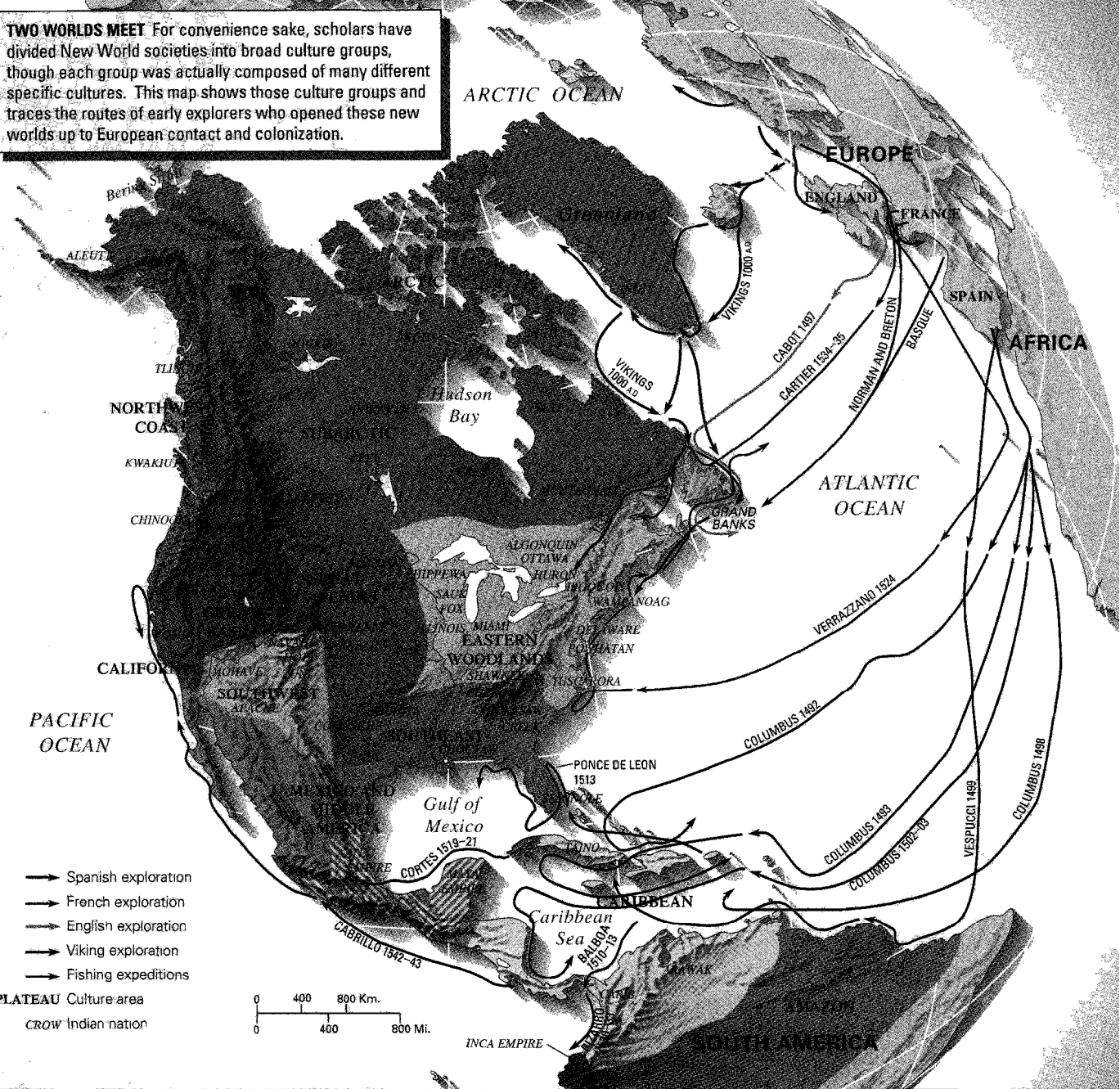
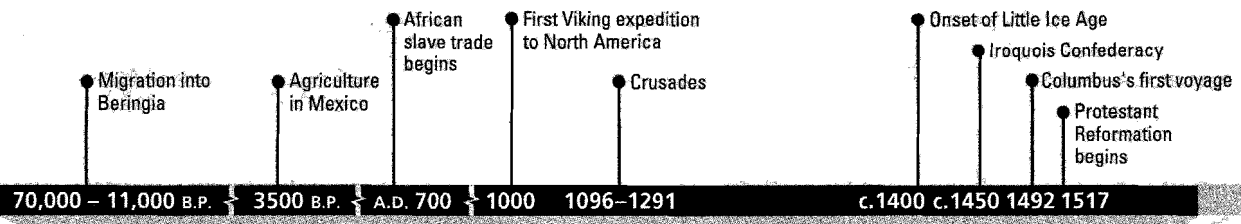
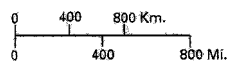


TWO WORLDS MEET For convenience sake, scholars have divided New World societies into broad culture groups, though each group was actually composed of many different specific cultures. This map shows those culture groups and traces the routes of early explorers who opened these new worlds up to European contact and colonization.



- Spanish exploration
- French exploration
- English exploration
- Viking exploration
- Fishing expeditions

PLATEAU Culture-area
CROW Indian nation



*Note: B.P. means before present time

CHAPTER 1

Making a "New" World,

to 1558

American Origins

- Before the arrival of Columbus, what constraints did environmental conditions impose on native cultures?
- What kinds of choices did American Indians make, and what were the outcomes of those choices for Indians living in various parts of the continent?

European Outreach and the Age of Exploration

- What expectations led Europeans into extensive exploration and outreach?

- What geographical and political constraints stood in their way?
 - How did they choose to overcome those constraints?
-

The Challenges of Mutual Discovery

- How did American Indians choose to respond to European contact?
- How did Europeans choose to respond to Indians and Africans?

What were some outcomes of the Columbian Exchange?

INTRODUCTION

The first people to come to America *chose* to come here a very long time ago, *expecting* to find improved hunting. These Americans subsequently faced natural, cultural, and economic *constraints* that gave peculiar shape to their societies. As their numbers grew, these hunters were *constrained* by the rapid rise of their own population and the simultaneous decline of the large game animals they depended on for food. Many *chose* to increase their reliance on plants. The *outcome* for these societies was the eventual development of agriculture. Other societies responded differently to the decline and ultimate extinction of big game because of different *constraints* and *expectations*. The overall *outcome* was a broadly diverse cultural universe in North America.

In the meantime, people in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe were making their own *choices*. Muslim traders, following routes first taken by the ancient Egyptians, spread knowledge and goods that presented a new set of *expectations* and *choices* to Africans. One *outcome* was the rise of rich and sophisticated African kingdoms. Another was the establishment of a systematic slave trade by Africans and Muslims.

The influence of Viking and Muslim traders led to changed *expectations* in Europe as well. The wealth of these traders lured Europeans into increasing adventurousness. At first, their neighbors' military strength was a large *constraint*, but gradually Europeans *chose* to challenge Islam's control over large parts of Europe and the Asian and

Expectations
Constraints
Choices
Outcomes

African trade. Italian merchants formed partnerships with their Islamic neighbors, bringing new wealth and knowledge into their cities. Farther west, the Portuguese and then the Spanish swept the Muslims from their lands. They then explored new trade routes to escape the Italian-Muslim monopoly of the Far Eastern and African trade. Their successes led other European nations to *choose* exploration as a way of bringing new riches to their lands.

The *outcome* of these *expectations*, *constraints*, and *choices* was a collision among Europeans, Africans, and American Indians in the Western Hemisphere. This collision of worlds transformed life on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus the story of making America must begin with the first discovery of the New World, long before Columbus, and trace the development of the people who were already here when Columbus arrived. Then we must consider what was happening in the rest of the world so we can understand why others eventually came to this land. Only then will we be prepared to see how the *expectations*, *constraints*, and *choices* made by the people who came together in the New World following Columbus had the particular *outcomes* we call America.

American Origins

The settlement of the **Western Hemisphere** took place fairly recently in human history. Although human culture began about 4 million years ago in what is now northern Tanzania, anthropologists hold that the peopling of the Americas did not begin until at least 70,000 years ago. Some theorize that this process did not begin until about 20,000 years ago.

The movement of people from Asia to North America is intimately connected to the advance and retreat of glaciers during the Great Ice Age, which began about 2.5 million years ago and

Western Hemisphere The half of the earth that includes North America, Mexico, Central America, and South America.

The New World

- c. **70,000-10,000 B.P.** Human migration from Asia into Beringia
- c. **7000 B.P.** Plant cultivation begins in North America
- C. **3500 B.P.** Agriculture begins in central Mexico
- C. A.D. **500** Agriculture extends into present-day New Mexico and Arizona
- c. **500-1000** Rise of Hopewell culture
- c. **700** Islamic caravans to West Africa and African slave trade begin
- 800-1100** Vikings extend trade network
- 800-1700** Rise of Mississippian culture
- 1096-1291** The Crusades to the Holy Land
- c. **1200** Aztecs invade central Mexico
- c. **1400** Beginning of the Little Ice Age
- c. **1450** Hiawatha founds the Iroquois Confederacy
- 1492** The conquista completed
Columbus's first voyage
- 1500** Portuguese begin to control the African slave trade
- 1517** Protestant Reformation begins
- 1527-1535** Henry VIII begins English Reformation
- 1558** Elizabeth I becomes queen of England

ended only about 10,000 years ago. During the Wisconsin glaciation, the last major advance of glaciers, a sheet of ice over 8,000 feet thick covered the northern half of both Europe and North America. So much water was frozen into this massive glacier that sea levels dropped as much as 450 feet.

This drop in sea levels created a land bridge called Beringia between Siberia and Alaska. During the Ice Age, Beringia was a dry, frigid grassland that was free of glaciers. It was a perfect grazing ground for animals such as giant bison and huge-tusked woolly mammoths. Hunters of these animals, including large wolves, saber-toothed cats, and humans, followed them across Beringia into North America.

Geologists believe that sea levels were low enough to expose Beringia between 70,000 and 10,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence yields a wide variety of dates for when people first moved southward into North America, ranging from about 40,000 to about 12,000 years ago.

Other evidence, from blood DNA, tooth shapes, and languages, suggests that the majority of North America's original inhabitants descended from three separate migrating groups. The first of these, the Paleo-Indians, probably arrived 30,000 to 40,000 years ago. Their descendants ultimately occupied the entire Western Hemisphere. The second group the Na-Dene people, arrived near the end of the Wisconsin era, between 10,000 and 11,000 years ago. Their descendants are concentrated in subarctic regions of Canada and in the southwestern United States. The final group, the Arctic-dwelling

B.P. An abbreviation for "before the present"; 70,000 B.C. means "70,000 years ago."

Beringia An expanse of land between present-day Siberia and Alaska, now covered by water; an avenue for migration between Asia and North America in prehistoric times.

Inuits, or Eskimos, probably arrived after the land bridge between North America and Asia disappeared (see Map 1.1).

About 9,000 years ago, a warming trend began that ended the Ice Age and brought temperatures to what we now consider normal. As temperatures warmed and grasslands disappeared, the gigantic Ice Age creatures that had supplied early hunters with their primary source of meat, clothing, and tools began to die out. The hunters faced the unpleasant prospect of following the large animals into extinction if they kept trying to survive by hunting big game.

Seedtime for Native Cultures in North America

The constraints imposed by the changing environment forced the American Indians to make a series of choices. The first phase of adaptation, called the **Archaic phase**, lasted until about 3,000 years ago. During this period, people in North America abandoned nomadic big-game hunting and began to explore new sources of food, clothing, and tools and new places to live.

Archaic culture emerged at different times in different places. It appears that western North America was hit earliest and hardest by the changing climate. At Fort Rock Cave in southern Oregon, archaeologists have unearthed evidence dating from 9,600 years ago of people abandoning big-game hunting and adapting to local conditions. Three findings at Fort Rock Cave mark it as an important transitional site between the big-game and Archaic cultures. First, investigators found many different tools for grinding seeds. The tools were signs that these people were eating less meat and more local grass seeds, nuts, and other vegetable foods. Second, investigators found baskets, sandals, and clothing woven from grasses and reeds, also indications of a greater reliance on plants. Third, investigators found small spear points and fishing and bird-hunting equipment. These early Indians had apparently stopped chasing after mammoths and had begun to hunt and fish for animals that they could find close by.

Over the next several thousand years, people throughout North America made similar choices,

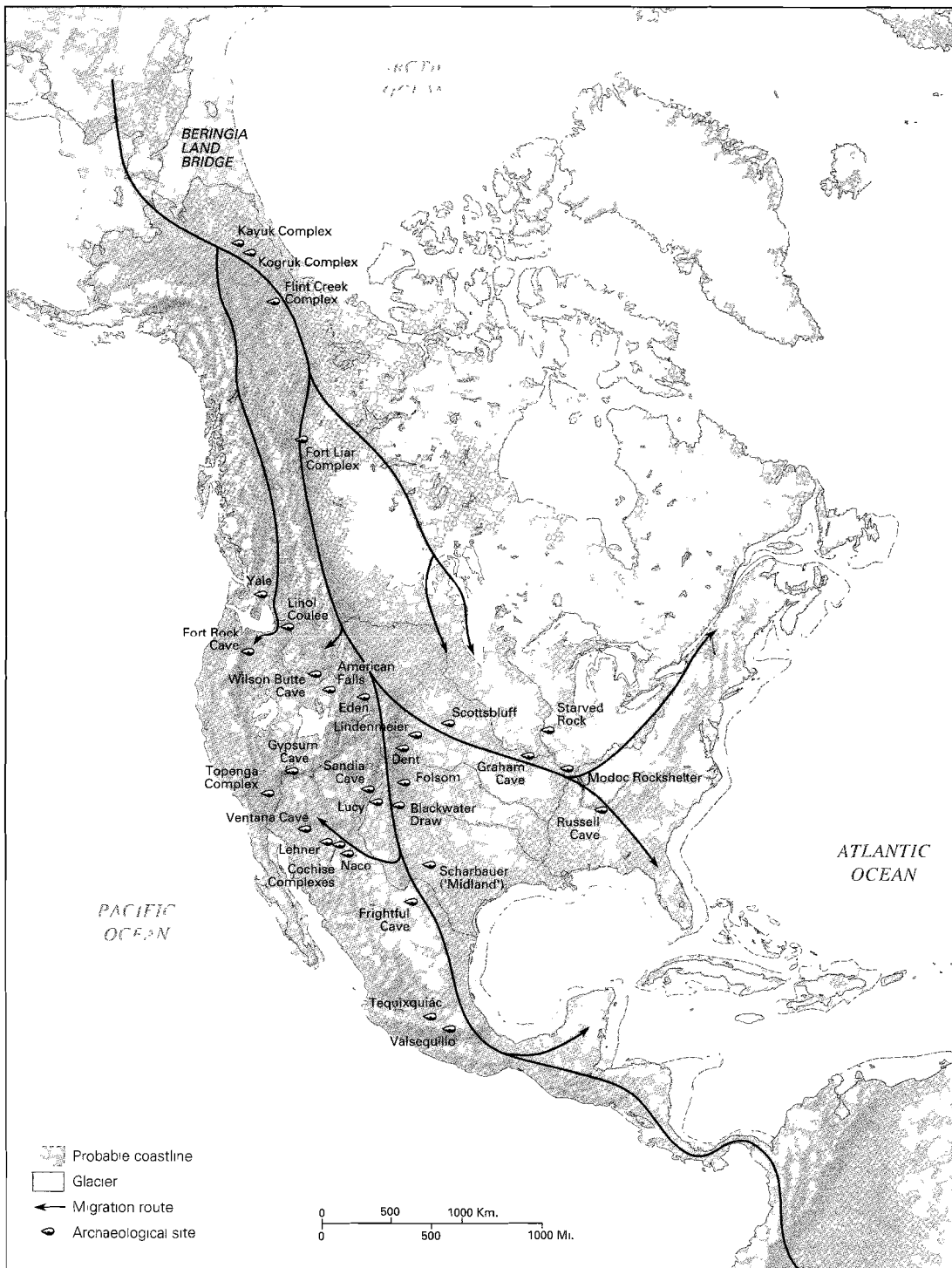
differing only in the specific foods and types of materials they employed. In the forests that grew up to cover the eastern half of the continent, Archaic Indians developed finely polished stone tools, which they used to make functional and beautiful implements out of wood, bone, shell, and other materials. There and along the Pacific shore, people hollowed out massive tree trunks to make boats. During this time domesticated dogs were introduced into North America, probably by newly arriving migrants from Asia. With dogs to help carry loads on land and boats for river transportation, Archaic people were able to make the best use of their local environments by moving from camp to camp over the year, perhaps collecting shellfish for several weeks in one spot and then wild strawberries in another.

Such efficient use of local resources caused an enormous increase in population. Nomadic hunting had involved dangerous animals and occasional famines that helped keep human populations small. Archaic life was much safer and food supplies more reliable. Freed from the constant need to track and kill big game for meat, Archaic people also had more spare time. One outcome was the continuing invention of new tools and craft skills. Another was the emergence of art, which played a prominent role in the elaborate burial practices that emerged everywhere in North America during this period.

Early Indians left their mark on their local environments. They used fire to clear forests of unwanted scrub and to encourage the growth of berries and other plants that they found valuable. In this way they produced vegetables for themselves and also provided food for browsing animals like deer, which increased in number, while other species, less useful to people, declined.

Archaic phase In Native American culture, the period when people began to shift away from hunting big game and turn to agriculture and other food sources in local environments.

nomadic Having no fixed home and wandering from place to place in search of food or other resources.



◆ **MAP 1.1** First Americans Enter the New World Although DNA evidence indicates that all early migrants to the Western Hemisphere were genetically related, at least two cultural groups moved into North America approximately 40,000 years ago. The Old Cordilleran group entered to the west of the Rocky Mountains, and the Clovis group, to the east of the Rockies. Both groups left records of their passing at numerous sites, the most prominent of which are labeled here.

A significant example of such environmental engineering comes from north-central Mexico. Perhaps 7,000 years ago, humans began cultivating a wild strain of grass. Such cultivation eventually transformed a fairly unproductive plant into maize, an enormously nourishing and prolific food crop.

Maize, along with beans, squash, and chilies, formed the basis for an agricultural revolution in America. Although it is not clear how or why this revolution got started, about 3,500 years ago people near what is now Mexico City began planting these vegetables. Shortly thereafter, they stopped their annual round of hunting and gathering. They settled down into villages near their fields and moved away only when these fields were exhausted.

Maize spread like wildfire. From central Mexico, it found its way to New Mexico and Arizona about 1,000 or 2,000 years ago and then spread northward and eastward. Between 500 and 800 years ago, the Woodland Indians of eastern North America, who had been cultivating wild sunflowers and other foods, incorporated maize into their economy.

The Complex World of Indian America

Although the broad shape of American Indian life was similar throughout North America, vast differences existed among various Indian groups. This variety of cultures developed in direct response to local environmental conditions. The map at the beginning of the chapter shows the eleven major culture areas that anthropologists have identified.

Lifestyles differed greatly from one culture area to another. The language and technology of Arctic peoples were unlike those anywhere else on the continent. In the eastern half of what is now the United States, Indians were agriculturalists who supplemented their diet of corn, beans, and squash by hunting and fishing. On the Western Plains, an Archaic lifestyle persisted as people traveled from one camp to another on an annual hunting and gathering cycle. On the Pacific coast, Indians lived in permanent villages and harvested the riches of the sea. Clearly North America was socially and culturally complex.

The spread of agriculture allowed Indians to build large, ornate centers in many parts of North America. These centers were generally not residential cities but trading and ceremonial centers where people congregated periodically. Large earthen mounds in the shape of huge animals, pyramids, or geometrical patterns characterize these trading and ceremonial centers. Archaeologists have called these **mound builder** societies. The map of late Archaic America is dotted with such centers (see Map 1.1). Along the Ohio River, a complex of sites known as the Adena culture was constructed about 3,000 years ago. Adena cities were centers of ceremony and trade, as is evidenced by the artifacts from all over North America that have been found at Adena sites.

In the Eastern Woodlands, Hopewell culture took the place of Adena culture. Hopewell culture reached its peak between 1,500 and 1,000 years ago at Cahokia, near the modern city of East St. Louis, Illinois. Archaeologists have found the distinctive forms of pottery, tools, and religious and artistic objects that originated there over much of North America. About 800 years ago, Cahokia and the entire Hopewell complex fell into decline for unknown reasons.

While ceremonial and trading centers declined in the North, their development continued in the southern Mississippi River valley. Between 1,200 years ago and the time of European entry into the region in the 1700s, peoples speaking Siouan, Caddoan, and Muskogean languages formed a vibrant agricultural and urban society, named the Mississippian culture.

maize Corn, a tall plant with a solid stem and narrow leaves that bears seeds on large ears; the word *maize* comes from an Indian word for this plant.

mound builder Name applied to a number of Native American societies that constructed earthen mounds as monuments and building foundations.

Hopewell culture An early American Indian culture centered in the Ohio River valley; it is known for its burial mounds, tools, and pottery.

Mississippian culture An American Indian culture centered in the southern Mississippi River valley; influenced by Mexican culture, it is known for its pyramid building and its urban centers.



- ◆ Cahokia was the largest city in pre-Columbian North America, occupying over 6 square miles and containing more than 120 earthen mounds, including several gigantic pyramids. The largest, Monk's Mound (the huge structure in the upper right corner), was larger than the Great Pyramids of Egypt. Despite being a significant ceremonial and trading center, Cahokia probably did not have a large permanent population. *Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site/painting by L. K. Townsend.*

Although the Mississippian culture had ties with the earlier Adena and Hopewell cultures, it was more directly influenced by contacts with adventurous traders from Mexico. The Mississippian culture featured fortified cities such as the one at present-day Natchez. These cities contained gigantic pyramids. Unlike the earlier Hopewell centers, these were true cities in that they housed a large residential population.

Farther north, in the Eastern Woodlands, people lived in smaller villages where they combined agriculture with hunting and gathering. The **Iroquois**, for example, lived in towns containing three thousand or more people. They moved their towns when soil fertility, firewood, and game became exhausted. Each town was made up of a group of longhouses, which often were more than 60 feet long. Family apartments ranged down both sides of a long central hallway. This hallway was the center of social and political life. In it, babies crawled, children played, men swapped hunting stories, and women cooked and cleaned.

A dominant matriarch supervised the daily tasks of running the household. Women occupied

places of high social and economic status in Iroquois society. Families were matrilineal, meaning that they traced their descent through the mother's line, and matrilocal, meaning that a man left his home to move in with his wife's family upon marriage. Women distributed the rights to cultivate specific fields and controlled the harvest. Clan matriarchs chose the men who would sit as judges and political council members.

Variations on the Iroquois pattern were typical throughout the Northeast and in the Great Plains and Southwest. Agricultural village life dominated in each region before the arrival of Europeans.

Iroquois Collective name for six Indian tribes that lived in present-day New York State whose cultures and languages were closely related.

longhouse A long communal dwelling, usually built of poles and bark, having a central hallway with family apartments on either side.

matriarch A woman who rules a family, clan, or tribal group.

Migrants into the plains probably came from the East, carrying seed corn from the declining Hopewell settlements. Groups like the Mandans began settling on bluffs overlooking the many streams that fed the Missouri River. By 1300, such villages could be found on every stream from North Dakota to Kansas.

Indians in the Southwest were closely tied to Mexico. Corn appears to have been brought into this region as early as 3,200 years ago. But the Southwestern Indians, unlike their counterparts in Mexico, continued to engage in hunting and gathering for a long time thereafter. Not until about A.D. 400 did the Southwestern Indians begin building larger, more substantial permanent houses.

A drastic climatic change in the eighth century prompted two different responses among the Southwestern Indians. Generally, this new climate was drier, but it also brought violent late-summer thunderstorms that often caused flash floods. One group of Indians, whom later residents called the Anasazi, protected their homes by building dams that channeled runoff through irrigation canals. The cooperative labor required for such projects resulted in much larger communities.

Another Southwestern group, called the Chichimecs, responded to climatic change by moving southward into Mexico. There they built on the declining fortunes of highly urbanized societies, borrowing architectural and agricultural skills from such established city-states as Teotihuacán. The most famous of these Chichimec groups was the Aztecs, who established themselves on a small island in the middle of a lake in the Valley of Mexico in about 1200.

Still another change in climate in the thirteenth century spelled the demise of the Anasazi people. Prolonged droughts and bitterly cold winters forced the Anasazi to abandon their cities and to split into much smaller communities. These smaller communities, which ultimately became the various Pueblo tribes, were able to survive by mixing agriculture, hunting, and gathering.

In the rest of North America, agriculture was practiced only marginally. Areas like the Great Basin were too dry for agriculture. In California, the Pacific Northwest, and the Plateau **region**, the bounty of wild food made agriculture unnecessary.

The Nez Perces and their neighbors in the Plateau region, for example, moved around from season to season, hunting, fishing, and gathering plants. Although they occupied permanent village sites in the winter, they did not stay together in a single group all year. Members of the village went their separate ways during the rest of the year to fish for salmon or to dig for roots. Political authority in such tribes was based on skills such as salmon fishing, and thus passed from individual to individual on a seasonal basis.

Variations in daily life and social arrangements in pre-Columbian North America thus reflected variations in climate, soil conditions, food supplies, and cultural heritage. The only generalization we can make is that pre-Columbian Indians adopted economic strategies, social conventions, and political systems that were well suited to their ecological and historical circumstances.

European Outreach and the Age of Exploration

While the Aztecs were expanding into Mexico, Europeans were feeling a similar restlessness. The Vikings extended their holdings throughout many parts of Europe and even into North America. In

Great Basin A desert region of the western United States that includes most of present-day Nevada and parts of Utah, California, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon.

Plateau region A region of the United States and Canada bounded on the east by the Rocky Mountains, on the west by the Cascade range of mountains, on the north by the subarctic plains, and on the south by the Great Basin.

pre-Columbian Existing in the Americas before the arrival of Columbus.

Vikings Medieval Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian groups, who responded to land shortages in Scandinavia by taking to the sea and establishing communities in western Europe, Iceland, Greenland, and North America.

the **Middle East**, Christian monarchs and church leaders launched a series of **Crusades** to wrest control of the Holy Land from the **Muslims**. In the Holy Land, the Crusaders came into contact with fine silks, exotic spices, and precious stones and metals that they had known only through myth and rumor. Subsequently, enterprising individuals began looking for ways to profit by providing Europeans with such luxuries. These movements ultimately led to the establishment of transatlantic ties and the creation of a new world.

Change and Restlessness in the Atlantic World

Around 800, Vikings from the northern frontier of Europe began sweeping down along the continent's western coasts. They captured the British Isles and seized Normandy, a large province in western France. Simultaneously, another group of Vikings pushed south through Russia along Europe's eastern frontier. Eventually they extended their influence all the way to the eastern Mediterranean.

Accomplished seamen, the Vikings also sailed westward, colonizing Iceland, Greenland, and eventually North America. According to Viking sagas, Bjarni Herjolfsson first sighted North America in 986 when he was blown off course during a storm. In about 1000, Viking chieftain Leif Ericson led an expedition to the new land, touching shore at Baffin Island and later at Labrador. During the next few decades, Vikings established several colonies in North America.

Although the Vikings' discovery went unnoticed in Europe, it did have important consequences for Native Americans. As the Vikings were expanding westward, a group of Inuit hunters known as the Thule people was expanding eastward. The Thule Inuits appear to have become middlemen between the Vikings and the subarctic Indians. The Thule people brokered ivory from walrus tusks obtained from other Native Americans for Viking coins and other metal objects. They guarded access to their Indian trading partners jealously and prevented the Vikings from expanding their holdings.

The Vikings were ultimately forced to retreat from North America and Greenland. The most likely cause of their departure was a change in climate known as the Little Ice Age. At some point between 1350 and 1450, temperatures fell worldwide. In the Arctic and the subarctic region, sea ice became a major hazard to navigation. It soon became impossible for the Vikings to practice the herding, farming, and trading that supported

their economy in Greenland, and Iceland became the westernmost outpost of the Viking world.

Crusading, Trading, and the Rise of Nation-States

While the Vikings were expanding to the west and to the south, an economic, religious, and political empire controlled by Muslim Arabs, Turks, and Moors was taking over Europe's southern and eastern frontiers (see Map 1.2). The Vikings and the Muslims often made life miserable for Europeans but also eventually benefited them. Both groups helped Europeans expand their knowledge and broaden their culture. Europeans became participants in a trading system that extended from Viking outposts in Greenland to Islamic trading posts in India and China.

In 1096, European Christians launched the first of several Crusades designed to sweep the Muslims from their strongholds in the Holy Land in the eastern Mediterranean. The Europeans proclaimed

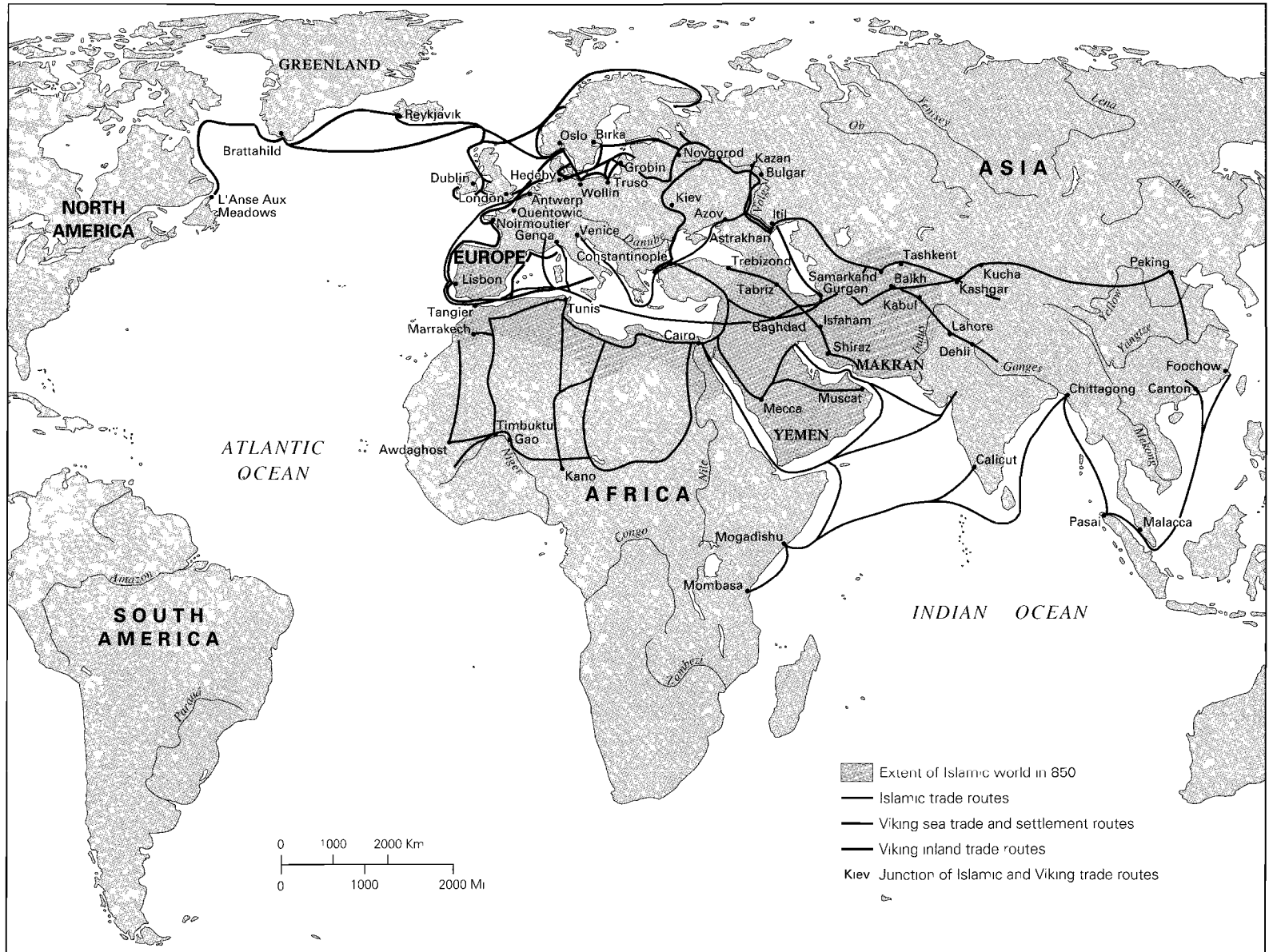
Middle East The region of the eastern Mediterranean, including modern Turkey, the Persian Gulf area, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Holy Land.

Crusades Military expeditions undertaken by European Christians in the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims.

Holy Land The region in which the events in the Old Testament of the Bible took place; it is sacred to Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

Muslims People who practice the religion of Islam, a monotheistic faith that accepts Mohammed as the chief and last prophet of God.

Moors The Muslim rulers of the Iberian Peninsula.



◆ MAP 1.2 Europe and **Its Neighbors**, C. A.D. 1000 Europe was not isolated during medieval times. As shown here, Viking and Islamic empires surrounded Western Europe, and their trade routes crisscrossed the region.

that they were seeking to destroy what they claimed was the false religion of Islam, but they also were hoping to break Islamic control of the eastern and African trade. Over the next two centuries, hordes of Crusaders invaded the area, capturing key points, only to be expelled by Muslim counterattacks. In the process, however, the Europeans gained more knowledge, technical skill, and access to trade. By the time the Crusades ended in 1291, trading families from city-states such as Venice had edged their way into the trade between Europe and the East.

The **Reconquista**, or reconquest of the Muslim-held areas of the Iberian Peninsula by Christian Europeans, began at about the same time as the Crusades. Portugal attained independence from Islamic rule in 1147, and by 1380 Portugal's King John I had united that country's various principalities under his rule. Spanish unification took much longer because feuding local states could not settle their differences. But in 1469, **Ferdinand and Isabella**, heirs to the rival thrones of Aragon and Castile, married and created a united state in Spain. Twenty-three years later, the Spanish subdued the last Islamic stronghold on the peninsula.

Northern European rulers also attempted to create national states in the face of local and regional rivalries. Consolidation finally occurred in France around 1480, when Louis XI took control of five rival provinces to create a unified kingdom. Five years later, Henry Tudor became king of a unified England when he defeated his rivals in the Wars of the Roses.

Portuguese Exploration, Africa, and the Quest for Asia

Portugal, the first of the European national states, was also the first to contest the hold of Italian merchants and their Islamic trading partners on eastern **commerce**. **Henry the Navigator**, the son of Portugal's John I, took the decisive step by establishing a school of navigation and ordering expeditions to sail west and south to look for new sources of wealth. By the 1430s, the Portuguese had discovered and taken control of the Azores, the Canaries, and Madeira, islands off the western shore of Africa. Within thirty years, Portuguese captains

had pushed their way to sub-Saharan Africa, where they came into contact with the **Songhay Empire**.

The Songhay Empire combined various kingdoms along the Niger River. Timbuktu, the Songhay capital, was a cosmopolitan center where African and Islamic influences met. It was a showplace of art, architecture, and scholarship. From Timbuktu, Muslim traders shipped goods across the Sahara by means of caravans. The Portuguese, however, offered speedier shipment and higher profits, carrying trade goods directly to Europe by sea.

By the end of the fifteenth century, Portuguese navigators had gained control over the flow of gold, ivory, and spices out of West Africa, and Portuguese colonizers were growing sugar and other crops on the newly conquered Azores and Canary Islands. Gradually, Portuguese plantation owners borrowed an institution from their former Islamic rulers and their African trading partners: slavery. Slaves had formed a crucial part of Islamic caravans in West Africa since about A.D. 700. From the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese became increasingly involved in slave trafficking, at first to their own plantations and then to Europe itself. By 1550, Portuguese ships were carrying African slaves throughout the world.

The Portuguese took a major step toward becoming world traders when Bartholomew Dias became the first European to reach the **Cape of Good Hope** at the southern tip of Africa in 1487. Ten

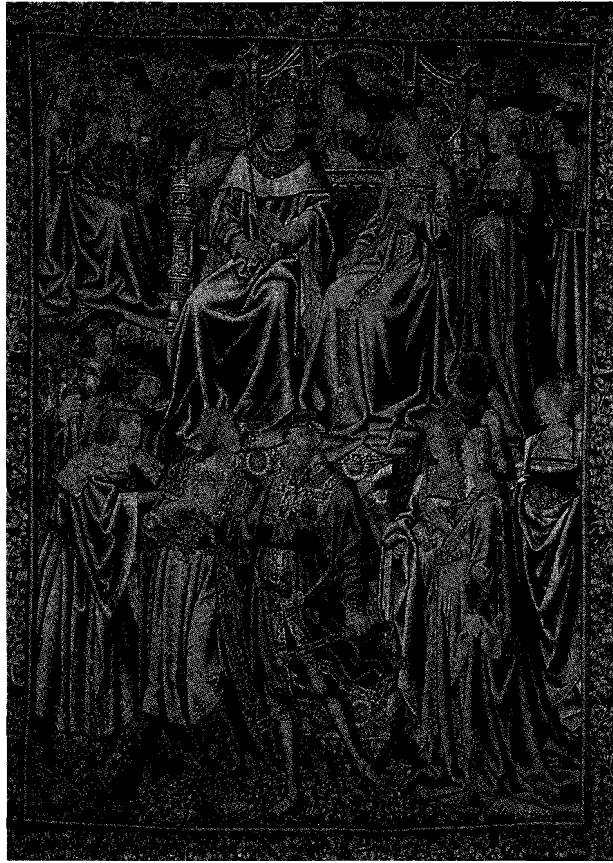
Reconquista The campaign undertaken by European Christians to recapture the Iberian Peninsula from the Muslims.

Ferdinand and Isabella Joint rulers of Spain; their marriage in 1469 created a united Spain from the rival kingdoms of Aragon and Castile.

Henry the Navigator Prince who founded an observatory and school of navigation and directed voyages that helped build Portugal's colonial empire.

Songhay Empire A large empire in West Africa; its capital was Timbuktu; its rulers accepted Islam in about A.D. 1000.

Cape of Good Hope A point of land projecting into the ocean at the southern tip of Africa; European mariners had to sail around the cape to pass from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.



- ◆ Ferdinand and Isabella were the king of Aragon and queen of Castille—the two dominant Christian states in Spain. Their marriage in 1469 created a new nation powerful enough to drive out the Muslims and launch Spain on an expansive new course. Within a hundred years, the kingdom they created became one of the richest and most powerful nations in the world. *ARXIU MAS*.

years later, Vasco de Gama sailed around the cape and launched the Portuguese exploration of eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean.

By the end of the fifteenth century, England, Spain, and France were vying with Portugal for access to the riches of the East. Borrowed technologies from China and the Arab world aided these new competitors. From China, Europeans acquired the magnetic compass, which allowed mariners to know the direction in which they were sailing. An Arab invention, the astrolabe, allowed navigators to determine their latitude. These inventions, to-

gether with improvements in steering mechanisms and in hull design, improved captains' control over their ships' direction, speed, and stability.

Columbus's Folly

An impoverished but ambitious sailor from the Italian city of Genoa was eager to capitalize on the new technology and knowledge. In 1484, **Christopher Columbus** approached John II of Portugal and asked him to support a risky voyage across the Atlantic. When John's geographers warned that Columbus had probably underestimated the distance of the trip, the king refused to support the enterprise. Undaunted, Columbus peddled his idea to various European governments over the next several years but found no backers. Finally, in 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella's defeat of the remaining Muslim enclave in Spain provided Columbus with an opportunity.

The Spanish monarchs, eager to break the domination of the Italians and their Arab partners in the east and of the Portuguese in the south and west, agreed to equip three ships and granted Columbus 10 percent of any returns from the voyage. On August 3, 1492, Columbus and some ninety sailors departed on the *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* for Asia.

After ten weeks at sea, the three ships finally made landfall on a small island on October 12, 1492. Columbus thought he had reached the Indies, but he had really reached the **Bahamas**. Celebrating his escape from disaster, Columbus named the place San Salvador (Holy Savior).

Over the next ten weeks, Columbus sailed around the Caribbean, stopping at Cuba and Hispaniola. He collected spices, coconuts, bits of gold, and some native captives. He called these people

astrolabe An instrument that navigators used to measure the height of the sun and stars and calculate their position of latitude.

Christopher Columbus Italian explorer in the service of Spain who attempted to reach Asia by sailing west from Europe, thereby discovering America in 1492.

Bahamas A group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean east of Florida and Cuba.

"Indians" because he believed that he had reached the Indies. Columbus then returned to Spain and was welcomed home with great celebration. His account of the trip and the goods he brought back helped gain him support for three more voyages. Over the next several decades, the Spanish gained a permanent foothold in the region that Columbus had discovered and became aware that the area was not the Indies or Japan but an entirely new world.

Columbus's discovery opened unprecedented opportunities for Europeans. Taking to heart stories of new lands, new goods, new peoples, and new possibilities for acquiring wealth, kings, sailors, and merchants began eyeing the New World with enormous interest.

A New Transatlantic World

Initially, North America posed more of an obstacle than an opportunity for Europeans. Exploration efforts for several decades after Columbus's landfall aimed at finding a sea route around or through the continent to the riches of the East. Though fruitless, the search for the Northwest Passage led to the gradual charting of the North American coast.

The English were the first to search for an alternate route to India. In 1497, King Henry VII commissioned an Italian mariner, Giovanni Caboto, known to the English as **John Cabot**, to investigate a northern passage. Cabot explored the area that Leif Ericson had colonized five centuries before. Another Italian, **Amerigo Vespucci**, sailing shortly thereafter under a Spanish flag, explored the northeastern coast of South America and the Caribbean. The French entered into the quest in 1524, when they commissioned Giovanni da Verrazzano to chart the Atlantic coast of North America. A decade later, **Jacques Cartier** explored the Canadian coast for the French government. In 1542, he established a short-lived colony near present-day Quebec, primarily to trade for furs.

It was the fish of the Grand Banks, however, that became the first staple of North American commerce. Historians continue to debate when the English, French, and **Basque** fishermen first took advantage of the prolific fishing grounds off the North American coast. Some have argued that they

were harvesting cod and mackerel even before Columbus set sail. What is clear is that by the early 1500s, such fishermen were making annual voyages to the Grand Banks and were conducting a lively trade in copper pots, knives, jewelry, and other goods in exchange for Indian ivory, furs, and food. The Micmacs, Hurons, and other northeastern tribes welcomed the newcomers and were eager to trade, in part to gain advantages over their rivals.

The nearly simultaneous arrival of Europeans and the Little Ice Age had several effects. Tribes pressured by the Thule Inuits withdrew to the south, thereby coming into conflict with the Algonquins and Iroquois. Deteriorating corn harvests in turn prompted the Iroquois to expand their holdings. Warfare thus increased among the northeastern tribes. As war became more common, some Indian groups began to form formal alliances for defense. The most prominent of these was the Iroquois Confederacy, organized by a Mohawk leader named Hiawatha in about 1450.

The Challenges of Mutual Discovery

It is usually said that Europeans discovered America, but it is also true that America discovered Europeans. The relationship between Europeans and American Indians ran in two directions. Europeans approached the inhabitants of the New World based on what they already knew. American Indians approached Europeans in the same way. Both

John Cabot Italian explorer who led the English expedition that sailed along the North American mainland in 1497.

Amerigo Vespucci Italian explorer of the South American coast; America was named after him.

Jacques Cartier Frenchman, who in 1534, explored the St. Lawrence River, giving France its primary claim to territories in the New World.

Basques An ethnic group from north central Spain that was heavily involved in early North American fishing activities.

groups had many of their fundamental assumptions challenged. Mutual discovery in America influenced the choices people were to make on a global scale.

A Meeting of Minds in America

Initially, most Europeans were content to fit what they found in the New World with their prior expectations. Columbus expected to find the Indies and Indians, and he believed that was precisely what he had found. Europeans understood only later that America was a new land and that the natives there were a new people.

Europeans were of a divided mind about the people they encountered in America. Columbus's comments about the American Indians set the tone for many of those to follow. "They are so ingenuous and free with all they have," Columbus wrote, "that no one would believe it who has not seen it. Of anything that they possess, if it be asked of them, they never say no; on the contrary, they invite you to share it and show as much love as if their hearts went with it, and they are content with whatever trifle be given them, whether it be a thing of value or of petty worth." Such writings led to a perception of the Indians as noble savages, men and women free from the temptations and conceits of modern civilization. Many Europeans praised the Indians' apparent ignorance of private property.

Not all Europeans held this view of American Indians. Amerigo Vespucci shared the opinion that Indians were savage, but he found them less than noble. "They marry as many wives as they please," he explained. "The son cohabits with mother, brother with sister, male cousin with female, and any man with the first woman he meets. . . . Beyond the fact that they have no church, no religion and are not idolaters, what more can I say?"

From the European point of view, the native populations lacked "true" religion. But Columbus was optimistic that this lack could be remedied. "I maintain," he wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella, "that if they had access to devout religious persons knowing the language, they would all turn Christian." He added, "It appeared to us that these people were very poor in everything." Thus although

Indians were savages, they could be made civilized through European religion and trade.

The arrival of Europeans may have been easier for American Indians to understand than the existence of American Indians was for the Europeans. To Indians, Europeans did not appear to be either superhuman or even particularly strange. Their mode of arrival, manners, speech, and dress no doubt seemed odd, but no odder than the language, behavior, and appearance of traders from the Valley of Mexico. Indians accepted Europeans as simply another new group to be added to the already complex social cosmos.

The Columbian Exchange

Although Europeans and American Indians found some similarities in each other, their natural environments differed greatly. The passage of people, plants, and animals among Europe, Africa, and North America wrought profound changes in all three continents. Historians call this process the Columbian Exchange.

Perhaps the most tragic trade among the three continents was in disease. The Indian peoples whom Columbus and other explorers encountered lived in an environment in which contagious diseases that were common in Europe (such as smallpox, measles, and typhus) did not exist. Thus they had no acquired immunity to the various bacteria and viruses that Europeans carried. As a result, new diseases spread very rapidly among the native peoples and were much more deadly than they were among Europeans.

ingenuous Lacking in sophistication; artless.

idolater A person who worships idols or false gods.

Columbian Exchange The exchange of people, plants, and animals among Europe, Africa, and North America that occurred after Columbus's discovery of the New World.

acquired immunity Resistance or partial resistance to a disease; it develops in a population over time, after exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.

Controversy rages over the number of Indians killed by imported European diseases, but most scholars agree that the number was enormous. An estimated 3 million to 10 million people lived in America north of Mexico in 1492. Between 90 and 95 percent of this native population appears to have died of European diseases during the first century of contact.

This exchange of microorganisms created a distinctive pattern of contagion and immunity in North America. American Indians appear to have been less devastated physically by syphilis, which may have originated in the Western Hemisphere, than other groups were. Africans were largely unaffected by various **malarial** fevers, transplanted from their home continent, that ravaged both European and native populations. For Europeans mumps was a mild childhood disease, but for Africans and Indians it was a mass killer and left many survivors sterile. The march of exchanged diseases across the North American landscape played an important role in the continent's history.

Less immediate effects arose from the exchange of plants, but the long-term consequences were profound. Asian transplants such as bananas, sugar cane, and rice, which came to America by way of Africa, became **cash crops** on New World plantations, as did cotton, indigo, and coffee. Wheat, barley, and millet were readily transplanted to suitable areas in North America. So were grazing grasses and vegetables such as turnips, spinach, and cabbage.

The most important North American plant in the Columbian Exchange was tobacco, a stimulant used widely in North America for ceremonial purposes and broadly adopted by Europeans and Africans as a recreational drug. Another stimulant, cocoa, also enjoyed significant popularity among Old World consumers. New World vegetables helped to revolutionize world food supplies. Maize was remarkably easy to grow and thrived in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. In addition, the white potato, tomato, manioc, squash, beans, and peas native to the Western Hemisphere were transplanted throughout the world.

The Columbian Exchange also involved animals. Animal populations in North America were very different from those in the Old World. The continent teemed with deer, bison, elk, and moose,

but they had to be hunted rather than herded and were useless as draft animals. Europeans brought a full complement of Old World domesticated animals to America. Horses, pigs, cattle, oxen, sheep, goats, and domesticated fowl did well in the new environment.

The exchange of plants and animals altered the natural environments in North America. The transplanting of European grain crops and domesticated animals led to the reshaping of the land itself. Clearing trees, plowing, and fencing changed the flow of water, the distribution of seeds, the nesting of birds, and the movement of native animals. Gradually, imported livestock pushed aside native animals, and imported plants choked out native ones.

Probably the most far-reaching environmental impact of the Columbian Exchange was on human populations. Although exchanged diseases killed many millions of Indians and lesser numbers of Africans and Europeans, the transplantation of animals and plants significantly expanded food production in Europe and Africa. The environmental changes that Europeans caused in eastern North America permitted the region to support many more people than it had under Indian cultivation. The result was a population explosion in Europe and Africa that eventually spilled over to repopulate a devastated North America.

New Worlds in Africa and America

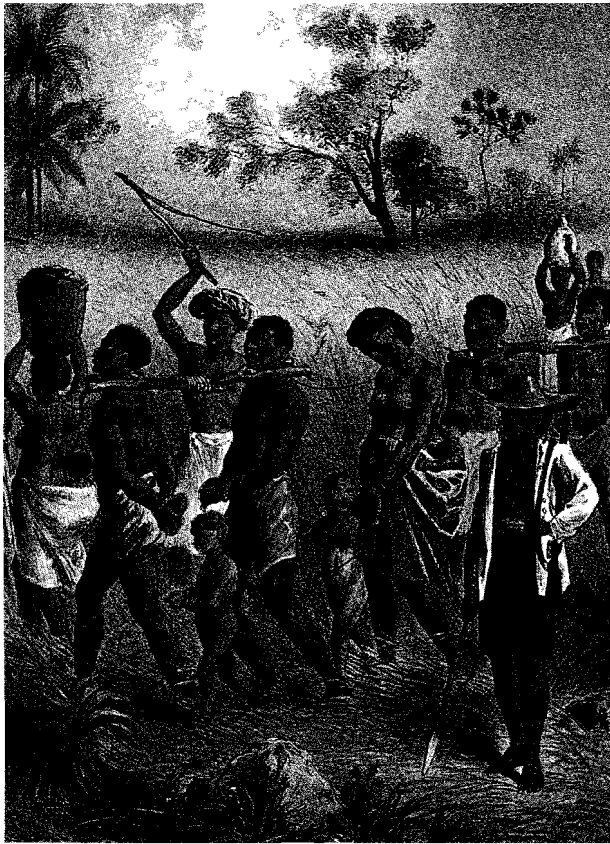
The Columbian Exchange did more than redistribute plants, animals, and populations among Europe, Africa, and North America. It permanently altered the history of both hemispheres.

syphilis An infectious disease usually transmitted through sexual contact; if untreated, it can lead to paralysis and death.

malarial Related to malaria, an infectious disease characterized by chills, fever, and sweating; it is often transmitted through mosquito bites.

cash crop A crop raised in large quantities for sale rather than for local or home consumption.

indigo A plant that yielded a blue dye used for coloring textiles; in the mid-eighteenth century, it was a staple crop in the Lower South.



- ◆ Parties of captured villagers from Africa's interior were bound together and marched to trading centers on the coast, where they were sold to Europeans or Muslims. The slave drivers were heavily influenced by outside contact. One of those shown here is wearing a Muslim turban, while the clothing of the other is more European. Note, too, that the slave driver carries both a gun and a traditional African spear. *The Granger Collection.*

Imported disease had the most devastating influence on the lives of Indians. Those who escaped epidemics were often faced with a struggle for survival because too few able bodies were left to perform tasks that had been done cooperatively. Wholesale death by disease sometimes wiped out the elders and storytellers who stored the entire practical, religious, and cultural knowledge of these nonliterate societies. The result of this loss was confusion and disorientation among survivors.

The devastation wrought by European diseases also made it easier for Europeans to penetrate

the North American continent. Such devastation prompted some Indians to seek alliances with the newcomers. Others adopted European tools, which helped make smaller work forces more productive. Still others turned to European religions for spiritual explanations and possible remedies for the hardships they faced. Together, economic and spiritual forces pushed the Indians into an increasingly tangled alliance with Europeans.

The Columbian Exchange also severely disrupted life in Africa. The depopulation of America and the suitability of America for crops such as sugar cane created a huge demand for African slave labor. The Portuguese were well prepared to meet that demand, having taken over much of the African slave trade from North African Muslims in the fifteenth century. They supplied aggressive tribes like the Ashanti with European firearms, thereby enabling coastal tribes to raid deep into the Niger and Congo River regions. These raiders captured millions of prisoners, whom they herded back to the coast and sold to European traders to supply labor for New World mines and plantations.

It is difficult to determine the number of people sold in the West African slave trade from 1500 to 1800. The most recent estimates suggest that over 9.5 million enslaved Africans arrived in the New World during this period. But these estimates do not include the 10 to 20 percent of the slaves who died on ships, those who died on the march to the African coast, and those who remained as slaves in Africa and elsewhere. Africa sacrificed a great deal to the Columbian Exchange.

A New World in Europe

The discovery of America and the Columbian Exchange also had repercussions in Europe. Along with new economic opportunities and foodstuffs, the opening of the Western Hemisphere brought new ideas and demanded new kinds of political and economic organization. The discovery of the New World clearly forced a new and more modern society onto Europeans, and in the process, it produced a sense of crisis.

nonliterate Lacking a system of reading and writing.

Europe's population was already rising when potatoes, maize, and other New World crops began to revolutionize food production. The population of Europe in 1500 was about 81 million. It grew to 100 million by 1600 and 120 million by 1700. This growth occurred despite nearly continuous wars and a flood of thousands of people to the New World each year.

The development of centralized states under leaders such as John I of Portugal, Louis XI of France, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and Henry VII of England appeared to offer the most promising avenue for harnessing the riches of the New World while controlling ever-increasing numbers of people at home. The sons and daughters of these monarchs continued the centralization of authority begun by their parents.

They did so even as traditional sources of authority broke down. Martin Luther, a German monk, dealt a devastating blow to religious authority by preaching that Christians could achieve salvation without the intercession of the Catholic church. Salvation, he said, was God's gift to the faithful. In 1517, Luther attacked the sale of **indulgences** by Catholic priests. He presented ninety-five arguments ("theses") against this practice, maintaining that only individual repentance and the grace of God, not the purchase of a pardon, could save sinners.

Luther's ideas took root among a generation of theologians who were dissatisfied with the corruption that permeated the medieval Catholic church. A Frenchman, John Calvin, further undermined the authority of the Catholic church. Like Luther, Calvin believed that salvation was a gift from God and that God had chosen the souls to be saved and the souls to be damned when he created the world. Calvin likewise concurred that no human actions could alter God's plan. Calvin differed from Luther in calling attention to the elect, the small elite God had chosen to save. Although only God knew who was among the saved and who among the damned, Calvin urged Christians to engage in constant meditation, prayer, and scriptural study and to live as though they were among the chosen.

The doctrines of Luther, Calvin, and others who wanted to reform the Catholic church collectively became known as **Protestantism**. Their ideas appealed to a broad audience in the rapidly changing world of the sixteenth century. The new doctrines

were most attractive to the middling classes of lawyers, bureaucrats, merchants, and manufacturers, groups that stood to gain from the questioning of entrenched authority. Some in the ruling classes also found the new theology attractive for similar reasons. In Germany, Luther's challenge to the Catholic church led many local princes eager to establish a German national church to question the **divine right** to authority claimed by the ruler of the **Holy Roman Empire**.

Similarly, Henry **VIII** of England found Protestantism convenient when he wanted to divorce his wife. Henry VIII was the first undisputed heir to the English throne in several generations, and he was consumed with the desire to have a son who could inherit the crown. When his wife, Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, failed to bear a boy, Henry demanded in 1527 that Pope Clement VII grant him an annulment of his marriage. Fearful of Spanish reprisals on Catherine's behalf, Clement refused. In desperation, Henry launched the English Reformation by seizing the Catholic church in England. By 1535, he had gained complete control of it.

Henry was not a staunch believer in the views aired by Luther and others. But he reluctantly opened the door to Protestant practices in his newly created Church of England to win the support of

indulgence A pardon issued by the pope absolving the purchaser of a particular sin.

the elect According to Calvinism, the people chosen for God for salvation.

Protestantism The religion and religious beliefs of Christians who accept the Bible as the only source of revelation, believe salvation to be God's gift to the faithful, and believe the faithful can form a direct, personal relationship with God.

divine right The idea that monarchs derive their right to rule directly from God and are accountable only to God.

Holy Roman Empire A political entity authorized by the Catholic church in 1356 unifying Central Europe under an emperor elected by four princes and three Catholic archbishops.

Henry VIII King of England (r. 1509-1547); his desire to divorce his first wife led him to break with Catholicism and establish the Church of England.

Protestants. Henry also seized the extensive and valuable lands that the Catholic church owned in England, thereby adding to his wealth and power.

The Protestants gained substantially during the short reign of Henry's young son Edward VI from 1547 to 1553. When Mary, Edward's oldest sister, succeeded him, however, she attempted to reverse the Protestant tide. The daughter of Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Mary had married Philip II of Spain and was a devout Catholic. She burned several hundred of the leading reformers at the stake in her effort to suppress Protestantism. Her brutality only drove the movement underground and made it more militant. When Mary died in 1558 and was succeeded by her half sister Elizabeth, who had been raised as a Protestant, militant Protestantism resurfaced. Elizabeth spent much of her long reign attempting to moderate the demands of Protestant reformers. The desire of Protestant dissenters to worship freely clashed with her desire to control church and state. This tension between fervent reformers and the Anglican church would significantly affect English settlement in the New World.

dissenters People who do not accept the doctrines of an established or national church.

SUMMARY

Expectations
Constraints
Choices
Outcomes

Making America began perhaps as long as 70,000 years ago, when the continent's first human occupants started adapting to the land. *Expecting* better conditions than they had left behind in Asia, they

migrated across Beringia and then overcame or adapted to *constraints* presented by the new environment. Over thousands of years, they continually made *choices* to preserve and enhance their lives. The eventual *outcome* of these *choices* was a rich and flourishing world of different cultures, linked by common religious and economic bonds.

The Atlantic crossing by Europeans presented the natives of America with *constraints* that they had never dreamed of. Disease, then war, and then environmental

changes wrought by the Europeans who followed Columbus soon limited the *choices* open to Native Americans.

At the same time, however, Europeans knew full well that American Indians were an important key to making America. Thus Indians exerted a powerful *constraint* on Europeans' freedom of *choice*.

Influences from the New World accelerated processes that were already changing *expectations* and *constraints* in the Old World. Wealth and food from the New World fostered the growth of population, of powerful kings, and of strong nations, but led in turn to continuing conflict over New World resources. In Africa, strong coastal states *chose* to raid weaker neighboring tribes, more than doubling the flow of slaves out of Africa. Meanwhile, as disease destroyed millions of Indians, newcomers came pouring in. These newcomers came from a very different physical environment and brought drastic changes to the face of the land. The *outcome* of these continuing interactions among newcomers, and between them and the survivors of America's original people, would be the making of America.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Becker, Marvin B. *Civility and Society in Western Europe, 1300-1600* (1988).

A brief but comprehensive look at social conditions in Europe during the period leading up to and out of the exploration of the New World.

Crosby, Alfred W. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972).

The landmark book that brought the Columbian impact into focus for the first time. Parts of the book are technical, but the explanations are clear and exciting.

Fagan, Brian M. *The Great Journey: The Peopling of Ancient America* (1987).

An excellent recounting of the peopling of North America during the last stages of the Ice Age.

Laslett, Peter. *The World We Have Lost Further Explored* (1983).

Updated third edition of the author's well-respected characterization of British society before colonization. Highly readable and interesting.

McNeill, William H. *Plagues and Peoples* (1976).

A fascinating history of disease and its impact on people throughout the period of European expansion and New World colonization.

Oliver, Roland, and J. D. Fage. *A Short History of Africa* (1988).

The most concise and understandably written comprehensive history of Africa available.

