility, commoners, and slaves. The capital city dominated the area, although most people lived in rural settlements.

The Tarasco worshipped many deities who, among other things, were associated with animals and calendrical days. Ceremonial dances affirmed their connection with ancestral gods. Enemies of the Aztecs, the Tarasco flourished from CE 1100 to 1530. The Azteca attempted to conquer the Tarasco but failed. In CE 1478, 24,000 Azteca retreated in the face of a Tarasco army of 40,000 warriors. But because the Tarasco did not leave a written language, scholars know relatively little about them.[68]

The Azteca

The Azteca or Mexica were Náhuatl speakers. Náhuatl belongs to the Uto-Aztecan family spoken from Oregon to Panama. It is not related to most Mesoamerican languages. The Azteca belonged to diverse polities and ethnic groups. They were not a single ethnic group; they were comprised of many ethnicities that shared a like culture and shared history.

The Azteca[69] arrived from a legendary place in the north called Aztlán.[70] (Some Chicanos say that it was in what is today the southwest United States; others, in northern Mexico, in the area of Zacatecas.) A network of trade routes linked the high plateau of Central Mexico with Maya territories, reaching as far as the most remote northern districts of the realm, in what is now the southwestern United States.[71] The Azteca prospered between CE 1345 and 1521 and dominated most of northern Mesoamerica. They had a tribute system in which craftspeople could share their ware. From this was born the tributary system. At first tribute system was layered with commoners paying tribute to nobles. This system expanded after the formation of the Triple Alliance that is often referred to as the Azteca Empire. It was an alliance of three Nahua altepetl city-states of Tenochtitlán, Texcoco, and Tlacopan.[72]

Between CE 1325 and 1345, the Azteca established Tenochtitlán on an island in Lake Texcoco. The Azteca built a confederation of city-states that had more than 350,000 people. The leader of the Triple Alliance was Tenochtitlán known for its military prowess. The Azteca ruler directly controlled the Alliance although local governments remained in place. A Tributary Economic System developed where client states paid tribute to the Alliance. Although members of the Alliance shared in the tribute, the political and military power rested with the Azteca nobility and state. It reached from the Pacific to the Gulf of Mexico, from Central Mexico all the way to Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. The Mexica were not culturally homogeneous, but consisted of 17 ethnic groups. Scholars have mislabeled this confederation the Azteca Empire.[73]

Rarely is the colonization process in relation to the provinces discussed or that the tributaries retained their ethnic identities. Today the notion empires are discussed in the context of a Euro centric world view thus empires are based on the concept of imperium generally references Rome. For example, sociologist George Steinmetz research on empires focuses on mechanisms such as capitalism. In most studies of an Azteca Empire the "institutional dimensions" are thin. Most models are based on European experiences. I maintain that most scholars are more infatuated with the word "empire" than its particularities.[74]

The Azteca farm surpluses underwrote the "craft-manufacturing economy". The Azteca supplied food to large cities. The growth of market systems gave the Azteca more opportunities to exchange their goods as well as providing a means to trade and accumulate tribute as well as the opportunity to spread their culture. The society was stratified, with the elites extracting tribute and the commoners paying it. Life was better in the city that the periphery. In Teotihuacán they lived in small adobe houses with stone roofs and had more access to material goods.

The Azteca benefited from their highly productive agricultural infrastructure. They farmed on raised fields, or *chinampas*, fashioned by piling earth over the natural growing surface, as a way of reclaiming swampland for cultivation.[75] They stacked flat mounds of fertile river sediment and then deepened the ditches or canals around them to create a waffle-like pattern. The advantage of raised fields was that they could be cultivated year-round, even during the dry season, because swamp water percolated up into the nutrient-rich soil. Five hundred acres of fields could have fed up to 5,200 people.[76]

The Azteca assimilated the cultural experiences of generations of native peoples. Mixteca art played an important role in Azteca artistic skill development. Azteca sculpture displayed technical perfection and powerful symbolism. The Azteca knew and appreciated the masterpieces of the civilizations that preceded them and those of contemporaries such as in Monte Albán. They developed a well-defined literature, some of which has been preserved through oral testimony. Much of this tradition was conserved in codices, which consist of a combination of pictographs and ideographs. Religious and cosmological themes dominate the codices. The Azteca did not neglect the socialization of its people. They had two kinds of schools—one for commoners, the other for nobility. In both, boys and girls were taught rhetoric, history, ritual dancing, and singing; in the Calmecac School for future leaders, the curriculum included law, architecture, arithmetic, astronomy, and agriculture. Their poets were frequently kings or military captains from satellite principalities.[77]

Although a lot is known about the work performed by women, relatively little is known about cultural attitudes toward them. Some scholars assume that Azteca society was rigidly patriarchal, and that it became increasingly so with the militarization of society. Another viewpoint is that the "prehispanic Azteca gender system appears to have combined gender parallelism (where men and women played different but parallel and equivalent roles) with gender hierarchy. Gender parallelism was rooted in the kinship structures and in religious and secular ideology. Men and women were genealogically and structurally equivalent."[78]

The lower classes, as in most societies, bore the burden of class oppression. Lower-class women did embroidering, which they often sold in the *mercado* (marketplace). Generally, a woman's caste, as in contemporary society, determined her occupation and she was schooled to play that role. Women could enter the priesthood, and although there were female goddesses, women could not become the musicians or poets who honored goddesses in public. Furthermore, they could not engage in violent activities or participate directly in mercantile caravans. Women had few options, and circumstances sometimes forced them into prostitution. The woman who worked outside the sphere of male control was suspect. According to Irene Silverblatt, "class and social standing critically shaped the social experiences of Mexica men and women."[79]

Anthropologist June Nash's "The Aztecs and the Ideology of Male Dominance"[80] describes the transformation of the Azteca society from a kinship-based society to a class-structured empire, claiming that there was a diminution of the power of women beginning in CE 830 and continuing to the fifteenth century CE. Despite this, women enjoyed equal rights under the law and could participate in the economy. According to Nash, women were active producers as well as vendors. They could hold property—but whether they did and how much depended on social class.

The Azteca were the beneficiary of Tolteca culture, and many Azteca males took Tolteca wives, which quickened the assimilation process. According to Nash, polygamy "weakened the role of women in royal families" this was because their sons were not guaranteed succession to the throne. By the late fifteenth century a division of labor based on gender was well established. The codices show men teaching boys to fish, cultivate, and work metal and women teaching girls to weave, tend babies, and cook. According to Nash, sacrificial ceremonies glorified the cult of male dominance.[81]

While Azteca society may have ignored forms of male homosexuality, lesbians were disdained as lower than prostitutes. Contradictorily, there were male transvestite performers who are said to have been bisexual, and they enjoyed access to both male and female. In short, Azteca culture appears to be highly puritanical, militaristic, and male-centered. Among men, power came with age, which brought privileges.

As with other Mesoamerican civilizations, human sacrifice and war were apparently interwoven into Azteca religious practice. The Azteca justification for human sacrifice was a cosmic view that encompassed the demands of their god Huitzilopochtli, lord of the sun and god of war.[82] The Azteca placed their faith in their priests, who revealed that the sun and the earth had been destroyed four times; the present era was known as *el quinto sol*, "the fifth sun" the final destruction of which was imminent. Only special intervention through Huitzilopochtli would save them. [It is similar to the Christian idea that the world will end during a millennial and Christ will rise to save them.][83] The coming of the fifth sun is predicted in the Aztec Calendar Stone.

The religious system legitimized the authority and the tributary rights of its leaders. Blood sacrifice was necessary to preserve the Sun, and the whole structure of the universe, from the threat of cosmic destruction. The logic was that the sacrifices appeased the Sun; it was based on the cyclical belief that the sun provided food and the sacrifices fed the sun. The need for sacrifices was made even more important after the drought of CE 1450 ravaged Central Mexico with many believing that the calamities of 1450 were because too few victims had been offered to the gods.[84] The Azteca rationalized war, which was the result of politics and trade, in much the same way as Christians, Jews, and Muslims rationalize their holy wars.

Every aspect of Azteca life, from the birth of a young warrior to a woman's continuous sweeping of dust from the house, symbolized the intricacy of war as well as their advanced society. Azteca society was well ordered and highly moralistic, treating commoners with "consideration, compassion, and mercy,"[85] while also demanding from them moral conformity. Medical treatment was on a par with Europe's, and life was less harsh than it was in Europe at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards.

Náhuatl writing was primarily written on perishable materials such as deerskin and paper. Like other books and documents, they were burned because, according to the conquistadores, they were works of the devil. Surviving documents in Náhuatl were written after the Conquest. The writing was in the form of pictographs. The codex painters were educated in the calmecacs. While mostly for nobles, some commoner children were trained as scribes. "After the Spanish conquest, codex painters worked with the priests, recording the details of Aztec life. These codices are the richest source of information we have about the Aztecs."[86]

Los Norteños

North America was not sparsely populated. There were an estimated four to six million Indigenous Americans in what is today the United States in 1492, which is probably a dramatic undercount.[87] The numbers and the evolution of these people must be put in context and must not be compared to Mesoamerica or any other people. For example, in 1500 Spain had a population of six to ten million; Portugal had about a million people.[88] Moreover, historians like to compare Mesoamerican and other civilizations. They get so involved with the architecture and neglect the story of the Southwest and the rest of the Indigenous Americans, forgetting that they were in totally different environments. In North America over thousands of years, the Indigenous People through trial and error became among the world's great botanists and environmentalists, learning to conserve water, and recognizing the properties of the Southwest's plants. Buildings alone do not define greatness.

In the Southwest cacti are not all alike—some could be eaten, some contained water, while others had medicinal properties. Some bore fruit. What white people considered weeds the Indigenous People ate, such as the Verdolagas (purslane), a vitamin powerhouse that white Americans are just discovering.[89] It grows in many Southwest backyards in the summer. It spreads like a weed after a downpour of rain. Verdolagas are high in Vitamin C. The Yaqui, or Yoeme, of present-day Sonora and the Tohono O'odham (Papago) of the Sonoran Desert dealt with the great aridity and extreme heat by selecting native flora such tepari beans that require little water to cook.[90]

The distribution of maize (corn) into the Southwest from Mesoamerica in probability began about 4,000 years ago. Maize adapted to the climatic and cultural environment of the Southwest with a drought tolerance.[91]

The choice of a trail to reach a water source and selected plants involve economy. Choices had to be made which paths were the safest, best and most direct; the trails were used for transportation. They were not exclusively used by the young, but entire families used them. Since prehistoric times, Native American families chose the best ways to get from one point to the next before they had beasts of burden; the entire family blazed the trail, carrying their household goods with them. So the choices they made were very important. The planners made sure there was water, so they followed the paths of the animals to creeks, arroyos, and rivers. They selected the paths that were the easiest to walk. They crossed rivers at the shallowest point.[92]

Thousands of years before the arrival of the Spaniards, trade thrived between what is today the Native Americans of Mexico and North America. There were no borders, there were no walls. The very first trailblazers of the Southwest were animals. The Native Americans followed the paths of the animals to find water and then made paths of their own. They mapped North America. Long before Columbus, the Native Americans traveled over trading paths or trails that crisscrossed the Southwest and what is today the United States.

> Merchants and itinerant traders linked Paquime (Casas Grandes, Chihuahua) to what archaeologist J. Charles Kelley has called the "Aztatlan Mercantile System," a vast network of trade routes and markets, which extended from the Valley of Mexico up through northern and western Mexico into the southwestern United States.[93]

When other people arrived the natives not only had knowledge of what plants were safe to eat but which were nutritious and medicinal.

The Anasazi, Mogollon, and Hohokam began farming corn in abundance as early as 2000 BCE. Corn fueled the rise of Mesoamerica and northern people. Mexico's north had varied societies, most of which lacked sufficient water to sustain large populations. Nevertheless, the Southwest, outside of Mesoamerica and northern Mexico, have a continuous history of habitation and contact. The Indigenous Populations of the Southwest shared an agricultural tradition with Mesoamericans revolving around corn and the use of ceramics. Unlike Mesoamerica, most of the Southwest with the exception of the Pueblos are believed to have lacked state-level societies and urban centers.

People arrived in what is now the Southwest between 23000 BCE and 10000 BCE.[94] (They probably got here a hundred thousand years ago, but American archaeologists quibble that they were not *Homo sapiens* but Neanderthals, which they consider a lower classification.) About 4,000 years ago, maize (corn) was first introduced into the southwestern United States from Mexico through highland corridors along the Sierra Madre Mountains. As agriculture spread some built villages similar to what is present-day northern Mexico. Many formed homes in villages or *rancherías* or remained hunters. Agriculture transformed the lives of the people and by 500 BCE, corn, squash, and beans were grown and pottery was crafted. The widespread cultivation of corn is estimated to have occurred from 1100 BCE to 500 BCE.[95] The progress of agriculture varied throughout the Southwest and the rest of what is the United States reaching advanced levels in what is Arizona and New Mexico today. This led to complex social and economic systems among the northern peoples—the Hohokam, the Mogollon, and the Anasazi. *Ranchería* populations comprised of Opata and Pima Altos lived in northern Sonora/Arizona.

Carlos Vélez-Ibañez writes, "A triad of complex agriculturally based societies that included the Hohokam of Southern Arizona and Sonora, perhaps the Mogollon of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico, and to a lesser extent the Anasazi of Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde who inhabited the Four Corners area of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado, lived in the region."[96] One of the most successful civilizations was the Hohokam, who began their transformation about 300 BCE, although, as with the Mesoamerican civilizations, the process began hundreds of years before this date. According to anthropologist Vélez-Ibáñez, the Hohokam were probably migrants from Mesoamerica.[97] For nearly 1,700 years, they flourished along the Desert Rivers before vanishing in the fifteenth century CE.[98]

During the Formative period, the Hohokam lived mainly in flask-shaped huts set in shallow pits, plastered with mud over a framework of poles and woven twigs. Early villages were loose clusters of houses separated by stretches of packed clay.[99] After about CE 1000, Hohokam villages took on a more urban aspect. Each contained several "great houses," typically three or four stories high, and numerous smaller dwellings similar to the early pit houses. One city stretched for a mile and included at least 25 compounds of buildings. A vast irrigation network consisting of more than a thousand miles of canals crisscrossed an area of some 10,000 square miles.[100]

Archaeologists estimate that at least 100,000 and possibly a million people lived in these ancient cities. They subsisted on the barren desert, making the desert productive through irrigation and by breeding a variety of drought-tolerant corn that would grow from planting to harvest on a single watering. In addition, they cultivated squash, beans, tobacco, and cotton. Acid-etched shells suggest that the Hohokam traded with tribes a thousand miles to the east.[101]

By 1450, Hohokam civilization vanished. Legend has it that raiders from the east swept down on the Hohokam, destroying homes and fields. The invaders killed or enslaved the inhabitants of the great cities. Some Hohokam escaped, but upon returning they never rebuilt the cities or canals. Some archaeological authorities believe the demise of the Hohokam came after a gradual transition. They theorized that the Hohokam never left, but abandoned most of their villages in the Salt and Gila River Valleys, around CE 1450. The theory is that Hohokam society collapsed because of internal conflicts brought about by environmental pressures and they taxed the land's capacity to feed the people. The floods during fourteenth late 14th century probably damaged the Hohokam canal systems. These disasters weakened the control and authority of the secular or theocratic elite. This did not happen overnight, but was a slow process that lasted several generations. Another theory is that the Salado, a mixture of Anasazi and Mogollon cultures, simply migrated in and took over, blending with the Hohokam and diffusing them out of existence. Further evidence suggests that the long-term effects of irrigation contributed to the Hohokam demise. River water carries dissolved minerals. As this water evaporates from irrigated fields, it leaves behind mineral residues—usually alkali salts that gradually make the soil unfit for plants.

The Anasazi (meaning "ancient ones" in the Navajo language), who neighbored the Hohokam, settled in the Four Corners region in about CE 100–1300. Ancestors of Pueblo People now living in New Mexico and Arizona, the Anasazi farmed and produced fine baskets, pottery, cloth, ornaments, and tools. Villages evolved in caves that consisted of an array of semi-subterranean houses. Houses in the open also consisted of chambers below and above ground. Pit houses, known as *kivas*, served ceremonial purposes; these were community structures with up to a 1,000 rooms.[102] Multistoried pueblos like Chaco Canyon and cliff dwellings like Betakin and Mesa Verde are examples. The Anasazi abandoned the cliff houses in the late thirteenth century, possibly because of a severe drought between CE 1276 and 1299, and because of pressure from the Navajo and the Apaches. The Anasazi were the ancestors of today's Hopis, Zunis, and Rio Grande Pueblo peoples.[103]

The Mogollon lived in the southeastern mountains of Arizona and southwestern New Mexico between 200 BCE and CE 1200. In all probability, the Mogollon made the first pottery in the Southwest. They depended on rain and stream diversions for their farming, a technique that influenced the Anasazi or Puebla culture. From about CE 700 on, the Mogollon in New Mexico were greatly influenced by the neighboring Anasazi.[104]

According to Vélez-Ibáñez, Casas Grandes, Chihuahua was, a Mogollon city.[105] Also called Paquime, it was a major trading and manufacturing center on the northern frontier within the Mesoamerican world system, from which Mesoamerican culture was dispersed. A link is made between Casas Grandes and the Mimbres culture of southwestern New Mexico, a branch of the Mogollon peoples, who produced painted pottery between CE 800 and 1150 similar to that found in the Casas Grandes area. Some scholars call Paquime an outpost for Mesoamerican traders controlling trade between the Southwest and Mesoamerica; others link it to the Anasazi.

Present-day Casas Grandes is within a vast network of ancient ruins that was once the heart of one of the Southwest's largest trading centers. The area is still being excavated, and a lot remains unknown about this center. Small villages surrounded the city of Paquime, which evolved into a sophisticated center with an irrigation system that included dams, reservoirs, and *trincheras* (stone ditches). It had warehouses, ball courts, ceremonial structures, plazas, and steam rooms. By the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, the area began to stagnate. Climatic change, environmental degradation, sociopolitical conflict, and shifting trade patterns all took their toll on the Mogollon people.[106]

At this point, hundreds of tribes with different cultures and linguistic dialects lived in northern Mexico and the Southwest. For example, Texas Indigenous People lived in camps perhaps as early as 37,000 years ago.[107] They went through the evolutionary cycle, at first surviving primarily on wild game. In fertile East Texas, tribes built permanent villages, and had well-developed farms and political and religious systems. These tribes formed a loose federation, known as the Caddo confederacies, to preserve the peace and provide mutual protection.[108] This ancient culture originally occupied the Red River area in what is now Louisiana and Arkansas. Semi-sedentary agricultural people, these tribes grouped around ceremonial mounds that resembled temples. Some scholars speculate that these skillful potters and basket makers were linked to the Mesoamerican cultures of the South.[109]

By the latter part of the eighteenth century, thousands of miles to the west in present-day Alta California, one of the largest concentrations of Indigenous People lived. Dozens of tribes adapted to its varied climate and topography. California mostly had a mild climate and an abundance of food. Like Hawaii, it had an abundance of game, wild fruits and plants, and fish, and most tribes did not have to farm. Trade with the native people to the east and among themselves supplemented their ways of life that amounted to living off California's rich vegetation. Their habitation of central California began between 12000 and 10000 BCE, and their evolutionary cycles resembled those of other native peoples. They left artifacts, traditions, and their descendants.

Edward H. Spicer's *Cycles of Conquest* is one of the most important studies of the native peoples in northern Mexico who, at one point, were part of the Mesoamerican sphere of influence.[110] The Pima, Opata, and the Tohono O'odham did not have a border marking Mexico and the Southwest,

They used the land to its fullest, building *rancherías* and some cases small villages" or retained as such. They used the land to its fullest. Notable among the tribes were the Cáhita, who spanned northern Sinaloa to Central Sonora. Among the Cáhita were the Yaqui; they had a strong sense of identity with the Yaqui River, one of the great waterways of North America.[111] Because of the fast-flowing river, the Yaqui were able to form villages of up to 3,000 villagers, unlike other people of the desert. Their lives differed from the Tarahumara (Rarámuri) and the Conchos, who lived on the eastern slopes and to the east of the Sierra Madre. These tribes, although they numbered in the tens of thousands, traveled in bands of 30 or fewer people, farming, hunting, and gathering to survive. When the sun got blisteringly hot, they migrated to the headwaters of the sierras to farm; in the harsh winters they migrated to lower altitudes to hunt and gather.

The Indigenous People to the north did not build great cities but like other people, the corn and trade bound them together. They endured frequent droughts, often warred with each other, and they endured.

Conclusion: The World System in 1519

Mesoamerica was an interconnected world that was integrated and in which events taking place in one social unit affected those in another over an extended region. It was composed of large towns and their dependent rural communities. The rural communities consisted mostly of patri-lineal kinship groups; the nobles and other elites lived in the large centers, exercising authority over the commoners. The forms of government varied from chiefdoms to fully developed states. In the Valley of Mexico, there were about 50 city-states with rulers or joint rulers appointed by the "royal" lineage as the supreme authority. They called the supreme ruler a *tlatoani*, "he who speaks," or in the case of joint rulers, *tlatoque*. In the highlands of Guatemala, the Maya called the ruler or king *ajpop*, "he of the mat." Because he ruled sitting on a mat that symbolized a throne.[112] The Azteca Empire was a loose coalition of subject city-states that paid tribute to an imperial center.

Scholars are split on whether the Azteca attempted to impose their culture on their subject peoples. One thing is certain: There was considerable ethnic diversity among the people of Mesoamerica. The dominant cultures influenced some, while others remained segregated as distinct cultures. Mesoamerica, although influenced by the dominant world systems of the Maya, Tolteca, and other cultures, was not under the political control of a single power.

The Core Zones

Mesoamerica, meaning "Middle America"—located between North and South America—was divided into multiple core zones, of which Central Mexico was the most prominent. The exchanges between the core, periphery, and semi-periphery were important in determining the flow of luxury goods—cotton garments, jade, cacao beans, hides, feathers, and gold ornaments. The core—through conquest, tributary demands, or trade activities—often obtained the goods that in great part were a product of its demands.

The core zones were Central Mexico, West Mexico, Oaxaca, and the Maya zone. Tenochtitlán was the capital of the Central Mexico zone, inhabited by some 200,000 persons. The Azteca ruled over about 300 city-states and over another 100 or so client states throughout the Central Mexico core zone. The Azteca appointed administrators to oversee the states and in other instances cemented alliances though marriage between Azteca and other elites. Considerable cultural and linguistic diversity existed within this core.

The Tarasco held sway over the West Mexico core zone. The Tarasco zone, more centralized and militaristic than the Azteca, held a tighter grip over its city-states. But the Tarasco did not have the same impact that the Azteca did on Mesoamerica.

The Oaxaca core zone was less integrated than the previous two zones. This zone consisted of 50 small kingdoms in which the dominant languages were Zapoteca and Mixteca. However, as in the other zones, multiple languages coexisted with the dominant languages. At the time of the Spanish invasion, the Mixteca states enjoyed considerable unity, forged by intermarriage between the ruling families. Trade took place within and outside the core. Intermarriage also occurred between the Mixteca and Azteca, who had significant cultural exchange.

The Maya core zone structurally resembled that of Central Mexico. Maya language and culture dominated the zone, although there was little unity between the highland and the lowland core states. Moreover, Maya had multiple dialects and non-Maya speakers also lived within the zone. The city-states competed with one another and some, like Quiché, incorporated approximately 30 tribute-paying provinces. The smaller zones within the main core zone were densely populated, and trade and warfare existed between them. Although generally peaceful, tensions existed between many Maya and the Azteca cores often due to trade competition.

The Semi-Peripheral Zones

The semi-peripheral zones, regions that mediated between the core and the periphery, were important to the exchange network, especially when dealing among competing core states. They assimilated much of the trade and the religion of the core and the periphery. Casas Grandes, in what is now the state of Chihuahua, was one such semi-peripheral region (although it did not exist at the time the Spaniards arrived). The Mexican state of Tabasco on the Gulf Coast was also an important semi-peripheral zone. Many of these regions were port-of-trade societies, and centers such as Xicalanco were quite cosmopolitan. They organized the governing classes, comprised of merchants, into political councils, in which women could reach high positions of authority. The south Pacific coast region is less well known. The Azteca and Quiché Maya vied for control of the Xoconusco area, which ultimately became a tributary province of the Azteca. The Caribbean coast, including the Yucatán Peninsula and the Central American isthmus, was another important semi-peripheral zone. Among the most important of these semi-peripheral centers was the island of Cozumel, which was run by merchants who invested in massive temples, shrines, and palaces. These port towns bordered the Caribbean all the way to Panama.

The Mesoamerican Periphery

The zones of the Mesoamerican periphery actively participated in the economic, political, and cultural life of the Mesoamerican world. However, the people in the periphery played a subordinate role. They were unequal, and often subject provinces. The periphery should not be confused with frontier zones, from which the Azteca originally came. The periphery extended to Mexico's northwest, from Colima to Culiacán and well into Sonora. In the northeastern part of what is now Mexico, the Huaxteca played a peripheral role. Its people had no writing system, and tension existed between them and the Azteca. Southeastern Central America was also a peripheral zone, occupied mainly by people speaking Pipil, which is closely related to Náhuatl. The Lenca language was also spoken in this peripheral zone. This peripheral zone was especially rich with diverse peoples, who interacted with the Maya and were organized into simple city-states or chiefdoms.

It is important to repeat that contact also existed with what is now the U.S. Southwest. This contact varied, but was most intense with the descendants of the Hohokam and other sedentary populations. Distance played a role in how much influence the core had. Frontier people such as the Azteca were eventually integrated into the core. The main point is that the diverse peoples of Mesoamerica were unified under a vast, well-defined world system, in many ways more distinct than the European world system.

Although more research is needed, it is highly probable that a trade structure existed that further integrated the disparate regions. Exotic commodities from Mesoamerica have been found in the Southwest, and it is probable that they were circulated through local native trade networks. Turquoise was an important trade item, and long-distance trade between the Zuni and Sonora existed. There was also an intense use of turquoise in Mesoamerica. Trade contributed to the evolution of the division of labor; it led to the evolution of state systems in Mexico proper, and it was a mechanism of economic integration. The population of what is today Mexico and Central America had reached a population of between 25–38 million on the arrival of the Spanish, and because of the population explosion in what is the Mesoamerican region, it is probable that contact would have increased the quest for water. In sum, the Americas did not need Europe for its growth and survival.

Notes

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4 Also an under researched area.
5 Zapotec, Ancient Scripts. http://www.ancientscripts.com/zapotec.html. Mesoamerican Writing Systems, http://www.ancientscripts.com/ma_ws.html.
6 Brendan Borrell, "What's So Hot About Chili Peppers?" *Smithsonian*, April 2009, http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/Whats-So-Hot-About-Chili-Peppers.html. The author makes the point that while chili may have originated in Bolivia, chili is generally associated with Mexico.
7 Scholars presuppose that agriculture is essential for the development of village life and the evolution

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Chapter 2
El Imperio Español

Learning Objectives

2.1 Analyze how Spain developed the historical and cultural justifications for imperialism.

2.2 Analyze Spain's justifications for the destruction of Mesoamerican Civilizations.

2.3 Describe how Spain's location and history paved the way for slavery in the Americas.

2.4 Analyze how the Spanish Caste system maintained a system of racial and gender control.

2.5 Describe role of silver in Indigenous and colonial Spanish interactions in the Mesoamerica northern New Spain.

2.6 Explain how mining bonanzas impacted life for Indigenous People as the Spanish moved into the Rio Grande region.

2.7 Describe interactions between the Pueblo people and Spanish colonizers.

2.8 Deconstruct the notion that European Colonialism did not impact the Native American because the land was uninhabited.

2.9 Characterize the notion that the missions were more a institution to colonize the people than to convert them to Christianity.

The Illusions

2.1 Analyze how Spain developed the historical and cultural justifications for imperialism.

Rome colonized Iberia for about 600 years leaving its language, culture, institutions, and pretensions. The occupation profoundly impacted the Indigenous population, assimilating most people on the peninsula into the Roman culture. Only in the north were people able to partially resist this absorption.[1]

Spain did not become an Empire by accident: globalization, racism, capitalism, and Catholicism stoked the illusion. Castile during the Reconquista (CE 711–1492) built a military machine and a war mentality. It intervened in Northern Africa and competed with Portugal. In 1402 Henry III of Castile colonized the Canary Islands. A growth in Europe's population increased the demand for sugar and led to the expansion of the sugar trade as well as a thriving African slave trade Spanish and Portuguese on the Atlantic islands of the Madeiras and São Tomé and Principe off the west-central African coast. The Canaries and the Azores, along with the Mediterranean Islands also prospered producing 80 to 90 percent of CE western European sugar market.[2]

A sugar industry began on the shores of the Mediterranean between CE 700–1600.[3] Sugar was part of the Arab Agricultural Revolution that followed the founding of Islam and the Arab occupation of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt in the first half of the seventh century. It spread throughout the Levant (eastern Mediterranean region).[4] The Arab Agricultural Revolution developed trade, organization of labor, and land that was the genesis of a colonial plantation system.

In the fourteenth century incessant warfare brought about a change in the eastern Mediterranean sugar industry as the Ottoman Turks extended their power, shifting production to the western Mediterranean.[5]

Early Arab sugar cultivation also flourished in North Africa, southern Spain, Sicily, and Morocco.[6] The Norman conquest of Sicily in the eleventh century and the Crusades brought northern Europeans into contact with the sugar-producing lands. Sugar was new to the Middle East. By the 700s, sugar was cultivated in Palestine and Egypt and by the 800s in Sicily. It was a key part of the Arab Agricultural Revolution.

Sugar was a luxury among western Europeans, who discovered it during the Crusaders in the eleventh century. The rich used it as a spice for their pastries, replacing honey.[7] The Mediterranean sugar trade and the exploration of the African coast set the stage for the colonization of Madeira, the Canaries, and the Americas.

The Black Plague killed an estimated 75 to 200 million people in Eurasia and peaking in Europe between 1346 and 1353. Its effects were monumental, resulting in a dependence on African slaves. A restructuring took place because

of the decline in production of major suppliers such as Egypt and Palestine; Venice and Genoa filled the gap. The slave trade expanded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, enabling an increase in sugar production in Granada, where the Genoese played an important role in the trade. The Genoese were also heavily involved in the Canaries and Madeira.[8] The colonial plantation system also emerged in the Azores and São Tomé. By the early sixteenth century, the plantation system was a tested form of colonial land use.[9]

Its rivalry with Portugal also added to the Spanish notion of empire. During the second half of the 1400s, the Portuguese explored Africa's western coast, rouning the Cape of Good Hope in 1488. Soon afterwards Spanish ships raced to build the larger navy. The rivalry raged until the two countries reached an agreement in the fifteenth century that prohibited Spanish exploration and commerce south of the Sahara.

Slavery was indispensable to Spanish expansion, in 1500 Spain only had about seven million people and there was a shortage of labor. Portugal was also sparsely populated and in Lisbon and Évora and throughout much of southern Portugal slaves were essential because of the scarcity of labor. Slaves comprised roughly 10 percent of the population by the mid-1550s. North African, eastern Mediterranean, and Morisco slaves were common in Iberia.[10]

Always Roman

It is not surprising that when Spain invaded the Americas that it called itself *el Imperio español,* it grew to be one of the largest empires in history. The empire reached its peak under the Spanish Habsburgs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[11] The empire began with the inaugural of Charles I (1500–1558) as king of Spain in 1506, who became Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire in 1519. The ascension of Charles touched off wars with other Habsburgs and European states, for which Spain's colonies paid for. During the Protestant Reformation, the Holy Roman Empire essentially meant Spain; it defended the Vatican as well as promoted the spread of Catholicism in the Americas. Charles's son Philip II inherited the Spanish Empire, including its possessions in the Netherlands and Italy.

Habsburg Spain was a superpower and the center of a global maritime empire. Trade flourished across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Toppling the Azteca and Inca civilizations, Spain laid claim to vast territories in North and South America.[12] The Spanish Empire dominated the oceans; victorious in Europe, it entered a cultural golden age in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, paid for by silver and gold from American mines. Incessant wars with other European countries (e.g., France, England etc.) fractured hopes for a commercial empire.

Spain's occupation violently disrupted Mesoamerica's evolution. It destroyed Mesoamerican social institutions, religion, and infrastructure. Within 80 years, between 1519–1600, the Indigenous population of New Spain fell from at least 25 million to about a million. What followed was 300 years of colonial rule, making possible the political and economic exploitation of Indigenous People. Systems of control such as the categorization of people by color, and the projection of the dominant class's worldview, made this possible. The exploitation pulled Spain and, ultimately, all of Europe out of the dark ages and allowed them to buy into a world market dominated by China.

The Asian market's demand for silver in the early 1500s contributed to the growth of mining districts such as Zacatecas. In the early 1500s, the gold/silver ratio was 1:6 in China; in Europe it hovered around 1:12, in Persia 1:10, and in India 1:8. Thus, with six ounces of silver, merchants could buy a full ounce of gold in China. In Europe, the same six ounces had a purchasing power of one-half ounce of gold. This trade put a premium on silver. In 1571, the Spaniards founded the city of Manila, Philippines, and it became a global center of substantial and continuous trade across the Pacific Ocean. Through the seventeenth century, Pacific galleons transported more than 50 tons in silver annually from Acapulco to Manila, where Chinese merchants would ship the cargo to the mainland. Trade with eastern Asia pushed demand for Mexican bullion as the Chinese population zoomed from 55 million in 1500 to 231 million in 1600 and 268 million in 1650.[13] Zacatecas and the northern periphery of New Spain depended on the demand for silver in the Orient.

Africa Begins at the Pyrenees

French novelist and playwright Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870) is generally credited with the aphorism "Africa begins at the Pyrenees."[14] It was originally a disparaging remark meaning the Spanish were really not Europeans but Africans:

> It is an error of geography to have assigned Spain to Europe; it belongs to Africa: blood, manners, language, the way of life and making war, in Spain everything is African. The two nations have been mixed up for too long—the Carthaginians who came from Africa to Spain, the Vandals who left Spain for Africa, the Moors who stayed in Spain for 700 years—for such a long cohabitation not to have confused the race and customs of the two countries. If the Spaniard were Mohammedan, he would be completely African; it is religion that has kept it in Europe.[15]

In truth, Iberia (modern-day Spain and Portugal) was much more a part of the ancient world that included Phoenicia, Carthage, Greece, Rome, and the Muslim world than it was a part of western Europe. The intermingling of the races began in about 35000 BCE. By 5000 BCE, the Basque people lived in the north, in the Pyrenees region. Between 4000 and 3500 BCE, the Iberians entered from North Africa, in all probability through Gibraltar. Around 1100 BCE, Phoenician merchants from present-day Lebanon established trading posts in Cádiz and elsewhere along the Spanish Mediterranean

coast. Greek merchants traded along the northeastern coast and Jewish merchants from North Africa settled on the Iberian Peninsula.[16] The Celts arrived through the Pyrenees or the Atlantic Ocean between 900 and 650 BCE, bringing knowledge of iron metallurgy. The Phoenician colony of Carthage, in what is modern-day Tunisia, was an offshoot of the Lebanese Phoenicians. Iberia came under the rule of Carthage, but following the Punic Wars (264–246 BCE) it was eclipsed by Rome laying the foundations for Spanish language and culture.[17]

The fall of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century CE opened the way for the Visigoths, a nomadic Germanic people from central Europe, to rule Spain. In 711, the Muslims of northern Africa launched invasions across the Strait of Gibraltar, occupying most of the peninsula. The African presence lasted more than seven centuries.[18] Under Muslim rule, Spain was a center of learning and art. The Muslims preserved the writings of many Greek, Roman, and Middle-Eastern intellectuals—writings that otherwise would have been lost. Muslims brought improved irrigations methods, enabling production of cotton and foods such as rice, sugar cane, oranges, and other fruits and vegetables. The Africans also brought other breeds of animals; using stock from the Muslims and Moors, the Spaniards developed a breed of horse that was better adapted to an arid climate. They developed strategies to travel long distances, herding African cattle and churro sheep.[19]

Meanwhile, the northern Christian kingdoms gradually gained power in holy wars known as *la Reconquista,* driving the Moors southward. By the 1000s, Christians were gaining the upper hand, and by the 1200s, they had driven the Muslims into the Granada region of the Iberian Peninsula. In 1479, the marriage of Queen Isabela and King Fernando united the kingdoms of Castile and Aragón, and in 1492, they conquered the last Moorish kingdom, Granada, which occupied the eastern half of present-day Andalusia.[20] That same year they expelled between 120,000 and 150,000 Spanish Jews. These events set the stage for "Occupied America."[21]

The Spanish Conquest

2.2 Analyze Spain's justifications for the destruction of Mesoamerican Civilizations.

Who is Christopher Columbus?[22] He is claimed by Italians, Jews, Spaniards, and Catalans! In 2006, a forensic team led by Spanish geneticist José Antonio Lorente has compared DNA from bone fragments that Spain says are from the explorer—and that were buried in a cathedral in Seville—with DNA from remains that are known to be from Columbus's brother Diego, who is also buried in the southern Spanish city.[23] The DNA findings were immediately challenged by the Genovese and Jews who claim Colón. The only ethnic groups that do not claim him are Native Americans and those condemning the Indigenous genocide. The controversy continued and three years later another "study by Estelle Irizarry, based on official documents and letters of the explorer, found that Columbus came from the kingdom of Aragón and his native tongue was Catalan. Irizarry also concluded that Christopher Columbus's origins were not obscure by chance, but rather the result of the famed explorer's having purposely hid the fact he was *a converso*, a Jewish convert to Christianity."[24]

Columbus traveled to Portugal, the center of the African slave trade, before going to Spain. In all probability, Cristóbal Colón was a slave trader and took part in the African slave trade before 1492. He saw firsthand the wealth that could be accumulated by trafficking in slaves. In 1492, Columbus landed in what are now the islands of the Caribbean. "On his first day in the New World, he ordered six of the natives to be seized, writing in his journal that he believed they would be good servants. Columbus returned to Barcelona with six Taíno natives who were paraded as curiosities before King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. Throughout his years in the New World, Columbus enacted policies of forced labor in which natives were forced to work."[25]

During Columbus's expeditions between 1493 and 1501 some 3,000 Indigenous are known to have been shipped to Europe. When the Indigenous People revolted, Columbus was brutal and ordered the dismembered bodies of the freedom fighters to be paraded through the streets.[26] On the island of Española, sometime in 1495, the Spaniards forced Indigenous People to surrender goods, including gold ore. When he could not find sufficient gold and wealth, he turned to slave trading. In 1495, he rounded up 1,500 Taínos (Arawaks), selecting 500 of the "best specimens," and set sail for Spain.[27] Only 300 natives survived the trip to Spain. By 1650, few Taíno or Caribs remained alive.[28]

As mentioned, Columbus was probably trained in the Madeira sugar trade. On his second voyage of 1493, he introduced sugar cane plants to the Caribbean. Columbus knew that sugar and slavery were inseparable and that tremendous profits could be gotten from sugar. By the early 1500s, sugar-growing plantations flourished on the Caribbean Islands, built on the model of the Mediterranean plantation system. The sugar industry thrived on Santo Domingo, then on Cuba, and soon after on Puerto Rico.[29]

Meanwhile, the pope condemned the Portuguese practice of plunder and the enslavement of human beings along the coast of Africa. However, he left a loophole. The natives could be enslaved if they were cannibals. Columbus himself justified the enslavement of the Indigenous People, claiming they were cannibals. The Spaniards used this loophole throughout the colonial period. In Central America, they captured and sold tens of thousands of natives as slaves. They shipped Nicaragua natives to Peru to work in the mines and *haciendas*, plantation-like estates.[30]

Today's racial attitudes began a long time ago. Feelings of superiority and destiny planted the idea of European superiority. Pope Alexander VI issued a papal document on May 3, 1493, "granting" to Spain—at the request of Fernando and Isabella—the right to conquer the lands that Columbus had found, as well as any lands which Spain might "discover" in the future. In 1494, the Treaty of Tordesillas gave Christian nations the right to colonize non-Christian lands under the Doctrine of Discovery, a series of papal bulls issued in the fifteenth century that absolved present and past generations for atrocities committed in the conquest of the Indigenous Peoples.[31] This absolution created a mindset of entitlement for Europeans.

Faith versus Rationality

Apologists for Columbus say that he did not invent the institution of slavery. They claim that Spain tried to control slavery, and that the crown promulgated the Laws of Burgos in 1512 that included regulations protecting Indigenous labor and ensuring their Christianization. They argue that Spaniards such as the Dominicans Antonio de Montesinos and Bartolomé de las Casas defended the rights of the Native Americans.[32] But the Laws of Burgos were almost never enforced, and the famed national debate over whether or not the natives had rational souls did not occur until six decades after the initial contact in the Caribbean and three decades after the fall of the Azteca Empire.

The debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and the renowned Spanish scholar Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda took place in 1550–1551 in Valladolid, Spain. Ginés based his arguments on Aristotle's doctrine of natural slavery: "that one part of mankind is set aside by nature to be slaves in the service of masters born for a life of virtue free of manual labor." Sepúlveda wrote a treatise justifying war against the natives. According to him, the Spaniards had the right to rule the "barbarians" because of their superiority. He compared the natives to wild beasts.[33] The judges in the debate never reached a decision as to the validity of Sepúlveda or las Casas's point of view.

The Spanish Invasion of the Mexica

The Spaniards explored the Caribbean coastline of Middle America, gathering information. By 1511, the invaders conquered Cuba, and in the late 1510s, Hernán Cortés landed on the mainland that was to become Mexico. On the island of Cozumel, Cortés encountered the Maya. In 1519, Cortés sailed to what today is Veracruz, and within two years Cortés's forces conquered the great Azteca Empire and began the colonization of what they later called New Spain.[34]

Throughout the Spanish advance to the Azteca capital of Tenochtitlán, gunpowder, horses, snarling dogs, and glistening armor helped the Spaniards. Unlike the invaders, the Indigenous warriors did not intend to kill their enemies, hoping to wound and capture them, and use them as sacrifices to the gods. Western historians often dwell on human sacrifice but overlook the brutality of the conquest and praise the achievements of Cortés and other Spanish explorers. The invaders created an empire based on the fiction of the right of discovery and conquest. They gave absolute "property rights of any European nation who claimed the land."[35] They minimized Cortés's cruelty during his march to Tenochtitlán in 1519, when Cortés and his Indigenous allies slaughtered 5,000 to 10,000 unarmed Cholulans in less than two hours. His atrocity was based on his suspicion that the Cholula were planning to ambush him.[36] Similarly, rape was justified or worse, it was such a matter of fact that it was not mentioned. It is said that as many as 240,000 Azteca died during the 80 days of the fall of the Mexica. It is reported that five to eight million people perished in a smallpox epidemic during 1519–1520.[37] The Azteca were not immune to smallpox and other European diseases, so outbreaks of these diseases had the effect of germ warfare. At a critical moment, when it seemed as if the Azteca might drive out Cortés's men, a smallpox epidemic ravaged the Indigenous population.[38]

The Azteca also stopped fighting periodically to remove their dead and wounded from the battlefield. At close range, Native Americans used wooden clubs ridged with razor-sharp obsidian—vicious weapons against other Indigenous People, but weapons that shattered against Spanish helmets.[39] The double-bladed swords of the Spaniards in close combat slashed left and right, killing or maiming. Their armament allowed them to drive directly at warriors clustered around their leaders. When the Spaniards captured or killed a local chief, the chief's warriors fell back. In the battle for Tenochtitlán, this weaponry gave the Spaniards a decisive advantage over the Azteca.[40]

Colonialism

2.3 Describe how Spain's location and history paved the way for slavery in the Americas.

Early European colonial occupations consisted of systematic massacres, ethnic cleansing, forced labor, and coerced religious conversion. The Spanish tightened control and adopted a policy of exploiting the occupied country through full or partial political control. They sent Spanish colonist to occupy the country .[41]

In the case of Latin America, colonialism amounted to total control of its political and religious structure. Colonialism relied on a caste system to govern as well as the imposition of the European god. They justified colonialism by claiming an Empire that had the right of discovery. It mattered little that the colonized were not lost. They

were the original inhabitants. Colonialism also resulted in a mentality whereby the colonized people felt inferior to their colonizers, an attitude that often persisted long after independence.

The Colonization of Indigenous Mesoamerica

After the conquest of the Azteca, the Spaniards—through looting, torture, and rape—conquered the Tarasco; they executed the Cazonci, the Tarascan ruler, by dragging him through town behind a horse and burning him at the stake. Cortés's men also subdued the natives of Oaxaca, but the conquest of the Maya proved more arduous. Many Maya fled to the dense forests that remained out of the control of the Spaniards for 200 years.

Not every Maya City was abandoned, however.

> The southern lowlands were nearly deserted. But Maya splendor lived on in the Yucatán peninsula. When Spanish explorers got there in the early sixteenth century, they found cities full of people. They saw highly decorated palaces and temples raised on stepped pyramids. They found paved stone roads and busy marketplaces. They met leaders wearing jade and gold jewelry. These leaders also wore intricate headdresses, jaguar-skin skirts, and bright feathered capes. The Spanish were also met by warriors with bows, arrows, and clubs.[42]

As late as 1680, the Spanish only occupied the northwestern third of the Yucatán Peninsula. The Itzá kingdom survived in the jungles of the Maya lowlands to the south. (The occupation of what is today southern Mexico and parts of Central America was slower because of the conquistadores' preoccupation with silver and gold. As of 1700 there were only five million people in Spain proper. It did not have sufficient population to settle or hold on to their possessions.)

Smallpox and Other Plagues

The distinguishing characteristic of the subjugation of the Mesoamerican native populations was its genocidal proportion. The term *genocide* is used here because when people lose 90 percent or more of their population, millions of lives, an explanation must be forthcoming. As with a nuclear disaster, saying it was accidental is no excuse. After the conquest of Tenochtitlán, smallpox and other epidemics spread throughout the countryside, subsiding and recurring, until eventually as many as 24 million died in what is now Mexico. Certainly, the smallpox, measles, and influenza outbreaks hit urban areas hardest because of the population concentration. (These three diseases are highly communicable, being transmitted mainly by air.)[43]

Four major epidemics occurred in the first 60 years of Spanish occupation. Smallpox caused the first epidemic of 1520–1521, the second year after Spanish contact. Azteca medicine could not stop its spread, and untold thousands died. The second epidemic of smallpox (possibly combined with measles) broke out in 1531. The Azteca called it *tepiton zahuatl*, or "little leprosy." The third epidemic began in 1545 and lasted three years. The Azteca called this *cocoliztli*, or "pest," thought today to have been hemorrhagic fever. A fourth epidemic, again named cocoliztli, lasted from 1576 to 1581, and an estimated 300,000–400,000 Native Americans died of it in New Spain.[44]

Apologists argue that the Indigenous People had a predisposition to diseases that made them vulnerable to European diseases; they theorized that the native peoples were vulnerable to these diseases because their slow trek across the Bering landmass more than 15,000 years before created a biologic selector and "cold screen" that eliminated harmful bacteria and viruses from their bodies. A more plausible explanation is that the lack of larger-sized domesticated animals shielded the natives from diseases carried by animals.[45] The introduction of domestic animals, accordingly, contributed to the spread of diseases to the natives.

The Columbian Exchange refers to widespread exchange of animals; plants; culture; and human populations that included slavery, communicable disease, and ideas between Spain and the New World. Some put a positive spin on the enrichment that occurred because of the exchange. However, to do so is to forget the cost in lives, the destruction of cultures and environment, and the appropriation that took place. It ignores the Atlantic slave trade, the enslavement of Indigenous Peoples, and the diseases that killed millions of them.

The Spaniards brought gunpowder, the horse, and the Catholic Church to the Americas. The Americas' part of the exchange sent corn, the potatoes, the tomato, peppers, pumpkins, squash, pineapples, cacao beans (for chocolate), the sweet potatoes, and fowls such as turkeys. The Europeans brought livestock such as cattle, pigs, and sheep that caused disastrous environmental destruction, and grains such as wheat that condemned generations to diabetes. They brought the onion, citrus fruits, bananas, coffee beans[46], olives, grapes, rice, and sugar cane from other parts of the world. But they also brought smallpox, influenza, malaria, measles, typhus, and syphilis.[47] The exchange wiped out the Indigenous religions, submerged their languages, and tried to blank out their history. They introduced a European construct of race that lasts to this day.[48]

Race and Labor in Mesoamerica

The conquerors practiced a "scorched-earth" strategy that caused widespread environmental destruction and social disorganization. Large numbers of displaced, disoriented, and depressed refugees roamed the countryside, suffering severe nutritional deficiency and often starving to death.

Illness often prevented many natives from caring for their crops or from processing corn into tortillas. The acute food shortage resulted in starvation, and contaminated food and water spread disease. Meanwhile, the Spaniards forcefully herded natives into new farming schemes. Alcoholism took an additional toll with the distilling of native drinks. Before the invasion, *pique*, which was low in alcoholic content and rich in vitamins, was used for religious purposes. It resembled beer rather than hard liquor. When the Spaniards introduced distilled alcohol, it provided an escape from the destruction of society, and addiction became common.[49] Urban resettlement plans only reinforced substantial crowding and lack of hygiene, and native centers became breeding grounds for epidemics.

INDIGENOUS LABOR A "Viceroy," or vice-king, governed New Spain, ruling the colonial government that was subdivided into smaller administrative units. The crown gave former *conquistadors*[*] (meaning "leaders of the crusades") *encomiendas*, large tracts of land with native subjects, an institution that was established in Spain during the Reconquista and also used in the Caribbean Islands. The *encomendero* received tribute from a village along with Indigenous labor. In principle, encomenderos would protect the natives under their care and supervise their conversion to Catholicism.[50] In reality the conquerors often mistreated and abused the natives, keeping them in a state of serfdom. Critics correctly say it was a system to control and regulate Indigenous labor and behavior.[51] The encomienda was a fiction that allowed the crown to circumvent ideological biases against slavery.

THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE Throughout the colonial period, Spain passed legislation supposedly to protect the natives. In theory, the Laws of Burgos, passed in 1512 as *Recopilación de las Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias* (Recopilation of the Royal Law of the Indies), protected the natives. Spain strengthened the laws in 1542, eliminating the right of encomenderos to unlimited use of Indigenous labor. Occasionally, the natives successfully sued; some used the laws to protect their lands or personal labor. However, there was a difference between what the law said and how it was enforced. Justice rarely went beyond an occasional victory in the courts.[52]

The Spanish crown abolished Indigenous slavery and the *encomienda* in the 1550s. Yet, they flourished on the peripheries and frontiers of New Spain well into the nineteenth century. The *repartimiento,* requiring a native community to provide labor for public projects, agriculture, mines, and as carriers of goods was practiced into the eighteenth-century. Although the system mandated wages for the natives, employers often ignored the decree.[53] The repartimiento was not limited to labor; it also included the requirement that natives purchase goods from Spanish authorities. The generous grants of land and labor favored the crown because it made it easier to confiscate the grants as well giving the conquistadores an incentive to conquer and develop regions in New Spain. Moreover, the crown did not have to directly finance this expansion. Lastly, "The Crown also endeavored to convert the natives to Catholicism. Even if life on earth was not pleasant, a converted Indigena could look forward to an afterlife in heaven. A miserable Christian, the Crown reasoned, was much better off than a free 'heathen.' Encomenderos were required to instruct the natives in the faith and enforce attendance at Mass on Sundays. Slave owners could have carried out similar responsibilities."[54]

STRUCTURAL CONTROLS The native communities endured the catastrophes of the invasion and colonization of Mesoamerica, but not before Spaniards dramatically changed them. In order to control them, colonial authorities grouped native communities into *municipios,* townships. The largest town of the municipios was the *cabecera*, or head community. While this structure led to the survival of the native community, it strengthened colonial control of the native village. Its purpose was to isolate natives in order for them to identify with the local village rather than forming class or ethnic identities. This division made it difficult for the different communities to unite against Spanish rule, destroying intercommunity regional networks and the pre-invasion world system. This concentrated power in the hands of Indigenous *caciques*, chiefs, who ran the local system, and were loyal to the Spaniards.

The Spaniards allowed the Indigenous Peoples to keep their languages, but Spanish was the official language. All official government business was conducted in Spanish. If the native or the *casta*, of mixed race, spoke Spanish, he or she was considered superior to those who did not. The Catholic Church was the state religion, and the Christian god supplanted the Indigenous gods.[55] The paternalism of the Spanish friars was an expression of racism, in that they saw the natives as being childlike. They believed that the natives lacked the spiritual and mental capacity to understand Catholicism. During the early colonial period, the Spanish crown did not allow natives to become priests or nuns.[56]

Spain administered the religious conquest from Iberia most members of the hierarchy were from the upper classes. The monarchy and the Church were one with the crown appointing the bishops—a right generally reserved for the pope. The Spanish Reconquista influenced the colonizers: They were intolerant and hostile toward any person who was non-Catholic. To hold office or be a noble in Spain, the nominee was required to prove a *limpieza de sangre* (purity

[*] The name *conquistador* expresses the similarity of conquests in the New World and the conquest of the Moors in Spain. It is similar to a knight who participated in the crusades or the *Reconquista*.

of blood); that they were not of Jewish or Moorish blood.[57] The intolerance extended to Spain's colonies. As previously mentioned, to consolidate its power, Spain imposed a caste system based on race that designated an individual's rank according to color. Spanish priests listed racial classification on baptismal certificates. There were four main racial categories: the "peninsular" or Spaniard born in Spain; the "criollo/a," a person of Spanish descent born in Mesoamerica; the "indio/ia," or native; and the "negro/a," of African slave descent. Innumerable subcategories of hybrids developed over time.[58] This complex system, used for social control, lasted in various forms throughout the colonial period, although it became more difficult to keep track of one's class position as the castas (those of mixed race), moved north. Distance allowed them to fudge on their race. The advantage of moving up in race is obvious: The more Spanish one looked and claimed to be, the more privileges the person enjoyed.[59]

Women in Colonial Mesoamerica

2.4 Analyze how the Spanish Caste system maintained a system of racial and gender control.

Class, status, and gender shaped one's role in society.[60] There was considerable violence against Indigenous women; however, they resisted. Maya women used the courts to bring complaints against priests and other officials for sexual harassment. However, the priest's or official's family connections often predetermined the outcome. In these cases, the Indigenous women were at a disadvantage compared with Indigenous men.[61] "Whereas native men, *hijosdel pueblo,* were assured rights to community land women's entitlements were much more precarious. Women enjoyed independent access to land in central Mexico before the Spanish conquest and they were able to extend their holdings in the mid-sixteenth century, when the decline in native population rendered land abundant."[62]

The Changing Roles of Women

During the colonization, women were the victims of rape, which is considered to be part of the colonization strategy. It is the ultimate symbol of subordination and conquest.[63] Structurally, under colonialism, women were at the bottom of their castes. The new economy, however, opened limited opportunities for women. In Yucatán, the introduction of sheep led to the commercial production of wool. Women were generally responsible for making woolen goods, thus enabling their participation in the wool trade.[64] Yet this was not entirely positive, since the repetitive motions in textile work resulted in physical ailments.

In Azteca society, women were recognized as adults. They had rights before the law and society; this status varied greatly according to their class. Under Spanish rule, their standing was weakened. Spanish law allowed them to litigate inheritance and land rights in court. Nahua women took advantage of these rights, and they actively litigated and testified on their own behalf in the colonial courts. This activity became less frequent in the seventeenth century, as Nahua husbands and fathers increasingly represented the women in court. Native women were not always recognized as *hijas del pueblo*, daughters or citizens of the town, with communal land rights. Women's rights to property narrowed under colonialism, and their participation changed as commercial agriculture pressured *los de abajo* (the poor and powerless) to abandon or sell their land.[65]

PATRIARCHY Gender roles were strongly influenced by the Catholic Church and resulted in deep divisions between the genders. Patriarchy was not only a form of social control but part of a managerial or caste system. Patriarchy resembles the organization of the Catholic Church where the hierarchy is male. The nuclear family was similarly engineered through patriarchy. "Because environments, Indigenous languages, patterns of political, economic, and spiritual organization, ways of structuring family life, varieties of cultural expression, and forms of interrelationships with Spaniards varied so much, Indigenous People did not experience a single New Spain. Instead, a multiplicity . . . emerged."[66] The Catholic Church saw the nuclear family as essential to converting the Indigenous People to Christianity.[67]

The colonizers strengthened their colonial control. Marriage and family was strictly controlled via the casta system.[68] Before the arrival of the Spaniards, women generally married when they were about 20 years of age. After the arrival of the Spaniards, however, Church friars encouraged females to marry at 12 or 14. Early reproduction often resulted in health disorders, including anemia. Society was patriarchal, and men received preferential treatment in nutrition.[69] Even in death, men were favored, as they were more likely than women to be buried within the church courtyard. In sum, colonization worsened the status of women and increased violence toward them.

The family structure changed during the colonial period. For a time, the native nobility kept much of their prestige. But the colonization led to the breakdown of the traditional Indigenous family framework, which was based on an extended family (clan) rather than the highly patriarchal nuclear family that the Spaniards favored. According to Carmack and his colleagues, "Colonial authorities believed that the Indigenous would be easier to supervise and control if divided into small nuclear households," which not only reduced the authority of the elders but also removed the support network for women within the clan.

Early marriage also influenced gender relations and increased the power of the male within the nuclear family, reducing the authority of native women within the clan. The age difference between male and female spouses favored the male. A 20-year-old male who married a 14-year-old girl held much more power than he would have if both were 20 years old.[70]

Finally, the designation of a natural (illegitimate) child that was written into baptismal certificates served as a form of control.

> Illegitimacy was, as other expressions of social behavior, closely linked with race and environment. Urban Indios showed a much higher rate than rural Indios, getting close to rates shown by Españoles and Castas. In Valladolid, for example, between 1760 and 1790, the rates stood at 17% for mestizos, 19% for Indios, 29% for Españoles, and 29% for mulattos. In the countryside, rates for Indios ranged from 2 to 10% in Zacatelco, Acatzingo, Tula or San Luis de la Paz, lower, often by as much as one half, than the rates found for other groups.[71]

The term "Castas" was generally applied only to non-white that were not clearly Indigenous. Whites were considered legitimate. However, the Castas were suspected of "illegitimacy or slavery in their lineage."[72] Illegitimacy could only in part be forgiven by the father acknowledging fatherhood. Being a natural child could bar a person from becoming a member of the clergy or a civil servant.

The Assimilation of Native Women

Native women, according to some sources, experienced a diminished participation in traditional social domains. The Catholic Church promoted rigid attitudes toward women, making women the scapegoats for its failures in converting the natives. Priests blamed Indigenous mothers for not socializing their children, although little attention was paid to educating them. There were few religious schools for women in colonial society. By contrast, during the pre-conquest period, women worked as marketers, doctors, artisans, and priests, and perhaps, occasionally, as rulers. The opportunities for life outside the home were based on class: native noblewomen who married the conquerors and brought a dowry were more readily assimilated and acculturated than the poor.[73]

THE MYTH OF PASSIVITY Indigenous women were anything but passive or invisible, however. By the end of the eighteenth century, they accounted for one-third of the Tenochitilán, or Mexico City, workforce. (Tenochitilán had become the capital of New Spain and was renamed "Mexico City.") A sizeable number of native, African, and mixed-race women worked outside the home. In Mexico City, 46 percent of native women and 36 percent of women from *las castas* (mixed races) engaged in work outside the home, whereas only 13 percent of the Spanish or criollos worked outside the home in the labor force. Most women found employment as domestic servants. We can deduce that native women and women las castas performed the menial work while middle-class women pursued some education.[74]

As mentioned, native women also were far from docile; legal documents show many examples of resistance. Take the case of Josefa María Francisca, a *cacica*, or noblewoman, who for some 30 years played a leading role in Tepoztlán, near Cuernavaca. Francisca did not know how to read or write and probably was unable to speak Spanish; nevertheless, her fiery temperament made her a respected ally and a feared opponent.[75] What angered Francisca was the repartimiento, which forcefully took the village's men to the hated mines of Taxco. In 1725, when authorities arrested repartimiento workers, she led an assault on the jail and freed them. In September a group of 100 women broke into the sacristy, liberated the ornaments and vestments, and sold them to pay for litigation. Angelina María Francisco, the wife of Miguel Francisco, Francisca's lover for 30 years, led the revolt and authorities sentenced her to one year in an *obraje*—a sweatshop—and six months at the *hospital de indios.* They later commuted her sentence.

In the winter of 1797–1798, as typhus ravaged the Maya village of Ixil, the women feared that the royal administrators would tax the village based on its pre-epidemic population. In addition, Spanish authorities violated the tradition of burying local Maya within the church compound and ordered that typhus victims be buried outside the church boundaries, which infuriated the women. They locked the doctor and the priest in the church and made their release contingent on proper interment of the deceased.[76]

Throughout the colonial period, women lodged complaints against clergy for sexual improprieties. This was no small feat considering they were appealing to a patriarchal structure.

ICON OF SOCIAL CONTROL OR LIBERATOR? For many Mexicans today, the appearance of the *Virgén de Guadalupe* to an Indigenous person is proof of the Church's benevolence. For others Guadalupe is the symbol of Spanish social control, representing a passive female role model, subservient to male authority. According to critics, the supposed appearance of the Virgin Mother to Juan Diego[77] at Tepeyac in 1531 is an example of church authorities' substitution of the Virgin of Guadalupe for the Indigenous goddess Tonantzin, mother of gods. The story of the Virgin of Guadalupe may be the product of "the invention of tradition" rather than historical fact. Today, however, the Virgén de Guadalupe has become a Chicana cultural expression that gives strength to women and unifies and defines Mexican culture. For many, she has become a liberator, a symbol of hope and liberation for her community. Sandra

Cisneros and Gloria Anzaldúa have underscored the Indigenous roots of the Virgin and her symbol as a source of inspiration.[78]

Vincentian Father Stafford Poole, C.M., in *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, traces the making of the Mexican tradition of Guadalupe based on documents produced in the colonial period. According to Poole's evidence, most authorities and priests did not know about the Tepeyac shrine representing the Virgin's appearance for some 20 years after the Virgin supposedly appeared to Juan Diego. Spaniards confused her with the medieval Spanish Lady of Guadalupe shrine (in Extremadura, Spain), and venerated the Virgin. Not until the seventeenth century, when the criollo population began to celebrate her, did she become popular among native populations. From conquest to seventeenth century Indigenous Peoples had identified with local religious symbols, which had played a central role in the development of their own religious practices. Consequently, by the mid-1600s, the Church was able to baptize most natives in Central Mexico.[79]

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Guadalupe was more a symbol of criollo nationalism than an Indigenous icon, according to Poole. He argues that even the story of the apparition appears to have changed during the colonial era as did the tradition itself, until Father Miguel Hidalgo used her as a symbol of Mexican independence in 1810. Notwithstanding, today the Virgén de Guadalupe has taken on different dimensions, symbolizing for many Mexicans and Latin Americans a "renewal and rebirth as a people. Guadalupe stands for both transformation and continuity in Mexican religious and national life."[80]

Al Norte: God, Gold, Glory, Silver, and Slaves

2.5 Describe role of silver in Indigenous and colonial Spanish interactions in the Mesoamerica northern New Spain.

The Spaniards sent expeditions in every direction searching for riches. A Cuban-based expedition in 1565 planted one of the oldest European colonies in the United States near present-day St. Augustine, Florida. Meanwhile, the viceroy sent scouting expeditions from Central Mexico to investigate rumors of another Tenochitilán to the north. In 1533 Diego de Guzmán, a slave trader, penetrated as far as Yaqui Valley, in what today is Sonora, Mexico. In 1540 Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, in search of Cibola, the legendary city of gold, led an army of mostly Native Americans and five Franciscan friars as far as the Grand Canyon and across the central plains to Kansas before retreating to Mexico without finding a trace of gold.[81]

Unlike the Azteca and the natives of central New Spain, many natives of the north did not live in concentrated areas. Some lacked the complex social and political organization of the towns of south-central New Spain. Nevertheless, the northern tribes resisted the Spanish encroachments, and the Spaniards called them *indios bárbaros*, or barbaric Indigenous People. In short, the conquistadores felt entitled and were offended that the Indigenous did not meet them with open arms.

Meanwhile, the Spanish named the colonial administrative region in western Colonial Mexico "Nueva Galicia"; it made up of roughly the present states of Jalisco, Nayarit, and southern Sinaloa. Guadalajara was its administrative capital and base of operations for expeditions into the northwestern frontier. Governor Nuño de Guzmán led an expedition that left a trail of depredations, enslavement, and mistreatment of natives as the Spaniards explored and secured the area as far north as Sinaloa. Among the largest were those of the Tepeque and Zacatecas at Tepechitlán.

Bonanzas, or large mining strikes, energized the pull north. They made possible the exploitation of river valleys and the establishment of haciendas, missions, and settlements. The northward movement was not easy, as the northern tribes resisted the encroachment. It was not until after the 1541 Mixtón Rebellion that the Spanish were able to open the mines of Zacatecas, which, at their height, produced one-third of Mexico's silver and employed 5,000 workers. The bonanza drew prospectors and Christian natives to the mines. It generated institutions such as the hacienda and the mission. Bonanzas in Guanajuato (1548) and Real del Monte (1552) followed Zacatecas. The Chichimeca, sometimes called Otomí or Zacatecas, and their allies fought the advance of the Spaniards throughout the 1560s and 1570s, with Spanish settlements forming a large triangle between Guadalajara, Saltillo, and Querétero.[82]

The Decimation Towards the Indigenous Population

The Spaniards' arrival on the northern frontier, accompanied by natives from the interior and domesticated animals, devastated the native ecology and intensified competition for rivers and valleys pushing the native peoples off their lands.[83] The Spanish authorities responded to native resistance by organizing *presidios*, forts, which became an integral part of the invasion after the Chichimeca War of the 1560s. As with the Mesoamerican civilizations, the numbers of natives fell drastically during the Spanish occupation. The Greater Southwest, according to Thomas Sheridan, encompassed "that vast arid convulsion of deserts and mountains north of Mesoamerica," with an estimated population of around 1,700,000 in 1519, plummeting to 165,000 by 1800.[84]

THE LIVING PATTERNS OF THE NORTHERN CORN PEOPLE Most natives lived in *rancherías*, semi-fixed farming settlements. Three-quarters of all Indigenous ranchería natives were Uto-Aztecan. But they varied greatly as to their population density, mode of living, and organization, depending on rainfall and the flow of rivers. For example, at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, fixed villages did not exist in Chihuahua; instead, natives moved in search of water. In the spring they would travel to the headwaters in the sierras, farm, and live there for the summer, and then migrate east to the deserts during the winter where they would subsist on desert vegetation. This pattern of migration meant that the size of the ranchería was smaller than a traditional native village, numbering between 30 and 50.

The Tarahumara people of modern Chihuahua/Durango lived over a large area; they would come together at *tesgüinadas*, festivals during which the Tarahumara practiced rituals that included imbibing corn beer. In Sonora, the Pima and the Yaqui lived in areas that were more compact. Their rivers, such as the Great Rio Bravo or Grande, gave life to villages of thousands and complex social and political systems. The Pueblo people, found mostly in what is today New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and Texas, also lived in villages. In comparison, the nomadic people were still in the process of migration when the Spanish arrived.[85]

The Changing Order

2.6 Explain how mining bonanzas impacted life for Indigenous People as the Spanish moved into the Rio Grande region.

The mining city of Zacatecas was a melting pot of varied races and people. Near the mines, *haciendas* for cattle raising sprang up, which caused tensions with the native populations in these valleys as the newcomers usurped the best land and believed themselves entitled to native labor. As in the south, the Spanish elites considered themselves conquistadores entitled to encomiendas of natives.

Slowly, the Spanish imperial system moved up the Pacific coast to Culiacán, and, simultaneously, up the Zacatecas trail to Durango and Chihuahua. The Spaniards established presidios, missions, haciendas, and pueblos (Indigenous villages or towns). Because of the lack of population and capital, Catholic missions played an essential role in extending and holding the empire's borders and congregating, forging a native workforce and religious presence on the frontier. The demands on native labor occurred both inside and outside the mission orbit: The growth of the mining industry increased the need for food production, forcing the natives to work longer hours, while the mines and the haciendas pressured the missionaries to provide more native workers. These demands, along with the frequent droughts and epidemics that depopulated the region, made the natives restless. Their frequent uprisings made the Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries, as well as the outside settlers, increasingly dependent on the presidios to maintain order by force.[86]

Meanwhile, the missions profoundly changed the lives of Indigenous People. For example, while life had always been harsh for women, often subjected to the raiding and enslavement due to intertribal warfare, they always held strong roles in their communities. Females and males seem to have inherited wealth equally, and women were involved in the trade of weaving and pottery. Both men and women could marry multiple times before they found the ideal mate.[87] A native woman had the choice of abortion, and women participated in ceremonies, although their religious roles were subordinate to those of males. Pre-conquest women shared these cultural memories and religious values; however, the missions ended these choices, as they imposed the attitudes and values of Spanish society on the natives. A hierarchical structure made clear distinctions between the male and female spheres. Meanwhile, Spanish institutions such as the repartimiento shifted women to work that men had previously done.

The Bonanzas

Mining bonanzas forged the *Camino Real* (Royal Road) from Mexico City to Zacatecas, then through today's Durango to Chihuahua, and then to New Mexico. Natives from Central Mexico as well as Africans, Spaniards, mestizos, and castas were drawn over this road to the mines. The conquerors uprooted Native Americans from their villages and destroyed their institutions. Consequently, natives caught in a work-or-starve situation formed a large sector of the wage earners. Dozens of small and large ore strikes brought these workers through Durango to Santa Bárbara and then to Parral in 1631.[88]

By the turn of the sixteenth century, Spain attempted to expand its dominion into present-day New Mexico, where it anticipated another bonanza. In 1598 Don Juan de Oñate, whom the viceroy had appointed governor of the territory of New Mexico, set out with a party of some 500 colonists, including 10 Franciscans and hispanicized Tlazcala and Tarasco natives, many of whom were from Central Mexico, to establish a colony. Juan de Oñate's father was a prominent mine owner, one of the founders of Zacatecas. The younger Oñate, married to a granddaughter of Cortés and a great-granddaughter of Moctezuma, financed the operation. When Oñate and his party failed to find gold or silver, he returned to Mexico City in disgrace.[89] Most narratives about the conquistadores in the Southwest forget that they were invaders. In what is today eastern New Mexico, a few miles south of the city of Clovis, an archeologist found the Clovis

spear tips, which were for a long time reputed to be the oldest known spear tips in the Americas. Clovis type spears changed the people from primarily foragers into big game hunters.

The Indigenous People lived in different places during the changing seasons. They moved with the animals and the availability of plants and fruit bearing trees. Over thousands of years they became farmers gradually digging canals to extend the area of farming, constantly gaining more control over their own food. They were no longer collectors but food producers. They were constantly learning: weavers of baskets, sandals, mats, string, and ropes.

"The Mogollon people grew food in small gardens. They also planted crops on mesas. They depended on mountain rains to water their gardens and crops."[90] Most villages were made pit houses. They were built on the side of the mountain that received the most rain. These were the ancestors of the pueblos that were built with stone, brick, and clay. They built multi-room apartment houses, often three stories high.

New Mexico was hardly a wasteland at the time Oñate and his men arrived. It had a future with the mighty Rio Grande running through its middle and the spread of pueblos as its population grew. At Zuni and Acoma and along the Rio Grande and its tributaries, the Spanish encountered people who lived in multistoried cities and cultivated the land. Further into the interior of this vast unknown frontier, they encountered nomadic societies that followed the migration of immense herds of strange cattle-like beasts with enormous humps. On August 18, 1598, the new settlers began work, and by early September they were ready to dedicate the pueblo. For this occasion, they invited the Indigenous chiefs, opening the festivities by thanking god, and proceeding with a tournament and a great fiesta. The settlers fought mock battles, and participated in jousting contests and horse shows. Toward sunset, the colonists took time out to act in a play written by Captain Marcos de Farfán, recounting the epic story of the opening of New Mexico. It was the first known European play written in the American Southwest.

From the European point of view, the Oñate expedition had a romantic flavor. However, the reality was that Indigenous People suffered extreme hardships under the colonizers. These Spaniards, like other conquistadores, imposed themselves and their civilization on the conquered. The native New Mexicans who resisted were severely punished. When the Acoma resisted colonization, Oñate retaliated and sent a small force against its pueblo, destroying Acoma, and killing 800 men, women, and children. Oñate ordered one foot cut off all the male captives older than 25.

Not everyone is enamored with the Oñate legacy. The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 spread throughout New Mexico and northern Mexico and lasted until 1692. The Indigenous pueblo people rose up against the Spanish colonizers in Santa Fé, New Mexico. Other Indigenous Peoples such as the Apache joined the pueblos and drove the Spanish colonists out of New Mexico. The revolt affected Chihuahua and Sonora where Indigenous People supported the pueblos. After the 1680 Revolt the crown built presidios from Sonora to Texas. When the Spanish settlers returned in the 1690s, many New Mexican families remained in Sonora and Chihuahua.

In 1998 a 12-foot high statue of Oñate's statue erected was stationed a few miles north of Española.[91] Vandals cut off its right foot with an electric saw, leaving the message, "We took the liberty of removing Oñate's right foot on behalf of our brothers and sisters of Acoma Pueblo. We see no glory in celebrating Oñate's fourth centennial, and we do not want our faces rubbed in it."[92]

For most of the seventeenth century, New Mexico was an outpost. The land between Santa Bárbara/Parral and New Mexico had few villages. Continuous small mining strikes filled this century. However, the northern expansion did not come without cost as the Indigenous People resisted the encroachment as well as enslavement and other forms of forced labor. Due to war and epidemics, the Indigenous populations of Chihuahua and New Mexico dwindled radically.

The native population in New Mexico numbered more than 60,000 at the time of the Spanish arrival. By 1800 the population fell to 9,000. Throughout the frontier, from 1560 to 1650 the population declined by 50 percent. The population fell 90–95 percent by 1678. Frequent smallpox epidemics brought heightened competition for farm labor in the north; those in 1639–1640, the 1640s, and 1650s were especially severe. In the 1690s, yet another epidemic of measles broke out.[93] Droughts and labor shortages affected the supply of food. Due to these tensions, frequent revolts spread throughout northwestern New Spain during the 1600s.

Forced Labor

Coercion was part of the colonial process. Government officials in collusion with the agricultural establishment perceived the Indigenous populations as key to production.[94] Landowners and miners could avoid restrictions on forced labor due to their distance from central government. They sought arrangements that bound natives without being required to pay wages or credit advances. The repartimiento was the optimal form of labor control because it improved reliability. The types of labor varied in the mines, and haciendas used mixed crews of wage laborers of all races who worked alongside African and Indigenous slaves.

Periodic bonanzas increased demand for labor. Mine owners and *hacendados* pressured the missions for workers. The mission congregation almost invariably followed the establishment of Spanish mining camps and estates.

The earliest encomiendas drew workers from the native rancherías; encomenderos competed with the missions and Indigenous villages for workers. The encomenderos were in full control of the native population under their charge, often abusing their "trust" by renting the natives to mine owners and other hacendados. Colonial elites also relied on native caciques to furnish them with workers, further stressing the native population.

The repartimiento, although primarily used for agricultural labor, was sometimes used for the mines. The repartimiento as an institution continued long after "free" wage labor was employed in the mines and hacienda. The forced labor draft was crucial to agriculture. In addition, repartimientos were used for maintaining public works. An overlapping progression from slavery to encomienda, to repartimiento, to free labor operated often simultaneously. In this scheme, the missions were training schools, often supplying the haciendas and mines with skilled workers.[95]

The Northern Corridor

2.7 Describe interactions between the Pueblo people and Spanish colonizers.

Nueva Vizcaya was the "heartland" of the northern frontier for some 250 years. It encompassed the area north of Zacatecas and included most of the modern Mexican states of Chihuahua and Durango, and, at different times, parts of Sinaloa, Sonora, and Coahuila. The capital of the province was Durango. Exploratory and missionary expeditions launched from Nueva Vizcaya resulted in the settlement of New Mexico, Parras and Saltillo, and Sonora and Sinaloa.

The first colony settled north of Nueva Vizcaya in what is today the United States was Nuevo México where, as mentioned, the Spaniards hoped to find gold or silver. However, its existence and prosperity rested on the waters of the Rio Grande that ran from the Rocky Mountains down through the center of the province. Because of large numbers of sedentary natives, there was also a ready supply of labor that made possible the development of large haciendas and trade with various other Indigenous People.

In New Mexico, the Spanish settlers repeated the patterns of exploitation described in Nueva Vizcaya and Sonora. The use of bonded servants was widespread. New Mexican colonists used fictions such as indios *de depósito* to forcibly place natives in Christian households under the pretense that they would receive a Christian education. Forced Indigenous labor was so widespread in New Mexico that the colonists had no need to import expensive black slaves. Indeed, New Mexico was a net exporter of slaves to the mines of Parral and elsewhere.[96]

The Pueblo People lived in this region since at least CE 1 AND shared the traditional Indigenous perceptions of the world of nature, differing only in language. The Pueblo also shared a theocratic lifestyle that interrelated their kinships and religious groups with the world of nature. The members of each village organized themselves to cope with their particular environment. Survival disciplined them to note even the minutest variations in climate and topography—the amount and seasonal rhythm of precipitation, the form of a flood plain, or the erosion of a temporary stream.

The Pueblo's social grouping was matrilineal, that is, they grouped kinship around the core of blood-related women. The Pueblo conceived kinship as timeless, extending back into the remote past and extending forward through generations of unborn. Thus, they related the kinship system symbolically beyond the human community into the world of nature, using animals and plants as symbols for different clans.

The colonists established Santa Fé as the capital of the province in 1610. During these early years, the hispanicized population of the province increased from a few hundred to a few thousand who were dispersed in isolated farms, ranches, and hamlets.[97] Spanish settlers and their livestock encroached on native fields. Although tensions existed, there is evidence that the newcomers commingled with the natives and often intermarried.

However, tensions mounted as encroachment on native lands, forced labor, a prolonged drought in the region, and Apache raids contributed to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Popé of the San Juan Pueblo led the rebellion, joined by some mestizos and half-African persons. The natives drove the colonists from New Mexico, the bulk of whom did not return until the 1690s.[98]

The 1680 Revolt affected the whole of Nueva Vizcaya and Sonora; it became known as the "Great Northern Revolt." In New Mexico, the revolt had millenarian trappings. The natives washed off the stains of baptism, annulled Catholic marriages, and destroyed churches. The New Mexicans wanted the Spaniards and their god out of their space and wanted to return to the old ways.[99]

According to Ramón Gutiérrez, "Within New Mexican households slave treatment ran the gamut from the kind neglect of some to the utter sadism of others."[100] At the time of the revolt, 426 slaves were dispersed among the Hispanic households. Some 56 percent of the households had one or more slaves. In this system, female slaves were worth more than males and were sold openly at fairs, as females were valued as household servants and for bearing children, who would also be born into this class. The Spanish merchants also marched New Mexican slaves to Parral to work in the silver mines. Some ended up in the plantations of Veracruz and, after 1800, in Havana, Cuba, and Yucatán. When the Spanish army put down the rebellion,

military authorities tried the rebels in Spanish courts and sentenced them to hanging, whipping, dismemberment of hands or feet, or slavery.

The Decline of the Native Population

Constant warfare reduced the Pueblo population from 17,000 in 1680 to 14,000 in 1700. Many Pueblo went into exile with the Apache, Navajo, and Hopi. After the colonists returned to New Mexico, the repartimiento replaced encomienda system. The excessive use of the repartimiento system had a devastating impact on Indigenous People, depriving the native communities of labor for their own crops, which caused a shortage of food, and ultimately malnutrition.[101]

By the end of the eighteenth century, only 68 of some 16,000 persons was born outside New Mexico, with two born in Spain. The landed peasants, mostly mestizos, lived above Santa Fé in areas they called *Rio Arriba* and *Rio Abajo*. Until the mid-eighteenth century, land grants were largely private grants. After this point, colonial authorities parceled out community grants—that is, community land grants that included common pasture lands and common rights for using land—to buttress the haciendas of the elite in the south of Rio Abajo from native attacks. Most of the mestizo colonists were of humble birth, although they fashioned themselves Spaniards and tried to distance themselves from the *indios* and other lower castas.

The Rio Arriba and Abajo villages were self-sufficient. As a group, the villagers were distinct from the hacendados. Both the Pueblo and the villagers were at a disadvantage compared with the hacendados. However, according to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "Though Pueblos and Hispano villages had no political or economic power during the eighteenth century, the elite, on the other hand, never gained the necessary economic prosperity to affect the predominant village life of the province nor to change land tenure patterns radically during the colonial period."[102] Still, considerable tension existed between the Pueblo population and the colonial administration; as late as 1793, the governor jailed the caciques of various Tewa Pueblos for holding "seditious" meetings.[103]

The Colonization of Texas

2.8 Deconstruct the notion that European Colonialism did not impact the Native American because the land was uninhabited.

Texas natives lived in camps perhaps as early as 13,500 years ago and subsisted primarily on wild game.[104] Because of the vastness and remote location of what eventually became Texas, it took the Viceroyalty of New Spain hundreds of years to occupy it. While on the periphery of the Viceroyalty, it had been fully explored. But unlike other parts of the Viceroyalty, there was no evidence of mineral wealth to attract expeditions and adventurers from the south. Its occupation came from three directions. El Paso del Norte belonged to New Mexico and was a corridor to Chihuahua and Sonora. East of El Paso, where the Rio Grande joined the Conchos River at La Junta de los Ríos, the Spanish founded missions in Nueva Vizcaya. The Conchos River was a corridor into West Texas and the area along the Rio Grande. The coastal region from the Nueces River to the Rio Grande and upstream to Laredo was settled from the province of Nuevo Santander after 1749. The movement into Texas was from these areas.

By the eighteenth century, Spain entered a period of declining revenues and defense of its territories. Spain was a declining power and the expenses of the missions and presidios drained the royal treasury. Hence, the crown encouraged the establishment of self-sufficient Pueblos, consisting of castas and a sprinkling of Spanish peasants. Unlike Nueva Vizcaya and Sonora, where mining drew settlers, the occupation of Texas was more a matter of holding onto frontier territory.

The Rio Grande played a key role, seen by many as the answer to the development of New Mexico and much of northern Mexico. The river had the potential of an all-water route to the Gulf of Mexico. Plans to exploit the river and navigate it never fully developed—Spain just did not have the resources. But the importance of the Rio Bravo did not escape the early colonists, who recognized the interdependence of the frontier colonies in what today is called the American Southwest and northern Mexico.[105]

El Paso del Norte

The oldest Spanish settlement in Texas was in the El Paso area. The first Spanish entry into the El Paso area took place in 1581 with the Rodríguez-Sánchez expedition, consisting primarily of natives from Mexico. They passed through two mountain ranges rising out of the desert with a deep gap between them at the crossing of the Rio Bravo (Grande), which they named El Paso del Norte. (El Paso refers not to a passage through the mountains but rather to the crossing of the river.) Oñate's expedition also passed through there, near today's San Elizario in 1598, when Oñate claimed the entire territory drained by the Rio Bravo. It was not until 1659 that Fray García de San Francisco founded Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Mission. The Pueblo Indigenous Revolt of 1680 drove Spanish colonists, Franciscan missionaries, and Pueblo and Tigua natives from northern New Mexico (which sided with the Spaniards) to El Paso del Norte. South of the river, some 12 miles from today's downtown El Paso, the refugees settled at Santisimo Sacramento, later known as Ysleta del Sur. Two years later, construction of a mission began there and was completed in 1692.

By 1682, the Spanish crown had founded the missions and settlement of El Paso del Norte, San Lorenzo, Senecú, Ysleta, and Socorro, all south of the river. This cluster of settlements became a trade and farm center on the Camino Real. Throughout the colonial period, this area was more properly part of New Mexico, Chihuahua, and the northwest Mexican territory than of Texas, with some elite families from other provinces moving there.[106]

The Tlaxcala and the Castas

As with New Mexico, natives from Central Mexico played an important role in the colonizing of Texas proper. According to Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, the Tlaxcala initially served as scouts and auxiliary soldiers on various expeditions. In 1688, the Tlaxcala participated in the building of the presidio of San Juan Bautista near today's Eagle Pass. In response to French exploration along the Mississippi River Valley, Spanish friars established six missions along New Spain's eastern frontier in 1690. The missions' isolation—a three-month journey away from the capital in Mexico City—left the missions vulnerable.

Spanish friars established Mission San Antonio de Valero, now known as the Alamo, as a way station on the San Antonio River in 1718. The following year the French that were active in present-day northwest Louisiana forced the Spaniards to abandon the East Texas missions, and the missionaries took refuge at Mission San Antonio. By 1731, a chain of five missions (three of which had moved from East Texas), populated by Indigenous recruits from Texas, operated along the San Antonio River. Mission San José, founded in 1720, quickly grew prosperous and became the largest of the Texas missions. An *acequia*, an irrigation ditch, boosted agricultural production, and the mission sold the surplus to the growing settlements around the military presidio and the villa of San Antonio. The mission's holdings included El Rancho Atascoso, about 30 miles to the south, where native *vaqueros*, or cowboys, tended 1,500 cattle, 5,000 sheep and goats, and herds of mules and horses.[107]

The Importance of San Antonio and Links to the Rio Bravo

The area that is today San Antonio was vital to the future of this frontier. In the early 1730s, a contingent of 55 peasants arrived from the Canary Islands. The colonists revived the villa of San Antonio. The Canarians joined the descendants of the first colonists and friars to form a community, depending on the local garrison for trade and outside merchandise. The population increased slowly but began to prosper somewhat by the 1770s when the community developed new markets in Louisiana and in the El Paso area.[108]

Spain chose to colonize the rich valleys of the upper Rio Grande and the mining districts of Nuevo León and Coahuila to prevent French encroachment into this area. The incentive for this expansion was the need for more pasturage for their herds and the growing demand for cattle and their by-products by the mines. The colony of Nuevo Santander included the Mexican state of Tamaulipas and South Texas. Tomás Sánchez and other hacendados established the colony of Laredo in 1755, downstream from Sánchez's *Hacienda de Dolores*, where some 30 families lived.[109] As in other areas, the natives resisted Spanish encroachments.

By 1767, Laredo numbered 186 persons. The 1789 census listed 45.3 percent of Laredo's residents as *españoles*, 17.2 percent as mestizos, 17.2 percent as mixed blacks, and 15.6 percent as indios. Only 6.7 percent of the married persons said they were intermarried. Illegitimacy was the highest between the mixed blacks and the Indigenous. Tejano historian Gilberto Hinojosa writes that the Spanish population increased to 57.2 percent of the population by 1820 and that the non-Spanish population seemed to have fallen by 23.9 percent. He speculates that the indios may have moved back to their ranchería settlements. A more plausible explanation is that colonists self-identified themselves as Spanish.[110] The population grew to 2,052 in 1828. In 1824, Laredo had 700 sheep; four years later, it had 3,223. Wool became Laredo's chief export traded with Mexican merchants from the interior. Racial divisions that existed in 1789 persisted in the 1835 census.

Meanwhile, the population of Nuevo Santander grew from 31,000 in 1794 to 56,937 in 1810. (In 1519 the Native American population of Nuevo Santander was estimated at 190,000. By 1800 the population fell to 3,000.) By 1820, despite the turmoil of the Mexican War of Independence from Spain, the colony had grown to 67,434. The combined population of Reynosa, Camargo, Mier, Revilla, Laredo, and Matamoros, on both sides of the Rio Bravo, numbered 1,479 in 1749; by 1829, it had increased to 24,686. The administrative structure of the colony was stratified into large landholders, high government officials, and merchants. The rancheros made up a middle group along with artisans, while the natives and servants lingered at the bottom of the social ladder. Seventeen haciendas and 437 ranchos dotted Nuevo Santander by 1794. As in other provinces, the presidio played an important role in the order and brought in government revenue. Ranching and commerce became the main economic pursuits in the Lower Rio Grande.[111]

The Occupation of Alta California: Paradise Lost

2.9 Characterize notion that the missions were more a institution to colonize the people than to convert them to Christianity.

The colonization of *Alta*, or Upper, California began in 1769. Upper California had been one of the most densely

populated regions in what is now the United States, with a native population of nearly half a million. The population fell to half that number during the Spanish colonial period. The Franciscans led the colonization of Alta California, where they established 21 missions. At the height of their influence, the missions had 20,000 natives living under their control.

Los Indigenas

From south to north the missions housed the Diegueño, Juaneño, Gabrieliño, Chumash, and Costanoan peoples. Inhabiting the coastland, these tribes were skilled artisans who fashioned sea vessels out of soapstone and used clamshell-bead currency. These tribes bore the brunt of missionary activity.

The Spaniards never missionized the Yokut, who lived in settlements that ran the length of the San Joaquín Valley and the western foothills of the Sierra Madre just south of present-day Fresno. They were divided into as many as 50 tribelets, each with their own dialect. The Yokut, also known as Mariposan, spoke a Penutian language. Master hunters and food gatherers, the Yokut lived in communal houses inhabited by as many as 10 persons. Chiefs or co-chiefs headed the tribes; these were hereditary positions that women could inherit. The women also had a wealth of knowledge about religious questions.

The Yokut carried on extensive trade with other California natives. They harbored runaway mission natives, and thus tension existed between them and Spanish authorities. Like native peoples elsewhere, a large number, 75 percent, of the Yokut died because of epidemics, the most devastating of which occurred in 1833.[112]

The Missions: Myth and Reality

In principle, the missions were supposed to prepare the natives for self-rule. This did not happen in the Spanish or Mexican periods. Because of the friars' puritanism and harsh treatment, they drove the Indigenous populations to rebellion.[113] Critics point to the falling birthrate among the Indigenous People during the mission period. Furthermore, work was associated with a complex system of punishments and rewards. The Indigenous People in California were not used to the type of confined physical labor found in the missions.

The missions, presidios, and pueblos consolidated Spanish rule. Mostly mixed-race colonists from Sonora and Sinaloa settled in the pueblos. Spanish officials granted land, known as *ranchos*, to many former presidio soldiers where they raised cattle and sheep. Some received larger grants for haciendas. The California natives did most of the labor, usually trained by the missions to be vaqueros, soap makers, tanners, shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, bakers, cooks, servants, pages, fishermen, farmers, and carpenters, as well as a host of other occupations.

Tension existed between military and ecclesiastical authorities over the soldiers' mistreatment of the Indigenous women; historian Antonia I. Castañeda says that we can assume that this was the case in other provinces of New Spain as well. Father Junípero Serra, himself a severe taskmaster, often complained about soldier misconduct, saying that the Indigenous People resisted conversion and sometimes became warlike and hostile "because of the soldiers' repeated outrages against the women." Serra lamented, "Even the children who came to the mission were not safe from their baseness."[114] Evidence suggests that offenses against women were not remedied; rape and even murder went unpunished. Military officials assumed a "boys-will-be-boys" attitude, although the official policy prohibited such abuses.

In 1785, natives from eight rancherías united and attacked Mission San Gabriel, killing all the Spanish settlers. Toypurina, a 24-year-old medicine woman, persuaded six of the eight villages to join the rebellion. The soldiers captured and punished her along with three other leaders.

Conclusion: On the Eve of the Mexican War of Independence

By the eve of the Mexican War of Independence, a complex society evolved on the northern frontier of New Spain. Although they were isolated, there was considerable interaction between the different regions in northern New Spain. The non-Indigenous settlers tapped into a network of routes used before their arrival by the natives. The Chihuahua Trail, part of the Camino Real, was the trade route linking Santa Fé to Chihuahua and Mexico City. After Taos, New Mexico, was founded in the 1790s, they extended this trail to its plaza. A major part of the trail within New Mexico was a river road, following the Rio Grande. Caravans traveled this road and brought imported goods and luxuries to the settlements of the Rio Grande as they had to the mining camps of Nueva Vizcaya. Exchanges would include ore, slaves, and other goods. There were also well-established routes connecting Alta California, Sonora, New Mexico, and Texas.[115]

We should not romanticize this society as egalitarian or idyllic. Though most of the inhabitants were non-European, the elites in these societies were recently immigrated Spaniards and/or their criollo children. The vast numbers of subjects were Castas, those of mixed race, which had limited access to land. Indeed, the 1793 census shows the dynamic race mixture that was taking place in

New Spain. A word of caution is that although there was diversity, race established privilege, and the more Spanish the subjects appeared the more privileges they had.

By the nineteenth century, race was based more on sight than on the rigid categories of the sixteenth century. What would become the Mexican (and Central American) was a conglomerate of people whose racial identity could change from generation to generation—it went beyond the mestizo paradigm popularly portrayed. For instance, the 1810 census suggests that more than 10 percent of the population were Afromestizos, a classification that generally meant they looked mixed black, or more African than Spanish.[116] Over generations, those who were originally African or native looked *or wanted to look* more like Spaniards.

As has been mentioned throughout the chapter, forced labor, the wars, the enslavement of the natives, and droughts and plagues had taken their toll on the native population. Either they had become hispanicized, or they perished or were forced into exile. In some cases, like that of the Tarahumara, a large portion of them retreated further into the Sierra Madre. The Yaqui, who had warred with the Spaniards, were later drawn into battle with the Mexicans in the 1920s in defense of their homeland. The Mexicans' justification was that they were *gente de razón* (people of reason), or better still, Christians, and those who opposed them were *indios bárbaros.*

On the eve of the Mexican Revolution, Mexico did not yet have a set national identity. As the reader can deduct from the chart following, the new nation was racially diverse. The population was predominantly Indigenous, and Africans were at least 10 percent of the population. Given the 300-year tradition of lying about race in order to gain racial status, it can be speculated that as many as 20 percent of the population had some African blood and fewer than stated were full-blooded Spaniards.[117] The colonial mentality and racial ambivalence are a factor even today among the Mexican people. Yet it is clear from current population data that most racial mixing took place after Independence with the mestizo population going from 10 percent in 1810 to about 60 percent today; on the downside the Indigenous population fell from 60 percent to 30 percent.

Three hundred years of mercantilism left New Spain without its own commercial or manufacturing infrastructure. Spanish capital fled the country and the mainstays of its economy—agriculture, ranching, and mining—went bankrupt. The Spanish tightly ruled New Spain because it was Spain's most valuable commodity, giving the castas little experience in self-rule. Indeed, mixed bloods would continue to be excluded from the governance of the republic after independence. Most Mexicans lacked experience in self-government and they lacked a professional civil service bureaucracy. In addition, Mexico experienced a long war of independence (1810–1821), losing an estimated 10 percent of its population, worsening Mexico's serious underpopulation that resulted from the mass migrations to the northern frontier.[118] Colonialism had seriously retarded Mexico's development.

On the positive side, influenced by the Enlightenment and representative constitutionalism, many of Mexico's new leaders wanted a modern society based on reason rather than theology. However, Mexicans had to overcome 300 years of Spanish colonialism, which was no small order. On the negative side, secularization and modernization meant not only the privatization of property belonging to the Catholic Church, but elimination of the feudalism that meant the privatization of Indigenous land. To build their own nation, Mexicans had to create a new identity for themselves. A crucial part of creating a new identity and nation building was replacing the old saints with new, secular heroes—heroes who would call on the people to celebrate Mexico and everything it meant to be Mexican.[119] Within this was interwoven the acceptance of the Indigenous heritage, a process that really did not begin until a 100 years later with the Second Mexican Revolution.[120]

The Spanish colonization annihilated a universal Mexican identity. It created a tension within the Mexican that grew over time as the culture and identity of the colonizer has created schizophrenia among many Mexican Americans as they learn their history. Parts of their identity once thought to have been wiped out clash with their colonial mentality. The colonized begins to question phrases such a "inferior races" and the colonized understand their birthright.[121]

Population of Mexico in 1810

Racial Category	Number	Percentage
Indigenous	3,676,281	60
Europeans (peninsulares)	15,000	0.3
Criollos (Euromestizos)	1,092,397	18
Mestizos (Indiomestizos)	704,245	11
Mixed Africans and zambos (Afromestizos)	624,461	10
Blacks	10,000	0.2

SOURCES: *Austín Cue Cánovas, Historia social y económica de México (1521–1854)* (Mexico, 1972), p. 134, adapted in Meyer and Sherman, p. 218.

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