Eleventh Edition

A People & A Nation

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Kamensky / Sheriff / Blight / Chudacoff / Logevall / Bailey / Norton

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A People & A Nation

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Eleventh Edition

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ABBREVIATIONS

AUS.	AUSTRIA
BEL.	BELGIUM
B. H.	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
CR.	CROATIA
CZ.	CZECH REPUBLIC
DEN.	DENMARK
HUNG.	HUNGARY
K.	KOSOVO
LUX.	LUXEMBOURG
MAC.	MACEDONIA
MO.	MONTENEGRO
NETH.	NETHERLANDS
SE.	SERBIA
SLK.	SLOVAKIA
SLN.	SLOVENIA
SWITZ.	SWITZERLAND

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***A People & A Nation,* Eleventh Edition**
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BRIEF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

FEATURES

MAPS

FIGURES

TABLES

LINKS TO THE WORLD

LEGACY FOR A PEOPLE AND A NATION

VISUALIZING THE PAST

PREFACE

With this eleventh edition, *A People and A Nation* consolidates the last edition's broad structural changes, fine-tuning the streamlining and chapter combinations that made the text easier to assign over the course of an average academic semester. In this edition the authors introduced new interpretations, updated content to reflect recent research, and thought hard about what new features might engage our readers. This edition also more fully embraces the possibilities offered by digital platforms, as you will learn about in the MindTap description that follows later in this introduction.

A People and A Nation represents our continuing rediscovery of America's history—our evolving understandings of the people and the forces that have shaped the nation and our stories of the struggles, triumphs, and tragedies of America's past.

Key Themes in *A People and A Nation*

Published originally in 1982, *A People and A Nation* was the first U.S. history survey textbook to move beyond a political history to tell the story of the nation's people—the story of *all* its people—as well. That commitment remains. Our text encompasses the diversity of America's people and the changing texture of their everyday lives. The country's political narrative is here, too, as in previous editions. But as historical questions have evolved over the years and new authors have joined the textbook team, we have asked new questions about "a people" and "a nation." In our recent editions, we remind students that the "*A People*" and "*A Nation*" that appear in the book's title are neither timeless nor stable. European colonists and the land's indigenous inhabitants did not belong to this "nation" or work to create it, and Americans have struggled over the shape and meaning of their nation since its very beginning. The people about whom we write thought of themselves in various ways, and in ways that changed over time. Thus we emphasize not only the ongoing diversity of the nation's people, but their struggles, through time, over who belongs to that "people" and on what terms.

In *A People and A Nation,* the authors emphasize the changing global and transnational contexts within which the American colonies and the United States have acted. We pay attention to the economy, discussing the ways that an evolving market economy shaped the nation and the possibilities for its different peoples. We show how the meaning of identity—gender, race, class, sexuality, as well as region, religion, and family status—changes over time, and we find the nation's history in the mobility and contact and collision of its peoples. We discuss the role of the state and the expanding role and reach of the federal government; we pay attention to region and emphasize historical contests between federal power and local authority. We trace America's expansion and rise to unprecedented world power and examine its consequences. And we focus on the meaning of democracy and equality in American history, most particularly in tales of Americans' struggles for equal rights and social justice.

In *A People and A Nation*, we continue to challenge readers to think about the meaning of American history, not just to memorize facts. More than anything else, we want students to understand that the history of the American nation was not foreordained. Ours is a story of contingency. As, over time, people lived their day-to-day lives, made what choices they could, and fought for things they believed in, they helped to shape the future. What happened was not inevitable. Throughout the course of history, people faced difficult decisions, and those decisions mattered.

What's New in This Edition

Planning for the eleventh edition began at an authors' meeting near Cengage headquarters in Boston. Authors' meetings are always lively, and we discussed everything from recent scholarship and emerging trends in both U.S. and global history to the possibilities offered by digital platforms and the needs of the students who would be reading our work.

This edition continues to build on *A People and A Nation*'s hallmark themes, giving increased attention to the global perspective on American history that has characterized the book since its first edition. From the "Atlantic world" context of European colonies in North and South America to the discussion of international terrorism, the authors have incorporated the most recent globally oriented scholarship throughout the volume. We have stressed the incorporation of different peoples into the United States through territorial acquisition as well as through immigration. At the same time, we have integrated the discussion of such diversity into our narrative so as not to artificially isolate any group from the mainstream.

We have continued the practice of placing three probing questions at the end of each chapter's introduction to inspire and guide students' reading of the pages that follow. Additionally, focus questions and key terms have been added to this edition. The focus questions appear beneath each section title within every chapter to further support students in their reading and comprehension of the material. Key terms appear near the first mention of a term and are placed throughout each chapter.

Chapter-level Changes for the Eleventh Edition

For this edition, the authors reexamined every sentence, interpretation, map, chart, illustration, and caption, refined the narrative, presented new examples, updated bibliographies, and incorporated the best new scholarship. What

follows here is a description of chapter-level changes for the eleventh edition:

1. **Chapter 2: Europeans Colonize North America, 1600–1650**
   - New chapter-opening vignette on an episode of interracial violence in 1630 New England
2. **Chapter 3: North America in the Atlantic World, 1650–1720**
   - New *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature: "Fictions of Salem: Witch-Hunting in the American Grain"
3. **Chapter 4: Becoming America? 1720–1760**
   - Increased attention to Canadian maritime provinces in King George's War
4. **Chapter 5: The Ends of Empire, 1754–1774**
   - New information on Caribbean colonies' response to the Stamp Act and other imperial tax laws from rare pamphlets published in Barbados
   - New primary source material about the Stamp Act repeal and Boston Massacre trials
   - The *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature, "Women's Political Action," has been updated to reflect the 2016 presidential election
5. **Chapter 6: American Revolutions, 1775–1783**
   - Increased attention to the Spanish empire and the war in the Gulf of Mexico
   - More attention is given to African American soldiers in the American Revolution
   - New *Visualizing the Past* feature: "A British View of the Colonial Army"
6. **Chapter 8: Defining the Nation, 1801–1823**
   - New *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature: "The Star-Spangled Banner"
7. **Chapter 9: The Rise of the South, 1815–1860**
   - New section on slavery and capitalism
   - New material on the domestic slave trade
   - Additional information on slave religion
   - Additions to discussion of "planter paternalism"
   - Updated *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on reparations
8. **Chapter 11: The Contested West, 1815–1860**
   - New topic ("The Mexican-United States Border") for *Legacy for A People and a Nation* feature
9. **Chapter 12: Politics and the Fate of the Union, 1824–1859**
   - Includes additional information about states' rights under nullification
   - Features a revised map for the Mexican War
   - Added material on Fremont, California, and the coming of the Mexican War
   - New scholarship on the underground railroad in New York
   - Increased attention to voter turnout in the Jackson era
   - The *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on coalition politics has been updated
10. **Chapter 13: Transforming Fire: The Civil War, 1860–1865**
    - Chapter-opening vignette has been revised
    - Clarified discussion of secession crisis
    - Added discussion of Native Americans fighting in the Civil War
    - New discussion of the importance of the "Union Cause" to Northerners
11. **Chapter 14: Reconstruction: An Unfinished Revolution, 1865–1877**
    - Revised discussion of Radical Republican vision of Reconstruction
    - New scholarship on the military occupation of the South
    - New scholarship on the movement West
    - Revised discussion of railroad growth and expansion
    - Updated *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on the Lost Cause
12. **Chapter 21: The New Era, 1920–1929**
    - New *Links to the World* feature on Margaret Mead
13. **Chapter 22: The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929–1939**
    - Added section on the voyage of the *St. Louis* and FDR responses to Nazi Germany
14. **Chapter 23: The Second World War at Home and Abroad, 1939–1945**
    - Revised discussion of U.S. path to war
    - Discussion of attack on Pearl Harbor has been recast to emphasize Japan's broader attack on U.S. and U.K. Pacific possessions
    - New scholarship on financing the war
15. **Chapter 25: America at Midcentury, 1945–1960**
    - Discussion of GI Bill updated to incorporate recent scholarship
    - Added material on relative income equality and tax rates
    - Updates made to recast Levvittown in the *Visualizing the Past* feature
    - New *Links to the World* feature: Sputnik
16. **Chapter 26: The Tumultuous Sixties, 1960–1968**
    - Added material on federal spending on social welfare programs

- New section on Mexican American and Chicano activism
- Updated and revised *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature: "The Immigration Act of 1965"
- Minor updates to the Vietnam section.

17. **Chapter 27: A Pivotal Era, 1969–1980**
    - New chapter-opening vignette on the Iran hostage crisis
    - A section on Puerto Rican nationalism has been added
    - Updated *Legacy for A People and a Nation* feature: "The All-Volunteer Force"
    - Information on Pentagon Papers case has been added.
18. **Chapter 28: Conservatism Revived, 1980–1992**
    - New chapter-opening vignette on 1980 "Washington for Jesus" rally
    - New scholarship on rise of conservatism
    - Revised discussion of economic policies and results.
    - Additional material on computer technology
19. **Chapter 29: Into the Global Millennium: America Since 1992**
    - Added discussion of Obama's presidency and accomplishments
    - Fully recast and updated final section on Americans in the new millennium
    - Information added on the digital revolution
    - Significant changes to the section on Obama's foreign policy, including in the second term, including the rise of ISIS and the civil war in Syria

Format for Each Chapter

Opening Vignette

Each chapter opens with a brief story about a person, place, or event and includes an image related to the story. The stories highlight specific events with historical significance while bringing attention to the larger themes in U.S. History during that period.

Focus Questions

Each chapter section is accompanied by a set of focus questions that guide students in absorbing and interpreting the information in the section that follows. This is a new pedagogical feature added in this edition to help students retain the information they are learning as they move through the book.

Chapter Features: *Legacies, Links to the World,* and *Visualizing the Past*

The following three features— *Legacy for* A People and a Nation, *Links to the World*, and *Visualizing the Past*—are included in each chapter of *A People and A Nation*, eleventh edition. These features all illustrate key themes of the text and give students alternative ways to experience historical content.

Legacy for A People and A Nation features appear toward the end of each chapter and offer compelling and timely answers to students who question the relevance of historical study by exploring the historical roots of contemporary topics. New *Legacies* in this edition include "Fictions of Salem: Witch-Hunting in the American Grain," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "The Mexican-United States Border."

Links to the World features examine ties between America (and Americans) and the rest of the world. These brief essays detail the often little-known connections between developments here and abroad, vividly demonstrating that the geographical region that is now the United States has never been isolated from other peoples and countries. Essay topics range broadly over economic, political, social, technological, medical, and cultural history, and the feature appears near relevant discussions in each chapter. This edition includes new *Links* on anthropologist Margaret Mead and on Sputnik and American education. Each *Link* feature highlights global interconnections with unusual and lively examples that will both intrigue and inform students.

Visualizing the Past features offer striking images along with brief discussions intended to help students analyze the images as historical sources and to understand how visual materials can reveal aspects of America's story that otherwise might remain unknown. New to this edition is "A British View of the Colonial Army" in Chapter 6.

Summary

The core text of each chapter ends with a brief summary that helps students synthesize what they have just read and directs students to see long-term trends and recurring themes that appear across chapters.

Suggested Readings

A list of secondary sources appears at the end of each chapter for students and instructors who want to dig deeper into the content of the chapter.

Key Terms

Within each chapter, terms are boldfaced for students' attention with brief definitions appearing on the same page. Terms highlighted include concepts, laws, treaties, movements and organizations, legal cases, and battles.

MindTap for *A People and A Nation*

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MindTap for *A People and A Nation* is a flexible online learning platform that provides students with an immersive learning experience to build and foster critical thinking skills. Through a carefully designed chapter-based learning path, MindTap allows students to easily identify learning objectives; draw connections and improve writing skills by 1) completing unit-level essay assignments; 2) reading short, manageable sections from the ebook: 3) and testing their content knowledge with map-based critical thinking questions.

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Supplements for *A People and A Nation*

- **Instructor's Companion Website.** The Instructor's Companion Website, accessed through the Instructor Resource Center (login.cengage.com), houses all of the supplemental materials you can use for your course. This includes a Test Bank, Instructor's Manual, and PowerPoint Lecture Presentations. The Test Bank, offered in Microsoft® Word® and Cognero® formats, contains multiple-choice, true-or-false, and essay questions for each chapter. Cognero® is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content for *A People and a Nation*, 11e. Create multiple test versions instantly and deliver through your LMS from your classroom, or wherever you may be, with no special installs or downloads required. The Instructor's Resource Manual includes chapter summaries and outlines, learning objectives, suggested lecture topics, discussion questions class activities, and suggestions for additional films to watch. Finally, the PowerPoint Lectures are ADA-compliant slides collate the key takeaways from the chapter in concise visual formats perfect for in-class presentations or for student review.
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- *Doing History: Research and Writing in the Digital Age,* 2e ISBN: 9781133587880 Prepared by Michael J. Galgano, J. Chris Arndt, and Raymond M. Hyser of James Madison University. Whether you're starting down the path as a history major or simply looking for a straightforward, systematic guide to writing a successful paper, this text's "soup to nuts" approach to researching and writing about history addresses every step of the process: locating your sources, gathering information, writing and citing according to various style guides, and avoiding plagiarism.
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Born in Washington, D.C., and raised in Bethesda, Maryland, Carol Sheriff received her BA from Wesleyan University (1985) and her PhD from Yale University (1993). Since 1993, she has taught history at the College of William and Mary, where she has won the Thomas Jefferson Teaching Award; the Alumni Teaching Fellowship Award; the University Professorship for Teaching Excellence; The Class of 2013 Distinguished Professorship for Excellence in Scholarship, Teaching, and Service; and the Arts and Sciences Award for Teaching Excellence. Her publications include *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress* (1996), which won the Dixon Ryan Fox Award from the New York State Historical Association and the Award for Excellence in Research from the New York State Archives, and *A People at War: Civilians and Soldiers in America's Civil War, 1854–1877* (with Scott Reynolds Nelson, 2007). In 2012, she won the John T. Hubbell Prize from *Civil War History* for her article on the state-commissioned Virginia history textbooks of the 1950s, and the controversies their portrayals of the Civil War era provoked in ensuing decades. Carol has written sections of a teaching manual for the New York State history curriculum, given presentations at Teaching American History grant projects, consulted on an exhibit for the Rochester Museum and Science Center, and appeared in The History Channel's Modern Marvels show on the Erie Canal. She worked on several public-history projects marking the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, and is involved in public and scholarly projects to commemorate the Erie Canal's bicentennial. At William and Mary, she teaches the U.S. history survey as well as upper-level classes on the Early Republic, the Civil War Era, and the American West.

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Fredrik Logevall

A native of Stockholm, Sweden, Fredrik Logevall is Laurence D. Belfer Professor of International Affairs at Harvard University, where he holds appointments in the Department of History and the Kennedy School of Government. He received his BA from Simon Fraser University (1986) and his PhD from Yale University (1993). His most recent book is *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (2012), which won the Pulitzer Prize in History and the Francis Parkman Prize, and which was named a best book of the year by the *Washington Post* and the *Christian Science Monitor*. His other publications include *Choosing War* (1999), which won three prizes, including the Warren F. Kuehl Book Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR); *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (with Campbell Craig; 2009); *The Origins of the Vietnam War* (2001); *Terrorism and 9/11: A Reader* (2002); and, as coeditor, *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis* (2007); and *Nixon and the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969–1977* (2008). Fred is a past recipient of the Stuart L. Bernath article, book, and lecture prizes from SHAFR, and a past member of the Cornell University Press faculty board. He serves on numerous editorial advisory boards. A past president of SHAFR, Fred is a member of the Society of American Historians and the Council of Foreign Relations.

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A People & A Nation

1

Three Old Worlds Create a New, 1492–1600

CHAPTER OUTLINE

A generation after Columbus crossed the Atlantic, a Spanish soldier named Hernán Cortés traded words with the ruler of the Aztec empire. Motecuhzoma II was among the most powerful men in the Americas (as Europeans had recently named their "new" world). Thousands of loyal courtiers accompanied him to the gates of Tenochtitlán, the capital, one of the largest cities in the world. Cortés, his Spanish troops, and their Native allies approached on horseback, flying the flag of Charles V, the king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, one of the most powerful men in the "old" world. The conquistador and the Aztec ruler bowed to each other, and spoke. "Montezuma bade him welcome," recalled Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a soldier on the expedition. "There is nothing to fear," Cortés told his host. "We have come to your house in Mexico as friends."

This mixture of ceremony, half-truths, and outright lies was among the first exchanges between two great civilizations from two sides of a great ocean. It was not an easy conversation to have. Motecuhzoma spoke Nahuatl and had never heard Spanish; Cortés spoke Spanish and knew no Nahuatl. (The Spanish could not even pronounce the Aztec emperor's name, garbling "Motecuhzoma" as "Montezuma.") But in fact the conversation between Cortés and Motecuhzoma was not a dialogue but a three-way exchange. As Bernal Díaz explains, Cortés addressed the Aztec emperor "through the mouth of Doña Marina."

Who was Doña Marina? Born at the eastern edge of Motecuhzoma's dominion around the year 1500, she grew up at the margins of Aztec and Maya territories, worlds in motion and often at war. Her parents were Nahuatl-speaking nobles. The name they gave her is lost to history. As a child,

◀ Perched on a throne and wearing elaborate plumes in his hat, Cortès accepts the surrender of the Cuauthemoc in August 1521. Seated behind him in traditional dress, Doña Marina translates the negotiation, with gestures that exactly mirror his. The image, from a mural created by Tlaxcalan artists in the 1550s, shows the complex role of the interpreter in the meeting of worlds. AKG Images

Chronology

13,000–10,000 BCE	■ Paleo-Indians migrate from Siberia to western North America, some by boat and some across the Beringia land bridge
7000 BCE	■ Cultivation of food crops begins in America
ca. 2000 BCE	■ Olmec civilization appears
ca. 300–600 CE	■ Height of influence of Teotihuacán
ca. 600–900 CE	■ Classic Mayan civilization
1000 CE	■ Ancient Pueblos build settlements in modern states of Arizona and New Mexico ■ Bantu-speaking peoples spread across much of southern Africa
1001	■ Norse establish settlement in "Vinland"
1050–1250	■ Height of influence of Cahokia ■ Prevalence of Mississippian culture in modern midwestern and southeastern United States
14th century	■ Aztec rise to power
Early 15th century	■ Portuguese establish trading posts in North Africa
1450s–80s	■ Portuguese colonize islands in the Mediterranean Atlantic
1477	■ Marco Polo's *Travels* describes China
1492	■ Columbus reaches Bahamas
1494	■ Treaty of Tordesillas divides land claims in Africa, India, and South America between Spain and Portugal
1497	■ Cabot reaches North America
1499	■ Amerigo Vespucci explores South American coast
1513	■ Ponce de León explores Florida
1518–30	■ Smallpox epidemic devastates indigenous populations of West Indies and Central and South America
1519	■ Cortés invades Mexico
1521	■ Aztec Empire falls to Spaniards
1524	■ Verrazzano sails along Atlantic coast of North America
1534–35	■ Cartier explores St. Lawrence River
1539–42	■ De Soto explores southeastern North America
1540–42	■ Coronado explores southwestern North America
1587–90	■ Raleigh's Roanoke colony vanishes
1588	■ Harriot publishes *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* ■ English defeat of the Spanish Armada

she was either stolen from her family or given by them to indigenous slave traders. She wound up in the Gulf Coast town of Tabasco, in the household of a Maya cacique. There, in addition to her native Nahuatl, she learned Yucatec, the local strain of the Mayan language. She spoke both tongues well when she encountered the Spanish, who brought yet a third civilization into her changing world in the spring of 1519.

The leaders of Tabasco showered Cortés with tribute, offerings they hoped would persuade the Spanish to continue west, into the heart of their enemies' territory. In addition to gold and cloth, the caciques gave the invaders twenty Native women. The young bilingual slave was one of them. The invaders baptized her under the Christian name "Marina."

Marina learned Spanish quickly, and her fluency in this third language greatly increased her value to the would-be conquerors. As Cortés and his troops progressed inland, Marina's way with words proved as vital to the success of the expedition as any other

weapon they carried. Díaz called her "a person of the greatest importance." Cortés, reluctant to share credit for his triumphs, rarely mentioned her in his letters. But she bore him a son, Martín. Sometime before her death in 1527 or 1528, Marina married another Spanish officer.

A speaker of Nahuatl, Yucatec, and Spanish; the mother of one of the first *mestizo* or mixed-race children; the wife of a conquistador: Marina was a young woman in whom worlds met and mingled. The Spanish signaled their respect by addressing her as "Doña," meaning lady. Nahuatl speakers rendered *Marina* as *Malintzin*, using the suffix *–tzin* to denote her high status. Spaniards stumbled over the Nahuatl *Malintzin* and often called her *La Malinche*: a triple name, from a double mistranslation.

The legacy of Doña Marina/Malintzin/La Malinche remains as ambiguous as her name. Her fluency helped the invaders to triumph—a catastrophe for the Aztecs and other indigenous peoples. Their descendants consider Doña Marina their foremother and their betrayer, at once a victim and a perpetrator of the Spanish conquest. Today in Mexico, the word *malanchista* is a grave insult, equivalent to "collaborator" or even "traitor." Though she lived for less than thirty years, nearly half a millennium ago, Marina continues to embody the ambiguities of colonial American history, in which power was shifting and contested, and much was lost in translation.

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What happens when worlds collide? For thousands of years before 1492, human societies in the Americas developed in complex relation to each other, yet in isolation from the rest of the world. The era that began in the Christian fifteenth century brought that long-standing isolation to an end. As Europeans sought treasure and trade, peoples from two sides of the globe came into regular contact for the first time. Their interactions involved curiosity and confusion, trade and theft, enslavement and endurance. All were profoundly changed.

By the time Doña Marina held Cortés's words in her mouth, the age of European expansion and colonization was already under way. Over the next 350 years, Europeans would spread their influence across the globe. The history of the tiny colonies that became the United States must be seen in this broad context of European exploration and exploitation, of Native resistance, and of African enslavement and survival. Even as Europeans slowly achieved dominance, their fates continued to be shaped by the strategies of Americans and Africans. In the Americas of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, three old worlds came together to produce a new.

The continents that European sailors reached in the late fifteenth century had their own histories, internal struggles that the intruders sometimes exploited and often ignored. The indigenous residents of what came to be called *the Americas* were the world's most skillful plant breeders; they developed crops more nutritious and productive than those grown in Europe, Asia, or Africa. They had invented systems of writing and mathematics, and created more accurate calendars than those used on the other side of the Atlantic. In the Americas, as in Europe, societies rose and fell as leaders succeeded or failed to expand their power. But the arrival of Europeans altered the Americans' struggles with one another, just as the colonization of the Americas repeatedly reshaped the European balance of powers.

After 1400, European nations not only warred on their own continent but also tried to acquire valuable colonies and trading posts elsewhere in the world. Initially interested primarily in Asia and Africa, Europeans eventually focused mostly on the Americas. Their designs changed the course of history on four continents.

"In the beginning, all the world was America," wrote the English philosopher John Locke at the end of the seventeenth century. But in fact, America wasn't "America" until Europeans renamed the ancient homelands of hundreds of nations after one of their own explorers. The continent was not innocent, empty, and waiting, as Locke implied, but densely peopled and engaged in its own complex history. The collision of old and new worlds changed that history. New opportunities for some meant new risks for others. Every conquest contained a defeat. Every new place name was layered upon an older history. And a great deal was lost in translation.

- *What were the key characteristics of the three worlds that met in the Americas?*
- *What impacts did their encounter have on each of them?*
- *What were the crucial initial developments in that encounter?*

1-1 American Societies

- **How were the Americas settled?**
- **How did the first Americans—the Paleo-Indians—adapt to their environment?**
- **How did Native peoples who began to domesticate and cultivate food crops develop socially and culturally?**

Human beings originated on the continent of Africa, where hominid remains about 3 million years old have been found in what is now Ethiopia. Over many millennia, the growing population slowly dispersed to the other continents. Because the climate was then far colder than it is now, much of the earth's water was concentrated in huge rivers of ice called glaciers. Sea levels were accordingly lower, and landmasses covered a larger proportion of the earth's surface than they do today. Scholars long believed that the Clovis people, Siberians who were among the earliest inhabitants of the Americas, crossed a land bridge known as Beringia (at the site of the Bering Strait) approximately twelve thousand to fourteen thousand years ago. Yet striking new archaeological discoveries in both North and South America suggest that parts of the Americas may have been settled significantly earlier, perhaps by seafarers. Some geneticists now theorize that three successive waves of migrants began at least thirty thousand years ago. About 12,500 years ago, when the climate warmed and sea levels rose, Americans were separated from the peoples living on the connected continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

1-1a Ancient America

The first Americans, now called **Paleo-Indians**, were nomadic hunters of game and gatherers of plants. They spread throughout North and South America, probably moving as bands composed of extended families. By about 11,500 years ago, the Paleo-Indians were making fine stone projectile points, which they attached to spears and used to kill and butcher bison (buffalo), woolly mammoths, and other large mammals. As the Ice Age ended and the human population increased, the large American mammals except the bison disappeared. Scholars disagree about whether overhunting or the change in climate caused their extinction. In either case, deprived of their primary source of meat, Paleo-Indians found new ways to survive.

Paleo-Indians The earliest peoples of the Americas.

By approximately nine thousand years ago, the residents of what is now central Mexico began to cultivate food crops, especially maize (corn), squash, beans, avocados, and peppers. In the Andes Mountains of South America, people started to grow potatoes. As knowledge of agricultural techniques improved and spread through the Americas, vegetables and maize proved a more reliable source of food than hunting and gathering. Except in the harshest climates, most Paleo-Indians started to stay longer in one place, so that they could tend fields regularly. Some established permanent settlements; others moved several times a year among fixed sites. They used controlled burning to clear forests, which created cultivable lands by killing trees and fertilizing the soil with ashes, and also opened meadows that attracted deer and other wildlife. Although they traded such items as shells, flint, salt, and copper, no society became dependent on another group for items vital to its survival.

Wherever agriculture dominated the economy, complex civilizations flourished. Such societies, assured of steady supplies of grains and vegetables, no longer had to devote all their energies to procuring sufficient food. Instead, they were able to accumulate wealth, trade with other groups, produce ornamental objects, and create rituals and ceremonies to cement and transmit their cultures. In North America, the successful cultivation of nutritious crops, especially maize, beans, and squash, seems to have led to the growth and development of all the major civilizations: first the large city-states of Mesoamerica (modern Mexico and Guatemala) and then the urban clusters known collectively as the Mississippian culture and located in the present-day United States. Each of these societies reached its height of population and influence only after achieving success in agriculture. Each later declined and collapsed after reaching the limits of its food supply, with dire political and military consequences.

1-1b Mesoamerican Civilizations

Archaeologists and historians know little about the first major Mesoamerican civilization, the Olmecs, who about four thousand years ago lived near the Gulf of Mexico in cities dominated by temple pyramids. The Mayas and Teotihuacán, which developed approximately two thousand years later, are better recorded. Teotihuacán, founded in the Valley of Mexico about 300 BCE (Before the Common Era), eventually became one of the largest urban areas in the world, housing perhaps 100,000 people in the fifth century CE (Common Era). Teotihuacán's commercial network extended hundreds of miles in all directions; many peoples prized its obsidian (a green volcanic glass), used to make fine knives and mirrors. Pilgrims traveled long distances to visit Teotihuacán's immense pyramids and the great temple of Quetzalcoatl—the feathered serpent, primary god of central Mexico.

On the Yucatan Peninsula, in today's eastern Mexico, the Mayas built urban centers boasting tall pyramids and temples. They studied astronomy and created an elaborate writing

system. Their city-states, though, engaged in near-constant battle with one another, much as Europeans did at the same time. Warfare and an inadequate food supply caused the collapse of the most powerful cities by 900 CE, thus ending the classic era of Mayan civilization. When the Spaniards arrived 600 years later, only a few remnants of the once-mighty society remained, in places like the town where Doña Marina was enslaved.

1-1c Pueblos and Mississippians

Ancient Native societies in what is now the United States learned to grow maize, squash, and beans from Mesoamericans, but the nature of the relationship among the various cultures remains unknown. (No Mesoamerican artifacts have been found north of the Rio Grande, but some items resembling Mississippian objects have been excavated in northern Mexico, suggesting the presence of trade routes.) The Hohokam, Mogollon, and ancient Pueblo peoples of the modern states of Arizona and New Mexico subsisted by combining hunting and gathering with agriculture in an arid region. Hohokam villagers constructed extensive irrigation systems, occasionally relocating settlements when water supplies failed. Between 900 and 1150 CE in Chaco Canyon, the Pueblos built fourteen "Great Houses," multistory stone structures averaging two hundred rooms. The canyon, at the juncture of perhaps four hundred miles of roads, served as a major regional trading and processing center for turquoise, used then as now to create beautiful ornamental objects. Yet the sparse and unpredictable rainfall eventually caused the Chacoans to migrate to other sites.

At almost the same time, the unrelated Mississippian culture flourished in what is now the midwestern and southeastern United States. Relying largely on maize, squash, nuts, pumpkins, and venison for food, the Mississippians lived in substantial settlements organized hierarchically. The largest of their urban centers was the **City of the Sun** (now called **Cahokia**), which was located near modern St. Louis. Located on rich farmland near the confluence of the Illinois, Missouri, and Mississippi rivers, Cahokia, like Teotihuacán and Chaco Canyon, served as a focal point for both culture and trade. At its peak (in the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE), the City of the Sun covered more than five square miles and had a population of about twenty thousand: small by Mesoamerican standards but larger than any other northern community—indeed, larger than London in the same era.

Although the Cahokians never invented a writing system, these sun-worshippers developed an accurate calendar, evidenced by their creation of a woodhenge—a large circle of tall timber posts aligned with the solstices and the equinox. The tallest of the city's 120 pyramids, today called Monks Mound, covered sixteen acres at its base and stood 100 feet high at its topmost level. It remains the largest earthwork ever built in the Americas. It sat at the northern end of the Grand Plaza, surrounded by seventeen other mounds, some used for burials. Yet following 1250 CE, the city was abandoned, several decades after a disastrous earthquake. Archaeologists believe that climate change and the degradation of the environment, caused by overpopulation and the destruction of nearby forests, contributed to the city's collapse. Afterwards, warfare increased as large-scale population movements destabilized the region.

Nursing-mother-effigy bottle, Cahokia Culture, Mississippian Period, 1200-1400 (ceramic), American School / St. Louis Museum of Science & Natural History, Missouri, US/Photo © The Detroit Institute of Arts/The Bridgeman Art Library

▲ Archaeologists discovered this effigy bottle near Cahokia in present-day Illinois. The statue, which was made c1200–1400 CE, depicts a woman sitting cross-legged and nursing an infant.

1-1d Aztecs

Far to the South, the Aztecs (also called Mexicas) migrated into the Valley of Mexico during the twelfth century CE. The ruins of Mayan Teotihuacán, deserted for at least two hundred years, awed and mystified the migrants. Their chronicles record that their primary deity, Huitzilopochtli—a war god represented by an eagle—directed them to establish their capital on an island where they saw an eagle eating a serpent, the symbol of Quetzalcoatl. That island city became Tenochtitlán, the nerve center of a rigidly stratified society composed of warriors, merchants, priests, common people, and slaves.

The Aztecs conquered their neighbors, demanding tribute in textiles, gold, foodstuffs, and human beings who could be sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli. The war god's taste for blood was not easily quenched. In the Aztec year Ten Rabbit (the Christian 1502), at the coronation of Motecuhzoma II, thousands of people were sacrificed by having their still-beating hearts torn from their bodies.

City of the Sun (Cahokia) Area located near modern St. Louis, Missouri, where about twenty thousand people inhabited a metropolitan area.

IRA BLOCK/National Geographic Creative

▲ Even today, many centuries after the peak of its ceremonial and economic power, the central mound of the Cahokia settlement, known as the Monk's Mound, still dominates the flat landscape around it, as this 2010 photo shows.

The Aztecs believed they lived in the age of the Fifth Sun. Four times previously, they wrote, the earth and all the people who lived on it had been destroyed. They predicted their own world would end in earthquakes and hunger. In the Aztec year Thirteen Flint, volcanoes erupted, sickness and hunger spread, wild beasts attacked children, and an eclipse of the sun darkened the sky. Did some priest wonder whether the Fifth Sun was approaching its end? In time, the Aztecs learned that Europeans knew the year Thirteen Flint as 1492.

1-2 North America in 1492

- **What factors contributed to the diversity of indigenous peoples in North America?**
- **What role did gender play in the development and organization of indigenous societies?**
- **What role did warfare play in pre-Columbian American society?**

Over the centuries, the Americans who lived north of Mexico adapted their once-similar ways of life to very different climates and terrains, thus creating the diverse culture areas (ways of subsistence) that the Europeans encountered when they arrived (see Map 1.1). Scholars often delineate such culture areas by language group (such as Algonquian or Iroquoian), because neighboring indigenous nations commonly spoke related languages. Societies that lived in environments not well suited to agriculture—because of inadequate rainfall or poor soil, for example—followed a nomadic lifestyle. Within the area of the present-day United States, these groups included the Paiutes and Shoshones, who inhabited the Great Basin (now Nevada and Utah). Because of the difficulty of finding sufficient food, such hunter-gatherer bands were small, usually composed of one or more related families. The men hunted small animals, and women gathered seeds and berries. Where large game was more plentiful and food supplies therefore more certain, as in present-day central and western Canada and the Great Plains, bands of hunters were somewhat larger.

In more favorable environments, larger indigenous groups combined agriculture with gathering, hunting, and fishing. Those who lived near the seacoasts, like the Chinooks of present-day Washington and Oregon, consumed fish and shellfish in addition to growing crops and gathering seeds and berries. Residents of the interior (for example, the Arikaras of the Missouri River valley) hunted large animals while also cultivating maize, squash, and beans. The peoples of what is now eastern Canada and the northeastern United States also combined hunting, fishing, and agriculture. They used controlled fires both to open land for cultivation and to assist in hunting.

Extensive trade routes linked distant peoples. For instance, hoe and spade blades manufactured from stone mined in modern southern Illinois have been found as far northeast as Lake Erie and as far west as the Plains. Commercial and

Map 1.1 Native Cultures of North America

The Native peoples of the North American continent effectively used the resources of the regions in which they lived. As this map shows, coastal groups relied on fishing, residents of fertile areas engaged in agriculture, and other peoples employed hunting (often combined with gathering) as a primary mode of subsistence.

other interactions among disparate groups speaking different languages were aided by the universally understood symbol of friendship—the calumet, a feathered tobacco pipe offered to strangers at initial encounters. Across the continent, Native groups sought alliances and waged war against their enemies when diplomacy failed. Their histories, though not written, were complex and dynamic, long before Europeans arrived.

1-2a Gendered Division of Labor

Societies that relied primarily on hunting large animals, such as deer and buffalo, assigned that task to men, allotting food preparation and clothing production to women. Before such nomadic bands acquired horses from the Spaniards, women—occasionally assisted by dogs—also carried the family's belongings whenever the band relocated. Such a sexual division of labor was universal among hunting peoples, regardless of location. Agricultural societies assigned work in divergent ways. The Pueblo peoples, who lived in sixty or seventy autonomous villages and spoke five different languages, defined agricultural labor as men's work. In the east, large clusters of peoples speaking Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Muskogean languages allocated most agricultural chores to women, although men cleared the land. French colonizers often commented on Native gender roles that were very different from their own. "Men leave the arrangement of the household to the women, without interfering with them; they cut, and decide, and give away as they please, without making the husband angry,"

noted Father Paul le Juene of the Algonquian peoples he missionized along the shores of the St. Lawrence River. In the six nations of the Haudenosaunee (whom French called "Iroquois"), women held positions of political and cultural authority. This too Europeans found striking. "Amongst the Huron nations," wrote Father Pierre de Charlevoix, "the women name the counselors, and often chuse persons of their own sex." Indeed, he said, "the women have the chief authority amongst all the nations of the Huron language," excepting the Oneida. In general, he thought, they handled this surprising power ably.

Everywhere in North America, women cared for young children, while older youths learned adult skills from their same-sex parent. Children had a great deal of freedom. Young people commonly chose their own marital partners, and in most societies couples could easily divorce if they no longer wished to live together. In contrast to the earlier Mississippian cultures, populations in these societies remained at a level sustainable by existing food supplies, largely because of low birth rates. Infants and toddlers nursed until the age of two or even longer, and taboos prevented couples from having sexual intercourse during that period.

1-2b Social Organization

The southwestern and eastern agricultural peoples had similar social organizations. They lived in villages, sometimes with a thousand or more inhabitants. The Pueblos resided in multistory buildings constructed on terraces along the sides of cliffs or other easily defended sites. Northern Iroquois villages (in modern New York State) were composed of large, rectangular, bark-covered structures, or longhouses; the name Haudenosaunee means "People of the Longhouse." In the present-day southeastern United States, Muskogeans and southern Algonquians lived in large houses made of thatch. Most of the eastern villages were surrounded by wooden palisades and ditches to fend off attackers.

In all the agricultural societies, each dwelling housed an extended family defined matrilineally (through a female line of descent). Mothers, their married daughters, and their daughters' husbands and children all lived together. Matrilineal descent did not imply matriarchy, or the wielding of power by women, but rather served as a means of reckoning kinship. Matrilineal ties also linked extended families into clans. The nomadic bands of the Prairies and Great Plains, by contrast,

Collection of Mary Beth Norton

▲ Jacques Le Moyne, an artist accompanying the French settlement in Florida in the 1560s (see Section 1-9b, p. 28), produced some of the first European images of North American peoples. His depiction of Native agricultural practices shows the gendered division of labor: men breaking up the ground with fishbone hoes before women drop seeds into the holes. But Le Moyne's version of the scene cannot be accepted uncritically: unable to abandon a European view of proper farming methods, he erroneously drew plowed furrows in the soil.

were most often related patrilineally (through the male line). They lacked settled villages and defended themselves from attack primarily by moving to safer locations when necessary.

1-2c War and Politics

The defensive design of Native villages points to the significance of warfare in pre-Columbian America. Long before Europeans arrived, residents of the continent fought one another for control of prime hunting and fishing territories, fertile agricultural lands, or sources of essential items, such as salt (for preserving meat) and flint (for making knives and arrowheads). Native warriors protected by wooden armor battled while standing in ranks facing each other, the better to employ their clubs and throwing spears, which were effective only at close quarters. They began to shoot arrows from behind trees only when they confronted European guns, which rendered their armor useless. People captured in such wars were sometimes enslaved and dishonored by losing their previous names and identities, but slavery was not a primary source of labor in pre-Columbian America.

Indigenous political structures varied considerably. Among Pueblos, the village council, composed of ten to thirty men, was the highest political authority; no larger organization connected multiple villages. Nomadic hunters also lacked formal links among separate bands. The Iroquois, by contrast, had an elaborate political hierarchy incorporating villages into nations and nations into a confederation. A council of representatives from each nation made crucial decisions of war and peace for the entire confederacy. In all the North American cultures, civil and war leaders divided political power and wielded authority only so long as they retained the confidence of the people. Autocratic rulers held sway only in southeastern chiefdoms descended from the Mississippians. Women more often assumed leadership roles among agricultural peoples, especially those in which females were the primary cultivators. Female sachems (rulers) led Algonquian villages in what is now Massachusetts, but women never became heads of hunting bands. Iroquois women did not become chiefs, yet clan matrons exercised political power, including the power to start and stop wars.

1-2d Religion

The continent's Native peoples were polytheistic, worshipping a multitude of gods, sometimes under one chief creator. The major deities of agricultural peoples like the Pueblos and Muskogeans were associated with cultivation, and their main festivals centered on planting and harvest. The most important gods of hunters like those living on the Great Plains were associated with animals, and their festivals were related to hunting.

A wide variety of cultures, comprising more than 10 million people, inhabited America north of Mexico when Europeans arrived. The hierarchical kingdoms of Mesoamerica bore little resemblance to the nomadic hunting societies of the Great Plains or to the agriculturalists of the Northeast or Southwest. The diverse inhabitants of North America spoke well over one thousand distinct languages. They are "Americans" only in retrospect, grouped under the name the Europeans assigned to the continent. They did not consider themselves one people, just as the inhabitants of England, France, Spain, and the Netherlands did not imagine themselves as "Europeans." Nor did they think of uniting to repel the invaders who washed up on their shores beginning in 1492.

1-3 African Societies

- **How did the environment affect the development of societies in Africa?**
- **What was the influence of Islamic culture on African societies?**
- **What roles did gender play in the organization of African societies?**

Fifteenth-century Africa, like fifteenth-century America, housed a variety of cultures adapted to different terrains and climates (see Map 1.2). Many of these cultures were of great antiquity. Like the ancient cultures of North America, the diverse peoples of Africa were dynamic and changing, with complex histories of their own.

In the north, along the Mediterranean Sea, lived the Berbers, who were Muslims—followers of the Islamic religion founded by the prophet Mohammed in the seventh century CE. On the east coast of Africa, Muslim city-states engaged in far-ranging trade with India, the Moluccas (part of modern Indonesia), and China. In these ports, sustained contact and intermarriage among Arabs and Africans created the Swahili language and culture. Through the East African city-states passed the Spice Route, the conduit of waterborne commerce between the eastern Mediterranean and East Asia; the rest followed the long land route across Central Asia known as the Silk Road.

South of the Mediterranean coast in the African interior lie the great Saharan and Libyan deserts, vast nearly waterless expanses crisscrossed by trade routes passing through oases. The introduction of the camel in the fifth century CE made long-distance travel possible, and as Islam expanded after the ninth century, commerce controlled by Muslim merchants helped to spread similar religious and cultural ideas throughout the region. Below the deserts, much of the continent is divided between tropical rain forests (along the coasts) and grassy plains (in the interior). People speaking a variety of languages and pursuing different subsistence strategies lived in a wide belt south of the deserts. South of the Gulf of Guinea, the grassy landscape came to be dominated by Bantu-speaking peoples, who left their homeland in modern Nigeria about two thousand years ago and slowly migrated south and east across the continent.

1-3a West Africa (Guinea)

The inhabitants of West Africa's tropical forests and savanna grasslands supported themselves with fishing, cattle herding, and agriculture for at least ten thousand years before Europeans set foot there in the fifteenth century. The northern region of West Africa, or Upper Guinea, was heavily influenced by

Map 1.2 Africa and Its Peoples, ca. 1400

On the African continent resided many different peoples in a variety of ecological settings and political units. Even before Europeans began to explore Africa's coastlines, its northern regions were linked to the Mediterranean (and thus to Europe) by a network of trade routes.

the Islamic culture of the Mediterranean. By the eleventh century CE, many of the region's inhabitants had become Muslims. Trade via camel caravans between Upper Guinea and the Muslim Mediterranean connected sub-Saharan Africa to Europe and West Asia. Africans sold ivory, gold, and slaves to northern merchants to obtain salt, dates, silk, and cotton cloth.

Upper Guinea runs from Cape Verde in the northeast to Cape Palmas in the southwest. The people of its northernmost region, the so-called Rice Coast (present-day Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea), fished and cultivated rice in coastal swamplands. The Grain Coast, to the south, was thinly populated and not readily accessible from the sea because it had only one good harbor (modern Freetown, Sierra Leone). Its inhabitants concentrated on farming and raising livestock.

In Lower Guinea, south and east of Cape Palmas, most Africans were farmers who practiced traditional religions, rather than Islam. Believing that spirits inhabited particular places, they invested those places with special significance. Like

RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY

▲ This brass depiction of a hunting scene with a man and animals was employed by the Akan peoples of the modern Ivory Coast to weigh gold. An otherwise mundane object required for domestic and foreign trade thus was decorative as well as useful, providing for today's viewers a sense of ancient African life.

the agricultural peoples of the Americas, they developed rituals intended to ensure good harvests. Throughout the region, villages composed of kin groups were linked into hierarchical kingdoms. At the time of initial European contact, decentralized political and social authority characterized the region.

1-3b Complementary Gender Roles

In the societies of West Africa, as in those of the Americas, men and women pursued different tasks. In general, both sexes shared agricultural duties. Men also hunted, managed livestock, and did most of the fishing. Women were responsible for child care, food preparation, manufacture, and trade. They managed the extensive local and regional networks through which families, villages, and small kingdoms exchanged goods.

Despite their different economies and the rivalries among states, the peoples of Lower Guinea had similar social systems organized on the basis of what anthropologists have called the dual-sex principle. Each sex handled its own affairs: male political and religious leaders governed men, and females ruled women. In the Dahomean kingdom, for example, every male official had his female counterpart; in the thirty Akan states on the Gold Coast, chiefs inherited their status through the female line, and each male chief had a female assistant who supervised other women. Many West African societies practiced polygyny (one man's having several wives, each of whom lived separately with her children). Thus, few adults lived permanently in marital households, but the dual-sex system ensured that their actions were subject to scrutiny by elders of their own sex.

Throughout Guinea, both women and men served as heads of the cults and secret societies that directed the spiritual life of the villages. Young women were initiated into the Sandé cult, young men into Poro. Neither cult was allowed to reveal its secrets to the opposite sex. Unlike some of their Native American contemporaries, West African women rarely held formal power over men.

1-3c Slavery in Guinea

Africans, like North America's Native peoples, created various forms of slavery long before contact with Europeans. Enslavement was sometimes used to punish criminals, but more often slaves were enemy captives or people who voluntarily enslaved themselves or their children to pay debts.

West African law recognized both individual and communal landownership, but men seeking to accumulate wealth needed access to laborers—wives, children, or slaves—who could work the land. People enslaved for life composed essential elements of the economy. Slaveholders had a right to the products of the men and women they held in bondage, although the degree to which slaves were exploited varied greatly, and slave status did not always descend to the next generation. Some slaves were held as chattel; others could engage in trade, retaining a portion of their profits; and still others achieved prominent political or military positions. All, however, found it difficult to overcome the social stigma of enslavement, and could be traded or sold at the will of their owners.

West Africans, then, were agricultural peoples, skilled at tending livestock, hunting, fishing, and manufacturing cloth from plant fibers and animal skins. They were accustomed to a relatively egalitarian relationship between the sexes, especially within the context of religion. Carried as captives to the Americas, they became essential to transplanted European societies that used their labor but had little respect for their cultures.

1-4 European Societies

- What were the similarities in the everyday lives of Europeans across the continent?
- What roles did gender play in the social and cultural development of European society?
- What developments drove Europeans to engage in the exploration of the wider world?

In the fifteenth century, Europeans, too, were agricultural peoples. Split into numerous small, warring peoples, the continent of Europe was divided linguistically, politically, and economically. Yet the daily lives of ordinary men and women exhibited many similarities. In most European societies, a few families wielded autocratic power over the rest. English society in particular was organized as a series of interlocking hierarchies; that is, each person (except those at the very top or bottom) was superior to some, inferior to others. At the base of such hierarchies were people held in various forms of bondage. Although Europeans were not subjected to perpetual slavery, Christian doctrine permitted the enslavement of "heathens" (non-Christians), and some Europeans' freedom was restricted by such conditions as serfdom, which tied them to particular plots of land if not to specific owners. In short, Europe's kingdoms resembled those of Africa or Mesoamerica but differed greatly from the more egalitarian societies found in America north of Mexico (see Map 1.3).

Map 1.3 Europe in 1453

The Europeans who ventured out into the Atlantic came from countries on the northwestern edge of the continent, which was divided into numerous competing nations.

1-4a Gender, Work, Politics, and Religion

Most Europeans, like most Africans and Americans, lived in small villages. Only a few cities dotted the landscape, most of them seaports or political capitals. European farmers, called peasants, owned or leased separate plots of land, but they worked the fields communally. Men did most of the fieldwork; women helped out chiefly at planting and harvest. In some regions men concentrated on herding livestock while women cared for children, prepared and preserved food, milked cows, and kept poultry. A woman married to a city artisan or storekeeper might assist her husband in business. Because Europeans kept domesticated animals (pigs, goats, sheep, and cattle) for meat, hunting had little economic importance in their cultures, and served instead primarily as a sport for male aristocrats.

Unlike in Africa or the Americas, men dominated all areas of public life in Europe. A few women—notably Queen Elizabeth I of England—achieved status or power by right of birth, but the vast majority were excluded from positions of authority. European women also generally held inferior social, religious, and economic positions, yet they wielded power in their own households over children and servants. In contrast to the freedom children enjoyed in Native American families, European children were tightly controlled and subjected to harsh discipline.

Christianity was the dominant European religion. In the West, authority rested in the Catholic Church, based in Rome and led by the pope, who then as now directed a wholly male and officially celibate clergy. Although Europeans were, until the sixteenth century, nominally Catholic, many adhered to local belief systems that the church deemed heretical but failed to extinguish. Kings allied themselves with the church when it suited them, but often acted independently. Yet even so, the Christian nations of Europe from the twelfth century on publicly united in a goal of driving non-Christians (especially Muslims) not only from the European continent but also from the holy city of Jerusalem, which caused the series of wars known as the Crusades. Nevertheless, in the fifteenth century, Muslims dominated the commerce and geography of the Mediterranean world, especially after they conquered Constantinople (capital of the Christian Byzantine empire) in 1453. Few would have predicted that Christian Europeans would ever challenge that dominance.

1-4b Effects of Plague and Warfare

When the fifteenth century began, European nations were slowly recovering from the devastating epidemic known as the Black Death, which first struck in 1346. This plague seems to have arrived in Europe from China, traveling with long-distance traders along the Silk Road. The disease then recurred with particular severity in the 1360s and 1370s. Although no precise figures are available and the impact of the Black Death varied from region to region, the best estimate is that fully one-third of Europe's people died during those terrible years. A precipitous economic decline followed—in some regions more than half of the workers had died—as did severe social, political, and religious disruption because of the deaths of clergymen and other leading figures.

As plague ravaged the population, England and France waged the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), which began after English monarchs claimed the French throne. The war interrupted overland trade routes connecting England and Antwerp (in modern Belgium) to Venice, and thence to India and China. England, on the periphery of the Mediterranean commercial core, exported wool and cloth to Antwerp in exchange for spices and silks from the East. Needing a new way to reach their northern trading partners, eastern Mediterranean merchants forged a maritime route to Antwerp. Using a triangular, or lateen, sail (rather than then-standard square rigging) improved the maneuverability of ships, enabling vessels to sail north around the European coast. Maritime navigation also improved through the acquisition of a Chinese invention, the compass, and the perfection of instruments like the astrolabe and the quadrant, which allowed sailors to gauge their latitude by measuring the relationship of the sun, moon, or certain stars to the horizon.

Everyday scenes, illuminated page from Book of Hours of King Don Manuel I, manuscript, Portugal 16th Century/DE AGOSTINI EDITORE/Bridgeman Images

▲ Daily life in early sixteenth-century Portugal, as illustrated in a manuscript prayer book. At top a prosperous family shares a meal being served by an enslaved African. Other scenes show male laborers clearing land and hunting birds (left) and chopping wood (right), while at bottom a woman plants seeds in a prepared bed and in the top background female servants work in the kitchen.

1-4c Political and Technological Change

After the Hundred Years' War, European monarchs forcefully consolidated their previously diffuse political power and raised new revenues by increasing the taxes they levied on an already hard-pressed peasantry. The long military struggle led to new pride in national identity, which began to eclipse prevailing regional and dynastic loyalties. In England, Henry VII in 1485 founded the Tudor dynasty and began uniting a divided land. In France, the successors of Charles VII made the kingdom more cohesive. Most successful of all were Ferdinand of Aragón and Isabella of Castile, who married in 1469, founding a strongly Catholic and increasingly unified Spain. In 1492, they defeated the Muslims who had lived in Spain and Portugal for centuries, and expelled all Jews and Muslims from their domain.

The fifteenth century also brought technological change to Europe. **Movable type** and the **printing press**, invented in Germany in the 1450s, made information more accessible over wider distances. Printing stimulated Europeans' curiosity about fabled lands across the seas, lands they could now read about in books. The most important such works were Ptolemy's *Geography,* a description of the known world written in ancient times, first published in 1475; and Marco Polo's *Travels*, published in 1477. The *Travels* recounted the Venetian merchant's adventures in thirteenth-century China and intriguingly described that nation as bordered on the east by an ocean. Polo's account circulated widely among educated elites, first in manuscript and later in print. The book led many Europeans to believe they could reach China in oceangoing vessels instead of relying on the Silk Road or the Spice Route overland across East Africa. A transoceanic route, if it existed, would allow northern Europeans to circumvent the Muslim and Venetian merchants who had long controlled their access to Asian goods.

1-4d Motives for Exploration

Technological advances and the growing strength of newly powerful national rulers catalyzed the European explorations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Each country craved easy access to African and Asian goods—silk, dyes, perfumes, jewels, sugar, gold, and especially spices. Pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and nutmeg were desirable not only for seasoning food but also because they were believed to have medicinal and magical properties. Their allure stemmed largely from their rarity, their extraordinary cost, and their mysterious origins. They passed through so many hands en route to London or Seville that no European knew exactly where they came from. (Nutmeg, for example, grew only on nine tiny islands in the Moluccas, now eastern Indonesia.) Avoiding intermediaries in Venice and Constantinople, and acquiring such valuable products directly, would improve a nation's balance of trade and its standing relative to other countries, in addition to supplying its wealthy leaders with coveted luxury items that bolstered their power.

movable type Type in which each character is cast on a separate piece of metal.

printing press A machine that transfers lettering or images by contact with various forms of inked surface onto paper or similar material fed into it in various ways.

A concern for spreading Christianity around the world supplemented these economic motives. The linking of material and spiritual goals may seem contradictory, but fifteenth-century Europeans saw no necessary conflict between the two. Explorers and colonizers—especially Roman Catholics—sought to convert "heathen" peoples to Christianity. At the same time, they hoped to increase their nation's wealth by establishing direct trade with Africa, China, India, and the Moluccas.

1-5 Early European Explorations

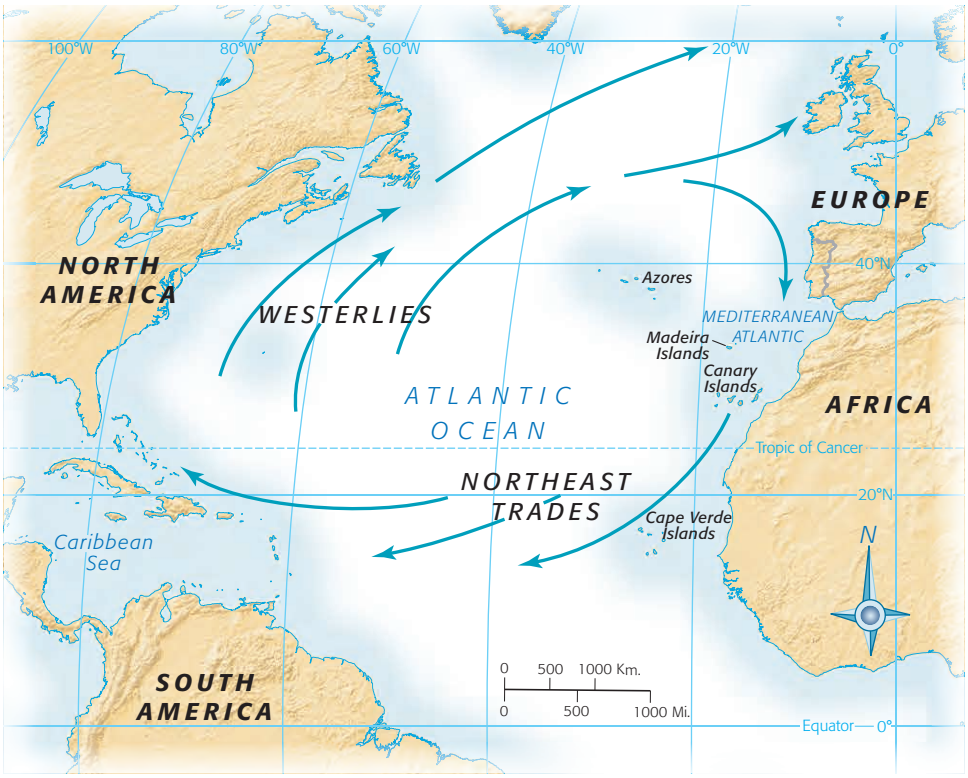
- **What navigational tools and techniques enabled Europeans to engage in exploration?**
- **What were the consequences of early European exploration?**

To establish that trade, European mariners first had to explore the oceans. Seafarers needed not just the maneuverable vessels and navigational aids increasingly used in the fourteenth century but also knowledge of the sea, its currents, and especially its winds, which powered their ships. Where would Atlantic breezes carry their square-rigged ships, which, even with the addition of a triangular sail, needed to run before the wind (that is, to have the wind directly behind the vessel)?

1-5a Sailing the Mediterranean Atlantic

Europeans honed new navigation techniques in the region called the Mediterranean Atlantic, the expanse of ocean located south and west of Spain and bounded by the islands of the Azores (on the west) and the Canaries (on the south), with the Madeiras in their midst (see Map 1.4). Europeans reached all three sets of islands during the fourteenth century—first the Canaries in the 1330s, then the Madeiras and the Azores. The Canaries proved a popular destination for mariners from Iberia, the peninsula that includes Spain and Portugal. Sailing to the Canaries from Europe was easy, because strong winds known as the Northeast Trades blow southward along the Iberian and African coastlines. The voyage took about a week, and the volcanic peaks on the islands made them easy to spot.

The problem was getting back. The Iberian sailor attempting to return home faced a major obstacle: the winds that had brought him so quickly to the Canaries now blew directly at him. Confronted by contrary winds, mariners had traditionally waited for the wind to change, but the Northeast Trades blew steadily. So they developed a new method: sailing "around the wind." That meant sailing as directly against the wind as was possible without being forced to change course. In the Mediterranean Atlantic, a mariner would head northwest into the open ocean, until—weeks later—he reached the winds that would carry him home, the so-called Westerlies.



Map 1.4 Atlantic Winds and Islands

European mariners had to explore the oceans before they could find new lands. The first realm they discovered was that of Atlantic winds and islands.

Those winds blow (we now know) northward along the coast of North America before heading east toward Europe.

This solution must at first have seemed to defy common sense, but it became the key to successful exploration of both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Once a sailor understood the winds and their allied currents, he no longer feared leaving Europe without being able to return.

1-5b Islands of the Mediterranean Atlantic

During the fifteenth century, armed with knowledge of the winds and currents of the Mediterranean Atlantic, Iberian seamen regularly visited the three island groups, which they could reach in two weeks or less. The uninhabited Azores were soon settled by Portuguese migrants, who raised wheat for sale in Europe and sold livestock to passing sailors. The Madeiras also had no Native peoples, and by the 1450s Portuguese colonists were employing slaves (probably Jews and Muslims from Iberia) to grow sugar for export to the mainland. By the 1470s, Madeira had developed a colonial **plantation** economy. For the first time in world history, a region was settled explicitly to cultivate a valuable crop—sugar—to be sold elsewhere. Moreover, because the work involved in large-scale plantation agriculture was so back-breaking, only a supply of enslaved laborers (who could not opt to quit) could ensure the system's continued success.

The Canaries did have indigenous residents—the Guanche people, who began trading animal skins and dyes with their European visitors. After 1402, the French, Portuguese, and Spanish began sporadically attacking the islands. The Guanches resisted vigorously, even though they were weakened by their susceptibility to alien European diseases. One by one, the seven islands fell to Europeans who then carried off Guanches as slaves to the Madeiras or Iberia. Spain conquered the last island in 1496 and subsequently converted the land into sugar plantations. Collectively, the Canaries and Madeira became known as the Wine Islands because much of their sugar production was used to fortify sweet wines.

1-5c Portuguese Trading Posts in Africa

While some European rulers and traders concentrated on exploiting the islands of the Mediterranean Atlantic, others used them as stepping-stones to Africa. In 1415, Portugal seized control of Ceuta, a Muslim city in North Africa (see Map 1.2). Prince Henry the Navigator, son of King John I of Portugal, knew that vast wealth awaited the first European nation to tap the riches of Africa and Asia directly. Repeatedly, he dispatched ships southward along the African coast, attempting to discover an oceanic route to Asia. But not until after Prince Henry's death did Bartholomew Dias round the southern tip of Africa (1488) and Vasco da Gama finally reach India (1498).

plantation A large-scale agricultural enterprise growing commercial crops and often employing coerced or slave labor.