Chapter 1

I. The Shaping of North America

- Planet earth took on its present form slowly.
- Over time the great continents of Eurasia, Africa, Australia, Antarctica, and the Americas were formed.
- The majestic ranges of western North America—the Rockies, the Sierra Nevada, the Cascades, and the Coast Ranges—formed.

I. The Shaping of North America (cont.)

- The Canadian Shield—a zone undergirded by rocks—became part of the North American landmass.
- Other mountain ranges were formed, along with rivers and valleys.
- After the glaciers retreated, the North American landscape was transformed.

II. Peopling the Americas

- The North American continent's human history was beginning to be formed, perhaps by people crossing over land.
- Low sea levels exposed a land bridge connecting Eurasia with North America where the Bering Sea now lies between Siberia and Alaska.
- This brought the “immigrant” ancestors of Native America. See Map 1.1.

II. Peopling the Americas (cont.)

- The Incas in Peru, the Mayans in Central America, and the Aztecs in Mexico shaped complex civilizations:
II. Peopling the Americas (cont.)

• The Incas in Peru, the Mayans in Central America, and the Aztecs in Mexico shaped complex civilizations:
  – They built elaborate cities and carried on far-flung commerce.
  – They were talented mathematicians.
  – They offered human sacrifices to their gods.

III. The Earliest Americans

• Agriculture, especially corn growing, became part of Native American civilizations in Mexico and South America.
• Large irrigation systems were created.
• Map 1.2—Native American Indian peoples.

III. The Earliest Americans (cont.)

• Social life was less elaborately developed.
• Nation-states did not exist, except the Aztec empire.
• The Mound Builders were in the Ohio River valley.
• The Mississippian settlement was at Cahokia.

III. The Earliest Americans (cont.)

• Three-sister farming—maize, beans, and squash—supported dense populations.
• The Iroquois Confederacy developed political and organizational skills.
• The natives had neither the desire nor the means to manipulate nature aggressively.

IV. Indirect Discoverers of the New World

• Norse seafarers from Scandinavia came to the northeastern shore
of North America, near present-day Newfoundland, to a spot they called Vinland.
• Ambitious Europeans started a chain of events that led to a drive toward Asia, the penetration of Africa, and the completely accidental discovery of the New World.

IV. Indirect Discoverers of the New World (cont.)
• The Christian crusaders rank high among America’s indirect discoverers.
• The crusaders aroused desire for the luxuries of the East from the Spice Islands (Indonesia), China, and India; Muslim middlemen exacted a heavy toll en route.
• See Map 1.3—Major Trade Routes with Asia, 1492.

V. Europeans Enter Africa
• Marco Polo’s tales also stimulated European desire for a cheaper route to the treasures of the East.
• Spurred by the development of the caravel, Portuguese mariners began to explore sub-Saharan Africa.
• They founded the modern plantation system.
• They pushed further southward.

V. Europeans Enter Africa (cont.)
• Spain was united by the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, and by the expulsion of the “infidel” Muslim Moors.
• The Spanish were ready to explore the wealth of India.
• Portugal controlled the southern and eastern African coast, thus forcing Spain to look westward.

VI. Columbus Comes upon a
New World
• Christopher Columbus persuaded the Spanish to support his expedition on their behalf.
• On October 12, 1492, he and his crew landed on an island in the Bahamas.
• A new world was within the vision of Europeans.

VI. Columbus Comes upon a New World (cont.)
• Columbus called the native peoples “Indians.”
• Columbus’s discovery convulsed four continents—Europe, Africa, and the two Americas.
• An independent global economic system emerged.
• The world after 1492 would never be the same.

VII. When Worlds Collide
• The clash reverberated in the historic Columbian exchange (see Figure 1.2).
• While the European explorers marveled at what they saw, they introduced Old World crops and animals to the Americas.
• Columbus returned in 1493 to the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

VII. When Worlds Collide (cont.)
• The introduction of horses changed many Native American societies.
• A “sugar revolution” took place in the European diet, fueled by the forced migration of millions of Africans to work the canefields and sugar mills of the New World.
• An exchange of diseases between the explorers and the natives took place.

VIII. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru
• Spain secured its claim to Columbus’s discovery in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), which divided the New World with Portugal.
• See Map 1.4.
• The West Indies served as offshore bases for staging the Spanish invasion of the mainland.

VIII. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru (cont.)
• The encomienda allowed the government to “commend” Indians to certain colonists in return for promise to try to Christianize them.
• Spanish missionary Bartolomé de Las Casas called it “a moral pestilence invented by Satan.”
• In service of God, in search of gold and glory, Spanish conquistadores (conquerors) came to the New World.

VIII. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru (cont.)
• In 1519 Hernan Cortés set sail with eleven ships for Mexico and her destiny.
• Along the way he rescued several people who would be important for his success.
• Near present-day Veracruz, Cortés made his final landfall.
• He determined to capture the coffers of the Aztec capital at Tenochtitlán.

VIII. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru (cont.)
• Aztec chieftain Moctezuma sent ambassadors to greet Cortés and invite Cortés and his men to the capital city.
• On June 30, 1520, noche triste (sad night), the Aztecs attacked Cortés.
• On August 13, 1521, Cortés laid siege to the city and the Aztecs capitulated. The combination of conquest and disease took its toll.

VIII. The Conquest of Mexico and Peru (cont.)
• Invaders brought more than conquest.
• They intermarried with surviving Indians, creating culture of mestizos, people of mixed Indian and European heritage.
• Mexico blends Old and New Worlds.
• 1532: Francisco Pizarro crushed Incas (Peru).
• Booty and silver may have led to capitalism; certainly transformed the world economy.

IX. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry

• Other explorers came to the New World:
  – 1513: Balboa discovered the Pacific Ocean.
  – 1519: Magellan rounded tip of South America.
  – 1513 and 1521: Ponce de León explored Florida.
  – 1540–1542: Coronado explored Arizona and New Mexico.
  – 1539–1542: Hernando de Soto discovered the Mississippi River.

IX. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry (cont.)

• Spain’s colonial empire grew swiftly and impressively. Other explorers began to come.
  • 1497–1498—Giovanni Caboto (known as John Cabot) explored the northeastern coast of North America.
  • 1524—Giovanni da Verrazano probed the eastern seaboard.
  • 1534—Jacques Cartier journeyed up the St. Lawrence River.

IX. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry (cont.)

• The Spanish began to build forts to protect their territories.
• The Spanish cruelly abused the Pueblo peoples in the Battle of Acoma (1599).
• They founded the province of New Mexico in 1609 and its capital in 1610 (see Map 1.6).
• The Roman Catholic mission became the central institution in colonial New Mexico.

IX. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry (cont.)

• The native Indians rose up against the missionaries in Popé’s Rebellion (1680).
• In the 1680s the French sent Robert de La Salle down the Mississippi River.
• In 1716 the Spanish settled in Texas.
• In 1769 Spanish missionaries led by Father Junipero Serra founded San Diego and 21 mission stations.

IX. Exploration and Imperial Rivalry (cont.)
• The Black Legend is a false record of the misdeeds of the Spanish in the New World.
• While there were Spanish misdeeds, the Spanish invaders laid the foundations for a score of Spanish-speaking nations.
• Spaniards were genuine empire builders and cultural innovators in the New World.